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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

A FEW days ago the main Committee of the Unity Conference appointed a Sub-Committee for preparing the ground by detailed discussion of basic questions. The Hindu proposals about cow-killing were summarised in a draft which contains very modest and what appear to us reasonable proposals. The basis of all the proposals is the right of prescription and if this is proved things will be done as they have been done heretofore but no innovations shall be allowed. It must be said to the credit of the Muslims that their draft is persuasive although the first clause is needlessly bellicose and assertive. It not only refers to the Hindus—which is pertinent—but to the Legislature as well as the Courts—as much as to say that they are not going to be browbeaten by any agency, not even the arm of the Law, which the Hindus may not invoke. An alternative draft suggested by the Muslims gives to the Hindus the right of playing music before mosques provided they concede the right of cow-sacrifice absolutely without reservation of time, place and manner. This looks veritably like a rivalry in vice ; it is tantamount to saying that both might suffer a violation of their feelings provided there is complete reciprocity. We think the Hindus should have accepted a modest proposal from the other side asking for the stoppage of music when "passing a mosque in which congregational worship is going on at the time." Nothing can be more reasonable. But the Hindus met this by a counter-proposal, admitting no restrictions except in the case of old historic mosques. Now when people priding themselves on their detachment from local passions and prejudices and on their philosophic calm cannot arrive at compromises it is no wonder that local leaders occasionally feel dispirited. In spite of this we would ask both the

communities to mind the appeal made by the main Committee to the public to persuade their coreligionists not to take the law into their own hands and use their best endeavours to prevent riots and to promote mutual good will. In particular we draw attention to the request made in an appeal to establish local unity boards. We have all along been in favour of such boards and are glad that the Conference itself has seen fit to recommend their establishment. We had hoped much from the Conference and we regret that it stands adjourned. In the meantime provincial attempts might be started to bring about unity and we suggest that Bombay City might organize a Committee for this province. Mr Satyamurti's recent utterance that there cannot be real or lasting communal unity until there is real political unity presents us with a vicious circle and has little immediate value. The abolition of communal representation without the acquiescence of the Muslims will only make matters worse instead of bringing about unity. Perseverance and patience seem to be the only antidotes to the pessimistic vein clearly discernible in the reflections of various journals in the country.

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THOSE who have made themselves familiar even very superficially with the provisions of the agreement reached in February last between the Governments of India and South Africa need not be told that the appointment by the Natal Government of the Education Commission so appropriately announced on Mr. Sastri's last birthday is in pursuance of its upliftment section. Under this the Union Government made themselves responsible for the first time in the history of the relationship of the two countries for the moral uplift of their permanent Indian population by providing for their education. But under the South African constitution education is a provincial subject and the Union Government could do no more than undertake to recommend to the Government of Natal, which has the largest Indian population but which has made very little provision for their Education, an examination of the whole problem of Indian education by means of a Commission. At the time the agreement was published, this very willingness of the Union Government to see that an Education Commission was appointed was seized upon by some people who unfortunately cannot be happy unless they have a grievance to nurse as a proof of the insincerity of the Union Government, who, it was said, merely wanted to shelter themselves behind the Natal Government for the time being and would at the earliest opportunity back out of the agreement. Why, it was asked, if they were really so solicitous of the welfare of our countrymen, did they not themselves promise to appoint such a Commission? Those who took this line failed to realise the simple fact that provincial governments of an autonomous country

like South Africa, being extremely jealous of their rights, would bitterly resent any interference on the part of the Central Government. It is a matter for satisfaction that the fears of such people have proved groundless. As the Commission is to concern itself exclusively with the problem of the education of Indians, it should have the benefit of the advice of Indian educational experts, for whose selection the Government of India seems to have been already approached.

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THE Saorstat Eireann elections have belied the prognostications of those who expected a big landslide in favour of Mr. Cosgrave and sanity, and away from Mr. de Valera and trickery. Unfortunately the old idea of proving one's patriotism by violent frothing against England is not yet discredited (what Indian ring there is about all this!): and nearly half the Irish electorate therefore—as far as it went to the polls—felt it “unpatriotic” not to vote for Fianna Fail. True, no alternative to Mr. Cosgrave's policy is possible today; true also that only he commands the general confidence which will ensure success to the flotation of a big Government loan which is immediately needed; still more true, that Mr. de Valera has proved himself not only an altogether barren doctrinaire, but has actually stooped to a disreputable subterfuge, not to say downright false swearing, which should make him shunned by every decent person—but what of that? In Ireland still, alas, any exhibition of moral indignation against England is sufficient to blot out any moral indignation against men who, in the words of the *Irish Times*, have not hesitated to transform their party of non-jurors into one of perjurers: and the melancholy result is that whilst Mr. Cosgrave can command 61 votes in the new *Dail*, Mr. DeValera has been left master of as many as 57. All the more truly patriotic of Mr. Cosgrave that in the face of such heavy handicap he is willing bravely to carry on for the sake of Ireland.

* * *

THE Bengal Primary Education Bill prepared before his resignation by Mr. Chakravarti, ex-Education Minister of the province, has since been published. It is yet too early to say whether his successor will find it acceptable or whether he would revise it before its introduction in the Bengal Legislative Council. As it is, the Bill strikes us as very disappointing. Though it differs in some respects from the Madras Elementary Education Act of 1920, it is largely modelled on that Act, which has since been declared to be a failure and is largely under revision. Unlike the Madras Act, Mr. Chakravarti's Bill concerns itself exclusively with rural areas and provides for the creation of the District School Board for the purpose of organising the education of children within its jurisdiction. No secret is made of the fact that this Board will in the beginning at any rate be under official control, which is quite out of the spirit of the times and is not what was expected of a thorough-going nationalist that Mr. Chakravarti is reputed to be. Another noteworthy feature of the Bill is that it proposes to saddle the Boards with the duty of training the teachers needed for the enforcement of the scheme. We do not know if this innovation is at all going to help in facilitating universalisation of education within a measurable distance of time. But Mr. Chakravarti does not appear to be in any particular hurry about it. Without this, it has so many duties entrusted to it that it may safely be doubted if the funds at its disposal would not be considerably frittered away in the training of teachers and the construction of buildings

etc. rather than in bringing every year more children under instruction, which ought to be the primary aim of a measure like this. Similarly, the proposal to invest Government with the power to enforce compulsion does not appear to be specially sound, in that it may in all likelihood lead to unnecessary friction between the Government and the Board and will hardly be conducive to the growth of a sense of responsibility in the Board. The better course would seem to be to transfer that power to the Board itself. The success of the whole scheme hinges upon its proper finance. To that end, the Bill contemplates the levy of a cess, the proceeds of which are going to be earmarked for primary education. As it is the rural areas that will benefit by this measure, the proposed cess has been so devised that if will fall mainly on cultivators who will pay one anna in the rupee of their rent, landlords paying only a quarter anna. Seeing that the permanent settlement in Bengal deprives government of their due share in the growing income from land of the landlord, the wisdom of allowing him to escape so lightly is seriously open to question.

