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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

MR. C. F. ANDREWS, after about a year's stay in South Africa, returns home to-morrow. It is of course well-known that the marvellous success which has attended the diplomatic negotiations between the Governments of India and South Africa is in very large measure due to the unremitting labour of this servant of humanity. Members of the Round Table Conference before February last and Mr. Sastri subsequently figured more prominently in the public eye as men who contributed to the success. But, without depreciating in any way the meritorious services rendered by them, we are sure that members of the Round Table Conference and Mr. Sastri will themselves be the first to admit—Mr. Sastri has indeed handsomely admitted it on every possible occasion—that without the support of Mr. Andrews whom, as Dr. Malan said, all India implicitly trusts, it would have been exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for these negotiations to be brought to a successful issue, and, what is even more remarkable, to get the whole country to accept the settlement with enthusiasm. This last was by no means an easy task; for the solution of the South African Indian problem which was ultimately adopted lay on lines quite different from those which we in India and they in S. Africa had expected such a solution to take. To the negotiators themselves, both Indian and African, the ground was somewhat unfamiliar and it must have taken no small amount of courage for them to have embraced a formula, which, though

honourable in itself to all parties concerned, would encounter, they must have foreseen, an amount of opposition from the people of both countries. That India has set its seal of wholehearted approval on the final agreement reached is due solely to the great prestige which Mr. Andrews carries among all the sections of opinion here. It is superfluous to say how he must have toiled day and night, without the slightest regard to his own body which was none too strong when he left for South Africa, and we Indians can never repay even in part the debt of gratitude we owe to him. The best way, not indeed of requiting his services, but of honouring him, that will be truly gratifying to him is for at least a few of us to emulate him in rendering to our own fellow-countrymen some amount of service that he has been rendering for all these years with an unequalled devotion to what to a narrow nationalism must appear to be foreigners.

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SPEAKING at Bangalore on the 7 inst., Pandit Motilal Nehru promised his support to the effort being made by publicists in Indian States to induce the Congress to lift the ban it has placed so far on questions affecting Indian States. The exclusion of such questions from the Congress agenda is by now an age-long tradition, which has been latterly confirmed and reinforced by the oracular opinions of Mahatma Gendhi. That Pandit Motilalji should be willing now to exert his powerful influence in upsetting this tradition is an event of great promise for all those who hold that British India and Indian India should march forward in step to self-government. The injustice of the present arrangement whereby subjects of Indian States are allowed to become delegates of the Congress and are invited to shoulder their share in the responsibilities of British Indian politics, while they get no opportunity of ventilating their own grievances in the body and can look for no contribution to a solution of their problems from British Indian politicians is palpable; but Pandit Motilal, in trying to introduce Indian States questions into the Congress, is actuated evidently by the desire to break down all artificial barriers in the way of the national will expressing itself through one organ. To him the proposed alteration in the Congress constitution is one of the means of building up an Indian nationality just as much as of bringing about a rapprochement between Hindus and Mahomedans. It is idle to suppose that India will get self-government before she even goes to the trouble of thinking out what place Indian States should occupy in the future constitution. It is an oversimple way of solving Indian problems to brush aside Indian States as an unnece-

sary complication. Not a few of our leading politicians fondly hope that the knotty problems that a self-governing India will have to face—like the Indian States, capital and labour, landlord and tenant, manufacturer and consumer—will conjure themselves out of existence for a while, i.e., till India actually obtains self-government; but these problems will not be so obliging to our politicians; they will press themselves in an increasing measure every day on the attention of all who would snatch self-government from the hands of the Britishers. Indeed there is much truth in what Professor Rushbrook-Williams has said in the *Asiatic Review*, viz. that the States "have the power of becoming either the main bulwark of the future Indian Commonwealth, or the rock upon which British policy and Nationalist aspirations may alike suffer shipwreck." No one therefore who is intent on winning self-government can disinterest himself in Indian States and for that reason Pandit Motilal must be warmly congratulated on his promised help in removing from the Congress platform the existing taboo on Indian States problems, which will make our politicians, it is to be hoped, give some constructive thought to these problems—not after self-government has arrived, but when it is yet to arrive.

* * *

WHILE Pandit Motilal Nehru has performed a useful public service in urging a change in the Congress policy, believing with Mr. Rushbrook-Williams that "it is the height of folly to exclude the Indian States from our reckoning when we attempt to plan the future, immediate or remote, of the British Dominion in India," it must be confessed that his speech is disappointing in other respects. He made no suggestion as to how the agitation for reforms in British-ruled India should be linked up with the reform movement in Indian-ruled India; nor did he express any opinion as to the methods by which the movement for obtaining popular government should be conducted in Indian States, beyond entering the rather superfluous caveat that States' subjects need not embark on the perilous waters of non-co-operation with their Princes merely out of sympathy with their British Indian fellows who are supposed to be in a relation of non-co-operation with the British Government. Indeed, the belief is fondly cherished by politicians in British India that no occasion would ever arise in Indian States for pursuing the policy of non-co-operation with their rulers. If, however, the intensity of people's grievances and the unresponsiveness of rulers to the wishes of ruled is to be the criterion and justification for starting non-co-operation, we are sure the people living within the borders of Indian States will have cause to press more for non-co-operation than people in British India. Indeed, we know for a fact that many of the staunchest followers of Mahatma Gandhi coming from Indian States are sorely disappointed with their revered leader because he counsels inaction when, on his own principles, there is much greater need for espousing in several of the Indian States the policy which he preaches in British India. The only concrete advice Pandit Motilal gave to the people living in Indian States was that they should engage themselves in the non-political activities designated by the term "constructive programme." In recommending this programme the Pandit was in effect asking the States' subjects to abstain from politics, but in the view of Mahatma Gandhi "constructive work" of the narrow kind which he is fond of preaching is the best possible preparation for civil disobedience. Why then ask Indian States' subjects to prepare themselves for a campaign which, as is believed, they will never

have need to inaugurate? Mysore's response to the Mahatma's appeal for Khaddar is, Pandit Nehru says, splendid. A thousand pities that disciplined passive resisters become available in regions where they can never be wanted while they are hardly ever in evidence where their presence is persistently felt! This only serves to put to the test one of Mahatma Gandhi's many assumptions, on which his whole programme is founded. Anyway it is something gained if, by Pandit Nehru's efforts, the Indian States are at all brought into the picture of the general Reform Movement in India.

* * *

ON the closing day of the Bombay Council Mr. J. B. Petit moved a resolution recommending the Governor in Council to bring to the notice of the Government of India the desirability of revising their decision on the Tariff Board Report on the Cotton Textile Industry in view of the sufferings of a large class depending on this industry. It will be remembered that a few days ago a Committee appointed by the Conference of the representatives of the textile interest all over India waited upon His Excellency the Viceroy at Simla. Since then Government have been reticent and the restlessness of the mill-owners appears perfectly natural. It is clear that the reluctance of the Government of India to give additional protection has much to do with their inability to formulate a general scheme of Imperial preference. Failing such a scheme, the general import duty of 15 p. c. *ad valorem* on all cotton manufactures other than yarn, as proposed by the Majority Report, would hit Lancashire goods along with Japanese goods, against which latter the Indian industry deserves protection on the ground of 'unfair competition'. Latterly Japanese competition has become severer, the Japanese imports during the last six months having shown a phenomenal increase. It cannot be ignored that the Report of the Tariff Board indicates many defects in the organization of the industry which can only be cured by the joint action of the mill-owners themselves. But these defects will take time to be cured and in the meanwhile the industry which plays such a large part in the industrial economy of the country cannot be allowed to be paralysed. In a recent press-note the Government of India has notified its intention to move a bill in the Assembly for imposing a duty of 1½ annas per pound on all imported yarn and to reduce the duty on artificial silk yarn. Although we welcome this relief to the industry with regard to yarn, the depression in the industry is too great to enable it to withstand the competition in piecagoods. We would therefore support an import duty of 15 p. c. on cotton manufactures other than yarn with the proviso that it would cease to operate at the end of, say, two years, this period giving the necessary respite to the industry to set its own house in order and do the necessary self-purification. The mill-owners ought equally to bind themselves to a self-denying ordinance and refuse to entertain proposals for a reduction of wages. Without such a promise they would not be able to enlist the sympathies of the legislators or the public. There is an apprehension in the minds of consumers that, freed from the competition of Japan, the mill-owners might rest on their oars and postpone the improvements in organization insisted on in the Report and might try to enrich themselves at the cost of both the labourers as well as the consumers.

