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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE Home Member in the Government of Bombay, as we showed last week, evaded answering a question regarding the treatment of political offenders while in gaol on the ground that the law of the land did not define the 'political offenders." It is true that this is a popular expression not recognised in law, but Mr. Hayward should not have had much difficulty in understanding it as in gaols these prisoners are in their "history ticket "labelled "political prisoners" by the gaoler himself! The position which the treatment of political offenders occupies in England at present is this, that persons convicted of sedition or seditious libel are treated as offenders of the first division, and prisoners of the second and third divisions whose previous character is good and who are convicted of offences not involving dishonesty, cruelty, indecency or serious violence, may at the discretion of the Prison Commissioner be granted relaxations of the rules not exceeding those allowed by the rules for the first division in respect of wearing prison clothing, bathing, hairsutting, cleaning of cells, employment, exercise, books and otherwise. It is unnecessary to detail here all the ameliorations to which offenders of the first division are entitled in England, but it may be said generally that this class corresponds more or less to persons sentenced to simple imprisonment in India, and it may be added in particular (in view of the prominence which the question has received in Mr. Gandhi's case) that they are allowed to receive letters and visits from not more than three friends at intervals of a fortnight, additional letters and visits being allowed at the discretion of the visiting Committee. There is no reason why, till the law is changed on these lines, political offenders should not be treated similarly in India by making the necessary alterations in the rules. Such changes have actually been made in Bihar and Orissa; where all prisoners sentenced to rigorous imprisonment under the Criminal Law Amendment Act or section 124 A or 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, or under section 108 read with section 114 of the Criminal Procedure Code, were ordered by the Inspector General of Prisons to be treated "as if they had been sentenced to simple imprisonment." The Bombay Government can indeed do worse than follow the example of Bihar.

THE Gujarat Provincial Conference, held last week, passed a resolution to the effect that "after fully considering the discussions that had taken place in the country regarding the boycott of Councils, the Conference was of the opinion that co-operation in the administration by entering the Councils was altogether or posed to the first principles of non-co-operation, and the experience of the last eighteen months showed clearly that the well-being of the country lay in sticking to the beycott of Councils." This is no doubt the correct position from the orthodox non-co-operation point of view, but what is the alternative to the abandonment of non-co-operation, as implied in the removal of the existing ban on councils, schools or courts? The only alternative is a premature adoption of the aggressive forms of non-co-operation, which Mahatma Gandhi desired at all wosts to suspend for fear of violence breaking out as a result of such dangerous activities. The Bardeli programme, which consists mainly of spinning, is miserably inadequate to engage the interest of the frenzied enthusiasts of non-co-operation, who have been fed till recently on promises of swara; within a year. They require much stronger meat than is contained in the Bardoli plan. That is the true inwardness of the resolution passed, for instance, by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, which advocates "resort to individual civil disobedience of the gagging orders under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code and to a limited form of mass civil obedience which is to consist in refusing to pay certain taxes levied under the salt, forest and chaukidari laws." The Servint bewails the passing of this

resolution as due to impatience. But such impatience is bound to be betrayed by people who have been persistently taught to expect miracles to happen and with this impatience there is always bound to be a danger of an eruption of violence, unless a new direction is given to their enthusiasm such as is provided by work in the Councils. The latter may be, and is, inconsistent with non-co-operation, but when the choice is between non-co-operation and non-violence, which will the non-co-operators have?

A DEPUTATION of the Malabar Re. An Impossible Ciaim. construction Committee, led by Dewan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nair, urged on H. E. Lord Willingdon the necessity for giving to the poor victims of the Moplah rebellion free and liberal grants of money for food, houses and cattle instead of the loans that are being given. We have already commented on the in-.adequacy and other unsatisfactory features of these loans and heartily support the deputation on this point. But we cannot say the same thing with regard to the claim for compensation put in by the deputation for damages to property caused by the rebellion. Lord Willingdon promptly enough expressed his doubts about the Legislative Council being induced to grant money for such compensation. But Mr. Krishnan Nair is confident of getting it, provided the Government do not themselves oppose the motion. We are afraid he is reckoning without the host. The tax-payer may not grudge relief to poor people in distress owing to famine or some other calamity, but he will certainly refuse to reimburse well-to-do landlords and others. You may appeal to his charity but you cannot treat him as a property insurance company. It would of course not be unreasonable to make the rebel Moplah compensate the victim of his inhumanity. But he is a poor devil who has been either shot down, imprisoned or already fleeced of his ill-gotten wealth and is now mostly himself in need of relief. When the Allies are thinking of forgoing German reparations, it is absurd for the Hindus of Malabar to think of getting compensation from the Moplah, without whom their economic life would be almost at a standstill, with whom they are obliged to live side by side and to calm down whose hatred and fanaticism is to their best interest.

Peaceful Picketting. WE are glad that an appeal has been preferred in the Allahabad High Court against the decision of the District Magistrate who convicted Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others for intimidation and extortion in connection with the picketing of certain shops in Allahabad where foreign cloth was sold. The owners of these shops had promised a private association not to sell foreign cloth and on their breaking the promise the association threatened to picket their shops and carried out the threat, so that the owners paid a fine and gave an undertaking in writing not to deal any more in foreign cloth. One

reason for our welcoming this appeal is that it is a departure from the non-co-operators' practice of refusing to lead evidence or to cross-examine, whereby they have only helped the prevalence of injustice and oppression. A more important reason is that it will enable the High Court to decide the limits within which peaceful picketing is permissible. In England its legality was placed beyond doubt in 1906 by a legislative enactment, but only in connection with trade disputes between the employers and the employed. We do not hear of picketing for other purposes being thought of there, such as that of capitalist shops by socialists, &c. But in India we have picketing for political reasons as in the present case, and it is possible to conceive of its being resorted to for making a person join a particular political association or do something else against his inclination; in which case it would become an intolerable nuisance. On the other hand, it would have the approval of the best minds, when it is adopted for promoting the moral welfare of the community as when liquor-shops or brothels are peacefully picketed. It is a matter where one individual's liberty of action has to be reconciled with another individual's liberty of speech. The present case is further complicated by a threat to picket which has been construed as intimidation and by the collection of a fine which has been construed as extortion. We hope the High Court will go fully into the matter and give useful guidance for future action.