* * *

A SCHEME agreed upon by the Principals of the three Arts Colleges and some other eminent Compulsory Physico-educationalists including Mr. Heskeith, the Director of Public Instruction, had been prepared and sent to the Syndicate of the Bombay University some time ago. In answer to a resolution passed by that body in its last meeting inviting an estimate of the cost, the Principals of the three Arts Colleges have submitted an estimate of Rs. 7000 and odd for the second term of the present academical year, and the Syndicate has consented to make a grant of this amount to the Colleges. The scheme is simple enough. All the students will be given physical training three times a week, the standard course in physical training being followed or if possible suitable substitutes in the form of exercises. All students will be medically examined and those found physically unfit will be exempted. The unit period of exercise will be three-fourths of an hour. The penalties will range from a low fine to debarring from University examinations, according to the degree of recalcitrance. Nothing can be more calculated to develop a sound body as an encasement for a sound mind and to prevent the various forms of maladies to which our young men are exposed when they start life after their academic career. We are glad to find in this connection that the Select Committee on the University Bill has added a special clause empowering the Senate to make provision for the physical and military training of students. Readers of Stanley Hall's 'Adolescence' will remember how in American and European Universities and Schools the physical development of the pupils is minutely studied by means of anthropological investigations.

* * *

APROPPOS of this, we may state here what steps have been taken in the Philippines for the last six years to impart physical education to all school children. Even before physical education was made a “required” subject in 1921, 95 per cent. of the pupils in fact obtained physical exercise of some kind in public schools. In many cases however the exercise was more or less sporadic and was not conducted on scientific lines. In 1921 a new course of study in physical training was drawn up, which every able-bodied child of either sex has to go through; and indeed a rating of 75 per cent. in physical education is prescribed as a requirement for promotion of all

pupils from the fourth grade, elementary, to the fourth grade, secondary, which latter corresponds to the high school classes in this country. The course "calls for the devotion in all schools of not more than 10 minutes a day to health and sanitary inspections of pupils, classrooms, school buildings, and school premises; for the devotion in all classes of from 4 to 10 minutes a day to relief exercises, the chief object of which is to relieve pupils of fatigue caused by sitting still; for the devotion in all elementary schools of from 30 to 40 minutes a day to such activities as marching, calisthenics, dancing, impromptu games, and group athletics; for the devotion in all secondary schools of 60 minutes a day by boys to such activities as military drill, impromptu games and group athletics; and of 60 minutes three times a week by girls to such activities as marching, calisthenics, impromptu games, dancing, and group athletics. The health and sanitary inspections and the relief exercises are conducted by classroom teachers without assistance. The other activities are conducted by classroom teachers with the assistance wherever possible of athletic directors." This course has been given a trial only for six years. The annual report of the Director of Education for one of these years says: "The average Filipino schoolboy of today has been so benefited by the physical training that he has received as a part of his schooling that from the standpoint of stamina he is superior to the average Filipino schoolboy of the time twenty years ago when our public-school system was yet in its infancy." In no other place the Director says: "Physical education has helped incalculably to promote the health, the strength, the physique, and the efficiency of Filipino children."

A LARGE batch of Indian labourers from Trinidad has recently returned to this country; and in an interview with the *Hindu*, has given us some idea as to the grievances of our countrymen there. In the first place there is no one, official or non-official, to look after their interests, even the emigration department of the Government of the Colony which was supposed to care for their convenience and comfort, having been recently abolished. In consequence, ignorant and illiterate as most of them are, Indians are left to shift for themselves as best they may in a far-off strange country and naturally experience many difficulties. The principal among these is that about return passages to India, leading to the enforced residence of many Indians in Trinidad. This is very hard, as, according to these people, conditions of work in Trinidad are not at present particularly inviting. Wages are low and the treatment accorded to them very damaging to their self-respect. In these circumstances, if the passage difficulty is removed, many of them would perhaps like to say good-bye to Trinidad. Not that we are sure that the change from Trinidad to India would materially improve their lot. For one thing many of them by their continued absence have lost touch with their castepeople here; and for another, employment is not readily obtainable. And though the fate that overtook the returned Indians from Fiji a few years ago does not help to make the prospect brighter, the situation has doubtless improved since then. The Government have begun to display a keener sense of responsibility in the matter, and the general community a greater interest in their well-being. It is a great pity that information on a matter of such serious consequence to our nationals in Trinidad should not be officially available here; and it is high time some means were devised of establishing proper contact between our countrymen in the several parts of the British Empire and the Government of India.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND PERSONAL LIBERTY.

A PARALLEL FROM IRELAND.

THERE is of course not the slightest reason for hope that, when the Council of State has so conveniently rejected Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill for seeking the intervention of the High Court in cases in which Government suppresses "unlawful" associations or interns persons on suspicion, Government will at all consent to refer the Bill to a joint session of the Indian Legislature, as Sir Hari Singh proposes. But one cannot help the feeling that Government has been very unfair in dealing with this Bill. When Sir Hari Singh introduced an earlier measure on the same subject, taking away from Government all power to proclaim associations and deprive persons of their liberty by arbitrary action, the Home Member attacked the Bill on the ground that it was far too radical a measure and almost invited a suggestion from some men who have a *penchant* for compromise solutions that Government should be allowed to retain the existing powers but the Legislature should subject their exercise to judicial control. We for our part have always thought that this kind of compromise cannot possibly work, for the essence of the Samiti Act and the Bengal Regulation of 1818 consists just in this, that Government can under the stress of sudden emergencies take action without being called upon to justify it by producing evidence as to guilt by the normal processes of law. The whole *raison d'être* of such special legislation is that desperate situations require desperate remedies to be promptly taken, and if the executive authorities are after all to be required to put men against whom they proceed on their trial and obtain convictions in the usual way, Government may as well give up the extraordinary powers it has under these laws. And this was precisely the Government's position. We can well understand it. But if they took such an attitude of uncompromising opposition to the new Bill, why did not Sir A. Muddiman say so last time? Why did he hold out a hope that a proposal less thorough-going than that for a total repeal of the laws would receive sympathetic consideration at the hands of Government? Why did the present Home Member attack the Bill on technical grounds rather than those of broad policy? We for our part are prepared to concede that in such matters there can be no half-way houses; that there can be no alternatives between taking away all powers from Government and giving it full discretion. But then we cannot understand for the life of us why Government should shillyshally with the proposal for such a long time, only intensifying thereby the discontent certain to follow on its rejection?