* * *

THE judgment delivered by the Bench of the Punjab High Court in the "Risala Vartaman" case has added to the puzzle created by the judgment of Justice Dalip Singh

about the right interpretation of the phrase 'hatred and enmity between different classes of His Majesty's subjects.' While the latter regards an attack by an individual on the Prophet as not reachable by 153 A, the Bench of the Punjab High Court thinks that it can. The distinction again drawn in the judgment delivered by Justice Broadway, between scurrilous and vituperative attack on the founder of a religion and a proper and legitimate attempt at 'missionary work' or a philosophic criticism of a religion or a founder makes matters still more complicated. It would appear from the judgment that a criticism or even an attack was permissible provided that it was not scurrilous. Scurrility or the venom would thus seem to be the differentia of the guilt contemplated under 153 A. The difficulty of applying this Section, sure to be felt by judges of unimpeachable integrity and possessing the highest sense of fairness, arises from the imperceptible gradation between hatred, ill-will, aversion, contempt, and aloofness. For example, even a highly philosophic and closely reasoned criticism of Christianity might produce a disinclination to adopt the creed or possibly even a feeling of contempt; but this would not be tantamount to hatred or enmity. We have known positively that a strong criticism of the esoteric side of Theosophy did create in the minds of certain persons an aversion to that organization. Either the phrase 'enmity,' therefore, must be precisely defined—as much as logical ingenuity will permit—or a wide discretion be left to the judge. We do not indulge in these hyper-subtleties simply for academic discussion, but in order to point out the difficulties of a widely drawn Section and one too, which has often been used for miscellaneous purposes and which has consequently earned for it a notoriety. It is not questioned that the Executive must have at hand some legal instrument for tackling overt attempts at disturbing the friendly relation between various groups of citizens. The objection is not against the section *per se* but against the vagueness of its phraseology and the consequent likelihood of its wide application endangering the basic freedom of speech in a democratic polity.

WHILE on this question it is necessary to remark that we are disinclined to view with favour any new provision of law of the kind adumbrated by Justice Daleep Singh or Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer making criminal a writing designed to bring into disrepute or revile preachers and founders of religion. Unless the oldest religions are specified the word may apply to any founder of a new—we were almost going to say new-fangled—sect. Again, who can have the hardihood to say that he will be able to define what a preacher is or what a religion is? Even now people are not agreed as to whether the Brahma Samaj is a new religion or a sect of Hinduism or only a schismatic body setting itself up as a separate organization. With this new section, anybody criticizing the founder of the Samaj may be dragged before a court of law on a charge of creating enmity between different classes of subjects. The best thing is to leave the present Section 153 A as it is, only defining more accurately the meaning of the word 'enmity' and possibly the word 'classes' occurring in the phrase "classes of His Majesty's subjects." Any innovation in law is bound to create more uncertainty than that experienced at present and the new state of things might be worse than the old one. Good sense and decency alone must in the last resort be relied upon to dissuade men from writing what would give pain to their fellow-citizens. The history of blasphemy laws in other countries does not, as we pointed out on an earlier occasion,

encourage the belief that our experience of similar legislation would be any better. It would indeed be, as Mr. George Joseph pointed out, "an atavistic reversion", for which we for our part do not care.

* * *

ALMOST the whole of the Bombay Government seems to have shifted to Gujerat with a view to see things with their own eyes and to organise relief. The

Finance Member, Sir Chunilal Mehta was the first to go and has since been followed by the Education Minister, Dewan Bahadur Desai, the Revenue Member, Mr. Rieu and the Excise Minister, Mr. Pradhan. The President, Mr. Dehlavi, who hails from Gujerat, has also gone there. Similarly a number of officers of the Agricultural Department are already in Gujerat, helping with advice and guidance in the matter of resowing. The Gujerat Provincial Congress Committee is giving splendid help in the distribution of seeds and otherwise, its volunteers, if report speaks true, not hesitating to do scavenger's work also in some places. At a Conference of officials and non-officials held at Nadiad last week with Sir Chunilal Mehta in the chair, the need of helping people to rebuild their houses was strongly pressed. The destruction of houses has taken place on a very large scale, as many as 72,000 houses having been officially ascertained to have collapsed in Kaira district alone. Besides the houses thus razed to the ground, some of those that are standing may have become unsafe for habitation and must be pulled down, if further loss of life is to be averted. Among those who have been dishoused are not only poor people, but also middle class people. While in the case of the former free housing grants may be necessary, the latter may have to be given loans on easy terms. House-building is the need of the hour. It is a matter for satisfaction that everything possible is being done to help the agriculturists with loans for purchase of implements and cattle. These loans are apparently given only to owners of land, and not to mere tenants, for whom in some cases the landlords were so heartless as to refuse to stand sureties! Arrangements are also being made to open shops where grain will be sold at cost price. Public meetings sympathising with Gujerat and Kathiawar are being held everywhere and relief funds started. The Central Fund in Bombay now exceeds Rs. 4 lakhs. In this connection prominent mention must be made of the princely donation of Rs. 25,000 by the Gwalior Council of Regency and of the very handsome donation of Rs. 10,000 by President Patel. Besides starting a separate relief fund, he is also going to place himself at the disposal of the Gujerat Provincial Congress Committee for relief work for two months after the Assembly session is over. Similarly His Highness Sir Sayaji Rao Gaikwad has also donated Rs. one lakh out of his private purse for the relief of his subjects, for which he deserves praise. In Baroda, housing co-operative societies are being organised. Our President, Mr. Devadhar, after visiting Broach, Amod, jambusar and a number of Gujerat villages, went to Baroda and saw some surrounding villages. He gave a grant of Rs. 500 for building some huts for poor people in Baroda and Rs. 100 for clothing and feeding some Muslim women. In a press interview he describes conditions as he found them at Baroda. In his opinion, it is necessary to supply gratuitous relief to some destitute people for about a month and to start cheap grain shops for middle class people.—Floods are reported to have done considerable damage in Lower Sind and Orissa, where also the need for relief is keenly felt.

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COST OF PROHIBITION.