IN an article contributed to the Cult. Cult. Cult. Cult. Current number of the Indian Review, Mr. Ramalinga Reddy aptly characterises the Gandhian movement as "an invitation to the re-barbarisation of India," and he thinks that the best mode of delivering an attack on this cave of Adullam is somehow to persuade the non-co operators to enter the councils and to put them into office, with the consequent duty fixed upon them of realising their policies.

"Let Gandhi try, for instance," he says, "to convert schools into spinning factories; to introduce personal law and permit the members of each religion to be tried by their religious codes; to discourage industrialism; to allow each local body to be a law unto itself; to legalise non-co-operation with Government and civil obedience on any and every pretext; or any one of the elements of moonshine that have served him in alliance with superatitious revivals so well in opposition; down he will go with no hope of resurrection. If Gokhale had been a revolution ary and succeeded, he would have given us a Government with progressive policies and workable measures. Gandhi could give nothing practical or progressive; it is only when the wheel of electoral fortune brings him into power that his hopeless impossibility will be demonstrated beyond dispute. If, on the other hand, power will purge his party of its crudities and absurdities, it is so much gained to the stock of national sanity, at which all will

The discerning observation of Mr. C. Rajagopali achariar is indeed true in more senses than one that the non-co-operators' entry into the councils would really be the extinction of the movement.

MALABAR.

THE TYRANNY OF "LAW AND ORDER." THE great need of the moment in Malabar, in addition to the prevention of starvation and the helping of the economic rehabilitation of her people, is the restoration of a feeling of security among them. This has been so rudely shaken during the past ten months that the temptation to revive it by strong methods is very great. But that way folly lies and the greatest consideration and tact are needed in laying down the right policy to be pursued. Regard for law and order is a delicate plant of tender nurture and it requires all the sympathy and imagination which the ruler could command to implant it in the minds of the citizens. all the more necessary in a place like Malabar where there has been recently a rebellion and which was consequently under the rough and ready systems of martial law and is at present under the special ordinance, which is equally stern in character. It is here that the Special Commissioner ought to have conceived of and inaugurated a thoroughly original and wholesome policy of action that would ring out the old by wiping out memories of class hatred and other tyrannies and ring in a new era of peace and good-will among all classes of people and of intelligent and loyal support to the Government.

Mr. Manjeri Ramaier, a leading public man of Malabar, one of the ablest and most experienced practitioners of oriminal law and one whose motive cannot be questioned by his worst enemy, official or non-official, has recently portrayed in the columns of New India the present political condition of the district. It is an unmitigated rule of the police with all its attendant evils. And . a worse remedy could not have been devised for Malabar in her present temper. The police official for various reasons has lost the confidence of the public and it is generally believed in Malabar that the growing sympathy which the middle and aristocratic classes of Malabar feel for the Gandhi movment, to whom not so long ago every favourite dostrine of the Mahatma was an anathema, was largely the result of the police misrule by petty officers which not only went unrebuked and unpunished but often received the approbation of the Department. It was because the police had lost the sympathy and therefore the co-operation of the public that they also failed to avert the rebellion as it was an open secret that even two months previous to the outbreak large quantities of knives were being forged at the village smithies. Any shred of respect or prestige which they might have commanded for strength and courage was completely lost when the policemen, at the first signal of the mob law surrendered all their arms and ammunition and took to ignominious flight, leaving the defenceless Hindus to their fate.

A police with such a record as this is the least fitted to restore respect for law and order in the minds of panic-stricken people nor of the really

guilty. Under the regime of martial law and the special ordinance the police enjoy privileged position and it is difficult conceive of their acting without wanting to take revenge for their past humiliation. The ordinary processes of law administered in the special courts, commendable as they are in preference to the notorious martial law courts of the Panjab, afford peculiar advantages to the police to practise their questionable methods of detection and prosecution under the present conditions in Malabar. The average Hindu there is naturally so much embittered againstthe Moplah that he seeks vicarious vengence on him by pointing out to the guardians of law particular criminals and also swearing to his actually having witnessed the criminal acts, when generally the truth is that the same Hindu was in some refugee camp in Calicut or elsewhere and the policeman hiding somewhere in mortal dread of, his life. It is a glaring commentary on the present demoralised condition of Malabar that only recently a Nambudiri Brahman who, saved from the rebels, fed and safely conducted to a place of safety by a Moplah, swore against his very protector in a . prosecution for waging war against the King Emperor. Rumour is also very strong that many of. the actual perpetrators of crime are still at large and shrewd men it is reported, explain the fact by saying that the deities have been propitiated with liberal shares of the loot. The arrests and prosecutions however of a large number of Moplahs and a few Hindus (for the law is no respector of creeds) have been going on. More than ten tousand have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. perhaps an equal number are awaiting trial and it is believed that twice the same number have yet to be arrested. The absurdity and danger of following the ordinary forms of remedy on such extraordinary occassions is painfully patent. A really statesmanlike policy is necessary but that is expecting the impossible of the bureaucracy in India.

Mr. Knapp has boldly recommended a new form of punishment for the prosecuted Moplahs. Large numbers of them who are accused of having participated in a minor degree in crimes commined during the rebellion will be brought to trial and if imprisoned will have their sentences suspended on condition that they remain on good behaviour and pay punctually the fine that will be imposed upon them and which they will be given time to pay. An excellent arrangement if only the police were not made the arbiters in this matter. Let Mr. Manjeri Ramaier describe the result:

After all the costly and long-drawn ceremonials, police and judicial, after the witnesses have done their best and the lawyers have done their worst, after long terms of imprisonment have been pronounced with due pomp and solemnity. Police Raj steps on the scene once again, recommending the metamorphosis of the victims' imprisonment to small instalments of monthly fince spread out into the fluid future. Suppose the fines are paid for a few months regularly, the time must come, in many cases, when the Mopla faces the policeman with an empty

pecket again; the alternatives that face him are either to go quiatly to gool at once like a good man to work out the remainder of his long term or to take to crime to refill his pooket at the expense of his neighbour, in which case he cannot be worse of, even if he is detected. Inaction leads him straight away to gool, action in crime may make him rich and enable him to dodge the prison. It is all a case of robbing the country to pay the State. What possible gain can account where the good of the State is identical with the good of the Country?