One of these laws at any rate, the Samiti law, Government retains on its statute book, not because it is required at present or in the immediate future, but only because it may possibly be required at some unknown time hereafter. It would be best to quote the precise words used by the Home Secretary, Mr. Haig

in the Council of State in this connection : "The Act is a reserve power. We do not want to use it at the present moment, and I do not think it is reasonable to suggest that it should be repealed merely on grounds of that nature. But the main argument, as I understand, which my Honourable friends opposite advance, is that the situation is now so quiet that there is really no need to keep the Act. . . . But I wish to make it plain that it is not a question of the present atmosphere. Our case is not that at the present moment we are contemplating the use of this Act ; our case is a different one. It is that if trouble were to occur—and, Sir, who can guarantee that it will not occur—it is most important not to have to wait until a situation has developed which will persuade a naturally reluctant legislature to grant powers to stop such trouble. . . . We know that the legislature would naturally and properly be reluctant to reintroduce these measures once they have been repealed. We should have to get together an overwhelming case to put before the legislature before we could hope, I am afraid, to convince my Honourable friends opposite of the necessity of action." This utterance has the merit of brutal frankness which we greatly appreciate. But if the reasoning here advanced is valid, every country ought to provide itself with such extraordinary legislation for if no one can guarantee that trouble will not break out in this country, no one can guarantee it in other countries either, e. g. England. But then why is India alone to be blessed with such precautionary measures ? In other countries also exceptional action has to be taken in exceptional circumstances (the need for such action was fully admitted in all quarters in the Legislative Assembly), but in no country other than India is there permanent legislation of the kind we have here. In fact in other countries measures for restricting individual liberty are tolerated for a brief space of time only because the executive, being responsible to the people, can safely be trusted to use special powers conferred upon it with discrimination. In India however we have an irresponsible executive which enjoys no manner of confidence in regard to exercising self-restraint in the employment of such powers and yet it is in this country that Government insists upon being given an unfettered discretion to deprive persons of their liberty under a law which finds a permanent lodgment among our statutes.

In debating the merits of this Bill official members drew freely on the recent happenings in Ireland. The temptation to cite the Irish precedent must at this moment be very strong indeed, for after the assassination of Kevin O'Higgins the Free State passed a law which puts into the shade all the laws passed even by the Czarist Russia, and the Free State is a democratically governed country. When Mr. Crerar in sheer desperation pointed to the Public Safety Act which was then being passed in Ireland, unofficial members like Sir Hari Singh Gour expressed a doubt whether it was not a temporary measure. Official members of course could triumphantly answer that it was permanent. It is so, but Sir Hari Singh Gour had every reason to think that the measure

was of short duration, for such has been the previous history of Ireland ever since she started on her career as an independent State. When the Free State had first to cope with revolutionary crime, it limited the life of the Public Safety Act it then passed to six months. But revolutionary activity had not ceased when this Act was about to expire. It therefore prolonged the life of the old Act by a year by passing another Act. On a previous occasion (i. e. in our issue of Dec. 17, 1925.) we have given full details of these measures, contrasting them with similar legislation in India. Later, in November last year, when there was again an outbreak of violent crime, the Free State Government had again to go to the Legislature for a Public Safety (Emergency Powers) Act, and this time they pressed for permanent legislation. It is true therefore that since the close of last year there is on the Statute Book of the Irish Free State permanent legislation similar to the Bengal Ordinance authorising indefinite detention without a prospect of open trial. But how different are the circumstances ? There a military organization has been formed and is kept in existence which imports into the country large supplies of ammunition and consignments of arms, for the avowed purpose of subverting the authority of the State. Just before the Act was passed, in a house in Dublin close on 50,000 rounds of ammunition were discovered, and armed raids were organized on the police force killing several of them. In addition to making attacks upon the peace officers of the State, telegraph wires were cut, trees cut down and roads blocked and attempt was made to terrorise the people of the country. In fact civil war was raging in Ireland at the time, and although even then permanent legislation of the kind could not be justified, still it must in fairness be recognised that the conditions of Ireland where frankly the issue was being fought on the plane of physical force were entirely different from those prevailing in India. Even so, what did the Public Safety Act of 1926 do ? It allowed the authorities to apply the provisions regarding detention without trial to any district on proclamation, but required them to summon Parliament immediately and lay before it proposals for bringing the Act into operation, thus giving an opportunity to Parliament to disapprove of Government's action. True, Government reserved to itself the right of putting the Act in force even in spite of Parliament's disapproval, but the fact that it had to submit its action to the scrutiny of Parliament at every step was in itself a valuable safeguard, which is non-existent in India. There was of course the provision of the Appeal Council too, which, though not completely satisfactory, was still much better than anything similar that obtains here. Still the measure was severely attacked for its permanency and the Government's defence was that under a responsible government there is no likelihood of even arbitrary powers being misused. Said Mr. Cosgrave, President of the Free State : "Here in the Dáil there will be an opportunity at all times to deal with any Government which would abuse the powers given under this Bill . . . These measures cannot be

taken by the Government without proclamation. The Oireachtas (Parliament) is in possession and must be in possession of the reasons which bring about that proclamation, and the Executive has got to stand the natural criticism which will flow from any possible abuse there might be of this Bill." There is no sufficient parallel therefore between the two countries: in the first place, there is nothing in India like the civil war that was raging in Ireland; in the second place, the sovereign remedy against indiscriminate exercise of authority, viz. a government responsible to the legislature, exists in its full force in Ireland, while it does not in India; thirdly, the Public Safety Act of Ireland contains mitigations of arbitrary power such as are not contained in the Indian counterpart of that Act.

The glaring contrast between the mentality of the executive authorities in the two countries comes home in a striking manner when one reflects on the action taken by the Free State under the Public Safety Act. The Free State interned some fifty men on suspicion under this law in November last; but *within a month of the passage of the Act it released all these persons and took no further action under it.* On 15th December, 1926, Mr. Kevin O'Higgins declared in the Dail:

"That step was taken (i. e. men interned were set at large) because, in the opinion of the Executive Council, a situation does not now exist in the country which would warrant the continued detention of persons against whom it has not been found possible to formulate any charge. . . .

It may be asked, and I hope will be asked, by Deputies and by people up and down through the country why the Government decided to take the step of releasing these men. I believe, it will be thought—I even hope it will be thought—that we are lenient, foolishly lenient, criminally lenient, with those persons in the way we are dealing with the entire situation which has arisen and which necessitated this emergency legislation. These men are being released in the hope that even now the persons who have been responsible for endeavouring to maintain in the country an unlawful military organization will realise that the continued existence of such an organization, while it can achieve no good and no useful thing for this country and its people, can do, and is doing, serious harm.

I wonder (if) they (the revolutionaries) are pleased with the result, and reviewing the situation generally, whether they think that to persist in sporadic outrage of this kind is a course that is likely to produce any useful results in the future. It is to give them an opportunity of viewing the situation in the light of these recent occurrences that the men who were interned have been released. At any rate it cannot be said that these incidents, five or six barrack raids throughout the entire State, were seized on by Government to give an excuse for energetic,

vindictive or punitive action against any large section of persons in the country; but if there is a recurrence of outrage of this kind, if there is this challenge repeated on the physical plane—on the direct action plane—then it will be the duty of the Dail, I submit, to consider that as a new position and to recognise the fact that there is in existence in the country an unlawful military organization challenging the peace, stability, prosperity and good name of the country."

It is an irony of fate that the very man who set at liberty criminal conspirators in the hope and belief that they will thereafter be on the mend should be struck down a few months afterwards. Our sapient officials in India will even point the moral of the evil flowing from premature release. Anyhow, our officials in arming themselves with measures not immediately required for putting down crime but which in their opinion might be required in the distant future can derive no justification from the example of Ireland who starts by making laws of short duration in a situation of grave peril and proceeds to make them permanent in theory but in fact restores to freedom all the persons interned within a month after their internment, trusting that the miscreants will thereby see the error of their ways. The repressive laws in India are damnable in all conscience, but they appear only the more damnable by comparing them with similar laws in Ireland.

REFORM OF THE BOMBAY UNIVERSITY.