THE Committee appointed by the Bombay Government about two years ago in pursuance of Mr. R. G. Pradhan's resolution has come to the conclusion that if the Presidency is to go dry, the cost would be from Rs. 5½ to Rs. 6 crores. Excise contributes Rs. 4 crores to the provincial finances, which under prohibition must be made good somehow if the budget is to balance. The cost of the preventive establishment needed for the enforcement of prohibition has been estimated by the Committee at somewhere between Rs. 1½ and Rs. 2 crores; but there is a great divergence of view on the point and it is necessary to remember that in arriving at this figure the Committee had nothing definite to go upon, and have therefore merely hazarded a guess. Official estimates themselves vary between (1) an annual recurring expenditure of Rs. 407 lakhs and a non-recurring initial expenditure of Rs. 565 lakhs and (ii) a recurring expenditure of Rs. 201 lakhs and a non-recurring expenditure of Rs. 332 lakhs; while Mr. Lalji Naranji believes that it should not exceed Rs. 60 lakhs. This item of expenditure is thus an unknown and uncertain quantity. Nor is it an easy task to prepare an accurate estimate of what it would be, depending as it does to a large extent, according to the view of the Committee, on the public attitude to prohibition. We are unable to see why there should be any doubt anywhere as to what this will be; it cannot be anything but helpful. By training and by tradition most of our people are abstainers and though there is a small class of our countrymen for whom drink may have become a necessity, an overwhelming majority of those who inhabit this Presidency are fortunately free from the accursed habit and may be trusted not to spare themselves in making prohibition a success. An idea of the sobriety of the general mass of the people can be gained from the fact that in some rural parts the yearly consumption per head does not exceed even half a peg; and prohibition cannot indeed start under more favourable conditions. The complaint is sometimes heard that the community does not help in the enforcement of temperance measures to the extent it might; but if it is so, the fault lies with the Government. Their attitude towards the public generally and their abkari policy leave a good deal to be desired, and if they expect unofficial help, they must be prepared to fall into line with public sentiment. Once the public is convinced as to the keenness of Government in enforcing prohibition, there would be hardly any ground for a complaint of the kind referred to above. In these circumstances to frame a scheme of enforcement as if a distasteful thing is to be forced down unwilling throats, as the official members seem to have done, is highly unwise and makes it needlessly expensive.

The question also deserves to be considered from another point of view. It is a matter of common knowledge that the drink problem is, comparatively speaking, mostly an urban problem. That however does not mean that the detection of

offences against excise laws is mostly to be done in big cities. Far from it; in big cities attempts at illicit distillation or importation are very rare and not likely to pass unnoticed. Bombay, e. g., is responsible for 25 p. c. of the total consumption, but no case of illicit distillation in that city has so far come to light. Which means that the large preventive establishment provided for in the official schemes will mostly have to keep itself busy in rural areas, which, as has been already seen, drink so little that it is a question for careful consideration whether their excise revenue would justify the maintenance of an expensive establishment for hunting out excise offenders. Besides, even with such a large and costly preventive staff as is proposed officially, is there any guarantee that no contraventions of the prohibition law will go undetected? As it is, do not many thieves, robbers, murderers, succeed in eluding the police, thoroughly watchful and efficient as they claim to be? Further the schemes appear to be open to the objection that expenditure is provided in them on a scale found unnecessary so far. In the first place, let it be noted that the present excise staff both in the Presidency proper and Sind together, does not cost the Province more than Rs. 20 lakhs and, despite the official bogey of illicit drinking, appears to be doing its work quite satisfactorily. Prohibition will no doubt add to its responsibilities; and while the public will not grudge its being strengthened to some extent what the official schemes propose in this behalf would appear to be beyond all proportion and even the necessities of the situation. The absence of any sea-going motor boats does not apparently act as any very great handicap to the Excise department in existing circumstances; but under prohibition it cannot do with anything less than 40 such boats! We are by no means anxious to shield excise offenders, but do not wish this done at disproportionate cost either. We cannot say what the framers of the official schemes had in mind; but if their object was to scare away people from prohibition, they could not have resorted to a more effective means for the purpose.

The presence of Indian States is another obstacle to the introduction of prohibition; but it is not an insuperable one. Their antecedents and past history are all in favour of prohibition and if proper arrangements are come to with them, there is no reason why they will withhold their co-operation in a matter which so vitally affects the moral well-being of their subjects. But the whole thing really turns on the Government's own keenness in the matter. If they are really serious about the introduction of prohibition, we are sure nothing will be allowed to thwart the fulfilment of their object. If, on the other hand, while doing lip service to prohibition, their object is merely to put it off as long as possible, the States can be used as a convenient handle for the purpose.

But the really difficult part of the Committee's task was that relating to the proposals about alternative sources of revenue. An impression is sought to be created that people will have to pay dearly for prohibition. That impression is not founded on facts. The people are already contributing as much as Rs.

crores by way of excise. When prohibition is introduced, the same burden will have to be shouldered by the Province, though by different people. The only additional contribution they will have to make will be the cost that may be needed for the maintenance of the extra staff required for enforcing prohibition. The solution of the problem of filling the gap that may be created by the disappearance of the excise revenue would doubtless be considerably facilitated if the Presidency were assured of the Central Government's co-operation. Bombay has been hard hit by the iniquitous Meston award and, to add to its difficulties, is made to pay heavily for the upkeep of the Central Government. The Government of India are of course committed to the extinction of the provincial contributions at the first opportunity and if they see their way to relieve this Presidency from the obligation in question, it will relieve Bombay's finances to the extent of Rs. 56 lakhs. Then it is only fair that she should be allowed a much larger share in the income-tax receipts. The Committee have framed their proposals on the basis that whenever this relief comes, it will improve the Presidency's finances by at least half a crore. For these proposals to materialise, the Government of India's sympathetic help is a necessary condition. But unless their attitude in the matter has undergone a desirable change since the 1925 prohibition debate in the Assembly, to count on their hearty co-operation in regard to prohibition is to build on insecure foundations. But whether their help is available or not, a revision of the Meston settlement cannot now be long postponed. Other taxation proposals made by the Committee are the imposition of a succession duty and local fund cess which is expected to yield Rs. 1 crore each, an irrigation cess to bring in Rs. 56 lakhs, a tax on exchange transactions which will swell the provincial exchequer by Rs. 55 lakhs, a tobacco duty to yield Rs. 30 lakhs and a duty on patent medicines which will bring in Rs. 10 lakhs. The Committee's proposals, when put into effect, will result in producing Rs. 430 lakhs out of the required amount, the minimum of which has been estimated by it at Rs. 550 lakhs. But though about Rs. 120 lakhs remain to be found, the Committee feels that not much harm would result financially if prohibition were inaugurated. We are unable to see why the Committee has failed to stress the need for retrenchment in provincial expenditure. For even with all the retrenchment and economy committees we have had since the reforms, it can be asserted without fear of contradiction that there is still room for considerable cuts in some places. At any rate so long as supernumerary posts like the Revenue Commissionerships are not abolished, the public will take a good deal of argument to be convinced that the utmost limit of retrenchment was reached.

The Committee's proposals, such as they are, will take some time to fructify, even supposing that the Government showed the greatest possible alacrity in putting them into effect. In the first place, to secure the Government of India's sanction for the stoppage of imports of foreign liquors into the Province is not

an easy affair and is sure to hold up the whole scheme for a considerable period; and though we do not wish to prejudge their attitude or be in any way unfair to them, it is doubtful if the sanction would be readily forthcoming. In the meantime, instead of wasting valuable time, why should not the Bombay Government take its courage in both its hands and introduce prohibition of country liquor and drugs in some districts which may be the least addicted to drink? The Central Provinces will have the experiment made next year in one district and the Excise Minister in Madras promises to try prohibition as an experimental measure in two districts before very long. What has been found possible in those Provinces should not be difficult of achievement in Bombay. There are two alternatives open to the Bombay Government. They may (i) introduce it either in the rural areas of some districts, carrying the rationing policy now in force in urban areas to its logical conclusion or (ii) introduce it in the districts in which consumption is very low. Thus we find that Panch Mahals, Satara, Kaira, Ahmednagar, Kanara and Bijapur together contribute less than Rs. 19½ lakhs of excise revenue and it is certainly a matter of practical politics to begin prohibition with them. It is to be hoped that while the financial and other difficulties are formidable, the Government will not allow themselves to be unduly deterred by them. Their decisions on the Committee's recommendations will be awaited with interest.

MADRAS POLITICS.