No wonder the afflicted people of Malabar feel in their hearts that the police are the third plague of their dear land, having been preceded first by the Moplahs who ran amok on account of the Khilafat agitation and second by the military who were licensed to do as they pleased in subduing them.

FRIENDS OF ISLAM.

NOWHERE perhaps outside of Erance was Erance's claim that "civilized" meant "Frenchised" more wholeheartedly accepted than in the Levant. Paris was for the Levantine the standard by which everytiling was axiomatically measured; and when we say Paris, we of course do not manuthe industrial quarters of Levallois or Belleville or the intimacy of the small bourgeois of the banlieu but the Paris of the grands boulevards. The effendi was at home there and his partners in the haute finance found him the ready means, whereby to enjoy the suphemistically so-called "gay" life of the ville lumiere. The fedlahin who had ultimately to pay for it all of course were not asked: having hitherto been crudely bled for the effendi, they now were scientifically exploited by the concessionaire plus his effendi associates. Everybody in the Levant who pretended to any education at all, needs had to have at least a smattering of French and the most polished had turned French into a second mother tongue. This was the general mentality of the Leventine towards France-whether in Egypt, Turkey or Syria.

Egypt of course was particularly pro-French since at one time—we speak of the Fashoda era—to be so, meant to be anti-English. But in 1904 England and France made it up and whilst England promised to give France a completely free hand in Morocco, France undertook to rencunce all its pretensions in Egypt. Since then Figure has added Morocco to its colonial possessions; but so slow are the Moors in appreciating the benefits of French rule, their that powers of discrimination have had to be aided by a permanent garrison of several lakhs, whose bayonets under the direction of General Lyautey (who is also Governor General) are still (after ten years!) engaged in "pacifying" the country.

It would therefore almost seem that the French are only before to their Moslem friends, as long as the country of the latter is not yet French. We read the other day that in Tunis, where the French keep a tame Dey to uphold the fiction of the mere "protectorate" of an au fond independent State, this unfortunate im-potentate had ventured

to oppose an order passed by the French Government: whereupon the French Resident General called upon the Dey to clear up matters. He called on the Dey and in doing so he ordered a squadron of French cavalry to accompany him. Whilst this squadron stood at attention in the Palace courtyard, the Dey signed the paper which the Resident General once more ventured to submit to His Highness-and once more was "complete accord" restored, except that subsequently some pestilential journalists were clapped into prison the better to be able to understand the benefits of French rule. And order now reigns in Tunis. But somehow one cannot quite believe that the Moslems of Tunis are quite as enthusiastic about France protector of Islam, as, say, the Kemalist press.

This Tunis affair of course was petty. Not so the open rebellion into which Syria broke out a few weeks ago. Syrians had always excelled even in Turkish times as Francophils and during the war one remembers periodical issues of manifestoes from some Syrian League or other (safely located at Marseilles or some such place), assuring the world in general that Syria was just crazy after France and would not be happy until it got it England accordingly had more or less promised Syria to France, when the Turkish booty was going to be divided up : which did not prevent it from promising Syria also more or less to the King" of Hedjaz; nor from promising one part of it, Palestine, to the Zionists. We know how afterwards a reconciliation of the three promises was attempted by drawing the Sykes-Picot line in favour of France; by drawing up a Zionist mandate for a severely truncated Palestine; by giving Transjordania to "King" Hussein and letting "King" Faysal occupy—entirely at owner's risk! the throne of Damascus. With that cordiality which always characterizes the Entente Cordiale. France soon drove this English protege from Damascus and annexed the province without further ado, thereby putting England to the trouble of organizing an "almost unanimous" referendum which called the unemployed sovereign to the hastily constructed throne of Iraq.

Meanwhile the French got busy in Syria. Their natural starting point was Beyrout, the great port of all Syria, and its immediate hinterland, the Lebanon. There, French influence had been supreme for half a century. For the Lebanese are almost to a man Christians, and not only Christians, but Roman Catholics. It is not superfluous to stress this difference; for the bulk of the Christians inhabiting the Levant are not Roman Catholic but Greek Orthodox, and if there is mighty little love lost between the Greek Orthodox and the Turk, there is still greater hatred between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholics, in fact, were officially protected and represented in the former Turkish Empire by France, and protector and protected were at all times ready to join with the Turks against the "Schismatics' i. e. non-papal) Christian population. No wonder, the latter hated the Christian of papal obedience even more than his "infidel" master; no wonder too, that France had an exceptionally strong position in the Turkish Empire.

The mountain district of the Lebanon, however, as already remarked, had an almost exclusively Roman Catholic population, and they on the intervention of France were given (long before the war) a status of practical independence, perfectly safe against any interference from Constantinople. As a consequence the Lebanon prospered exceedingly and after Turkey had lost the war, nothing of the whole Turkish settlement seemed as natural as that the Lebanon should come de jure under that protection of France which de facto it had enjoyed all along. The Lebanese of course welcomed their French liberators enthusiastically, at least at first. And when the French went and took the hinterland, i.e. the Damascus province, and the two further districts to the north, Aleppo (inland) and Latakia (maritime), they still were enthusiasticfor, were they not the favoured province, were they not safe in counting on an accendancy over the whole of this French Syria? So these Maronites (as this Roman Catholic community of the Lebanon is called) reckoned and at first they were not disappointed. But soon came disillusionment. For the French, confronted by a Syria, which, apart from the Lebanon, was overwhelmingly Moslem, soon saw the necessity of slowing down their pro-Christian pace. They at first tried to make each of the four provinces entirely independent of each other and to be pro-Moslem in three and pro-Christian in one. The scheme of course did not work and eventually the four provinces were "federated" into one whole, presided over by one French Governor General, with merely subordinate executives and legislatures in the four formerly "sovereign" districts. And the policy of this federated Syria of course had to be frankly pro-Moslem. But if thereby the Lebanese sympathies were necessarily alienated, it by no means followed that those of the Arabs were thereby won.

