

THE Servant of India

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Office: KIBE WADA, BUDHWAR PETH, POONA CITY

VOL. VIII, No. 24 }

POONA—THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1925.

{ INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN 10s.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE Sikh Gurudwaras Bill had as smooth a passage as one could well hope for. There was just a little trouble, a storm in the tea-cup, over the freedom given to the Judicial Commission (to be created under the Bill) to conduct its proceedings in the Punjabi language if it so chooses. The suspicion of the Muhammadan members of the Legislative Council was at once roused that this was the thin end of the wedge to displace Urdu as the language of the courts and on this ground they threatened opposition to the Bill. But on Sir Fazli Hussain explaining to them that the Commission was not a court and that their suspicion was altogether unfounded they extended their hearty support to the Bill. It was a Muhammadan member who pointed out the great significance of the Bill to non-Sikhs: that it introduced adult suffrage for both sexes in an important sphere of public activity and that it was an example to Hindus and Muhammadans to bring their respective religious institutions under proper management and democratic control. Sir Malcolm Hailey put the coping-stone by his well-conceived conciliatory speech and statesmanlike announcement that Akali prisoners in the Punjab and Nabha jails, who were there on account of the Gurudwara movement, would be released on their undertaking to abide by the provisions of the Bill and that all prosecutions which are still pending in that connection would likewise be withdrawn.

Gurudwaras Bill Passed.

Some Akalis are dissatisfied that the release of the prisoners is not unconditional; but we hope that the Siromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, the central organisation of the Akalis, which has given its support to the Bill, will persuade them that in fact if not in form the release is unconditional and that the hatchet may therefore well be buried. Not only the Punjab but the whole country is greatly indebted to Sir Malcolm Hailey for thus solving with courageous statesmanship a problem which had baffled not only his predecessor but many others besides during the last five years.

* * *

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD'S observations on the occasion of the recent Indian debate in the Commons referred to the Commonwealth of India Bill in terms of welcome which cause us special gratification. We attach unusual significance to them because the Executive of the Labour Party has excluded India from the agenda of their ensuing conference. Hitherto Home Rule for India has occupied a prominent place among the planks of the labour party. The agenda paper of the conference has a page and a quarter for Imperial subjects, but India finds no mention. The *New Leader* writes: "It is significant that in this page and a quarter there is not one line about India. One recalls the failure in office to do anything either for self-government or for labour conditions in India. The tendency is evidently to be permanent. Labour indeed seems to be *putting itself right* with the middle-class voter for whom India and the navy are sacred." We should not wonder if the late Prime Minister had this caustic comment in mind when he referred in friendly terms to the Bill. Anyhow Dr. Besant will have his good offices when she knocks at the door of the Labour Party's conference. She has every hope that her Bill will be accepted by the party, so that when the next Labour government sits in Downing Street it may have a chance of being treated as the official Bill for Indian Home Rule.

* * *

WE confess to a feeling of great surprise on reading the news of twenty members of the British Labour Party having voted with the Tory Government for Imperial Preference on Dominion-grown dried fruit, wine and tobacco; especially when we found Mr. Kirkwood and Mr. Dalton among the twenty and heard that Mr. Lansbury and the whole Clyde group had announced later that they would have voted in

Cement for the Steel Frame.

the same sense, had they been present on that occasion. The *New Leader* in a splendid article points out that this strange new Imperialism of Labour members is "an abandonment alike of the ethics and the economics of the Socialist movement. Imperialism is intelligible only from a militarist and capitalist standpoint. It sweeps the Labour Party from its international foundations. Workers of all lands, unite." George Lansbury assures us in his *Labour Weekly* (of the 20th ult.) that "none of us who supported Preference for the British Colonies are going to support Tariffs or any such pernicious nonsense as a cure for social evils. We want the standard of life of the workers maintained at home and abroad, and consequently desire to keep out (not tax) sweated goods." One is afraid that this assurance is as irrational, as the vote for Empire Preference. For how do these friends "keep out" allegedly sweated raisins from Turkey, Greece and California, by lowering the import duty on, say, Indian and Australian raisins? The principle applied to these historic raisins of June 12th was that of Empire, not of sweating: and it is for Empire, not against Sweating, that David Kirkwood and John Thomas voted. The former indeed has openly declared that "to get universal peace we must cement the British Empire." Now we all know, if Mr. Kirkwood does not, what this "Empire cement" means. It necessarily requires a "steel frame" of domination: white over black, Big Business over Labour, Britannia over the whole world.

* * *

WITHOUT going into the desirability of such an ideal, let it be said at once, that it is no longer capable of achievement. England is not in the position, the unique industrial position, which it occupied during the 19th century. It has been such a good industrial teacher of other countries, that it has made itself superfluous. The trouble with England to-day is that, far from being pleased with the excellence of her teaching, she is clamouring for more boys to teach, if the old ones will insist on keeping away from school: failing to realize, that the supply of boys is running short and that the whole world is growing up at a pretty fast rate—industrially and otherwise. To drop the metaphor, England's task is no longer to look for fresh markets abroad, but to re-orientate her whole production from one primarily meant for export to one primarily meant for home consumption. Coal is the most urgent case in point: formerly mostly an export trade, the increasing use of oil-driven machinery is killing it. The only way out of a complete disaster is to set up great English power-generating centres, which will turn the coal into briquettes, oil and electricity for consumption in the country. Similarly Lancashire mills will soon have to stop clothing the nakedness of the Indian and the Chinese, and start covering that of the British underclothed. All these things, however, are impossible, as long as England has to import most of her food from abroad. Hence the prime necessity for England to-day is to resuscitate her agriculture—a fact which experts pronounce to be quite feasible. But once England ceases to be an 80% exporting country, her urge towards "Imperialism" will grow weaker too: in which case her principal instinctive fear of "losing" India will likewise tend to disappear and coincident with that will arise a greater readiness to let India go her own way. All this does not mean an ideal of "Little-Englandism," in the sense of that of an utterly selfish "tight little" and complacently "right little island." On the contrary, England, once rid of her imperialistic designs of domination, would find her true role in world-leadership towards a League of

Nations, the very conception of which is hers. So far from counting less, she would count more than ever in the world: but count less she will undoubtedly, if she tries to rival the material power of the U. S. A. Materially she is already only playing what fiddle American assigns to her: and no Imperial grandiloquence will deceive one on that point Mr. MacDonald truly diagnosed the position when during his spell at Whitehall he tried to create a "League of Nations" policy for England. But apparently the whole British Labour Party has not yet reached his degree of perspicacity and statesmanship. One's only comfort is, that the I. L. P. at least seems to stand firm on sound principles.

* * *

Friends or
Brothers?

