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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THANKS to the Servants of India Society's deputation, the question of Bardoli has now assumed an all-India character, and four leaders of public opinion in Northern India, namely, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Ali Imam, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, have joined their powerful voice to that of the Society and made an urgent plea for a fresh inquiry. Apart from the capital mistake of basing the determination of assessment rates on rental values, without any warrant in law, to which pointed reference was made in the S. I. S. report, an ex-Revenue official of the superior grade points out, in another column, several other legal flaws which vitiate the whole official enquiry as valueless. The list of departures from established practice which is given in the article is only illustrative and by no means exhaustive. Indeed no one who gives dispassionate consideration to the subject will take long in coming to the conclusion that unless the whole process of collecting statistics is gone through *de novo*, no data can be had on which proposals for variation in the present rates can be founded. The North India leaders who have pressed for an enquiry emphasize the need for an independent or a mixed enquiry. And that seems to be the question at issue

at present between the Government of Bombay and the peasants of Bardoli. The former would appear to be agreeable to another official enquiry, while the latter desire a strong non-official element being allowed to participate in it.

If this is the only issue between the two parties to this struggle, it is indeed one in which the Government contention appears at its worst and the popular case at its best. For we understand that the leaders of the Satyagraha movement do not insist even upon a non-official or mixed enquiry; all that they say is that if a purely official enquiry is instituted, it would be only a Government's affair. Even such an enquiry they would welcome as showing a desirable change in Government's attitude, and they would reciprocate this change by suspending their movement and paying assessment at the old rate, but they would hold themselves free to take such action as they deem proper when the results of the fresh enquiry are made known. If on the other hand a really independent enquiry is set up they would go further and undertake beforehand to abide by the result of the enquiry. What they would concede to an enquiry, of which the impartiality is guaranteed, they would not concede to an enquiry, the results of which can be expected, if purely official, only to confirm the conclusions to which the Government are so deeply committed.

In two adjoining talukas we understand preliminary enquiries regarding resettlement are going on at the present moment, in which non-official help is freely availed of, and we make no doubt that if the present spirit of mutual helpfulness continues, the result will be found to be of the greatest advantage to the ryots concerned. We see no reason why this good example should not be given official recognition and extended to Bardoli. If, however, Government wish to assert what they regard as their exclusive right not only to determine, but even to make a preliminary enquiry with a view to determining, the rates of assessment, then surely they must give freedom to the people to determine what on their part their attitude will be to the Government decision. The people of Bardoli, so far as we can judge, do not ask for more. If Government will share the task of enquiry with the people, they will get the people to share responsibility for the results with them. But if they are to be the sole enquirers, they certainly have no moral right to ask the people to bind themselves to accept the results in advance. If, however, Government insist upon the payment of their revenue demand at the enhanced rate as a condition precedent to any talk of compromise, then of

course there is no use in entering on any negotiations, for no compromise in at all possible in that way.

It is to be devoutly hoped that the Government of Bombay will take occasion of the next Council session, which meets on the 23rd inst. and the following days, to announce an amicable settlement of the question. We have no doubt that they will be afforded sufficient opportunities of announcing such a decision if they have a mind to. If, however, these opportunities are allowed to go by, and no response is made to the pressure of the people's representatives in the Council, most people would come to the conclusion that the limits of parliamentary action are exhausted and that the issue must be fought out outside the legislature with such weapons as it is still open to them to use. The pronouncement of Mr. Chintamani, an authoritative exponent of Liberal opinion, on this subject should serve as a grave warning to Government. Says he: "The ryots' cause being just and a callous Government defying it with force, the former are fully justified in resisting the latter with their soul-force and I accord them my humble support, averse as I very generally am by temperament and conviction from any extremist political action. . . . It is not in the least inconsistent with the principles of Liberalism, as I understand them, or with the import of the misunderstood term 'constitutional agitation' for one to support the Bardoli Satyagraha. If it were, there would be something seriously wrong both with Liberalism and constitutional agitation. But it is not. Let any one who doubts this study Mr. Gokhale's classic exposition of the subject in his famous Allahabad speech of 1907, at a meeting presided over by Pandit Motilal Nehru."