The French, as is usual with them in all their colonial dependencies, unloaded on Syria an absurdly swollen French bureaucracy, which helped to keep down unemployment in France certainly, but was hardly calculated to enhance the political freedom of the Syrians. Economically the French dominion proved even more disastrous: the Syrian market became a close preserve for French industry and commerce, and a sinister manipulation of the currency saddled the country with a depreciated Syrian franc. Technically, of course, Syria was a sovereign Arab State with merely a League of Nations' mandate given to France, in order to help the infant country to stand on its own legs; practically, the French proceeded to make themselves as much at home there, as they had done, say, in Tunis or Morocco. And note, that the terms of the mandate have never been published yet! No wonder, the Syrian crown sits uneasily on the French brow; no wonder that the universal & ul body of landlords, ever jealous of their interests

revulsion of feeling of the Syrians against the French finds vent in bloody rebellions such as the one which is being put down just now. Alas, one feels that it is neither the first nor will remain the last of the series!

So far, so bad. But with all these facts staring one in the face, it would really be laughable, were it not so tragic, to contemplate the colossal audacity of French propaganda, which tries to exhibit France abroad as the one and only true friend of Islam. Whenever there is any acute tension between England and France, France is sure to appeal to Moslems who know British but ignore French rule, to compare France's angelic friendship for Moslems with their satanic oppression under Albion's perfidious rule-supremely confident, as she is, that it is a far cry from Morocco to India, and that, if you talk loud enough about the State endowment of a Mosque in Paris, the newspaper readers of the world will have no chance of listening too keenly to reports of massacres in Syria. Two whites, as we know, do not make one black, but it is very needful for us in India to appraise things as they are in fact and not in propaganda, and not to allow ourselves to be carried away with enthusiam for a stick which may seem useful to beat our own dog with, but which in the end may hurt ourselves most. If France is pro-Kemalist to-day, it does not prove that in France Indian Khilafatists have found a new champion.

Still, adversity makes strange bed-fellows; Who would have thought of that doughty Knight, Sir Michael O'Dwyer of Punjab fame, as an ally of Khilafatism? Yet so it is. Our Khilafat friends here shout against the iniquity of a British-Zionist mandate over Palestine and back the Arab delegation from there which tries to arouse English opinion to compassion with the poor zamindars of Palestine. And these Arab friends of theirs, when in England, find their natural—and only -allies in that antisemitic clique, which makes itself vocal in the Morning Post, and their meetings, where fiery denunciation of the wicked Jews, inside or outside of Palestine, is indulged in, finds no more illustrious or enthusiastic patron than the great Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

It's a strange world indeed, my masters; but with however little wisdom it may be ruled—that at least is becoming quite clear, that, if only one gives a sufficiently long rope to blind partizanship and reckless sectarianism, they are sure to end by tying themselves up in a knot—and hanging them selves.

THE KISAN MOVEMENT IN OUDH. —I. THE AGRARIAN DISTURBANCES OF 1921.

IT is an irony of fate that in a province, where soil is abundantly rich and rainfall hardly ever scarce, the peasantry should be so helpless and downtrodden as in Oudh. But the reasons for this disparity of conditions are not far to seek. Taluqadars of Oudh are an organised and power-

and position and for whom the successive rulers of the province have invaribly shown the utmost solicitude and sometimes actual partiality, which more often than not has proved detrimental to the interests of the tenantry. Further the tenancy legislation in Oudh is not only far behind the times, but does not go even, so far as in the sister province of Agra. Unlike his fellow-tenants in the neighbouring province, the tenant in Oudh has got no hereditary or occupancy rights. A few months before he was merely a tenant-at-will, now he has been conceded life tenure, though more in name than in reality. The miserable let of the tenant in Oudh was now and then the subject of serious complaint in the press and on the platform. The question of amending the Oudh Rent Act of 1886 was raised in the Local Legislative Council more than once, but to no purpose. The Government, being busy with other preoccupations, had no time to heed the warning. Meanwhile the oft-repeated demands of the Government on the purse of the Talugadars during the period of the great war and the general rise in the level of the prices, had been adversely reacting on the slender resources of the poor tenant in Oudh. His condition was growing The general upheaval against the desperate. established order of life and the political ferment in the country also affected the peasentry in Oudh in no small measure. Kisan Sabhas were started not only in every tehsil but almost in every village of considerable dimensions, in the various districts of Oudh. People flocked to these Kisan Sabhas in their hundreds and thousands. They were up against the taluqudars and zamindars and demanded that ejectment and nazrana should go for good and that they should be given hereditary rights of tenure. Our non-co-operator friends could not possibly let this tempting opportunity of pushing on their propaganda amongst the masses slip through their fingers, so the programme of swaraj and boycott was also added to the long list of agrarian grievances later on. This resulted in disturbances, looting and various other acts of lawlessness and aggression on the part of tenants against the zamindars and in some places against the traders also. The main area affected was limited to the four districts of Rai Barelli, Partabgarh, Sultanpore and Fyzabad. The disturbances were put down by the Government through the use of ordinary force, though in some places the local authorities, in their zeal for restoring peace and order, went far beyond the requirements of the situation in putting down the populace. When these disturbances had been quelled, so many lives had been lost and the people had undergone a severe test of suffering, then only did the Government wake up to the realities of the situation.

AMENDMENT OF THE OUDH RENT ACT.