IT has been felt for a long time that the Bombay University is not keeping abreast of the times and the present Bill is an attempt to make such changes in its organisation as to enable it to perform all the duties of a thoroughly modern academy of learning and research. The judgment passed on the Act would depend upon whether it has succeeded in achieving this object. So far as we can see, the principal changes proposed are a greater democratization of the constitution of the supreme governing body of the University, the institution of a new body called the Academic Council consisting principally of men of learning actually engaged in teaching, and a strengthening of the Syndicate as the Executive of the University administration.

The democratic character of the new Senate suggests many reflections. It is clear from the report of the University Committee that they have taken their cue from the opinions expressed by the Sadler Commission. The object is to set up, in the words of the report of the Commission, "a body to keep it in touch with all the varied requirements of the community" and to supply "statesmanlike guidance in the accommodation of means to ends and in mediation between the possible misconceptions of the public and the possibly too restricted outlook of the scholar." Although we sympathize with the sentiment underlying the desire to make the University as representative as possible of the various interests in the Province

we cannot look upon the result without misgivings. The result we have in mind is the unwieldy size of the governing body of the University. In the latest reform of the University of London the strength of the Senate is approximately 45 and the Departmental Committee say in their report that they can find no justification for the system whereby so many Senators are nominated by bodies none of which have any organic connection with the University. It is true that the new Senate of the Bombay University is intended only to be critical, advisory and stimulating and other bodies are created to control details. Still the very large size of the Senate will prevent it from doing even the work of reviewing very efficiently. We would suggest therefore the application of the pruning process as follows:—the 8 ordinary Fellows elected by the Principals of Arts Colleges should be reduced to 5; 10 Fellows elected by University teachers and other teachers should be reduced to 5; the representation to the City Municipalities should be reduced from 5 to 2 and that to the District Boards also reduced from 5 to 2; 5 Fellows elected by the Legislative Council should be reduced to 1; fellows nominated by the Chancellor should be reduced from 40 to 25. The nomination by the Chancellor is intended only as a process of filling up gaps necessarily remaining after the normal process of election runs its course and for this purpose the number we suggest is adequate.

The Select Committee have done the right thing in making the cancellation of the appointment of a Fellow contingent upon a vote of two-thirds of the whole number of Fellows instead of two-thirds of those present as in the original Bill and have deleted the original condition that he shall not be eligible until the disqualification has been removed by the Local Government. The assigning of a Fellow to a Faculty has in the revised Bill been made optional whereas originally every Fellow had to be assigned to some Faculty or other willy-nilly. The whole Senate sitting as so many Faculties in judgment on matters academic would have been an oddity. The cancellation of a degree cannot be made except by the decision of not less than two-thirds of the total number of the Senate; even then the Select Committee has guarded against a possible injustice by insisting that the person concerned shall be given an opportunity to explain and that the degree may be subsequently restored on showing good cause. In all these respects the Select Committee has removed the curious anomalies in the original draft of the Bill.

The right of the Academic Council to elect its own chairman is in consonance with the democratic trend of the whole Bill. With regard to the proposal to have an elected Vice-Chancellor Mr. Swaminarayan has told us in his minute that it was thrown out only by the casting vote of the Chairman of the Select Committee. In such a case it is worth while pressing for it in the discussion over the Bill in the Legislative Council. In case the Vice-Chancellor is elected it is good to give the Senators the freedom to choose an outsider because at times there may be no Senator peculiarly qualified

to hold the post or even if qualified may be unable to devote the necessary energy to the task on account of professional engagements or other reasons. The restriction to appoint from amongst themselves must be scrupulously avoided; of course, when appointed, he would be an ex-officio member of the Senate. A whole section has been added by the Select Committee to formulate a Selection Committee to recommend the appointment of whole-time University Professors and Readers. One advantage of this arrangement is obvious; it will place the appointment in the hands of impartial outsiders and prevent the decision of such an important matter by the Syndicate off its own bat. We wonder whether the pungent discussion roused by Prof. Shah's appointment has to be given the credit for the insertion of this innovation. In the case of an Honorary degree, the Vice-Chancellor's concurrence has been done away with in the revised Bill; with a nominated Chancellor, probably this is a necessary safeguard against the politics of the Vice-Chancellor intruding itself into the question; but we must equally warn the Senators against intruding their own politics either.

The revised draft transfers the inspection of colleges, registers of students kept by colleges, fees, the appointment of University Professors and execution of contracts on behalf of the University from the Senate to the Syndicate, so far as making rules about these matters is concerned; but it is to be noted that this does not increase its power because under another section the Senate can cancel or refer back statutes made by the Syndicate. A conflict at times may be inevitable, but it is hoped that the larger body, conscious of the expert character of the Syndicate, will not as a rule nullify its work except in grave emergencies when some important principle may be at stake. *A propos* of the subject of conflict of authority, we fear that the right to reject regulations made by the Academic Council conferred upon the Syndicate would lead to deadlocks unless there is complete good-will between the two bodies. The Academic Council in fact has no independent authority. It is not easy however to suggest a remedy, for consistently with its character of being the sole Executive, the Syndicate cannot forego its right of exercising the final authority in all matters without distinction. A rule that a two-thirds majority of the Syndicate is necessary for rejecting a regulation made by the Academic Council would probably be a good way of increasing the prestige of the Academic Council. In this matter we should follow the advice of Principal J. Mackenzie in a contribution to the Press to enlarge the size of this Council and make it the final authority in academic matters.

We had looked with wistful glances for the long expected provision of the post-graduate studies and research, but barring a section constituting a Board, not a word is found in the Bill with regard to the financial aspect of this important question. We are at one with Mr. Chikodi when he says in his minute of dissent that "the absence of a provision

securing the financial stability renders uncertain the position of the University in this connection. It seems therefore necessary that provision should be made in the Bill whereby a substantial portion of expenditure of the University should be met from the provincial revenues." Mr. R. G. Pradhan goes still further and opines that without a statutory obligation to make a substantial grant the present Bill is not likely to achieve much in the direction of reform and in advancing the cause of scholarship. The University is already at its wit's end in maintaining the School of Economics and Sociology and the Board would find perhaps that it has very little to do unless the fees are doubled and trebled, causing a flutter in the dovecotes of poor families.

There is nothing amiss about the proposal to have a whole-time Rector for giving sole and undivided attention to administrative business, but in any case we need not push extravagance so far as to pitch his salary so high as Rs. 3000 per month. A sum like this cannot be easily set aside unless the University's finances are bettered in some way or other, of which no hint is forthcoming. What with deficit budgets and top-heavy departments, the relief from provincial revenues may not be very considerable. It is wise then to proceed warily in creating new posts.

MORTALITY IN MADRAS.

THE administration of the Corporation of Madras is by no means a credit either to the Councillors or to the rate-payers of the city. The mortality rate has been steadily on the increase and is much higher than that of most mofussil municipalities. This deterioration of health conditions has been so marked that the Government appointed in July last a small committee to investigate into the causes of the high mortality and to suggest remedies for its prevention. The Committee consisted of the Director of Public Health, the Director of the King Institute, two ex-Presidents and the present President of the Corporation. They have produced a very interesting and valuable report which ought to rouse the citizens of Madras from their lethargy.