HONESTY is a rare virtue in politicians. It is difficult to take part in this game which is often compared to chess in which all movements are conditioned by the arrangements on the board and the possible or probable movements of the opponent. It becomes a practical impossibility when even the ordinary rules of the game are unscrupulously set aside, the goal of success is misconceived and commonsense, not to say anything of consistency, is cast to the winds in a reckless race for popularity among the ignorant masses. We are not therefore surprised at the reign of dishonesty which is becoming rampant among a certain section of politicians in the Madras Presidency. That province is at present the scene of a triangular fight which promises to reach its climax in a few weeks, with probably calamitous consequences to constitutionalism in the Presidency. The future of dyarchy and of the existing Independent Ministry is threatened by the proposed 'no-confidence' motion which some members have given notice of moving in the local Legislative Council. It behoves all upholders of the present Ministry to present the issues clearly before the public and warn them against the evils of allowing political dishonesty to play havoc with the best interests of the people.

To understand the perplexing situation in the province it is necessary to have a clear grasp of the several factors involved. As we pointed out above,

the fight there is, in the first place, triangular—between the Brahmans and the Non-Brahmans on one side, the Government and the Swarajists on the second and the Government (including the Ministry) and some disgruntled office-hunters among Justicites on the third. The object of the Brahman-non-Brahman squabbles is notorious and known to the public. It is purely social and communal in its nature. It has now evidently reached the height of acrimony and entered even the portals of the Congress, which was till lately free from the communal cancer. The much commented Coimbatore decision of the Justicites in regard to Congress entry was moved more by a desire to dislodge Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and his executive from the leadership of the Congress than by any genuine love for the ideals for which the Congress stands or an honest conviction of the soundness of its political creed. The future alone can show how far the Justicites will be able to swamp the Congress, capture its machinery and utilise it to advance their communal creed. That those who are now in possession of the Congress executive will not give it up without a fight is evidenced by the complaints already heard about the alleged obstacles placed in the path of the Justicites in their new game.

The other decision of the Justicites to boycott all offices under dyarchy and join hands with the Swarajists to throw out the present Ministry is, in a sense, a corollary to the above and more pregnant with mischievous consequences to the Presidency. An inward view of this resolution shows that it is rooted still deeper than the first in the depths of political dishonesty. It is but a repetition of the story of sour grapes by political foxes of the viped species. It is also a sop to the extremist non-Brahmans like Dr. Varadarajulu and his ilk, to do propaganda for the Justice party and recover its lost popularity among the people. It is a purely a vote-catching device calculated to set the seal of Swarajist patriotism on the back of the nominees of the party in the coming elections. It will serve its purpose only if an election is precipitated on the people in the near future, before the new paint gets dim. Hence the haste to throw out the present Ministry and force the hands of the Government. It is to be seen exactly how many members of the party, who have been elected to the Council on the definite programme of working dyarchy for what it is worth, will go back on their pledge to the voters and surrender to the dubious tactics of the party leaders to win back popularity or wreak vengeance on their political opponents. The meeting of the Justice group of Councillors is yet to be held and we would strongly appeal to the Councillors in the name of political honesty and constitutionalism to make a bold stand against such discreditable and dangerous somersaults.

We would also like to utter a word of warning to the saner section of the Madras Swarajists against the dangers of allowing the ogre of communalism to be again installed in office. They will be playing into the hands of the Justicites if they take them at their word, interpret their reckless antics as evidence of any honest change of views in regard to dyarchy

and the sweets of office. The considerations that demanded the installation of the Independent Ministry and leaving them secure in their post so long still operate. We wonder how, if our interpretation of the Coimbatore decision holds good, the situation is altered. If the present Swarajist policy of passive support to the Ministry is reversed, there is no certainty that the Swarajists will achieve their hearts' desire of wrecking dyarchy. The Independent Ministry might still contrive to continue in office with the support of the official and nominated bloc in order to save the cause of constitutionalism and do what little of constructive good they can to the people. If they elect to adopt this course, they will expose themselves to the charge of functioning without an elected majority behind them; but they cannot, at any rate, be guilty of the political dishonesty or suicidal unwisdom of which the other two parties can be reasonably accused by the public. The Ministry have so far done nothing of which they need be ashamed and have, in fact taken earnestly on hand the work of inaugurating far-reaching changes in education, excise and other departments of popular amelioration. If, on the other hand, unwilling to depend upon the official bloc and anxious to set up healthy traditions of responsible government, the Ministry choose to resign, the field will again be free for demoralised office-hunters in the Justice group, who can easily take another somersault or get out of the party with their supporters to form a communal Ministry. The temptations for such a somersault are stronger than those which led to the Coimbatore game. If, however, the Justicites' sense of decency and shame asserts itself for the moment, and the Governor is forced to dissolve the Council for a fresh election, there is again no guarantee that the Justicites will stick for all time to their resolve to boycott office until autonomy is attained. If returned in a sufficiently strong majority, they might revert to their old policy and again set up an irremovable régime of communalism. With so many uncertainties about the future, the Swarajists, we mean the saner section, will be undoing their past work and taking a blind leap into the dark by endangering the life of the present Ministry. Prominent Swarajists like the Hon. Mr. Ramados have already begun to speak in loud terms, protest against the move for censuring the ministry and observe that the Independents are not bound to resign their office even if the censure motion is passed. That is evidence of the cloven hoof in the Swarajists' ranks and a hopeful sign that sanity is not entirely absent in Swarajist circles. If Mr. Satyamurti could at all be taken seriously and be relied upon, his suggestion to the Tinnevely Provincial Conference that even Congressmen could consider the formation of a ministry under diarchy, under certain conditions, clearly shows which way the wind is blowing in the inner circles of the Swaraj party. The forthcoming meetings of the Madras Council Swaraj party and the Justicites will do well to consider the censure motion in all its aspects, with a full sense of the serious consequences

of the decision they may arrive at. Dishonesty might pay for a time in politics, but it could be easily discerned and deserves to be exposed in the interests of the public.

SIR SANKARAN NAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE MAHASABHA.

THE address is a plain, unimpassioned statement of the reasons which induce its author to lend his support to the Shuddhi and Sangathan movements. It is free from the ultra-fervour which characterizes the utterances of some exponents of the Hindu Sabha opinion, whose motto is 'Hindustan for the Hindus'. The salient points in the historical survey with which the address begins are: Lord Minto's acknowledgment of the Muslim claims as the origin of the mischief; the surrender of Hindu rights by Mr. Gandhi; the pan-Islamic consciousness of Muslims leading to violence with a view to compel Hindus to admit their claims; and Mr. Das's pact which embittered the relations between Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. In the orgy of riot that followed in Bengal, the Hindus were discovered to be wholly unable to protect the honour of their women and Sir Sankaran Nair lays great stress on this extreme demoralisation of the Hindu community. We must say here that whatever may have been the case in Bengal, we do not think that Hindus of other provinces can be said to be in the same predicament.

In this connection Sir Sankaran Nair castigates the Swaraj party for neither reconciling the two communities nor protecting the Hindus. It is here that the Hindu Maha Sabha steps in to fill up the gap and he believes that the Hindu Sabha and the Moslem League would be able to come to an agreement which would be beyond the power of the Congress to bring about. We do not think it is fair to blame any party for the failure to protect the Hindus, firstly because it is not the business of any political party which is national in outlook to protect a particular community, and secondly because all political parties have done their best to pour oil on troubled waters even at the sacrifice of cherished principles and by adopting impossible compromises. As another instance of the superiority of the Maha Sabha to the Congress party, he points to the opposition of the former to the separation of Sind, while the latter agrees to it at the instance of the Muslims. This instance is, to say the least of it, not conclusive, for it is quite conceivable for an ardent Hindu, who is also an ardent Nationalist, e. g., like Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal, to favour the separation on grounds necessarily the same on which Muslims demand it.