The Government of Sir Harcourt Butler, had it widely announced, that in view of the long standing grievances of the tenantry of Oudh, it was prepared now to take up the amendment of he Oudh Rent Act of 1886 at the earliest possible

date. Naturally it was expected that as the matter affected the Kisans most, the Government will ask the tenants to lay their case before it, through their representatives before the draft of the Amendment Bill was taken in hand by the Government. But unfortunately Sir Harcourt Butler set to work by holding private conversations and conferences with the representatives of the Taluqadars and ignored the Kisans. The draft Bill, when it was published, was found to be absolutely unsatisfactory from the point of view of the tenantry. The Government had from the very beginning set its face against conceding hereditary rights of tenure and, while granting life tenancy to the cultivators, had, more than compensated the Taluqadars for this loss by adding to their privileges in matters of Seer rights, acquisition of land, disallowance of subletting by the tenant and by inserting a clause about the ejectment of undesirable tenants. No sooner had the Amendment Bill been introduced in the Legislative Council than the Liberals seriously set to organise and focus the views and demands of the Kisans relating the Bill, inside as well as outside the Council. Dozens of public meetings of the Kisans were held in the various tehsils and villages of the several districts of Oudh, protesting against the objectionable features of the Bill and demanding the concession of hereditary rights. The Lucknew Lib. eral League submitted a memorandum to the Government fully setting forth the views of the Kisans, as ascertained by the League, after due investigation. A deputation of the prominent members of the League waited on the Hon'ble the Finance Member to represent the case in a personal interview. The Liberals in the Council, at the time of the introduction of the Bill, entered an emphatic protest against the objectionable features of the Bill and made out an unanswerable case for the concession of hereditary rights. The Finance Member, in reply to the criticism of the Hon'ble Members of the Council, promised that the views expressed in the Council woul receive due consideration in the Select Committee on the Bill. But when the question of hereditary rights was raised in the Select Committee, the Finance Member on behalf of the Government announced that the Government was unable to make any such concession without the consent of the Taluqadars to whom it was bound by certain pledges against conceding hereditary rights to the tenants. Thereupon the Liberals in a body withdrew from the discussions of the Select Committee as a protest against the attitude of the Local Government. The protest was not altogether vain. Though obdurate on the question of hereditary rights, the officials and the Taluqadars in the Select Committee. had to concede certain important amendments to the Bill. For instance, the clause relating to undesirable tenants was deleted and the heir of a statutory tenant was allowed to continue on the soil till after five years of the death of the tenant, on the same terms. It is to be noted that the

demands of the tenants for hereditary rights was backed up not only by the Liberals, but even some very high-placed officials and trusted advisers of the Government, whose opinions ordinarily carry decisive weight with the Government, advocated the same course. Mr. Hopkins, the then senior member of the Board of Revenue, and Mr. Hailey, the Commissioner of the Fyzabad Division, in their official notes on the question, strongly advised the Government to concede hereditary rights, as in their opinion this was the only remedy to ensure future peace and prosperity of the province. But the Government of Sir Harcourt Butler was deaf to every reason and argument. And no wonder, for out of the three members of Government with whom lay the final decision on the question, two were members of the British Indian Association, the well-known organisation of the Taluqadars of Oudh. Perhaps it is not widely known that Sir Harcourt Butler, after assuming the reins of the high office of Governorship of the United Provinces, allowed himself to be elected an honorary member of the British Indian Association, as a mark of signal confidence in and special favour to the Taluqadars. Though every inch of ground was contested by the Liberals in the Legislative Council during the passage of the Oudh Rent Act Amendment Bill, the Government could carry the measure through with the majority vote of the Taluqadars and the officials. In the concluding part of the debate on the Bill, the Finance Member, discounting the opposition of the Liberals. very complacently remarked that the Government had received definite assurances, through the district authorities, that the tenantry was quite satisfied with life tenure and that the opposition to the measure was not genuine. But hardly had the ink of the Oudh Rent Amendment Act dried in the Statute Book, than the Government was confronted with a revival of the Kisan movement in a slightly different form under the designation of Eka. Had the Finance Member been in touch with tenant life in Oudh, his speech in the Council would have been less complacent and more suber. I shall deal with the Eka movement in the next issue.

KRISHNA PRASAD KAUL.

THE C. P. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. LAST BUDGET SESSION.—III.

THE resolutions which evoked a great deal of discussion have been thus far dealt with. But to give the general reader an accurate idea about the nature of the problems which are sure to come to the surface very shortly (though much is not heard about them in open debate as yet), it is necessary to mention two more topics here, viz. the great discontent which exists as regards the restrictions imposed by the mining rules and the rights of tenants and their relations with the malguzar. The malguzari system itself, under which the malgujar is the proprietor of a village and intercepts nearly 50% of the Land Revenue

from going to the State has been called into question.

UNJUST MINING RULES. The Central Provinces contain minerals of great value. Of these coal, manganese and various kinds of clays, fit for industrial purposes, such as the manufacture of cement, pottery and the like, are at present the most important. Very bitter camplaints are frequently made against the arbitrary way in which the almost plenary discretion vested in the executive officers is often exercised, to the disadvantage, it, is alleged, of Indians who have to secure certificates of approwal or prospecting or mining leases. The charge of making an unfair discrimination against Indians or undue favouritism shown to European concessionaires is very frequently levelled against the executive. Unfortunately the rules under the Indian Mines Act are made by the Government of India, control of minerals being a central subject. In reply to a question in the Council in the August session last year, it was said on behalf of the Local Government that the mining rules were made by the Government of India and they could be amended only by that authority. But the technical plea about the helplessness of the Local Government apart, somebody having an intimate connection with the mining industry must take up the question very soon and bring the law as well as the rules thereunder into closer conformity with the desire of Indians to have an adequate share in the exploitation of the mineral resources of the country. Otherwise a conflict of interests is visibly growing up in a large class of influential people which is bound to lead to collateral political effects of an undesirable character. The Local Governments concerned would do well, on their own initiative, to get the complaints investigated in time by an impartial committee, and suggest such modifications in the mining rules to the Government of India as would allay the discontent which undoubtedly exists. The executive Government seems to be unaware of the seething mass of discontent which exists below the surface in the matter. Complaints are not openly made because, under the unlimited disoretionary powers which Deputy Commissioners at present exercise, everybody who has anything to do with the mining industry (except the European firms and a few favoured Indians) is afraid that he may lose even the few crumbs of right he has, if he gave expression to any complaints publicly. But one feels that there is something unwholesome or unhealthy in the whole atmosphere about the mining industry which may turn out to be one of the most fruitful causes of political discontent.

ABOLITION OF THE MALGUZARI SYSTEM.