The death rate of Madras is very much higher than that of Calcutta or Bombay, as the following figures show:—

	1922	1923	1924
Calcutta	29'10	28'40	29'60
Bombay	32'13	32'74	33'44
Madras	43'10	38'00	41'00

The years 1925 and 1926 were very much worse for Madras than the preceding ones, the death rate being 47'3 and 46 respectively. The higher death rate of Madras may be due to some extent to the difference in the sex-ratio of the population, the number of females per thousand males, according to the Census of 1921, being 500 in Calcutta, 524 in Bombay and 908 in Madras. This leads naturally to a larger number of births in Madras, and as the death rate among infants is everywhere higher than among adults, the total death rate is affected thereby. On the other hand, infantile mortality is considerably higher in Bombay than in Madras. The difference in sex-ratio cannot therefore account for the main part of the difference in the death rate. Then there is the fact that the death rate is growing worse from year to year. The only possible explanation seems to be that the administration of Madras is getting more and more inefficient.

The death rate is different for different communities. The average for 12 years from 1914 to 1925 was as follows:—

Europeans	...	15'8
Anglo-Indians	...	33'2
Indian Christians	...	29'5
Hindus	...	38'4
Muhammadans	...	51'5

Among the Hindus, again, it varies roughly according to the social status and economic condition of the different castes. The average for the same period of 12 years was as follows:—

1. Brahmans	28'4
2. Vaisias	36'1
3. Cultivating castes (Mudaliars & Naidus)	37'0
4. Shepherds, Goldsmiths, etc.	47'0
5. Depressed classes	47'4
6. Fishermen	51'5

Note:—The rates for 3 and 4 are approximate and differ slightly from the actuals for the different castes included in them.

It will be seen that the death rate rises as we go down the Hindu social scale, the only exception being the fisherfolk who show a worse rate than even the depressed classes. But really there is not much difference between 4, 5 and 6. It will be seen also that the Brahmans come next to Europeans in the lowness of the death rate. The rate for the latter would perhaps have been slightly higher, if the proportion of married women among them had been similar to that of the Hindus. The difference between the Indian Christians, Hindus and Muhammadans (29'5, 38'4, and 51'5) is striking. The spread of education, particularly among women, perhaps explains the superiority of Christians over the Hindus and Muhammadans. Insanitary housing and purda seem to be the cause of the awful mortality prevailing among the Muhammadans.

According to the statistics given in the annual administration reports of the Corporation, the death rate among infants under one year is somewhere between 250 and 300. But the Committee reject this figure. They have taken the average number of deaths of infants under one year during the last 15 years, compared them with the population enumerated in the Census of 1921 as under one year and arrived at the conclusion that the death rate is not less than 500 per thousand. The Committee believe that their figure is a nearer indication of the true state of things than the rate given in the Corporation reports. The rate-payer would have been obliged to the Committee if they had shown what factors had vitiated the statistics of the Corporation. One doubts, on the other hand, the correctness of the method followed by the Committee. The death rate is usually expressed in the ratio of registered or probable births in the year. The number of births in a year is always greater than the number of babies found alive on any particular date in that year, because, obviously, it includes the children who die after birth. Let us suppose that 300 is the infantile death rate. It means that out of every 1000 children born in a year, 300 die before entering on their second year. If on any day the infants under one year are counted, we shall not find 1000 but only 700. While the Corporation has compared 300 with 1000, the Committee have compared it with 700 and arrived at a higher ratio. But whichever is the correct rate, it is high enough to shock the complacency of our rate-payers.

There are, however, worse features in our infantile mortality. The Census of 1921 has revealed the fact that though the population of the City has slightly increased on the whole (from 5'19 lakhs to

5'27 lakhs) there has been a fall of about 7 per cent. in the age group, 0-5. In spite of it, however, the total number of deaths of children under one year, and also of those between 1 and 5 years is greater in the post-influenza period than in the pre-influenza period. The average number of deaths per annum was

	Under one year.	1 to 5 years
1910-1917	5768	3099
1920-1925	6078	3630

It will be observed that the years 1918 and 1919 have been omitted from the above calculations, so that the figures may not be vitiated by the abnormal mortality of the influenza years. These figures are there in spite of the Child Welfare work that is being done here during the last 10 years by the Corporation and during the last 5 or 6 years by the Maternity and Child Welfare Association started by Lady Willingdon. These centres are increasing year by year, their reports claim satisfactory results, yet the Committee has found that mortality among children is on the increase. It means that the deterioration in the general health conditions of Madras is greater the growth in the mortality rate indicates.

Analysing the causes of mortality over a period of 15 years the Committee find that 43 per cent. of the deaths are undifferentiated and that 25 per cent. are attributed to intestinal and 20 per cent. to respiratory diseases. Compared with Bombay and Calcutta, the incidence of intestinal diseases in Madras is about twice as high as in the other two cities. In the matter of respiratory diseases it is only slightly better than Bombay. But the percentage of undifferentiated causes is higher in Madras, apparently owing to the inefficiency of the registering agency. If this were corrected, the intestinal rate would be further aggravated and the respiratory rate would exceed that of Bombay. In the intestinal group of diseases are included dysentery and diarrhoea, cholera and enteric. The last is quite insignificant and cholera plays a minor part. The bulk of the mortality is due to dysentery and diarrhoea. These diseases are due entirely to food and water contamination. The water supply of Madras is notoriously impure. But even so, pipe water is better than other water. The highest mortality on account of these diseases is observed in the outlying parts of the City, where the supply of pipe water is inadequate and water from wells and ponds seems to be used in a larger measure. The contamination of food would seem to play a larger part than that of water. One of the peculiar features of Madras is that various kinds of cooked food are sold in the streets by petty hawkers, and these are invariably covered by swarms of flies. Competing with them are vendors of rotten fruits and vegetables and between them they manage to kill thousands of innocent lives. Our conservancy arrangements are very defective. A considerable portion of the labour population are mere squatters, living under trees and sleeping on pials and door steps. Very few of the huts and houses where others live have latrines at all, so that the majority of the labour population use either public latrines or foul the drains and the street corners. Public latrines are utterly inadequate and all of them are not of the flush type. The result is that the city is rendered most foul and flies find plenty of breeding places and also plenty of food matter to contaminate. The Committee have made suitable suggestions for improving the water supply, the provision of latrines, etc. But they do not seem to have thought of the petty street vendor. Only when she (more often she than he) is tackled and the sale of rotten fruits is made impossible, will there be any substantial decrease in the death rate due to intestinal diseases.

It is somewhat surprising that the death rate from the respiratory diseases should be so high in

Madras, which practically has no cold weather. About a fourth of the deaths from this disease are due to tuberculosis and its growing prevalence is alarming, although a part of it may be due to a better diagnosis of the disease nowadays. The largest number of deaths from these diseases occurs in the months of November and December when Madras gets its largest rainfall. Respiratory diseases are mostly due to defective housing conditions—such as overcrowding, dampness, lack of ventilation, etc. The high mortality of November and December is undoubtedly due to the dampness caused by the rains. It is curious that though Madras is an extensive city and has plenty of open space, still there is nearly as much overcrowding in the houses as perhaps even in Bombay. It is very common to find 5 to 8 families, consisting of 30 to 40 souls, living in a small house paying in all a rent of Rs. 15 to Rs. 20. Municipal regulations are either not stringent or are not enforced. The worst sufferers from the evils of bad housing are undoubtedly the poorest classes of Muhammadans. If private philanthropy and the State join hands, it should be easy enough to build blocks of houses for the use of these Muhammadans and save the city from its awful waste of human life. The Committee have suggested the creation of a Town Planning Trust and recommended the resumption of the anti-malarial operations which were stopped in 1920.