AND then, how difficult it is for even well-meaning Europeans to get outside their colour preconceptions! We notice in the *Friend* of the 12th ult. an article by Charles Roden Buxton on "The Rights of the Black Man," in the course of which there occurs the following sentence: "In some form or other the black man must work for the white man, if the white man's standards are not to go down." Being the quite genuine "Anti-Slavery and Aborigines" protector that he is, Mr. C. R. Buxton of course immediately goes on to ask: "Under what conditions shall he work?" But that the black man *must* work for the white man he takes for granted as an axiom. And why? Because otherwise the white man's standards would have to go down. To begin with, of course, there is no cogent connection between the two, unless "work for" is taken in the sense that Lancashire mill operatives "work for" Indians, in order to supply them with dhoties. In that sense we all work for each other, and this international economic dependence is of high value, if only to bring it home to us that we are all "members of each other" But of course "working for" is not taken in that sense of mutuality, but in that of servility—the black serf having to work for his white master: because, forsooth, otherwise the white master could not keep up his style of living. Is there then anything sacrosanct about this 'white' standard of life? And if it were inhuman to live at a lower standard, then why keep black workers chained to it? It certainly comes as a shock to one to find such ideas lurking behind even the attitude of C. R. Buxton and finding expression even in the official English Quaker journal. And then folks say that the doctrine of "the Brotherhood of Man" comes natural to people!

* * *

Welcome to
Karnataka.

Mr. D. V. GUNDAPPA, who for nine years between 1913 and 1921 conducted the "Karnataka" as a biweekly with conspicuous ability, has now revived that journal as a monthly. Being published from Bangalore, it will devote special attention to the problems of Indian States and also to those of the Kanarese speaking country. The first number, published this month, is full of well-written interesting matter, relating to several of our more important States. It also contains a message from the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, who expresses the hope that the Princes and Chiefs and their friends "will remember that at the present moment there is not a single newspaper published in English in the States with pretensions to independence or dignity, and that the active encouragement of a free press and its accessories is one of the most genuine proofs that they can afford of a desire for the welfare and continued progress of their subjects." Whether this hope will be realised or not, the journal has

a claim to support from the *people* of Indian States, as its object is the democratization of the States, so that they may form a congruous part of a democratic India. It is a valuable addition to the few journals that have been pressing for constitutional reform in Indian States, and we sincerely wish it a long and continued existence. Its get up is excellent. (Annual subscription Rs. 4; published from Basavangudi, Bangalore City.)

* * *

WE congratulate the Vidhya Vivah Sahayak Sabha, which owes its existence to the munificence of Sir Ganga Ram, on the excellent work it is doing in promoting widow marriages among high caste Hindus. In 1924 no fewer than 1603 marriages were solemnised under its auspices against 892 and 452 in the two previous years. The majority of them were among Brahmins, Kshatrias and Aroras, while in more than 160 cases no caste distinction was observed. The largest number of marriages naturally took place in the Punjab, which has the headquarters of the Sabha, and the adjoining provinces, but it is pleasing to note that even in Bengal there were as many as 51 and a few in Madras. There is no doubt that the figures for 1925 will be an improvement even upon those of last year: at the end of June last the total number of marriages already stood at 1020. How energetically the Sabha is working may be gathered from the fact that its paid workers visited during last year as many as 443 stations. Besides conducting a journal and issuing leaflets in different vernaculars, it maintains three homes at Lahore, Muttra and Hardwar, under supervision of elderly Hindu matrons, for young widows who desire to be married. It is decidedly the most successful institution of its kind and deserves the support and co-operation of every social reformer.

* * *

WE heartily commend the following observations of a correspondent in *Young India*, who protests against the common habit of referring to Hindus and Muhammadans as two different "races." In his opinion it is only less mischievous than to call them two "nations." We are not sure it is not *more* mischievous. He says: "The fact is that about 90 per cent. of the Musalman Indians (I would call them so, and not Indian Musalmans, as they are wont to call themselves) are of the same 'race' or races as the Hindus,—having been descended from Indian ancestors who embraced Islam in India itself. As for the remaining 10 per cent. of the Musalman Indians though they may have some drops of Turki, Tatar, Arab, Pathan, Persian or Abyssinian blood in their veins, yet it is so much intermixed with native Indian blood by inter-marriage down through the generations, that those 10 per cent. may safely be designated as 99 per cent. native by race. In fact, the Hindus and Musalmans in India no more represent two races than do the Protestants and Catholics in England. It is a question upon which history, ethnology and anthropometry can fairly accurately pronounce. But, above all, whatever the racial constitution of their blood,—the fact cannot be denied that *all* of them (cent. per cent.) were born in India, are living in India, will die in India and be buried in India, like their fathers before them. And India is one country, and therefore they are all of one nation with Hindus. If only they were to regard themselves in Indian politics as Musalman Indians, and not Indians Musalman!"

* * *

THE SILVER LINING.

By the Rt. Hon. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.

LEADERS of various sections of public opinion and organs of the press have flooded the country with comments on the speech of the Secretary of State. They have mostly condemned it as showing no way out of the present difficulty. The condemnation is deserved. One glowing passage in his lordship's pronouncement came near to uttering a word of hope; but to the disappointment of the late Prime Minister and his party, Earl Winterton interpreted it as little more than flummery. The idea of presenting a new constitution or Bill to the present Cabinet may therefore be dismissed as a wild goose chase. In another part of the speech, however, Lord Birkenhead seemed to open the door of hope. The actual words are of course hedged round with cautious qualification. But it is well to remember that a Cabinet meeting had passed the substance of the speech, if not its details. Besides, his lordship could not be positive in declaring the policy of Government because the Executive Council of the Viceroy and the Legislative Assembly had to be consulted, and it could not be assumed that the consultation would be merely formal. If there be anything in this line of thought, then one is justified in regarding that part of the speech which related to the Royal Commission idea as conveying a practical offer to the people of India. Both the Government here and the European community, who influence its policy to a material extent, and the legal advisers of the India Office have continually put forward the plea that under the Act of 1919 the inquiry commission could not be appointed before 1929. It is highly probable that Lord Birkenhead considers this legal opinion wrong. Still, holding the India Office portfolio, he is not likely, out of purely academic interest, to do an exercise in legal exegesis, unless it fitted in with the policy that he intended to adopt. And in fact the considerations urged by him confirm this impression. It is not merely our intense desire or sanguine temperament which inclines us to believe that a Royal Commission is contemplated in the not remote future. What is the condition stipulated by Lord Birkenhead?—That the different parties in India should evince a genuine spirit of co-operation and a desire to make the most of the existing constitution. Everything depends on the meaning which is attached in practice to this requirement. Surely it is madness to expect that at any time a few irreconcilable members would not be found in any house of the legislature in the country. Nor can it be seriously maintained that in any province except Bengal and the Central Provinces the people's representatives as a whole do not now make the most they can of the existing constitution. His lordship's condition thus comes to mean that the legislative councils of these two provinces should agree to appoint ministers and thus fall into line with the rest of India. Will they? It is for the Swarajists, not for others, to answer. Within the next few days they will meet in Calcutta to settle this vital ques-