As regards the other problem mentioned above, viz. that of the malguzari interests, there are the rumblings of a distant storm already audible. The question reared its head quite incidentally in the debate on a comparatively unimportant resolution which recommended that the settlement of

disputes relating to land in a village abadi, where the malguzar claims the site on which a house is built and the tenant the superstructure, should be made by a standing committee of arbitration. A village abadi corresponds to what is known as gaothan (village site) in the Bombay village. But it seems unnecessary to enter into the merits of the proposal in any detail. Suffice it to state here that the proposal was rejected, the Finance Member suggesting in the course of the debate that the acceptance of the motion implied a change in the existing law; and if that was at all a desirable thing the proper course would be to bring in a bill for effecting the change. But the interesting thing to note is that the proposal came from a member who was himself a malguzar or village proprietor, and it was opposed by other malguzar members of the Council. The incident has been mentioned only to draw attention to the signs of the times and coming events which have already begun to cast their shadows before. This malgujar member thus sounded a note of warning in the ears of his brother malgujars:

"My resolution has upset my malguzar friends in the Council who characterize my attitude as inconsistent with my protest against the abolition of the malguzari system during the budget debate. I may, however, assure them that I do not mean any ill to the malguzar by moving this resolution. I only want that a man should always be liberally disposed. Is it not inconsistent that we have been pressing Government to grant us nothing less than complete Swarajya while the malguzars are not willing even to extend even this small privilege to the tenants? It is surprising that we should expect to advance like America and Japan without being prepared for the least sacrifics. How should the tenant get land to live on under such circumstances? He cannot certainly be born with a piece of land in his mouth. If you are not prepared to give up your self-interest, what can you say if others do the same? ... I should like to invite the particular attention of my malguzar friends to the agitation carried on against their class in the United Provinces and warn them not to carry matters too far.

Now that we are dealing with this question, it will not be considered out of place to anticipate a little and indicate here what was actually proposed during the course of the budget debate on this question. Various suggestions were made with regard to the way in which an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure could be brought about in provincial finance, in view of the normal annual deficit of 48 lakhs in our normal revenue position. On two or three previous occasions the abolition of the malguzari system or expropriation of the malguzar was hinted at indirectly. But the suggestion was put forward directly for the first time only during this session in this way:

"One more phenomenal change which may be suggested is that the present malguzari system in the Central Provinces be now abolished. Some of us who are landlords here may perhaps feel the suggestion as it is against their interests, but it is a question worth while considering. The malguzars in the Central Provinces unnecessarily enjoy 50 per cent. commission on the revenue, involving loss to the State as well as to the actual tillers of the soil. Any settlement means extra payment by the tillers

of the soil, and not by the malguzars. The malguzars are charging this 50 per cent. commission unnecessarily. The question of vested interests can be met by giving-compensation to the malguzars. This will require a lot of money, but the system can be easily adopted on an experimental stage in certain districts, and a loan can be taken for the same."

The bold course suggested here is not of course within the range of practical politics just now, for the malguzari interest holds a strong position in the Council. As the Finance Member said in winding up the general debate on this year's budget:

"I notice another interesting suggestion relating to the acquisition of the malguzari right in the Central Provinces. I gather this is not suggested as a means of immediately meeting our deficit and I dare say that the malguzar members of Council have not yet begun to tremble. But there are some attractive points about the suggestion and they must appeal with special force to a part of our electors, the tenants and the urban population. No one knows what the future may bring forth, and I would advise the malguzars to put their house in order with an eye to the future."

The only important resolution of the session which now remains to be noticed as being of somewhat general interest is the one which deals with the grievances arising out of the rigorous enforcement of the Factory laws in Berar during the last cotton season. In Berar alone, where thereare a large number of factories, the number of prosecutions under the Factory laws rose from an average of 4 to 5 per year to 69 in the last cotton season. The members interested in the question did not contend that the law was faulty or that its administration was undesirable or should be suspended. They recognized that the public conscience had been recently quickened and that public opinion itself demanded proper protection for factory workers. But they contended that a sudden and drastic change in the system of causing harassment administration was when the offences were of a trivial character and that ordinarily mere warnings in cases of technical breaches of the law should suffice. The Home Member, Mr. Joshi, promised to draw the attention of District Magistrates to the discretionery powers vested in them, as regards giving warnings only, where such a course would meet the necessities of the case. But factory owners will do well to note that the law is bound to be administered with increasing rigour as time passes and they should train. up their staff properly in the requirements of the law, so that no appeal for mercy may be necessary. It has to be recognized that in a majority of factories, the management is still in the hands of people who do not know the rudiments of the scientific side of it. Those slovenly habits which have been prevalent till now must be given up—a course which will not subserve only the interests of workers but those; of the capitalists themselves in. the long run.

SITABALDI.

REVIEW.

IMPROVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE.

AGRICULTURAL PROGRESS IN WESTERN INDIA. By G. KEATINGE, C. I. E. (Longmans Green & Co.) pp. 253.

The chief object of the present volume by Mr. Keatinge, late Director of Agriculture in the Bombay Presidency, is to show the progress agriculture has made in the Bombay Presidency and in doing so to analyse the causes that influence the agricultural progress not only in India but also in other countries where similar conditions prevail. The anthor has very ably shown the progress Indian agriculture has made during the past ten years giving various proofs elucidating his argument with a large number of facts and figures obtained as a result of his long experience in the revenue and the agricultural departments.

AGRICULTURE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Not the least interesting part of this book is the one which deals with the progress which agriculture has made in some foreign countries, notably Denmark and Germany.

Denmark.—At present all authorities bear witness to the general prosperity of rural Denmark and the high level of education, intelligence and industry to be found there. It is interesting to study the method adopted to reach the present level of progress in Denmark as it may indicate the possible lines on which India can advance. The lines of development were threefold: (1) fundamental economic reforms, (2) measures creating the machinery for development and (3) technical advance on scientific lines.