Within the last few days the Corporation has considered this report and accepted by resolutions almost all the recommendations contained therein. But unless the Councillors as a whole concern themselves much more with the real business of the Corporation and look after the health, convenience and the amenities of life of the rate-payers and devote much less of their time to political squabbles there can be no real improvement, pious resolutions notwithstanding.

V. VENKATASUBBAIYA.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

GENEVA, September 8.

THE "GENEVA ATMOSPHERE".

THE "Geneva Atmosphere" has passed into a phrase. Last Monday morning as one looked down on the *Salle de la Reformation*, where the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations met, it was impossible not to be impressed by the scene below. One began to understand the meaning of that phrase. There was the bustle and feeling of crowd incidental to every such assemblage. There was even a certain care free air and gaiety about it. Everyone seemed to try to look important and was intent on making himself heard. The comings and goings were endless. One of the first proceedings of the Assembly was to draw up a set of rules regulating the conduct of the delegates during the meetings, and these were hardly distinguishable from similar restrictions governing juvenile discussions. It could not be said that these rules were superfluous. Nevertheless, the cordiality which characterised the whole proceeding was clearly discernible and just there lay its significance and its constructive spirit. Even the British delegates succumbed to the Latin manner of repeated and hearty handshakes. Serious and concerned as Sir Austen Chamberlain generally looked on the floor of the Assembly, one saw him obviously delighted to converse with many colleagues. What was noticeable and agreeable to the visitor from Asia was the manner in which the delegates from Asiatic States mingled freely with the others. These are days.

when the eyes of all the world are turned on Asia and just that morning on the way to the Assembly's meeting I had stopped at my bank to cash a cheque when an American from New York beseeched me to tell him something about the political situation in India. It would be more than human if the intercourse between the delegates did not lead to cordial and curious questioning, and if that in turn did not sometimes end in giving or obtaining information not ordinarily available. Just at present the League may be dominated by the Great Powers who by dexterous and interested co-operation keep out the smaller Powers from raising any points of consequence. But we must realise in India that neither the solidarity of the Great Powers nor the ineffectiveness of the smaller ones can be maintained indefinitely. To see the powerful and distinguished faces in the vast array of the representatives now met here is to need a good deal of persuasion to believe that either their ambitions with regard to themselves or their States or their aspirations about the League can always be held in check by a couple or more of the Western European nations. If the League stands, year after year it is bound to grow in importance and consequently in influence over the Great Powers. If it fails, it will be the greatest moral collapse for the Great Powers. Great Britain is feeling the consequences of Lord Cecil's resignation now. At home his resignation was just a vacancy in the Cabinet, but at Geneva it is a slur on the earnestness of the British Government in international matters. With the increase in the importance of smaller Powers will come also greater recognition for members such as India. Unless the Indian members of the Indian delegation choose to be mere figureheads, they will find at Geneva opportunities for a good deal of work by way of preparing the ground for greater gains both in private conversations with their colleagues from all parts of the world as well as in dealing with certain questions on the floor of the Assembly. One at least of the Indian members of the Indian delegation was visibly a universal favourite. To attach to these social amenities and to the Geneva atmosphere a greater value than what they really mean would be to lack the sense of reality, but to treat them as sheer superfluities or deliberate concoction is to err no less fatally. The undervaluation of the basic forces of human nature is the turning point from humour to cynicism. There was abundant humour in seeing the delegate from China and the delegates from the British Empire sitting together on the floor of the Assembly seriously discussing fraternity when, if in a somnambulistic mood your eyes fell on the morning paper you held in your hand, you found them resting on the achievements of the British fleet in China. The conclusion would not, however, follow that the whole show is futile. Only very young people would require life to conform to logic. If out of it can come something more, and it can gather content, even a form has its uses and is by no means futile. Not inventive journalism but the prevalent high political temperature had dissuaded public opinion in Europe from being guided by the character of the agenda in estimating the importance of the League's doings just at present. Judging from the Assembly's mood, a lively session may be expected in spite of the Council's extra-League attempts to regulate it conveniently. And, if the Assembly will only assert itself, the League will still redeem its name and recover from the criticisms which have, of late, obscured it rather effectively.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE LEAGUE.

M. Villegas, the acting President of the Council, who opened the Assembly's session, had said in the course of his speech: "Interest is claimed more

readily by political events, even if they are only of relative and passing importance; there is a tendency to mistake the external phenomenon for the inner cause and to see in these events the whole of international life". Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, who made the first speech on Tuesday at the plenary meeting, evidently took his stand upon it. The Chairman Dr. Guani announced that Sir Ramaswami was called upon to speak first as he was the first member of the Assembly who had expressed his intention to take part in the general debate. But it may also be interpreted as a delicate compliment to India. The Indian delegate was listened to with marked attention both by his colleagues among whom he seemed to count many personal friends and by the others who seemed to be impressed by his charm. While indicating the manifold ways in which India had discharged the obligations of her membership in the League, he took advantage of the occasion to point out:—"Yet I hope also that the presence of delegates from India and from other different lands such as Japan and China and the South American Republics may be of value to the League itself by preserving that character of universality which was the intention of its founders. It is just the fact that delegates from all parts of the world are not merely present but take an active part in the League's business, which has kept it true to its name of a league of nations, and has saved it from degenerating into a concert of Powers." Under the circumstances in which India finds herself Sir Ramaswami was right to emphasise the social and economic aspects of the League's work and India's willingness to participate in them. But it would be passing strange if a man of his high spirits did not feel the sting of his country being crippled and kept out of positions of greater consequence, the representation notwithstanding; he also said: "By reason of her political and geographical position, which is *sui generis*, India is only indirectly though much interested in some of the great political problems such as disarmament which have been sought to be tackled by the League, and it is, therefore, through the technical organisations of the League that the ideals of the League can be most adequately realised in the non-European countries." His Highness Mahammad Ali Khan Foroughi, the first delegate of Persia, who followed him, made, however, a very pointed speech even as regards the work of the League in the economic sphere:—

"Each nation should not only understand other nations, but should take account of their requirements and aspirations. It was in that spirit that we welcomed the International Economic Conference and that we participated in the work of that Conference. Indeed, the work of that Conference was of the utmost value and its resolutions are calculated to ensure the harmonious development of production throughout the world and to adjust it to the requirements of the human race. But we consider that if any valuable result is to come out of those resolutions you should look not only at Europe and at the American continent but also you should think of the Continent of Asia in another light than merely as a market, that you should consider our various centres of production in our many nations (each of whom desire to become a centre of production if it is not one already) and to carry on equal trade with other nations, having freedom in its operations, freedom on its seas, and, subject to the respect of the conventions to which it has voluntarily adhered, freedom in the choice of the products which it receives. We also desire that account should be taken of the economic, geographical, and historical requirements which are at the very basis of the existence of our people and of the

aspirations which are in our spirit and heart. . . . The nation which I represent is a peaceful one, but we are warned by a most unhappy past. We, therefore, most earnestly desire that nothing should in any way attenuate or enfeeble those articles of the Covenant which, if properly interpreted, will enable us to establish the machinery by which, in case of aggression, the efforts and activities of all the members of the League of Nations will immediately come into play as against the aggressor and in defence of the State against which an attack has been made."