tion. We pray earnestly that the largest wisdom may guide their counsels and the country's need may be the dominating motive. Prestige, fidelity to shibboleths, resolutions of this or that body are subordinate considerations. Even loyalty to the dead, beautiful and honourable sentiment though it be, comes under this category. We cannot have the ghost of Mr. Das directing us to the end of the fifth act. Some of his last words seemed to indulge in hopes of some real good coming from the present Secretary of State. Anyhow his Faridpur utterance shows him to have relented somewhat towards the Government, and many organs of British opinion both here and in England hailed it as a gesture of distinct friendliness. Respect for the departed leader thus points the same way as the paramount consideration of the welfare of the motherland. Our Swarajist friends cannot continue any longer to neglect the advice of such undoubted friends of our cause as Col. Wedgwood and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. During the Commons' debate the other day the Labour leader repeated what he had told the non-official Indian deputation that waited on him last year—"That the action of the non-co-operators in India at a time when Labour was on the threshold of office was a very tragic disaster, preventing the Labour Government from doing what they would have liked to have done with regard to India." For the moment the speaker seems to have overlooked the limitations of his Government; it could not have done much anyhow. But there can be no doubt that the summary rejection of the budget in 1924, as I pointed out in vain at the time, was an embarrassment to our Labour friends just installed in office. Let us take the Secretary of State at his word and change our tactics accordingly. Pandit Motilal Nehru has it in his power to show in the next day or two how far he appreciates the necessity of making a departure. A seat on the Sken Committee, we are told, has been offered him, and most non-Swarajists and, we hear, some Swarajists as well, wish him to accept it. That would be a clear symbol of a change of heart, such as we ask for in others. We trust too that his practical judgment and sound strategy will teach him to shake off the tyranny of former speeches and statements of policy, which would keep us continually looking backward when we ought to be marching forward. Election pledges are serious things and must not be lightly set aside. But this is no light occasion. They have been kept so far. If to keep them still would mean injury to the interests of the electors, the party must either force a general election at once or break the pledge openly and straightforwardly under a sense of duty and submit to the judgment of the country at the next election. The former course is obviously not open to our friends. If Pandit Nehru, Mr. Sen Gupta, Mr. Kelkar, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Rangaswamy Iyengar and other such leaders agree on a new policy after due deliberation and adopt it, it is inconceivable that their constituencies would for that reason withdraw their confidence and punish them. If this forecast be over-confident, even then the path of duty seems clear. Pursue it and take

the consequences. Eighteen months is a long time, and we cannot go on ploughing the sands of the sea. I voice the sentiment of a considerable section animated by a feeling of comradeship in the service of the country and not without sympathy for the Swarajists' standpoint, when I say that we look to Pandit Motilal Nehru and his trusted colleagues for an act of bold and even startling statesmanship at this critical hour. True I have said this sort of thing all along, but it would be a cheap sneer to fling at me. The truth is that the Secretary of State's pronouncement makes no great change in the situation, but it furnishes sufficient occasion for my moral. So far as wrecking is possible, it has been accomplished. What seemed to sanguine Swarajists the open highway to freedom is now discovered to be a *cul de sac*. Let us not pause to apportion blame, but find the way out first. It is not heroism to persist in proved wrong. The country, not petty party prestige, must reign in our hearts.

MORAL CO-OPERATION.

THE co-operative tradition of Europe assumes that the object of a co-operative society must be economic in a comparatively direct sense, and definitions of the term "co-operation" usually attribute to it a purpose of material gain. There is, however, no authoritative and final definition of the term which we in India are bound to accept without further question, and a tendency is visible in Asiatic co-operation to extend the range of co-operative objects. Although the Young Men's Associations which are commonly found in Japanese villages are not registered under the co-operative Act, they are closely associated in spirit and in membership with the general movement and it appears to be only the rigidity of the Act itself which prevents their inclusion. They aim at such "spiritual" ends as encouraging the members to rise early in the morning, inciting them to perform acts of benevolence towards the old or weak, and organizing them to carry out a work of public utility without direct profit to themselves. The greater laxity of the Co-operative Societies Act of India, which does not specify so exactly as that of Japan the nature and purposes of a registered society, permits the inclusion of "a society which has as its object the promotion of the economic interests of its members in accordance with co-operative principles, or a society established with the object of facilitating the operations of such a society," and various types have been originated by co-operators in this country, in which the economic interest, though existent, is at most indirect. The earliest example appears to be the anti-malaria society of Bengal, in which the members undertake, by following sanitary rules and carrying out sanitary works, to improve their own health and the condition of the neighbourhood. The tendency towards a moral object is, however, so far as the writer knows, more fully developed in the Punjab than in other provinces. A few years ago there were formed a number

of arbitration societies, registered under the Act, in which the members bound themselves to refer all disputes arising between them to arbitrators selected from a panel, and to pay a penalty assessed by the committee of the society, in the event of their failure to observe this rule. These societies, which were to a large extent successful in their purpose, were closed after a short life on the ground of legal defects, and an amended model of bylaws, in which those defects have been avoided, has only recently been approved, and the restoration of the arbitration societies may be expected. In the sphere of education co-operators of the Punjab bind themselves to attend a course of primary education in adult schools, frequently formed by co-operative organizers in villages which cannot easily be reached by the staff of the Education Department. In these schools, however, no penalty is imposed for non-attendance, and every member is expected to appreciate for himself the economic or other value of the education offered to him. The imposition of a penalty is on the other hand permitted by the bylaws of a co-operative society of Compulsory Education, the aim of which is to pledge its (adult) members to send their children to school for at least 4 years or up to the completion of the 4th primary class. Any member who fails to carry out this pledge may be fined by the elected committee of a society, and this provision is intended to be actually enforced. It should be clear to the reader that no penalty is imposed by Government or by a local body in the cases which we are discussing, and no person enters such a society or takes the pledge which is involved, without his own wish and his formal application for membership; there can therefore be no complaint against the enforcement of a rule which each person has made applicable to himself. The number of co-operative adult schools in the Punjab is believed to be about 100 (the Education Department has 2000 such schools) and the number of compulsory education societies more than 50; exact figures are not obtainable before the end of the year. The newest example of moral co-operation is the Better Living Society which may be formed either by the residents of a single village, including all castes, or by a single caste over a group of villages. The members pledge themselves to observe such standards of ceremonial expenditure and to follow such improved social customs in other respects, as may be accepted after discussion in their own general meeting, and their elected committee is empowered under the bylaws to impose a limited penalty for a transgression of the rules laid down by the general meeting. One or two such societies have now been organized and will shortly be registered. The principle is not new: numerous credit societies of the Punjab, especially among small agriculturists in the neighbourhood of Lahore city, have added similar sumptuary rules to their registered bylaws in recent years, and substantial penalties have been imposed in accordance with them. On one occasion a rule restricting expenditure on marriages had been broken by the *zaildar*, a non-official dignitary of the countryside superior