THE decision of Indian delegates to withdraw from the Commonwealth Labour Conference, however unpalatable to some of the Indian Delegates, was inevitable. Diwan Chamanal presented a Resolution reaffirming the opinion of all constituent bodies of the Empire at the Conference of 1925 in favour of the grant of immediate self-government to India, and in addition condemning the appointment of the Statutory Commission. The British Labour Party which is the principal sponsor of the Conference succeeded in having it declared as out of order on the ground that the Conference being a deliberative body was precluded from recording resolutions. Upon this Diwan Chamanal made a statement explaining his own position in which he criticized the methods of the Labour Party in strong and a bit too pungent language. What brought matters to a head however was his emphatic refutation of Mr. Hartshorn's assertion that labour in India was in favour of the Statutory Commission and the subsequent passage-at-arms between him and Mr. Henderson, which, according to a Free Press message, led to a scene. With regard to the 'ultra vires' character of the Resolution, Mr. Bakhale in an interview said that nothing in the draft arrangement of the Conference precluded the submission of resolutions. Later on Mr. Lansbury declared that the Labour Party participated in the Statutory Commission because it thought that it could thus serve the interests of Indians and tried to absolve the party from any blame, saying that the procedure connected with the official appointment of the Commission was none of their doings. We only hope that Mr. Lansbury would continue to befriend India not only by pious wishes but by veritable deeds. The whole affair is a clear proof that the Labour Party has become touchy about the part it has played in blessing the Statutory Commission. Curiously enough, the reply given by the British Labour Party to the questions issued by

the secretaries of the Conference with regard to the grant of self-government omits the very name of India.

THE Reports of the Provincial Governments on the working of Reforms give us a fore-taste of what their memoranda to be presented before the Simon Commission will be like. The Madras Government claim that increased respect is now shown by officials towards the decisions of the Legislative Council. There is however a fly in the ointment; they notice that there is a spirit of questioning authority and of demurring to rules and orders. In the matter of local self-government they remark on the reluctance of local bodies to impose fresh taxation and on the tendency of introducing extremist doctrines in their policies. They regret that parties are not based on regular fixed policies and principles and in their opinion the influence of the press on politics has not been appreciable. The Swarajists who adhered to the non-acceptance of office are accused of having violated election pledges.

The U. P. Government pride themselves on holding the balance even between the Reserved and Transferred halves, giving to each its fair share of revenue. In spite of a general quickening of interest in public affairs they admit that there is a profound gap between the Legislature and the people and they suggest that an amount of work should be done to qualify the electors. The U. P. Government expect that the bitterness of communal feeling may force the Muslim minority into a permanent alliance with the official element, although we hope they do not regard this as a desideratum. They think however of organising a permanent Government party, in order to avoid recurring deadlocks. Such a party however till such time as the Government is completely responsible to the people is a direct negation of democratic government.

The Bengal Government remark on the growing apathy of the Second Council to resolutions and on the obstructionist policy adopted by the Swarajists. They regret that members took no interest in maintaining relations with their constituencies. They assert that the Council has not displayed a sense of responsibility with regard to questions relating to the Reserved half of the Government. The most noteworthy thing about Bengal is that the Reforms have not worked for the greater part of the period under review. The Bengal Government after emphasizing the illiteracy of the major portion of electors, opine that little improvement is to be expected in the work of the Council until a higher standard of education is attained in the constituencies. The influence of the press on public opinion in Bengal is very great in their opinion. The Bengal Government think that the introduction of the elective principle in the appointment of the Chief Officer of the Calcutta Corporation has reduced his authority to a mere shadow and that the affairs of the Corporation are administered in the interests of a political party. In the District Boards however the Swarajists are given credit for raising the level of administration, the principal difficulties of the Boards being attributed to financial stringency.

The Bihar Government wail over the fact that the position of a district officer has definitely changed for the worse. There has been grave deterioration in the administration of local bodies in their opinion owing to the domination of the politician who refuses to take advice from officials. The Bihar Government repeat the complaint of the Bengal Government that the members of Council do not main-

tain personal relations with their constituencies. It is a sorry thing to confess that Government relies on the nominated members and landlords for support in Council. Unlike Bengal the press in Bihar has little direct influence on public opinion.

The Punjab Government say that they suffer from shortage of the I. C. S. cadre and consequently find themselves unable to satisfy the insistent demands for British Magistrates. They think besides that continued communal tension will have an injurious effect on the services undergoing a rapid progress of Indianization. The Government admit that the Ministers have in many cases safeguarded the claims of their own community but curiously enough justify the position on the ground that Ministers must consolidate their position in their parties. This is simply giving a *carte blanche* to communalism. The Punjab Government is not happy with the Press in the province which in their opinion is hostile to British administration. The Sikh party on political issues joins the extreme Hindu group and has leanings towards Hindus on communal questions. The bonds of party discipline however, in their opinion, are very loose and there is no knowing how the members of a party will vote even on important divisions. The Punjab Government congratulate themselves on the very good relations between the two halves of Government who freely discussed matters of importance and these have conduced to the development of the province in this critical period.