- (1) Towards the end of the 19th century a law was passed to bring into existence a large number of small peasant farms. Under this law the commission finds for a sober, industrious and trained farmer a farm of from three to sixteen acres, advances nine-tenths of the purchase money for the land and stock. Repayment is to be made in a hundred years by annual instalments paying an interest of only three per cent. Such farms cannot be subdivided or mortgaged and thus the farmers are protected against the grave evils to which small holdings are usually subject. The improvement of roads and telephone arrangements in rural areas have greatly assisted the progress, while societies for land raclamation, dramage and irrigation which benefit the farmers are encouraged and subsidised by the State.
- (2). The machinery for rural development consists of admirable arrangements for rural, and agricultural admostion and co-operation. Both agricultural schools and co-operative societies are private ventures but receive subsidy from Government. The co-operative organisation is of extreme value to the farmers and embraces a great many activities like the purchase and distribution of seed, manures and implements, live-stock, poultry and bee-keeping and many others.

(3) Technical progress on scientific lines is the third line of advance. Denmark depends on the cow for its wealth and its problems are scientific breeding and feeding of milk cattle. A high level of milk production has been reached by scientific cattle breeding. It may be of interest to note that the agricultural budget of Denmark (with a popula- of 3,000,000) for 1904 was roughly £80,000.

By means of such measures Denmark has achieved a high position amongst the nations of the world in the matter of rural progress.

Germany.—The improvement that has taken place in German agriculture during the last thirty to thirty-five years is very striking. These results were achieved by working on the same lines as in Denmark.

The progress of the beet sugar industry in Germany is an important factor in the agricultural progress of the country. By means of tariff protection and direct bounties a powerful industry has been established, profitable alike to the community and to the Government. One more thing worthy of note is that the cultivation of the land in the best possible manner is looked upon by the German agriculturists as their sarced duty to the Fatherland.

England and America.—The author then traces the progress of agriculture in England, from the 18th century onwards. It is shown how the progress was attained by the various Acts of Parliament along with the introduction of root and fodder crops, iron implements and the improvement of cattle by scientific feeding and breeding.

In the United States of America, agricultural progress is achieved by propaganda-work. Lecturing campaigns, demonstration farms, agricultural exhibitions and similar activities have brought about a great improvement in the agriculture of the country.

Some other Countries.—The progress made by the islands of Hawau, Formosa and Java affords instructive examples of rapid progress secured by the Americans, Japanese and the Dutch respectively in tropical countries. Powerful joint stock companies obtained control of the necessary land, commanded large capital and efficient foreign labour. In each case the sugar industry was taken as the most important line of advance.

In Formosa the Chinese farmers who were unwilling to sell their lands or to grow cane for the factories were forced to sell their cane to the factories and could be punished for making sugar themselves by an Act passed by the Government in 1905. In addition to this large aubsidies were granted to the industry.

In Java again on account of the State interference, the sugar companies are in a position of advantage for securing land and labour for came production, such as no other country enjoys.

It will be noticed that the apparent agricultural progress in these islands is not the result of genuine

advance made by the cultivators but is due to the artificial advantages obtained by State interference for the sake of the capitalists even at the cost of the liberty of the farmers and the labourers. No one who desires the genuine prosperity of the Indian cultivators, would recommended the adoption of any of these methods for agricultural and industrial progress.

AGRICULTURE IN WESTERN INDIA.

The author then deals with the indications of progress in agriculture in Western India. We agree with the author's general conclusion that "agricultural progress has taken place in Western India but the pace has been slow-slower than it has been elsewhere." But some of his arguments as indications of agricultural progress are not convincing. For when the author gives the increased import of gold in the Bombay Presidency as a sign of agricultural progress we cannot agree. It is difficult to know how much of this gold actually goes to the cultivators. We believe it is mostly absorbed in towns. Again the capacity of the rural population to withstand the effects of a recent famine cannot be wholly attributed to the agricultural progress but to the employment which the people got during war time in military and other construction works as well as in textile and other industries at very high rates of wages.

The rise in the price of food grains is not advantageous to the cultivators of the Presidency as a whole, for they have to import even in a normal year about 500,000 tons of grain from other parts of India. The increase in the imports of articles of luxury like tea, sugar, liquor, &c., does not necessarily prove the spending capacity of the rural population, for we know that most of these luxuries are only to be found in large industrial towns and their suburbs.

Holdings.—The subject of holdings with their subdivisions and fragmentations has been very ably treated by the author and the information given in the appendix enhances the value of this chapter. The author had paid a great deal of attention to this subject while he was in India and he has already drafted a permissive bill intended to stop the evil effects of subdivisions and fragmentations in the Bombay Presidency. The custom of fragmentation, together with the Hindu law of inheritance, has resulted in (1:) making the holding very small and (2) in breaking up the individual holding into a large number of plots. . The numerous evil effects of such excessive subdivisions have been clearly shown. It is also shown that this state of things is not peculiar to India; alone, but occurs in France, Switzerland, Japan; and parts of Germany. the study of the remedial measures adopted in most of these countries, it would not be difficult to suggest such remedies as would suit Indian conditions and the Hindu sentiment. The proposed draft bill of the anothor given in appendix III, which is the outcome of the author's long experience

and critical study of the problem, certainly deserves serious consideration at the hands of all those who wish to see the agricultural industry carried on on an economic basis.

Irrigation farming.—The author then deals with the special case of irrigation farming. It is shown that from 1868 large irrigation works have been constructed from time to time to supply water to the east Deccan where the rainfall is scanty and ill-distributed. The present area irrigated from such canals which amounts to 200,000 acres is capable of being increased several times. It is shown that the capital outlay involved in the construction of these large irrigation works is heavy. and interest paid on the capital outlay in the case of large irrigation works is very low, varying from 0.13 to 2.2 per cent. Now it must be remembered that whenever such schemes are proposed for sanction, they are always shown to be profitable and capable of yielding a high rate of interest. hence when we find after the completion of the works that they are hardly able to pay their way, we cannot admire the engineering skill and ability which certainly must include an accurate financial estimation of such works. The anthor indicates some of the evil effects irrigation on account of which one-third of area commanded by the Nira Left Bank Canal has been ruined or damaged. Even on the newly opened Godavary canals one-seventh of the area has been ruined by waterlogging and salt efflorescence. avoid these evil effects the author recommends preventive measures before starting a canal. this connection he has mentioned a scheme originally. worked by Mr. Inglis of the Irrigation Department. This is specially intended for starting the sugar industry in the canal areas by the establishment of some joint stock companies or sugar syndicates. This in our opinion is trying to mitigate one evil by introducing another. The establishment of such companies is sure to drive out a large number of cultivators from their farms and turn them into landless labourers. We shall certainly be glad to see the sngar industry established in these areas, but it should beorganised on the co-operative basis and not on the basis of joint stock concerns.