in position to a village headman), and the weaker members of the society declared their intention of imposing the maximum penalty of Rs. 100 upon him, if assured of the Registrar's support in the event of his refusal to pay. On receiving this assurance they imposed the penalty, which was duly paid, to the great edification and amusement of the surrounding villages. Another society fined a member for issuing invitations to a wedding on gilt-edged paper, which was considered to be an act of ostentation unsuitable to his status. Trivial as these instances may appear, the principle found favour in all districts, and the increasing demand for model bylaws upon the subject led to the origination of the special Better Living Societies.

An association for education or for moral improvement tends obviously to advance the economic interests of its members, and no technical objection can be raised to its registration under the Co-operative Societies Act. It seems not unlikely that the eminent need for creating a public opinion in India on social and ethical subjects may result in a large growth of "moral" societies, and may permanently affect the definition of co-operation throughout the world, and that India may be found, in this as in other respects, to have valuable elements of her own to contribute to the common stock of thought.

One word of warning in conclusion: the danger of hurrying too fast must be carefully avoided. A moral society which should lay down rules accepted by the members in principle, but not carried out in practice, will exercise a positively harmful influence, and will afford to the cynic an opportunity for his scoffing. It is far more important to carry out a simple rule in practice than to prescribe a schedule of trenchant rules which human nature will evade. It is consequently necessary that the organization of moral societies should lie in the hands of well-educated, broad-minded, and above all cautious men, who will not be misled by a temporary enthusiasm, but will make sure of their ground at every step before they advance further.

C. F. STRICKLAND.

REVIEWS.

A MEGALOMANIAC.

INDIA AS I KNEW IT. By SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER.
(Constable & Co., London.) 1925. 9 x 6. pp. 464
with two maps. 18s. net.

THIS book is no cure for insomnia or low spirits. Where it does not irritate, it either saddens or perplexes. There is not a dull page in it nor a pleasant or edifying one. You cannot put it down, but are not happy you took it up. You are in the grip of a megalomaniac and feel there is no escape. He has a grievance and picturesque eloquence. Bad luck!

The Indian politician, Lord Chelmsford's Government, the India Office with Montagu in it—these were the three curses of Sir Michael's career. But for them what could he not have made of the Indian Empire? Even now, if only the reforms were reversed, special tribunals became the normal agents

of justice, and His Majesty gave up his prerogative of amnesty, there is a chance—the Dominion is not lost, no, not yet!

In the calm of retirement, reviewing a long life of rank and power, reckoning up success and failure, weighing good and bad in the scale of final value, any other writer would have dwelt in part at least on the higher aspects of his experience, its pathos and its romance, and given us reflections, profound and profitable, on human nature and its play on the work of administration. Sir Michael's mind is peculiar. It is at home amid plots and secret deeds, amid prosecutions and coercive processes. He counts up his victims and sighs for more. Swift and sharp is his motto. Look at his chapter-headings. XI to XVIII consecutively are: Pan-Islamic Movement and Mohammedan Conspiracies; Hindu and Sikh Conspiracies: The Sikh-Ghadr Conspiracy; Agrarian risings in South-west Punjab; the War effort of the Punjab; Punjab Internal administration (1913-19); the weakening of the British Services under the reforms; the Punjab Rebellion of 1919; Thrown to the wolves. No wonder they make grim reading.

When anger and hate fill the heart, all power of discrimination is lost: truth and untruth get inextricably mixed. The simplest fact assumes in the narration quite sinister proportions. When the Government of India Bill of 1919 was before the Joint Committee of Parliament, the Congress party, the Home Rule party and the Moderate party all sent representatives to give evidence. Mr. Tilak had gone already for his case against Sir Valentine Chirol. There was a slight difficulty in his being allowed to appear as witness. He and his confreres were surely no great favourites at the India Office, for they openly opposed the Bill. Now read this passage: "Mr. Tilak and his satellites, with numbers of other extreme politicians, hastened to England, had free access to the India Office, and through their influence there and with certain supporters in the Labour Party did much to give the Bill a shape favourable to their pretensions. They had organization, money and influence at their back, and they were masters in the arts of political intrigue." Just another instance of the gross perversion of truth to which malice gives rise. In 1908 Sir Michael, then a Political Officer in Hyderabad, Deccan, visited England and saw Lord Morley once. Next year he was at home again, but the Secretary of State was unable for some reason to give him an interview. Was this sufficient to occasion the following outburst?

"Perhaps I may say here, quite apart from my own case, that the aloofness of the India Office from officers home on leave has hitherto been one of the causes of the surprising ignorance which Secretaries and Under-Secretaries of State often display in Indian affairs. Their doors are usually open to any Indian politician, however extreme in his views and even though he may have been convicted of serious political offences or have otherwise shown himself to be untrustworthy. But they are in

practice barred to their own trusted and experienced officials. It is true that there is a general invitation to civil officials on leave to call at the India Office. But the reception they meet with there, if they are received at all by any one in authority, is generally such as to discourage further visits."

Perhaps some big officials expect garlands and loyal addresses and profound salaams even after leaving India. It is we Indians that before Mr. Montagu's time had to walk tremblingly in the corridors of the India Office as though we were peasants who had strayed by mistake into the king's sacred presence. But then we get the same treatment in our own country when we have to visit the sahibs; so anyhow we are shocked by no contrast. The Cromwell of the Punjab, however, would brook no slight from any one. Once in 1921 Mr. Lloyd George was not available to him, being engaged on fateful talks with Sinn Fein leaders. He did not say, as a good Hindu would have done: "My luck! I should have known this when that widow crossed my path." But he sat down and, for the benefit of the offending Prime Minister, committed to paper his gubernatorial thoughts.

"In writing to the Private Secretary to express my disappointment I could not help saying that, had I been, like Michael Collins, a successful organiser of rebellion against the British Government, the doors of Downing Street would have flown open before me, but as I had come merely to plead for men who had suffered for assisting me in crushing a rebellion against the British Government, Downing Street was a closed door to me! I hope the shaft struck home."