DISARMAMENT LOOMS LARGE.

The following speech from the first delegate of the Netherlands, M. Blokland, was a surprise to the Assembly. So much of a surprise, it has been said, that Herr Stresemann who was due at Berlin for an important Cabinet meeting has deemed it fit to put off his departure and await developments. Ever since, speaker after speaker, the delegate from Finland, from Estonia, from Latvia, from Sweden, from Denmark, from Japan, has struck the same note. If we in India and that part of the world are accustomed to think of Geneva as the centre of Health Conferences, of economic deliberations and so on, to the Great Powers of Western Europe and the numerous small Powers of Eastern and Central Europe its reality is brought home in quite another way. Originated by the Treaty of Versailles for them it must be ultimately judged by the fulfilment of that Treaty. The fears, the dangers, the rumours and the narrow evasions which Europe has passed through this last year have caused a general atmosphere of disquiet which has impressed public opinion tremendously, and as against these, it sees on the League's side, only the adroit way in which the Council has dodged through them. The question is what has been done to face them and dissipate them. When Germany, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria were disarmed the world was told that it was the earnest of general disarmament. But in fact it has so worked out that conference after conference, proposal after proposal, bearing on disarmament collapsed at Geneva. From general disarmament to proportionate disarmament with due regard to security and thence to arbitration, it has been an inclined plane. Now Locarno has dropped the guise of arbitration and emerges as an alliance. Poland asks why she should not do the same and inaugurate another Locarno suitably to herself. That is one of Geneva's present perplexities. Finland and the Netherlands have proposed that the principles of the Geneva protocol should be reconsidered with a view to further development which leaves both France and Germany cold, for what Alsace was to France before 1914 Poland is to Germany now; and France has to be most careful of a Locarno round about Poland. As for the British their attitude towards the proposal of the delegate of the Netherlands is best brought out in the description of their reactions towards it as described by a Swiss journal: "There were diverse movements in the British Empire delegation." M. Felix Cielens, the first delegate of Latvia, said in his speech before the Assembly: "Unfortunately on the agenda of the third Committee (Disarmament) which was placed in our hands when we arrived in Geneva we found only one question, what measures should be taken in order to facilitate the convening of the Council in the event of a political crisis? which means to say, war. That shows how far we have travelled from the 1924 protocol." The Assembly is determined to raise the question of disarmament, and if the only result of it should be another spectacular collapse such as those which preceded this attempt—then, God help the League.

OUR PARLIAMENTARY LETTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

SIMLA, 21st September.

THE BLASPHEMY BILL.

THE closing days of the Simla session saw a keen struggle over the Criminal Law Amendment Bill for suppressing scurrilous writings. The elected members were fighting a losing battle over the attempts at improvement of the Bill. All the amendments moved on Monday shared the same fate as on Friday last, except the one by Mr. Abdul Haye, which only added to the drastic nature of the Bill. After a hard fight the Select Committee had made the offence bailable; and the Government naturally welcomed Mr. Abdul Haye's amendment which sought to make the offence non-bailable. He was confident that Government would never be in the wrong in the prosecutions under this Act, and held that it would be an offence against the Criminal Procedure Code to make it bailable. The elected members, of course, could not let such argument go unchallenged. Mr. Jayakar led the attack and in a cogent speech showed how it added to its unnecessarily drastic character. He held that in most cases the accused would be either an editor or a publisher of some status and it was absolutely necessary that he should be out of the prison gate to consult a pleader if he were to defend himself. The amendment was however carried by a majority of 54 to 40 votes. Mr. Neogy then moved that the duration of the Bill be restricted to three years only. He argued that the very existence of the Bill would be looked upon as a mark of distrust in the communities and would be trotted out as an argument against the grant of further reforms, which was generally expected to be the result of the labours of the Statutory Commission. This amendment was however lost. At the final reading, Col. Crawford came out as an adviser and showed by citing the recent riots at Sholapur, Nagpur and Ahmedabad, that inflammable material was there, and wondered how the Bill could attack the evil and suggested that confiscation of the press itself would be an effective remedy, as editors might be mere dummies. Munshi Iswar Saran told the House that Col. Crawford stood for "what was practically martial law and no damned nonsense." He protested that Government were enacting a measure which might land men in unseen difficulties, now that the offence was made non-bailable. Sir Hari Singh Gour opposed it on the ground that the Government were not the 'defender of faith' in India, but only a defender of peace. The Bill however was passed by the overwhelming majority of 61 against 26, the leaders of the parties having pledged themselves to see it through.

MISCELLANEOUS BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS.

Within a very short time after the passage of the Bill, most of the official agenda was finished. The Bills included the Aden Civil and Criminal Justice Act Amendment Bill, Inland Warehouses Bill, the Indian Divorce Bill and the Assam Labour Emigration Bill. The ratification of the League of Nations conventions about seamen was taken up for formal assent. Mr. Joshi complained that it should not have met with such a dilatory treatment, as the condition of Indian seamen was deplorable; but his complaint received no heed. The consideration of the resolution to appoint a Committee to go into the question of cinema films was postponed to the next session at the instance of Sir Hari Singh Gour, who pointed out that an urgent matter like that should have a full House. Tuesday saw a debacle in the work, non-official resolutions having been withdrawn one after another, so that the whole business was finished within an hour. Mr. Ram Narayan Singh's

resolution for giving help and encouragement to Khadi was allowed to be dropped as the mover himself was unwilling to take it up in a poorly attended House. Mr. Neogy put forward the resolution about Telegraph workmen, that stood in the name of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. He requested Government that some sort of proportionate pension should be given to the Telegraph men, who have many times to give up work after 20 or 25 years' service on being declared unfit by medical inspectors. It was more necessary in view of the higher mortality among them, due to the exacting nature of their work. On Sir B. N. Mitra's assurance of sympathetic consideration, Mr. Neogy withdrew it. The other resolutions on Indianisation of the Railway Board, separate establishment of the Andhra province, formation of a Sugar Board to give encouragement to the industry and stoppage of export of sacred objects were not moved at all. Maulvi Mohammad Yakub persisted in moving his resolution for the appointment of a Committee to go into the privileges of the members of the Legislature, on the same lines as the one discussed in the Council of State. Government neither accepted it nor opposed it and their neutrality and indifference in the matter deprived the resolution of all its importance. The session was then adjourned *sine die*.

CRITICISM OF NONOFFICIALS.