Passing next to the Sangathan movement, the outrages on Bengali women and the indifference of the Hindus to these constitutes the most powerful plea in favour of such a movement. Here again Sir Sankaran Nair thinks that it is the pact in Bengal which induced the Hindus to put up with all this horror. Now we think this presentation of the case is certainly grotesque; no number of pacts would induce hooligans and goondas to perpetrate atrocities, had it not been for the meekness and helplessness of the Hindus. The disease as well as the remedy are not political but physiological and psychical. When however he proceeds to the social causes of this disintegration of the Hindu society he is on the right track. The restrictions that divide the Hindu society into classes and castes are a great obstacle; so also is untouchability; and he makes an eloquent appeal for their abolition.

The case for Shuddhi according to him is clear. Persons and groups put out of caste for violation of

caste rules ought to be taken back; so also those who have not renounced Hinduism at heart but have been converted forcibly. Kidnapped and decoyed women are in the same category. Looking to past history also, it is clear that reconversions were very common and that throughout its career Hinduism has grown by assimilation.

So much for details. As to the pith or the moral of the address, it is in the first place a clarion call for Hindu consolidation. The very fact that a liberal-minded man of the eminence of Sir Sankaran Nair thinks it necessary to utter the call shows the extremes to which Moslems have reached in their anti-national and anti-Hindu propaganda as well as behaviour. As a counterblast to the nefarious activities of Muslims there may perhaps be a sufficient vindication for the Hindu Mahasabha, but having been started, the least it can do is to take sufficient care to keep itself within the sphere of nationalism and free from the extremes of communalism and all that it connotes. Otherwise it is likely to develop an uncompromising spirit and perpetuate the reign of communalism which all of us deprecate. Secondly, it is an invitation to the Hindus to regard themselves only as novices in the art of social reconstruction instead of developing the conceit that everything is perfect in the Hindu social world and that no readaptations are called for.

EDUCATION IN JAMKHANDI.

ONE of the resolutions passed by the Jamkhandi State Subjects' Conference, which held its first session last week under the chairmanship of Mr. N. C. Kelkar, called for the enactment of the compulsory attendance of pupils in elementary schools. Jamkhandi was renowned among the smaller States in the Deccan for its progressive educational policy in the early part of the late Chief's (Shrimant Bhausaheb's) régime, but latterly there is as complete a stagnation in education as it can ever be imagined. This can be best illustrated by quoting a paragraph from the latest Administration Report of the State: "Primary education has been free in the State. The percentage of school-going boys and girls to the entire population in the State is the same as last year, i. e., 6. Female education is well attended to. Free boarding and scholarships are given to poor and deserving students irrespective of caste and creed. The number of such free boarders is 50. Clothes and books are also given free of charge to the boys of backward classes with a view to encourage education amongst them. A special class for the untouchables is attached to the Vernacular School No. 2 at Jamkhandi which meets in the same building. This building is known as the Dhed School." In this paragraph, which appears in Administration Reports from year to year, we get an *ensemble* of all the leading features of the State's educational policy. The annual Reports only omit to mention the fact that all these features were inaugurated as early as two decades ago and that the State has not taken one single step forward since then even in small particulars. Primary education was made free in 1906; high school education too has been practically free all these years; the system of giving free board to poor students, that of supplying books and slates free of cost to boys of backward classes, and that of having a separate school for depressed class boys were all established in that early period, which was a hey-day for education in Jamkhandi. The number of pupils who were fed at State expense a generation ago was about 50: it has not yet increased. The number of low-caste students was 300 in 1911-12: this has not undergone any improvement, if indeed it has not suffered a decline. When education was made free

in 1906, there were in the State 44 boys' vernacular schools, with an enrolment of 2,563 boys. These numbers underwent a rapid expansion in the next few years: in 1907 schools were 51, scholars 3,587; in 1908 schools 62, scholars 4,221; in 1909 schools 67, scholars 4,909; in 1910 schools 69, scholars 5,251; in 1911 schools 70, scholars 5,525. Since then things have either remained obstinately stationary or gone definitely backward. To-day the number of boys' vernacular schools is 69 and the number of boys therein 4,886. It need not be said that the percentage of school children to the total population has not advanced even by a small fraction. Indeed there is evidence that former administrators, proud as they were of their achievements, never allowed themselves to turn a blind eye on what they had yet to achieve. The Report for 1910-11 says: "Having regard to the fact that in a population of over a lakh, the total number of school-going children is nearly 6,000, or about 6 per cent. (in large towns it is 10 per cent. and in villages it is 4 per cent.) there is yet ample room for further progress, taking 15 per cent. as the number of school-going children." A former Report even emphasised the need of compulsion. Referring to the many facilities for education provided by the State it said, "Notwithstanding such inducements and encouragements, they (the people) are yet indifferent, and it seems that they will not take to education unless it is forced on them." In later years however the authorities became filled to the full with a sense of self-complacency and no one even dared think of opening an additional school. The introduction of compulsory education is well within the means of the State, and the new Chief cannot signalise his administration better than by giving effect to the resolution of the Conference above referred to. There are, in the whole State, only 84 villages, big and small. A great many of these are already equipped with schools. The Administration Report of as early a date as 1909-10 could say in this connexion: "Almost all the large villages in the State have now got schools and it is only two or three villages with a population of 500 and upwards that are without schools; in the rest (about 10 villages) the population being below 400, it may not perhaps be conveniently possible to open schools for some time to come. More than fifteen years have elapsed since this was written, and it should certainly be now "conveniently possible" to place opportunities of primary education within the reach of every child in the State. Will Shrimant Appasaheb shake himself resolutely free from the atmosphere of "do-nothing" ness in which the officials have been accustomed to move and launch on undertakings like the one of compulsory education, which are everywhere regarded as the mark of civilization?"

The reaction of which I have spoken above is indeed not confined to education; it has invaded other branches of public activity as well. Take, e. g., the case of medical facilities. If at the beginning of the late Shrimant Bhausaheb's career as ruler (i. e. in 1904) as many as 39,457 received medical relief, at the close (i. e. in 1924) only 23,846 could receive it. That is to say, the number went down by over 50 p. c. In one department, however, there is a steady and continuous growth—viz. in the Khasgi. And I will conclude this my scrappy article by exhorting our present Chief to curtail drastically the expenditure on Khasgi that had bloated to an inordinate extent in his late father's régime. Shrimant Bhausaheb used to take latterly Rs. 10,000 a month for his private expenses from the State treasury. This does not mean, however, that his personal expenses amounted only to Rs. 1,20,000 a year. The expenses on "paga", which indeed in the Administration Reports are included in "domestic charges", were Rs. 2,000 a month.