The narrative of administration given by the author is so provocative that the temptation is great to challenge it at many points. But we must forbear. Our readers will not be thankful to be reminded of the nightmare years of Sir Michael's rule. Sufficient has been said to indicate the spirit and temper in which this book is written and incidentally the spirit and temper of the doings it records. They say a slave nation produces the worst tyrants; the saying, however, does not mitigate our sense of the irony that an Irishman manifested fierce hatred of political agitators and gloried in curtailing their liberties; nay, he could not bear the idea of any clemency being shown by others to his victims. "I am convinced," he writes, "that the arbitrary interference for reasons of political expediency with the decisions of the courts, which has been so common since Mr. Montagu's general amnesty of 'political' criminals in 1919, has done more to lower the credit of our administration, dishearten the courts, the magistracy and the police, excite the contempt for and continued defiance of the law by those who, though pardoned, have usually remained impenitent, and generally embolden the forces of disorder, than any other administrative measure."

Despite the fact that the writer had a full diary and copious official documents, the volume before us does not contain any first class revelations or

disclosures. Two facts, not generally known, but of interest to students of contemporary affairs, we shall present to our readers out of these pages. One relates to Mr. Lionel Curtis. Having, in collaboration with certain members of the reforms committee of the India Office, evolved the plan of diarchy, he came to India with an informal mission to "sound the authorities" as to its acceptance, and it was when he had failed to impress the provincial authorities that he sought to interest the politicians by a series of "Open Letters to the People of India." The other fact will appear from the following quotation: "The toleration of evil for the sake of a so-called political experiment—must have been galling to many Heads of Provinces, and it is no longer a secret that after three years' painful experience, it was the threat of resignation by two Governors that compelled Lord Reading's Government to enforce the law in 1922 against the arch-criminal Gandhi. One wishes in the interests of the Indian masses that they had forced an earlier decision. But all honour to them for their British insistence on the law being enforced without respect of persons." Who were the two Governors?

V. S. SRINIVASAN.

A GREAT SOUTH AFRICAN.

LORD DE VILLIERS AND HIS TIMES: SOUTH AFRICA, 1842-1914. By E. WALKER. (Constable, London) 1925. 8½ × 5½. pp. 523. 25s.

"TO make progress in one direction is to give things up in another. Such is life and there is no help for it." John de Villiers found the truth of Roger's aphorism when seeking education in Europe and so he found it all his life. Coming of an old French Cape family, de Villiers read first theology and tried several Dutch and German Universities before changing his subject to law and settling down to study in London. On his return to South Africa he was confronted with a succession of choices which continued almost to the end of his life. He entered politics to become a member of Molteno's cabinet, and by him was appointed Chief Justice of Cape Colony at an early age. From that day onwards he frequently contemplated a return to politics; he was three times asked to stand for the Presidency of the Orange Free State, once for that of the Transvaal against Kruger, once he was asked by Rhodes to take his place in 1883 as Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and he finally died while Acting Governor-General of the Union in 1914. But he never did return and remained Chief Justice to the end.

His real work was that of counsellor, giving advice which could rarely be lightly neglected to all comers, English and Dutch, official and colonial. He thus had a footing in both camps, and was able to cast his bread upon many waters, seeing some of it sink into the green depths of prejudice and folly, and some return again after many days.

The dream of his life was South African Union, a dream which he lived to see fulfilled in 1910 in a way he hardly expected after the two bitter

disappointments of Jameson's Raid and the Boer War. But his greatest dream, the Union of races, of African and European, he never lived to see; all he could do was to maintain a constantly liberal attitude and occasionally startle the country by his legal judgments, as in the Sigcan case. In the controversy with Kruger he was well aware that the fault was not all on one side and an illuminating sidelight on racial relations was provided by the prejudiced feelings of the Uitlanders of Johannesburg towards the rural Boers of the Transvaal.

As a judge de Villiers developed the austerity so often associated with the bench. He united seriousness and a sense of fairness, which was both needed and never better used than in inter-racial questions affecting the Bushmen. In the Upington libel cases of 1879 he gave judgments against the government in the teeth of a hostile public opinion and officially agreed with Froude that "Trial by Jury is the palladium of English liberty. Trial by Jury in South Africa acts sometimes as an arrangement by which a white man who has forgotten himself in dealing with a black man may be relieved of the consequences." (p. 142). To the old argument that the that release of prisoners would "cause unrest" he replied the business of his court was to administer justice and "not to preserve the peace of the country." He was the South African at his best, freed from the Imperialist prejudices of London and high finance, and the conservatism and bigotries of the Transvaal back veldter, a just man who loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

Prof. Walker draws a pleasing picture of his domestic life—his fruit growing, his bee-keeping, and his chess, his not always successful attempts at fishing, the whole harmonised by his long and happy partnership with his wife. His wit, though not frequent, was sharp, and when united with his judicial austerity occasionally devastating. When about to sentence a frequent offender to a year's imprisonment, de Villiers was once asked to substitute a fine, "He can pay a fine, can he? How much can he pay?" said the Chief, glaring. Anxious consultation at the back of the court resulted in the announcement that £50 would be forthcoming. "Very good" replied de Villiers "the sentence of the Court will be a year's imprisonment and a fine of £50."

Much patient labour has been expended on this book; the scope is so widened as to form a history of modern South Africa from the standpoint of de Villiers. The result has been to increase its value for students but to decrease it for the general reader, who when he is not perplexed by the forbidding technique of the law, is liable to get lost in the intricate tangles of imperial diplomacy and South African politics. If we might venture a suggestion to Prof. Walker it would be that to separate the history from the biography and in his next work give us a frank and general history of modern South Africa.

T. G. P. SPEAR.

LIBERALISM.

THE FAITH OF A LIBERAL. By NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.) 1924. pp. 369 \$ 2. 50.

IN this volume, which consists mostly of eloquent and stimulating discourses delivered on special occasions, Dr. Butler gives us an impressive exposition of his political creed and at the same time he indicates certain dangers which threaten the successful working of representative democracy in the United States, viz., the formation of parties on group or sectional interests, inordinate passion for law-making, and the tendency on the part of the majority to encroach, under the forms of law, on the rights and liberties of the individual citizen. The book amply repays study.