Technique and Equipment.—The next two chapters are devoted to the consideration of technique and equipment of the Indian cultivator. The first briefly deals with the departmental activities and propaganda. The author considers that substancial progress has been made in the direction, but the economic obstacles block the way for any rapid progress. Equipment includes implements and the live-stock required by the farmer. The author thinks that even the poor Indian cultivator cannot do without improved implements if he is to compete with the growers of cotton, sugarcane, oilseeds and wheat in the more advanced countries. The question of dairy industry has been discussed. It is shown how the measures adopted in other

countries have revolutionised the dairy industry in those parts and that there is room for enormous progress in this respect in India. Of course here again the author recommended the establishment of dairy companies well-financed and aided by Government by acquiring lands and other facilities for them. We however think that even the dairy industry can be established on the co-operative basis instead of as a capitalistic concern.

Finally the author considers the possibility of formulating a forward policy to secure agricultural progress at a more rapid rate. A brief review of the past policy has been taken and some of the important points likely to secure a rapid agricultural progress have been summarised.

On the whole the book is an excellent and authoritative review of the agricultural progress in Western India and gives very valuable, useful and practical suggestions for making a more rapid advance in agriculture in the Bombay Presidency. We warmly commend this book to those interested in agriculture and to the industrious and skilful cultivators to whom the book is dedicated by the author.

N. V. KANITKAR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REPRESSION OF NON-BRAHMANS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

-Readers of newspapers in the Deccan are quite familiar with criticisms of Non-Barhmans in certain parts of the Central Division on the ground that they have been committing acts of violence and persecution against their Brahman neighbours. It has also been said that the officials in the districts concerned are siding with the Non-Brahmans and shielding them against the Brahmans if they dare complain to them. What truth there may be in these allegations, it is not my purpose to-day to discuss. But I wish in this letter to show that there are two sides to the shield even in the present case What is the treatment meted out to Non-Brahmans by Brahmans when and where they are in power? The following. story of what is taking place at Yellur in the Kurundwad Junior State supplies a striking illustration of the Brahman attitude towards the Non-Brahman attempts to attain a position befitting their sense of self-respect. This State, as may be known to many readers, is situate in the Southern Maratha country and is ruled by a Chitpawan Barhman Chief who has some claims to be called an educated gentleman. His son, who takes a prominent part in these affairs, is an undergraduate. These facts are necessary to enable the public to appreciate the significance of their doings towards the Non-Brahmans in one of their own villages, who have the misfortune to be the followers of the Satya Shodhak Samai.

About three years back, the Yellur people, mostly Marathas by caste, imbibed the Satya Shodhak principles and decided to dispense with the services of the Brahman priests at their religious ceremonies. A suit for recovery of Daxina from one of the Satya Samajist Marathas was lodged by a Brahman priest and though it was shown that the ceremony having been performed in a Non-Brahmanical form, the suit could not lie according to the law laid down by the Bombay High Court, the Courts of the State with Brahmans presiding over them granted the claim on grounds which are worth notice. The original Court ignored the High Court ruling on the ground that it was not sufficiently old! The Court of First Appeal ruled it out on the ground that the case before him

was in respect of a marriage ceremony while the Bombay High Court's decision related to a funeral beremony. Ultimately the poor Non-Brahman was forced to pay Daxima emoluments to the Brahman whose services he never asked for or utilised.

In April last, a small portion of the backyard of the Brahman Kulkarni of Yellur was alleged to have been burnt. The police have arrested two menone a Maratha and another a Mahomedan, for this alleged offence and placed them before a Brahman Magistrate for trial. The case is still sub judice I am not, therefore, going to enter into a discussion of the merits of the case. But the highest authorities in the State do care for the ordinary principles of fairness or justice. decided that the offence has taken They have place, that it is the result of the Non-Brahman movement and that the whole Non-Brahman population in the village and even those of them who, though living far away from it, have the misfortune to own some property there, deserve to be saddled with a Punitive Police costing about Rs. 2,600 a year. In the Proclamation issued by the District Magistrata of the State, a Brahman of course, on the 25th April and given effect to on the 1st of May, it has been stated in a characteristically vague style that "horrible and troublesome acts" are taking place at Yellur, that there is "possibility of dangerous rioting" in the future, that all this is due to differences arising out of the Non-Brahman movement and that the fire for which the two mentare still to be tried is an instance of this dangerous state of things.

One may ask, is this justice or fairness to the men under trial? In a petty State like Kurundwad Junior, low paid men hold high posts and form a clique in which there is usually unity of purpose and plan. Are we to believe that the District Magistrate who has been imposed on the State by the 'advice' of the Political Agent and who is the highest officer in the State will not influence the Magistracy or even the Chief who is the nominal figurehead of the State by his own decision announced in the proclamation? Is such action justified? Does it leave any possibility of justice being dealt to the accused in the case? Does it not in fact make the trial a sham farce? Another point is that the whole village is going to be punished for a single offence committed by only two of its residents who are still under trial. Does it not show the existence of a deep-seated prejudice? Is it not! likely or intended to overawe the poor Non-Brahmans in the village and dissuade them from following the Satya Shodhak activities which have been damned for good by this District Magistrate?

These are questions for the Brahman leaders to answer. I cannot doubt that the answer of all fair-minded Brahmans must be only one and against the authorities of this Brahman State. What is the chance of justice being done to these Non-Brahmans of Yellur? Is not the State obviously trying to use methods of repression against the Non-Brahmans? And finally, what are the Brahman publicists in the Decoan going to do to see that such repression is not resorted to by a Brahman State against its Non-Brahman subjects for no fault of theirs except that they are trying to stand on a level with the Brahman? —Yours, etc.

B. K. DALVI.

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