I cannot close this my last Parliamentary letter for the time being without saying a word as to how Indian interests were allowed to suffer through the neglect of non-officials. The last days of the session showed that the elected members had allowed their ranks to be slowly thinned, while the official block was solidly present in the House. The Criminal Law Amendment Bill was certainly a matter not to be trifled with and was not meant by Government to be a temporary measure. Attempts to weed out its objectionable features were foiled by the absence of the elected members as can be seen from the division lists, for there was at no time an attendance of more than ninety; on two occasions divisions were lost only by fifteen to twenty votes. If the elected members had not left the Bill to take care of itself, many of its objectionable features might have been removed. They owe it to themselves to explain why they made their way home without compunction, when a drastic law restraining freedom of speech was being enacted. Another regrettable aspect was the atmosphere in which the question was being discussed. The Mahomedan members seemed to be much perturbed at the amendments moved by Mr. Amar Nath Dutt and Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury went the length of calling it a 'buffoonery' on the part of Hindu members. If responsible persons like members of the Assembly cannot restrain themselves at the slightest irritation what can one say about the masses?

WORK IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

In the Council of State Mr. P. C. D. Achari's resolution to link India with Burma by railways was lost. Seth Govind Das tried to amend the Blasphemy Bill, but his was a voice in the wilderness. He wanted more time to be allotted to its discussion, as it was an important Bill, but many of the Elders were in a hurry to go home and declared that they had attended the debate in the Assembly and knew the subject well. Mr. Haig, in proposing the consideration of the Bill, failed to understand the opposition of some of the men connected with Press and opined that it was merely 'instinct' and not reason that prompted them to do so. Five amendments were put in to reopen the decisions of the Assembly but they all failed; nobody could expect the Council to improve it when the Assembly had failed; if it did it would be a miracle. The other

items on the agenda consisted in giving the consent of the Council to the other Bills sent up by the Assembly. With this ended the business of the Council of State.

REVIEW.

MARSHALL, A BEACONLIGHT TO INDIAN ECONOMISTS.

OFFICIAL PAPERS. By ALFRED MARSHALL. (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.) 1926. 9 × 5½. pp. 428. 10s. 6d.

BY presenting to the public this invaluable collection of written Memoranda and Oral Evidence, prepared by that eminent professor of Political Economy in the University of Cambridge, for the governmental departments and official inquiries, the publishers have made available some important contributions to the economic thought and principles as propounded in the last century, to the great advantage of those of us who have had to tackle similar problems during the last two years and more. Not a mean portion of the present volume is devoted to the expression of his opinions by Alfred Marshall on Indian economics in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and to the Indian reader, of the six chapters comprising four hundred and odd pages, his evidence before the Currency Commission of 1899 will be specially instructive, as affecting vital interests of India, not only of thirty years ago, but at a time when we are struggling to solve those very crucial problems pertaining to our industrial and financial organisations without any apparent success. Alfred Marshall deals with those questions with such a vividness of expression and in such lucid language, as to make them enlightening even to the layman. His answers before the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade and Industry of 1886 in England are no less interesting. On the subject of Currency and Prices, besides emphasising the Government's obligations in times of trade depression, he has a unique proposal of his own, which, he claims, will have a steadying influence on home trade and is quite independent of the form of currency. He suggests that, to minimise hardship to traders and manufacturers in times of depression, to lessen the burden to the debtors, Government should publish from time to time tables showing as closely as may be the changes in the purchasing power of gold, and should facilitate contracts for payments to be made in terms of units of fixed purchasing power, and this task should be entrusted to a permanent Government department.

It would be interesting to note that the gold bullion standard as recommended by the Hilton Young Committee is in fact based on a scheme of Alfred Marshall put forward before the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade and Industry of 1886 in England. He himself admits that his scheme is derived from Ricardo's "Proposals for an Economical and Secure Currency," with the difference that the latter suggests at once an adoption of paper currency, while Alfred Marshall is content to proceed more cautiously and proposes that a bar of silver should be wedded to a bar of gold, the Government undertaking to be always ready to buy and sell a wedded pair of bars for a fixed amount of currency.

We have said above that the author's evidence before the Currency Commission of 1899 provides interesting reading, and we would draw the special attention of the reader to his views on complex problems, such as seasonal stringency, rates of exchange and discount, necessity of a Reserve Bank and foreign capital as found between pages 280 and 325. These

are the topics that are taxing our brains to-day and by the careful perusal of the author's opinions, though we may not see eye to eye with him in all respects, we may be able to grasp the view-point of the theoretical expert and arrive at some conclusion. In his opinion England is a specially bad example for India to follow in matters of currency, and he believes that the currency authority should direct its operations on the lines of the English Bank Act of 1844 somewhat as in the Reichsbank Act.

The author has made a valuable suggestion of training certain Civil Servants, before they come out to India, in Indian economics to make them efficient administrators of Indian finance. The necessity of a good grounding in economics in the case of Indian Civilians cannot be overlooked by our rulers and the suggestion, if carried out faithfully, would create a class of experts "who had learnt to separate the apparent from the real in the action of economic forces," and in course of time obviate the need of looking to westerners for guidance in Indian financial and economic matters.

We commend the volume to the earnest attention of all students of Indian economics who would be, in our opinion, immensely benefitted by the author's remarks on Indian questions.

S. Y. PONKSHE.

S. I. S. RELIEF OPERATIONS.

MR. DEVADHAR ON RELIEF MEASURES IN SIND. ON his return to Bombay after an extensive tour through Sind with his colleague Mr. Deole, Mr. G. K. Devadhar was interviewed by a representative of the *Times of India* on the nature and extent of the damage caused to Sind by the recent disastrous floods and the amount and kind of relief needed by the inhabitants of that territory. He visited four talukas in the district of Hyderabad and the town of Mirpurkhas, while Mr. Deole visited two talukas in Thar Parkar district. After careful calculations he put down the total loss to Sind—comprising loss to crops, cattle, houses, household property and grain stores—at Rs. 2½ crores, 1½ in Hyderabad and 1 in Thar Parkar.

The need for gratuitous relief, in Mr. Devadhar's opinion, is great. A sum of Rs. 5 to 6 lakhs is his estimate of the extent of gratuitous relief necessary, if further indebtedness is to be prevented among the flood-stricken Sindis. The following are the measures of relief suggested by him:—Cost price or cheap grain shops; free grain distribution centres in specified areas; free housing relief by the grant of building material at the rate of Rs. 25 per family, for reconstructing mud houses with provisions for light and air; housing loans at the rate of Rs. 50 per family, without interest for five years, to put up a decent house and a mud compound wall; free grants for reconstructing model villages on elevated sites, which are easily available on Government waste land, at an approximate cost of Rs. 3,000 per village; free distribution of quinine for 2½ months; travelling dispensaries in affected areas for 3 months; better free clothing, to enable people to fight the approaching cold, at the rate of Rs. 2-8-0 per adult and eight annas per child; supply of cattle, free of cost, for agricultural purposes, to small *jamedars* and *haris* who have lost them; and beasts of burden, like donkeys, camels and horses, to small traders and peddlars who are a class by themselves in Sind. Mr. Devadhar expected Government to

contribute Rs. 2,50,000 towards gratuitous relief (on the same scale on which they are helping Gujerat), the Bombay Central Relief Fund Rs. 2 lakhs and the people of Sind Rs. 1 lakh.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH. By M. K. GANDHI. (Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad,) 1927. 9×6. pp. 602. Rs. 5-8.
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