If it is not rash to join issue with the distinguished President of the Columbia University, we should venture to point out that he does serious injustice to the aims and aspirations of socialism. The doctrine of socialism, we are told, though it has an attractive sound, rests upon a series of historical, economical and psychological fallacies. There is about it no element or characteristic of progress. Its principles are reactionary in the extreme, and its programme would, if carried out, in due time bring to an end what we like to call our Western Civilization. This sweeping condemnation is certainly misleading and unfair. "It is only fifty years ago," says the learned doctor, "that all liberal men were reading and eagerly applauding the precious little tract of John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*. Who reads it to-day, or who, reading, attends to its searching exposition of liberal doctrine?" It is pertinent to remind ourselves that the author of the 'searching exposition of liberal doctrine' steadily drifted, in his later years, towards socialism. Not to speak of the fact that Mill advocated state education, nationalization of land, and other measures tending to the equalization of wealth, we have his own express admission of his socialist leanings in a well known passage in the *Autobiography* :—

"Our idea of ultimate improvement went far beyond Democracy, and would class us decidedly under the general designation of Socialists. While we repudiated with the greatest energy that tyranny of society over the individual which most Socialistic systems are supposed to involve, we yet looked forward to a time when society will no longer be divided into the idle and the industrious; when the rule that they who do not work shall not eat, will be applied not to paupers only, but impartially to all; when the division of the produce of labour, instead of depending, as in so great a degree it now does, on the accident of birth, will be made by concert on an acknowledged principle of justice; and when it will no longer either be, or be thought to be, impossible for human beings to exert themselves strenuously in procuring benefits which are not to be exclusively their own, but to be shared with the Society they belong to."

We shall add one further remark. For those who have learnt the lesson of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that, under modern conditions, the progress of democracy is inevitable, and that, whatever its critics may say, it is on the whole a beneficent

movement. As Dr. Butler says, every other form for the government and guidance of human association has been tried and found wanting. To return to autocracies or to conscious oligarchies would be quite impossible. Now it can easily be shown that socialism is intimately connected with democracy. According to its prophets, e. g., Mazzini, democracy rests upon two fundamental principles, the recognition of the supreme value of personality and the further recognition that personality can be realized in and through a common life in which all are sharers. Socialism attempts to make this democratic idea *real* by embodying it in the economic relations between man and man, for democracy remains an illusion so long as a large section of any community is dominated in the economic sphere by another. It is the merit of Socialists that they have shown once for all that political freedom, without economic freedom, is a dubious blessing.

N. NARASIMHA MURTI.

SHORT NOTICES.

THE STORY OF SWAMI RAM TIRATH. By PURAN SINGH (Ganesh and Co., Madras,) 1924. 9½ × 5½. pp. 295. Rs. 3.

TIRATH RAM was born of poor parentage in the district of Gujranwala (Punjab) in 1873. The years of struggle through which he had to pass as a student proved years of training also for the kind of life he chose for himself. A distinguished M. A. of the Punjab University, he served as professor of mathematics in the Mission College, Lahore, for a few years. But his heart was not there. The life and teachings of Swami Vivekanda, which had already taken hold of him, urged him to take the monastic robes and seek pleasure in preaching Vedantism and living in the woods. Filled with these ambitions, Ram Tirath bids farewell to his wife, children and friends, when only twenty seven years old, puts on the Sanyasi's garb, visits Japan and America, and in the latter country carries on a strong propaganda for the eradication of the caste system which prevails in India. But we have it from the author himself that Swamiji 'did not lay so much emphasis on the eradication of caste in India before going to America or even after his return.' Perhaps his love for solitude was greater than that of ridding India of the curse of caste. Soon after adopting the fashion of the Sadhus, the once professor got disgusted with it and began to admire the life of a married man. He also discovered what abuses the ochre garb led to in this superstitious land, how it was an easy passport for cheap notoriety, and if his life had not been cut short suddenly, he had resolved "to tear his robes into pieces in a full assembly in public and announce that the orange robe of the Sanyasi is no more the vehicle of freedom." We wonder why the Swami needed this first hand experience to discover what is common enough knowledge in India. One only expects eccentricities in a man of his type. While he felt nothing wrong in going to meet the President of the United States at an out of the way railway station in America, he can-

celled his voyage in the steamer which was bringing Lord Curzon to India, as in his opinion "two kings" could not travel together. On problems of national importance—political, social and economic—the Swamiji took the line that he would have us boycott the Government, all machinery, the Congress and conferences and live simply and quietly in villages, each engaged in some kind of work. He composed verses, the English renderings of some of which are published in the book. They show that the Swami was a poet of no mean order and if he had lived longer, he might have engaged in more useful work.

The book contains no lessons for a student of critical mind. The author had no prolonged intimate relations with the object of his adoration and is therefore unable to explain his hero's inconsistencies, though he records them. But the reader will concede that he has well used the material at his disposal.

S. P. A. DUBE.

CITIZENSHIP. by W. H. HADOW. (Clarendon Press, Oxford.) 1923. 7½ × 4½. pp. 240, with bibliography and index. 6s.

AN excellent treatise for students of all ages. Though a collection of lectures, the volume is a model of arrangement and exposition. No statement of any consequence is made without adequate authority, while the amount of historical citations and poetical embellishments is surprisingly large. Pedagogues of a former generation will learn with some disquiet that education is not really a "drawing-out" process. The old-fashioned derivation, according to Professor Hadow, is a triple sin—a false quantity, a grammatical blunder, and a total ignorance of Latin usage. "One might as well talk about the logical processes of Inducation and Deducation or about a *reducatio ad absurdum*. The first meaning of *educere* is the fact of birth: then by a natural extension it comes to mean the rearing of the child, especially by the mother." But the real original of our word is *educare* "which begins where *educere* leaves off, and is used primarily of the nurse who rears the child by providing it with suitable food and exercise. Thence it proceeds from physical nurture to mental and spiritual." On pages 201-4 a suggestion is made of great promise for the establishment in every city of the Empire of an institution for the study and investigation of civic problems. Barnett House, Oxford, is a model of what such an institution should be.

V. S. S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AGE OF CONSENT.

TO THE EDITOR THE SERVANT OF INDIA,

SIR,—May I thank you for your appreciative reference to my letter and add a few more lines to the discussion on the Age of Consent Bill? When we are agreed in what is essential, namely, that the age of consent as against a husband

should be raised to fourteen, you may perhaps think it ungracious on my part to differ in any way from your arguments. But it is, I think, necessary that those who press for reform, as we both do, should be quite clear about the facts and their methods of arguing the case.

I certainly did not in any way mean to suggest that the age should not be raised. It must be, of course. But what I want to point out is that it is no use (a) fighting the Government of India on wrong lines, or (b) ignoring the unfortunate but real fact that laws to be useful must be enforced. The particular instance quoted by you, instead of supporting our case, weakened it. And I must say I am not impressed by your argument that a very large percentage of normal people (? husbands) will respect a law, even when they know that it won't be enforced. All experience is the other way. See America, for instance, in regard to drink. Where, however, I agree with you is that parents will by such legislation be enabled—to some extent, at least—to resist importunities otherwise irresistible. This will be so much to the good, but it does not go far enough. What has to be done is to make the law enforceable and see that it is enforced. Ultimately, the only effective way of doing this is by educating public opinion, and that means constant iteration and repetition.