Similarly religious charges, which were Rs. 3,000 a month, must also be rightly classed with Khasgi. Thus the late Chief used to appropriate Rs. 1,80,000 from the State treasury for his own use. But apart from this the Chief had of course his own private income, which does not come on to the State accounts at all except for the fact that the officer who manages this private estate of the Chief is paid out of public revenues! This private income is one lakh of rupees annually. All this means that the late Chief used to spend on his household close upon three lakhs, leaving a bare six lakhs to be expended on his one lakh of subjects. Surely, it will be admitted, the Chief was taking much too big a slice from the rayats' meagre resources to spend—I will not use an expression which will only serve to remind us of things we had better forget—on his self-indulgence. Even these three lakhs does not in truth represent the full extent of the Chief's personal expenses. A goodly portion of the so-called public works expenses was in sober fact the Chief's own expenses. The Public Works expenditure amounted latterly to anything between Rs. 1,30,000 to Rs. 2,00,000 yearly. How much of this aggregate expenditure was on truly public buildings and how much on private cannot be accurately determined, but it would, I venture to suggest, be a conservative estimate if one were to put the latter at 50 p. c. The pages of Administration Reports are strewn over with the mention, under the heading "public works", of such buildings as a new bungalow for the Chief at Ramtirth, several other buildings at Ramtirth, additions to bungalows in Kolhapur and Mahableshwar, addition to the private residence of the Chief, guest houses, Shikarkhana compound, cook-rooms, store house, stabling accommodation at Ramtirth, Banhatti, and Poona. An idea of the raid which the private household expenses of the Chief made on the State exchequer can be gained from the fact that the establishment charges for the upkeep of the Chief's numerous bungalow is (Jogimaddi Bungalow, Polo Palace, Polo Ground Garden, Guest House at Ramtirth Kolhapur Bungalow, Angol Bungalow Mahableshwar Bungalow, Poona Bungalow, Jakhnu Bungalow) amount to half of the yearly salary bill of all the top officials in the State (excepting only the Karbhari. The Sar Nyayadhish, who is also Vidyadhikari, Khasgi Kamgar (regarded for salary purposes as a State official), Mamlatdar, Deputy Vidyadhikari, Head Master and Medical Officer—all these highest-salaried officials put together do not cost the State more than double the expense incurred in maintaining the buildings mentioned above in repair. I make particular mention of these facts, because they are always apt to be slurred over even in conferences convened avowedly for the purpose of ventilating grievances, as they were slurred over in the Conference just held, but chiefly because this is a rock on which the vessel of the State steered by a Prince who has just passed his teens is likely to break. The Chief must learn to make a sharp distinction between the State and his private demesne. He is at present full of promise, and will no doubt receive much adulation: I would however prefer to give him what he will not ordinarily meet with but what is so necessary for the fulfilment of the promise that is in him.

A RAYAT.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

[Paris, July 23.]

THE FORCE OF PRINCIPLE.

THE Three-Power Naval Disarmament Conference which is now in session at Geneva has been a perfect vindication of the argument that disarma-

ment is more a matter of psychics than of tactics, and that confidence must precede prudence. The relations between the United States and Great Britain have never been so cold as since the beginning of this Conference and so much of the dirty linen of the Anglo Saxons has hardly ever been washed in public. Not suspicions merely but open accusations have been all too common: Uncle Sam charges John Bull with having "cunningly, obstinately, worked for naval supremacy, and in fact secured it by stealth in spite of Washington, and the latter retaliates, that rich America "instead of paying for the naval equality she is free to create, is trying to humiliate and weaken the British Empire and put it out of business as a working concern by insisting that it must reduce the number of cruisers far below the standard of its vital and unquestionable requirements". All this orgy of suspicion brings out clearly the problem of problems which advanced democracies have yet to solve, viz. the abolition of war. Where internal affairs are concerned it has been more or less established that the nation's will is sovereign, but the people have yet to bring international wars under their control. Hitherto the power of declaring war has been entrusted even under democratic constitutions to a few persons. Mr. Houghton, the American Ambassador to Great Britain, confronted the problem in a recent speech, and envisaged an altogether interesting solution to it, though he was careful to state that he was speaking unofficially. He would place the prerogative in the hands of the whole people and he proposes, as between the chief self-governing peoples of the world, a pact to the following effect: "First, that no contracting nation shall go to war until a referendum or plebiscite has been held, and a majority of the qualified electorate has voted for hostilities; and, second, that the same self-governing nations, or some of them, shall solemnly engage by the same kind of referendum or plebiscite not to attack each other for a hundred years." This is alright as far as it goes, but, as the Germans are fond of insisting, there is such a thing as the force of principle or the logic of ideas. No sober thinker, however ardent, may deny that there is an actual distinction between developed self-governing communities and others which are in the way of development. To omit to determine the relations between these two is to overlook half, and the dynamic half, of the problem. That the present collapse of Europe may be traced to the perverse application of the admirable principle of self-determination is confirmed year after year as the recent events in Vienna prove. The downfall of every civilisation in history may be traced to the admission of a dual standard of right and wrong. It is elementary ethics that there should be the same principle of right and wrong for all people and Kant's categorical imperative was the result of logical necessity. Europeans themselves are more and more driven into recognising it. Very recently a distinguished representative of one of the Baltic States spoke on the problem of the minorities in Europe at the Paris branch of the League of Nations Union and the questions put to him at the end of his impassioned plea for the hapless millions in the Eastern European States, whom, as he grimly put it, "Fate and the General Council had settled between them", were highly significant. As often as he was asked how the European Colonial policy may be defended if the minorities were to be given the liberty of self-determination and saved from the heels of the majority, he had to reply that he confined himself to Europe. This answer had the merit of circumscribing the problem, but it suffered in conviction. Europe's malady is moral, not material; and as long as the developed communities of the West are not altogether alive to their moral responsibilities and carry them out in real earnest, their power, to quote

a simile of Dr. Tagore, will be like a knife all blade, cutting the hand of the user.

AS OTHERS SEE US.

A few days ago the London newspapers had announced that Miss Katherine Mayo, a reputed American authoress, was on the point of bringing out a book on India, and that thenceforward no one would have any right to talk about India until he had read that book. That book, "Mother India" (Cape) has at last appeared, and it must be confessed that there is no reason to believe that it is prejudiced in the sense that its author has some axe to grind. No doubt, if she had seen the cultural and creative aspects of our civilisation and brooded upon our philosophy, her pungent pen might have suffered moderation. But her gain would have been our loss. Her chief care is the social conditions of the people and she has taken pains to study them. Her conclusion is that the woes of India spring from the Hindu system, and that the Indian will have to suffer them "until he admits their causes and with his own two hands uproots them." To her the political aspect of India's problems is quite insignificant; the marriage of infants and the enforced motherhood of little girls and the "Hindu's manner of getting into the world and his serf life thenceforward" are the root causes of all our evil. It must be added that the book is likely to find a wide public.

Another book on India which has appeared recently is *Lenin and Gandhi* by René Fülöp-Miller (Wein). Every time I read a German book on India. I am astounded by the psychological insight displayed, and this is by no means an exception. Starting from the position that Gandhi and Lenin are both the result of a genuine perception of the inarticulate suffering of the masses around them and their rare capacity to identify themselves with them the author proceeds to justify the association of these two names which he obviously believes will go into history. He concludes: "At this moment old India gathers force once more for an enormous effort and closes its ranks for a resistance against penetrating Europe and would sacrifice even deep-rooted traditions (such as the Hindu-Muslim feud) if it helps to check the 'satanic' civilisation. Thus one of the greatest movements for liberty comes into existence. The Pariahs are awakened into free humanity so that they may take their part in the fight against foreigners. The danger which threatens them from the West appears to the Indian people so great that the whole country becomes one, that all the deep contrasts between nationalities and beliefs are forgotten over the desire to save their ascetic civilization." Not in Germany only, but in Russia, in France, in England, it is the same. There is remarkable interest about India all over Europe now. Some of the best sellers in Russia and Germany are translations of contemporary Bengali fiction, and a play by a Russian on modern Indian life is soon to be staged in two of the principal theatres of Berlin and Leningrad. But the days when India was regarded as the fableland of Rjas and Brahmans have passed. With greater interest has come also greater concreteness. I was invariably surprised by some of the close questions indicative of knowledge put to me at the end of some meetings which I addressed on India last spring in Paris. And, once when I went into a restaurant in the small manufacturing town of Middlesborough the good lady who owned the place lingered a little as I paid the bill to say: "Are you an Indian? I read some of the sayings of your religion once in some book and I found them so good," but added after some hesitation: "Have you any sisters? Is it true that your mother and sisters cannot go out of the house?"

REVIEWS.