There is unanimity in all the reports about proving that Diarchy has succeeded wonderfully well and if there were any hitches they were due to the recalcitrant members of the Councils and to the indifference of the people. The beautiful harmony between the two halves, which is harped upon in most of the reports, is hardly believable, considering the evidence tendered before the Muddiman Committee. The criticism of all the Governments that members of Councils are not in touch with their constituencies is unfortunately only too true and an attempt must be made to remove this reproach.

THE Maharaja of Kashmir has recently sanctioned a regulation intended to put a stop to early marriages in his State. Though the regulation is styled "The Infant Marriage Prevention Regulation," what it seeks to do is to prevent the marriages of boys below 18 and girls below 14. If a man above 18 marries a girl below the age-limit prescribed for marriage in the regulation, the maximum penalty under this regulation will be one year's simple imprisonment or a fine of Rs. 1000 or both. If the marriage of a girl or a boy below 14 or 18 respectively is brought about, all those who have directly or indirectly helped in doing so would make themselves liable to a like penalty, though the bride and bridegroom would be exempted from punishment. But the regulation does not aim merely at the stoppage of early marriages but also of incongruous ones. Thus we find that if a man of 50 or above marries a girl of less than the marriage age under this regulation, the punishment is heavier still, viz. four years' simple or rigorous imprisonment, a fine of Rs. 2000 or both, while those who directly bring about such a marriage or in any way help in doing so are also to be dealt with equally severely, the bride unable to take care of herself being exempted from punishment. All marriages in violation of the provisions of this regulation will be looked upon as void and illegal, so far as rights of succession and inheritance are concerned. The regulation seems to be far more drastic than anything so far attempted in any Indian State with the same object.

THE BOMBAY SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

WHILE the Bill was being considered by the Select Committee a volume of dissatisfaction was gathering and during the last few months the Bill has been condemned by many conferences and several associations. It cannot be said that this was due to factitious agitation; it was rather due to misunderstandings about the object of the Bill and apprehensions about its actual working when it was placed on the statute book. It has been generally supposed that the intention of the framers has been to dispossess small farmers and to establish large farmers working with big capital, possibly with the aid of machinery. Nothing can be farther from the truth; in fact it is difficult to find anything in the body of the Bill which can be regarded as the foundation for the ideas commonly entertained about the object of the Bill. Some mischief was caused no doubt by the phrase 'economic holding,' which is taken to mean a holding large enough to afford the highest return for a particular dose of capital and labour. This gave rise to the notion that holdings of 30 or 40 acres were contemplated according to the definition of the phrase given by experts like Mr. Keatinge and Dr. Mann. The Select Committee has deleted the word altogether and this ought to set at rest any further misapprehensions on this score. The Select Committee has also deprived the Collector of the power to fix the minimum size of a profitably cultivable plot of land. In fact part II of the Bill relating to the consolidation of holdings is made to concentrate only on consolidation, without in the least touching the idea of a minimum size holding. This ought to salve the consciences of those who were afraid of the power of fixing the minimum size being used to the prejudice of small holders.

In fact the Bill as it emerges from the hands of the Select Committee has been improved in such a way as to obviate all the possibilities of misuse, voiced by public opinion which can be regarded as enlightened. One important alteration made is the substitution of Taluka Committees for District Committees in the original Bill for fixing a standard unit. Apparently the Select Committee believed that the standard unit fixed by a body not directly intimate with local areas would be inaccurate or unjust. The only objection to this multiplication of committees is the likelihood that the committees may not get to work at all. The composition of the new committees is quite satisfactory, as out of 9 members 7 are non-officials. With one member of the Legislative Council and two landholders selected by the Taluka Board on the Committee there is hardly any danger of the point of view of the rayat going by default. In the revised Bill the final decision is left to the Local Government instead of to the Revenue Commissioner as in the original Bill. The Local Government has the power to fix the unit only when the local committee's proposals are in their opinion calculated to defeat the purposes of the Act. Another important amendment is the removal of the Consolidation Officer from the Tribunal of

Arbitration which is to hear appeals from the decision of that officer as to the amount or the apportionment of the valuation; in this way the possibility of his influencing the decision of the Tribunal is shut out completely. Under the original scheme there was no provision for ascertaining the consent of the people for the final scheme of consolidation; the changes made by the Select Committee provide for inviting objections and considering them before the Government finally sanction the scheme and make it effective.