Further, you have, I think, misunderstood my point when I wrote that it is no use confusing the issue by proposing a different age for unmarried girls. I do not at present wish to discuss such a proposition in the abstract. But it seems to me that in actual conditions the first and necessary thing is to secure that all girls should be preserved from sexual relations before fourteen at earliest. Now the arguments against such intercourse before that age are based on plain, self-evident, physical facts. The case is really irresistible, except in quarters where thought of any kind is out of fashion. But the moment that you introduce a further issue by suggesting a later age for unmarried girls, you inevitably admit uncertainties, doubts and some not wholly unreasonable opposition. You at once get away from hard fact, and stray among considerations of a more imponderable kind. You lose sight of realities; you admit sentimentalities instead. Thus you yourself, for instance, in your comments show that you assume the social consequences to an unmarried girl of having sexual relations at, let us say, the age of fifteen, to be invariably worse than for a married girl of the same age. Yet, if you use the word "social" correctly in its full implication—and not in the merely trivial sense of social recognition by a small circle or coterie—you are manifestly inexact in making any such general assumption. You no doubt remember Aristotle's distinction between "how it ought to be" and "how it actually is." Perhaps the conditions *ought* to be worse for the unmarried girl; sometimes they are. But actually they often are better. It all depends upon circumstances, and among the circumstances that count are caste or class, character, wealth and education. Even in India in many, in very many cases, you will—if you face facts truly and clearly—admit that the social condition of a dancing girl, for instance, may be more conducive to her happiness than that of countless married drudges or widows in poor or uneducated households. In England also, where our matrimonial laws are absurdly anomalous and irrational, it is incontestable that a *demimonde's* condition is in four out of five cases happier than that of the married or chaste unmarried woman of the same class from which she sprang. Do not misunderstand me. I am not arguing on what ought to be, or pleading on one side or another. But I do wish to point out that, in the interest of the greater number, any doubtful propositions should be avoided and that issues should not be confused at this stage. I should like to see every effort concentrated on having the age of consent raised to the necessary minimum in all cases, and the law made effective when altered.

Yours &c.

OTTO ROTHFELD.

CURRENCY AND EXCHANGE.

TO THE EDITOR, THE SERVANT OF INDIA,

Sir,—Allow me to correct the misleading impression sought to be created by an amazingly unfair review of my book on Indian Currency and Exchange in your issue of the 25th June. Differences of opinion are inevitable on such complicated subjects as currency matters; passion and prejudice sometimes play quite a large part in the expression of views on controversial topics; but no reviewer is justified in overstepping the bounds of legitimate criticism by ascribing to others views which they do not hold, by perverting their statements in order to make them a nice target for his offensive attack, and by indulging in vague general charges without condescending to details.

Your reviewer begins by complaining that the treatment is hurried and that there is "neither sufficiency of information nor sufficiency of illumination." I would have been grateful to him if he had pointed out the portions in which it lacked in "sufficiency of information" or "sufficiency of illumination." As it is, he assigns no reason for this sweeping charge beyond the suggestion that such a complicated subject should not have been treated "within the small compass of 180 pages," forgetting the fact that if the author had cared to exploit the students for whom it is primarily meant, it could have easily exceeded the size of Mr. Ambedkar's own "Problem of the Rupee."

Mr. Ambedkar then points out what he believes to be "contradictions" in my treatment of the subject. He charges me with having said in one place that "gold cannot circulate in India because India is poor" and in another place that "gold does not circulate in India because there are rupees." A reference to the book will show that I have made no sweeping statements of this kind, for I believe with Marshall that in Economics "all short statements are wrong." Far from saying that "gold does not circulate in India because India is poor," I have said expressly that "one cannot rely absolutely on the argument based upon the poverty of the people of India" (Page 129). Nor have I said anywhere that "gold does not circulate in India because there are rupees." All that I have said is that "no fair inference as to the public preference for gold can be safely drawn from the small amount of gold in circulation" in the period under discussion, because "the rupee in India was not freely convertible into gold during the period on which Mr. Keynes relied for his figures" (page 129). The only conclusion that I have drawn on the point is that "the public preference for one coin to the other can be conclusively proved only when the public is free to convert one into the other" (page 129). My opposition to the currency is based on the ground that "the proposal appears to be most inopportune at the present time" and that "there is no adequate reason why poor nations should allow a large part of their resources to be spent in providing them with so costly a medium of exchange as a gold currency, if something cheaper can serve all the purposes that it would do" (page 173). Let the readers now judge whether there is any inconsistency in all this.

Your reviewer detects inconsistency in my belief in the quantity theory of money and my conclusion that "the rise of the rupee after 1893 was not altogether due to the limitation of its issue." Evidently, he has not read the book through. On page 13 of the book, immediately after the discussion on the theory of money, I have warned the reader against the "common fallacy of mixing up the two different meanings of the phrase" "the value of the rupee," and emphasised the fact that "the quantity theory of money on which Sir David Barbour relies neither proves nor disproves this supposed necessary connection between the exchange value of the rupee in terms of gold and its internal purchasing power in terms of commodities," and that "the quantity theory of money deals with the latter and has nothing to say about the former." Mr. Ambedkar has obviously not profited by this warning, for while there was a rise in rupee-sterling exchange in 1896 and 1897, there was a heavy depreciation in the purchasing power of the rupee during these years. (Vide page 120). The causes

of this rise in exchange (and not a rise in the purchasing power of the rupee in terms of commodities) have been discussed by me in chapter X (pages 120-1), where I have attempted to prove that "in spite of the closing of the mints, there was very little of relative contraction of the currency" and quoted the Fowler Commission in support of my contention that "there were other important causes at work that all tended to raise exchange" (page 121). On page 123 I have further stated that the course of events in subsequent years shook the confidence of even officials in the theory and that Sir Lionel Abraham went to the length of saying that "the connection between the volume of token coinage and the stability of exchange is very remote." Least there be a misconception regarding my views on the subject, I have taken the trouble to emphasise at this stage the conclusion of the chapter on Foreign Exchanges that the normal rate of exchange "depends not on the price-level in any one country but on relative price-levels, measured in prices not of all commodities but of only those commodities which enter into international trade" (page 123), and that "deviations from the normal are possible on many grounds, one of the most important being the balance of accounts" (page 125).