THE MAKING OF MR. SPEAKER.

A SPEAKER'S COMMENTARIES. By the Right Hon'ble J. W. LOWTHER VISCOUNT ULLSWATER. 2 vols. (Edward Arnold & Co., London). 1925. 9 x 5¾. pp. viii, vii, 340, 312, 36s.

MR. SPEAKER LOWTHER (it is difficult to recognise him as Lord Ullswater) has afforded us in these volumes a peep into the life that he lived and the thoughts that passed through his mind during the fifty years of his public career. A Speaker of the English House of Commons lives a life apart although much of it he lives in public. His great position makes him a solitary being. His responsibility he cannot share with others as does a minister; splendid isolation is the note of his life. His dignity cannot allow him to take the public into his confidence. Very few Speakers have left books of reminiscences behind them. The only other Speaker who has left Notes of his life was Speaker Denison and they are rare and out of print. Speaker Lowther's Commentaries are all the more valuable for the rarity of the species to which it belongs.

Mr. Lowther had the usual education of a well-to-do landed country gentleman—Eton, Cambridge, a call to the Bar. Foreign travel, narratives of which fill a large portion of his Commentaries, was an important part of his education as of most cultured Europeans and gave him part of that knowledge of men and affairs which was to stand him in good stead in his life-work. Belonging as he did to country society, he went that periodical round of visits to country homes and parties which enables one to undertake through observation and conversation that knowledge of men and events and of the way things happen and men behave in the great world of politics which mere books and even newspapers—the two main and only sources of political knowledge available in India—cannot give. With such an equipment Mr. Lowther entered Parliament in 1884 by right of hereditary claim to serve in the political service of his country. He seems from the first to have trained himself for the Speakership for "he generally occupied a place below the gangway" and his "attendance at debates was also somewhat irregular" for it is from the modest position of a backbencher that most successful Speakers of the House of Commons have jumped off. After a short absence he re-entered the House of Commons in 1886 and remained there for 37 years uninterruptedly keeping up the family tradition about 600 years old of membership of Parliament. He further trained himself for the great office he was to occupy by membership of small Committees, at the meetings of one of which—the Small Holdings Committee, he often acted as the Chairman, by constant attendance at the late sittings of the House, by working as Fourth Unpaid Charity Commissioner, in which office as Parliamentary representative of the Commission it became his duty to reply to questions, to defend any schemes which were opposed and came on for discussion after midnight, and to be responsible for the estimates", by acting as Deputy Chairman of the House when he sometimes took the place of Chairman of Ways and Means, in which capacity he scored success from the beginning. It is an illustration of the remarkable solidarity that obtains in the House of Commons that Mr. Lowther, a Tory, should not only have been appointed to this office by Mr. Speaker Peel, a former Liberal, but that the Speaker should have advised him "to devote his time and mind to the getting up of the procedure of the House in view of the very

slight attention which most members give to the study of the rules and precedents under which the daily business is conducted." It was under this influence that Mr. Lowther learnt in a practical fashion the procedure, the leading principles and the rulings of the former Speakers and Chairmen which were to stand him in good stead when he became Speaker. But for a short interlude in 1891-94 as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lowther continued his steady march towards the Speaker's chair. In 1895 he became the Chairman of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker.

Speaking of his qualifications for this office he in effect sums up the qualities and qualifications required from an aspirant to the Presidentship of a legislative assembly in a passage which will bear quotation and may be recommended to intending aspirants to a similar office in India. "The forms and proceedings of the House", he says, "had been my special study impelled thereto by a suggestion from Mr. Speaker Peel. I had been 12 years in the House and knew its idiosyncracies and its personnel. I had never been a strong party man; an ardent desire to see fair play was a part of the heritage from my distinguished Parke grandfather. I had had some experience as Deputy Chairman of presiding in Committee, had served on Standing Committees, Select Committees, and Private Bill Committees, was tolerably well acquainted with the general organisation of the work and staff". This training proved useful to him and as Chairman and Speaker he revealed other qualities which added to his experience made him what he came to be, one of the most successful Speakers of the House of Commons in all the long history of that high office. His persuasiveness, his sense of humour, his bonhomie were the qualities he does not speak of, but which were shown in his conduct as Chairman and as Speaker. It was not all plain sailing. He once had to "report" a group of members which included Mr. Lloyd George to Mr. Speaker, was on one occasion called "impertinent" to his face and in full House by Dr. Tanner, another "report" of his to Mr. Speaker Gully, making use of the police to remove recalcitrant Irish members who refused to proceed to a division. In Chapter XVIII when he comes to the point in his narrative when he assumes the Speakership, Lord Ullswater speaks of the duties and conduct of his office. For success in the office of President of a legislative assembly—and Mr. Speaker Lowther was a successful exemplar—it would appear that moral qualities are more necessary than intellectual equipment. Knowledge of the rules and standing orders is necessary, but that can be supplied by learned assistants like the Clerks at the Table. But that will not help a President in his conduct in the Chair. The maintenance of order in a deliberative assembly according to Mr. Speaker Lowther's experience is a matter on which it is impossible to lay down any rigid principles of action. "Everything depends on atmosphere" says Speaker Lowther and a good President must be able to serve that atmosphere. No amount of outside or bookish advice can help him at a critical moment. Such advice would be as unhelpful as that given to Speaker Dennison by the Clerk of the House of that time. "It looks like stormy weather" said the Speaker to the Clerk on the occasion of a crisis. "What would you advise me to do?" "I would advise you to be uncommonly careful, Sir" said the Clerk and promptly walked out of the House. If one were asked what were the outstanding qualities of Mr. Speaker Lowther one would be inclined to answer that they were his commonsense in the interpretation of rules and his humour in the management of the House. Both commonsense and humour were combined in his answer to a question whether the word "fraud" was unparliamentary, when he said

"fraud" applied to a member was disorderly but applied to a party was not unparliamentary. But even Mr. Lowther lost his head when in the famous "scene" in May 1914 during the Irish Home Rule debate pandemonium was let loose by the Tory-blooms and he asked Mr. Bonar Law, the Leader of the House, whether it was with his assent and approval that that demonstration was being made and he got a dignified rebuke from the latter who said "I will not criticise Sir, what you consider to be your duty in asking the question, but I know more and that is not to answer it."

What may one learn in India from Lord Ullswater's account of his stewardship as Speaker of the House of Commons? To Indian Parliamentarians anxious to set up the best Parliamentary traditions in the legislatures of the country this book of an English Speaker's Commentaries ought to prove of more than passing interest. What are the things that go to the making of a good President, for much of the success of a parliamentary assembly depends on the efficiency of the President? First of all there are certain external conditions of success required. A good President must be a President continually for years. Custom has set up the practice in England of a Speaker's election being unopposed both in the House of Commons and in his constituency. So much is this considered necessary that the Irish constitution especially arranges for an unopposed election of the Speaker to the Dail. In view of the contested elections that Indian Presidents have had to submit to, it may not be unwise for India to adopt the Irish practice. A certain sense of security and competence and dignity must also be secured to a President. Perhaps the Speaker's House, his pension, the peerage may be luxuries in India; but surely the salary paid to the Indian President must be adequate enough for the support of his dignity and to prevent him from aspiring to more lucrative offices in the State to the sacrifice of his reputation for impartiality and independence. And the social lubrication of the Parliamentary machinery so much and so successfully used in England which Presidential hospitality furnishes may well be secured by granting the Indian Presidents a sumptuary allowance. As for the personal conditions of success, Mr. Speaker Lowther's career proves how it is moral qualities rather than intellectual equipment that go to the making of a good President. Mr. Lloyd George attributed Speaker Lowther's success "to a discriminating ear and a gift of humour which while occasionally indulging in sallies at the expense of individuals lets no sting or passion to ramble." Mr. Asquith spoke of "his keen insight into human nature" and A. G. G., a shrewd judge, spoke of him "as essentially the ordinary man in an extraordinary degree—his instinct for justice sound, his spirit firm and masculine." The hints and suggestions that would help in the making of a good President given by Lord Ullswater himself are so few and so general that one feels he might have said a little more and a little more definite about the art of good presidentship. But Lord Ullswater would probably reply to any such request: The art of presidentship may be learnt, but it cannot be taught.