Mr. Ambedkar sees another instance of inconsistency in my chapter on Foreign Exchanges. His indictment runs as follows: "There he contrasts the two theories—namely, the theory of Purchasing Power Parity and the theory of the Balance of Trade—and gives his own opinion in favour of the former as being the true theory. Yet, throughout the book he argues on this basis of the wrong theory, namely, the balance of Trade." Each of these statements is untrue. I have not rejected the theory of Balance of Accounts (not Trade as Mr. Ambedkar puts it) *in toto*. I have argued that the theory of Purchasing Power Parity explains the causes governing the variations in the normal rate of exchange and that the theory of Balance of Accounts explains the deviations from the normal rate. In order to illustrate my point clearly, I have reproduced a diagram (page 44) given by Miss E. C. Van Dorp in an article in the *Economic Journal*. In the very same chapter and immediately after the discussion on the Purchasing Power Parity, I have explained at length how the state of mutual indebtedness arises (pages 48-50). And far from arguing "throughout the book on the basis" of the Balance of Trade theory only, I have almost everywhere referred to the connection between exchange and relative price-levels. For instance, on page 78 I have mentioned among the causes of the failure of the 2s. gold rate in 1920 the fact that "the normal parity of Exchange as determined by Prof. Cassel's formulae was roughly only 1s. 4d. gold in March 1920, the purchasing power of both the Indian rupee and the American dollar having fallen to a trifle less than half of what it was in 1913-14." Again on page 83 I have reproduced a table compiled by Mr. Findley Shirras to show the connection between the course of the rupee-sterling exchange, and the relative price levels in India and the United Kingdom from January 1920 to March 1923. And in noticing the course of exchange during the year 1923-4, I have said on page 84 that "the relative price levels in India and England did not alter very much" and then given the index number of prices in Bombay and the United Kingdom month by month. I wonder how all this escaped Mr. Ambedkar's attention.

The last two instances of alleged inconsistency may be disposed of briefly. There is no inconsistency between my attitude towards the silver standard and my admission that one of the virtues which a standard of value should possess is stability for deferred payments, for the simple reason that my contention is that an automatic silver standard would be far more stable than the present currency system of India. In chapter xi (page 119) I have shown that "prices fluctuated far more in England under the gold standard than in Shanghai under the silver standard, and that the general purchasing power of gold was far more unstable than that of silver in England, India or Shanghai." In chapter xii I have further shown that "the period 1873-93 was one of comparatively steady price-level in India," and that "the annual net

additions to currency before the closing of the mints was only two crores on an average, an amount just enough to make-up the loss by wastage" (page 152.) Mr. Ambedkar is free to differ from this view, but he cannot accuse one who holds this opinion of inconsistency when he says that "there is nothing absurd" in the idea of reverting "back to the old silver standard, free and automatic," though it is open to the serious objection that "such a reversion to the past is bound to produce a temporary yet nevertheless a serious shock" (page 172.) Nor is there any inconsistency between my opposition to a managed currency and my plea for a convertible rupee, for the simple reason that the latter does not depend for its working on the discretion of an official and is therefore free from the danger of official manipulation.

The remaining portion of Mr. Ambedkar's review reveals honest differences between his standpoint and mine. He does not anticipate a fall of prices in the world on the restoration of the gold standard; I do. He believes that "in the present day there is no necessity to economise gold, because there is all over the world such a great plethora of money that "the less we economise the gold, the better." I don't share this view; and I have on my side not only the authority of some of the leading economists of the world but also the weighty support of the Geneva conference. Differences of opinion on such matters are, however, inevitable, but that is hardly a justification for the misrepresentation that I am one of those writers in India "who in order to show themselves civilised, indulge in vituperations against what they call the barbarity of using gold as currency." I challenge Mr. Ambedkar to quote a single sentence from my book which can be dubbed as 'vituperation.'

Mr. Ambedkar calls my view as to the *de facto* suspended convertibility of a small note as 'fantastic, if not strange.' It appears to him strange because of my admission that "convertibility is the best safety valve for redundancy." But surely Mr. Ambedkar does not mean to suggest that there is a virtue in the mere name of convertibility. Convertibility is a safety valve only if it is easy, immediate and *effective*. I contend that a small note is *de facto* inconvertible. Mr. Ambedkar evidently does not share this view, but I may inform him that a writer like Nicholson is of the same opinion as myself. He thinks that I am quite wrong in thinking that the older economists believed that convertibility of small notes was not a sufficient safeguard against over-issue. I have not by my side any of the old writers just now, but let me invite Mr. Ambedkar's attention to the following passage in Nicholson's "Principles":

"The Act of 1765 marked the recognition in Scotland of two great principles in the regulation of note issues. In the first place, a sharp distinction was drawn between immediate convertibility into specie and deferred convertibility after the realisation of securities of various kinds. . . . In the second place, it was recognised that if notes are small, there may be an excess of issues in spite of the fact that they are nominally convertible" (Vol II pages 184-5.)

The same view is referred to in the following passage of Nicholson's "War Finance": "Why in most countries is the lowest denomination of note so high relatively to the highest tokens? The answer to these questions involves *inter alia* an answer to the old questions. Is an over-issue of convertible notes possible? And is the danger specially great if the notes are of very low denomination?" "As the result of prolonged controversy, it became clear that "an over-issue might mean relatively to the reserve, or over-issue so as to promote or aggravate an inflation of prices on account of the defects of suspended convertibility of small notes." Be that, however, as it may, what strikes one as most interesting in Mr. Ambedkar's discussion is the fact that in stating his objections against my scheme, he practically admits the *de facto* suspended convertibility of a convertible rupee. "To legislate that notes shall be converted into gold bars of certain weight meant that only those who had notes of the value of the gold bars could convert. In other words, it was felt that such a scheme would considerably weaken the effect of convertibility and would thereby give an opening to inflation." Is this very

much different from saying that "a convertible rupee, (convertible in gold bullion) being small in its denomination is no adequate safeguard against inflation"? (page 176.)

Mr. Ambedkar concludes by condemning the arrangement of the book into two parts and calls to his aid the weight of his authority as an examiner in Economics. He seems to suggest that the candidate for the Honours degree will read the second part without going through the first. Nothing could be a greater misconception; Part II presupposes that the reader is acquainted with Part I. He objects in principle to feeding two sets of students on two different kinds of fare. But it is a recognised principle of university education that the abler students must be separated from the average. I feel sure that many experienced teachers will agree with me that no student should be fed on controversial literature on Indian currency before he has grasped the fundamental principles of its mechanism. As against Mr. Ambedkar's authority as an examiner, I may take the liberty of informing the readers of the SERVANT OF INDIA, that the book of which Mr. Ambedkar has spoken so slightly, has been highly appreciated by experienced teachers and examiners like Prof. Kale of Poona, Prof. Coyaji of Calcutta and Mr. Manoharlal of Lahore.

Yours etc.

H. L. CHABLANI.

Delhi.

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