M. RUTHNASWAMY.

A MALAY STORY.

TRAGEDIES OF EASTERN LIFE. By LIM BOON KENG. (The Commercial Press, Ltd., Shanghai.) 1927. 7½ × 5½. pp. 264. £3'00 mex.

THIS is a story from the Malay Peninsula. The principal characters are a Chinese millionaire and his son, a girl living in a Malay town, in a quarter

consecrated to "the ancient and ineradicable commerce in lewdness" who was a professional entertainer, a young and cultured Chinaman who was in love with her; two side characters are a Malay knight-errant who was a skilful boxer and his fair cousin who was betrothed to the heir of a local Sultan "who was unfortunately about the most ugly individual in the world."

The millionaire's son, having fallen desperately in love with the professional entertainer, became the rival of the Chinaman who was her lover and whose love she requited and instigated the skilful boxer to give the rival a couple of blows promising a handsome reward. The boxer overdid his part and gave a knock-out blow which proved almost fatal. The deed was witnessed by an Indian beggar and, apprehending legal proceedings, he ran away to a neighbouring island with his fair cousin who was equally anxious to escape from the marriage with the Sultan's heir against her will. After the brutal assault the Chinaman was nursed by the girl he loved, with a solicitude and patience which are the pristine rôle of her sex, till after a long time he recovered from the critical ailment.

In the meantime the home of the Chinese millionaire was a veritable pandemonium. His son's wife had eloped with a Moslem groom; he himself had been charged by his wife with paying attentions to a good-looking maid; his own daughter had announced her intention of marrying an Arab teacher as an "emphatic protest against the social prejudice and the snobbish formalism of her relations." When the Arab trader was warned against entering the house of the millionaire he ran amok and struck a terrible blow at a trusted Chinese servant who barred his way to the mansion of the millionaire. In the mêlée that ensued the Arab trader was severely wounded and killed. This was a signal for a racial warfare; the Malays attacked the mansion on all sides and by means of faggots and paraffin oil set fire to it. The millionaire's daughter had hanged herself and on hearing it the millionaire's wife also fell in a swoon and never recovered; the son bolted by a back-door as he saw the great crowds coming at him. The millionaire himself was saved by a Malay who kept him in hiding in his own house. A sort of jihad was proclaimed against the Chinese, the policemen themselves joined the mob and the whole town was reduced to ashes and thousands of Chinese were reduced to utmost destitution.

While the professional entertainer was on the brink of happiness at her lover's recovery she was ordered by the Sultan, who was smitten with her charms, to become a Moslem and join his harem. In return she stipulated that the Sultan should issue a proclamation granting full protection to Chinese and compensation to all sufferers in the religious riot. After joining the harem she wrote a touching letter to her lover and sending it through a messenger she jumped into a lake and ended her life. After reading the letter her lover also ran towards the same lake, flung himself into it and disappeared; rising again he was shot in the spine by the guard and was killed.

The Sultan had sent a police force to capture the boxer who had run away with the princess betrothed to the island where the fugitives had escaped. The villagers acting under their chief offered a regular battle to this party and in the conflict the Commissioner killed the boxer and the betrothed lady, whereupon the villagers instantly killed the Commissioner, allowing the party to go away unharmed. The Arab trader who had run away with the wife of the millionaire's son had by now become a rich merchant in Java and by a curious irony of fate it was

he who came back, reconciled himself to the quondam millionaire and became his adopted son. The Arab made attempts to find out the traces of the millionaire's son; and through a messenger learnt that he died in Hongkong from an illness.

This is tragedy with a vengeance; almost everybody meets with a violent death which does not appear natural in every case. For instance it is strange that the Commissioner of Police should not capture the lady and her lover alive; again the running amok of the lover of the millionaire's daughter is hardly necessary for the proper *dénouement*. The author appears to be determined to create a pessimistic vein in the minds of the reader by showing that life is nothing but misdeeds and retributions.

Leaving aside this over-tragic element there is much in the story which gives us a good glimpse of the life of these Eastern climes. The sincere and passionate love of the girl-entertainer for her lover is on the border of sublime passion and its course of development and end are pathetically described. More commonplace but equally tenacious is the love between the Arab trader and the runaway wife of the millionaire's son. The dispute between a Scotch doctor and a German doctor showing the extremes to which racial animosity can go, is entertaining and probably represents a picture of real life.

As a psychological study, the story gives us many results but hardly gives us anywhere the causes underlying those results. We miss in the book the subtle analysis of Zola or Tolstoy and we are left to guess the motives of actions as best we can. This is a serious deficiency in a novel which professes to be an introduction to the problems of social psychology. As a result many situations in the story come almost as surprises and the psychic thread is difficult to trace. Even with regard to the traffic in women which it is the object of the story to exemplify we are not vouchsafed any glimpse into the forces that help to keep it up.

V. N. GODBOLE

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLASPHEMY LAW.

A SUGGESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—In your article on 'Press Law and Blasphemy Law' in your issue of the 20th of July, 1927, you strongly "deprecate the undertaking of any legislation to make abusive writings in the Press impossible" and further add that there "is no help for it but to educate public taste—and in the meanwhile suffer". That seems to me to be too negative an attitude for a first-rate journal like yours. I am at the same time aware that you are alone in taking that attitude. But where there is a will the way can be found to secure the precious freedom of the Press without allowing it to degenerate into license.

What would you think of a League of Honour among the more respectable journalists of the country working somewhat on the lines of the Medical Council in controlling unprofessional conduct of journals and in thus securing the disappearance of abusive writings in the Press?

It would be too early to go into the details of such an organisation at this stage. Many, I am sure, will be found to support a rule whereby every journal attacking any person or institution will be bound

to reserve some space if its victim chooses to put up a defence. That would to some extent check the tendency to take unfair advantage of one's trustful *clientele* by gagging the victim. Another rule may make it obligatory upon every journal to send a copy to the person attacked so that he may at least have the chance to know what is being said against him.

Such a League may make the lot of disreputable journalists harder by securing special privileges, specially cheap postal rates and other concessions from Government and other public bodies.—Yours, etc.

R. H. KELKAR.

Yerandowna, August 8.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- HUMANISING EDUCATION. By SAMUEL D. SCHMALHAUSEN. (The New Education Publishing Co., New York.) 1926. 8½ × 5. pp. 343.
- THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM. By J. A. HOBSON. (P. S. King & Son, Ltd., London.) 1927. 8½ × 5½. pp. xx. 338. 7s. 6d.
- AN OUTLINE OF INDIAN CURRENCY. By H. B. TURLE. (Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.) 1927. 8½ × 5½. pp. 94.
- OUR FAR EASTERN ASSIGNMENT. By FELIX MORLEY. (Association Press, New York.) 1926. 7½ × 5. pp. ix. 185.
- AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES. By HUGHES and PATTERN BRUNNER. (George H. Doran Co., New York.) 1927. 8½ × 5½. pp. xxiii. 326. \$3.50.
- VILLAGE COMMUNITIES. By EDMUND DES BRUNNER. (George H. Doran Co., New York.) 1927. 8½ × 5½. pp. vii. 244. \$2.25.
- INDIAN STATESMEN. (G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.) 7½ × 5. pp. 384. Rs. 3.

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