In these various ways the Select Committee has made such changes, in response to popular demand as they interpreted it, as ought to make the Bill acceptable to the people. Much of the objection to the Bill is based on sentiment, pure and simple; in a country predominantly agricultural no one likes to relinquish ancestral land which has acquired a certain hold on his affection. But if the whole country suffers by the cultivation of very small holdings, which leads to a lessening of the total agricultural production, sentiment has to be sacrificed to reason. A certain number of farmers will be ousted but only such as deserve to go; there is no justification in the village for a man who by his mode of cultivation disturbs the economy of the whole village. Ultimately this problem is one of sectional interest giving way before the general interest of society.

Much is made by a certain section of critics of the amount of litigation that would follow in the wake of the Act when it begins to operate. But surely this cannot be made a ground of complaint. In every complex society with a multiplicity of laws litigation is inevitable if newly created rights are to be preserved. In any case there would be an amount of red tape wasted in correspondence between revenue officers and the owners of land; and with the vagaries and delays proverbially associated with the revenue department things might be made very inconvenient and annoying. But the proper remedy for this is not to throw out the Bill but to create a sufficiently strong public opinion which would expose the sins of omission committed by the department. Another apprehension about the Bill is that under it the Collector has an amount of discretion of doing various things, not excluding the partitioning of an estate, and it is not proper to make one man the repository of so much power and authority. But there is nothing new in vesting important powers in the Collector, who is under the existing system the principal representative of Government in a district and who is already too omnipotent and omniscient to make him for the first time an object of envy, by the passing of this new piece of legislation. Until some better organization supersedes the present one, the acquiescence in the district officer's discretion will be the most natural thing to enforce. In any case the Bill can hardly be indicted on this count.

The minutes of dissent written by members of the Select Committee give us a glimpse of the opinion of the constituencies which have elected the members. Mr. Jadhav thinks that much of the opposition to the Bill is due to the apprehension that a high

"standard unit" will be fixed and he is in favour of defining it in the Bill itself without leaving it to be determined by local committees. He therefore recommends $\frac{1}{4}$ acre as a standard unit for *bagait* land and one acre for *jirait* land. In this he has the support of Mr. Pataskar who recommends the same units. In our opinion these units are much too low and rather than pass these we might as well scrap the Bill altogether. Going through all this travail for the sake of fixing half an acre as a unit is hardly worth the while. Mr. Pataskar regards the scheme of consolidation as unnecessary and undesirable from all points of view; at the most he would confine the scheme only to small plots of land leaving the large ones out of the scope of the scheme. But this seems to be illogical; prevention of fragmentation and consolidation of fragments are allied conceptions and must be made to materialize together. With regard to the initiation of a consolidation scheme Mr. Pataskar wishes to make a change in the Bill so as to lay down that the initiative should be left with the people instead of with the Collector. His idea is that if the scheme is really beneficial people will of their own accord come forward to ask for one. Knowing as we do the conservatism of the average holder of land it is impossible to be so optimistic as Mr. Pataskar seems to be; our reply would be what he has already anticipated in his minute, namely, that if the matter is left to the owners of land the scheme would hardly ever come into being. Mr. Gunjal is of opinion that the Bill should be withheld till a clear verdict of the electors is pronounced through new elections. Does he think, we wonder, that elections on a single issue are practicable in India when they are so difficult to work out even in Western countries, long accustomed to the methods of democracy? He is further of opinion that an educative propaganda should be carried on with a view to bring to the notice of holders the evils of fragmentation for a few years before a Bill of this character is introduced. We can confidently assure him that at the end of this educating campaign matters would be exactly where they are to-day. In spite of giving the utmost consideration to the reasons brought forward in favour of suspending the Bill, we have definitely come to the conclusion that the Bill should be given a fair trial; if the actual working of it reveals even one-tenth of the evils prognosticated, it can and ought to be amended.

THE BARDOLI IMBROGLIO.

THE decisive objection, we are told, to the grant of a fresh inquiry into the resettlement of Bardoli taluka is that the demand, when first made, was supported by a threat of direct action, which has since been put into execution on its refusal. The objection on the ground of unconstitutionality however loses much of its force when it is remembered that the Government actions themselves have not been in strict accord with the provisions of law. Are there not, for instance, strong grounds for believing that there have been serious and even vital legal flaws in their

procedure, which might, on a reference to the High Court, be sufficient to upset the Government's appeal? It is true the Revenue Jurisdiction Act protects the actions of Government and bars suits against them in land revenue matters, but the actions must themselves be legal, and the High Court will interfere and has interfered where there have been illegalities, (15 Bo. L. R., 665, 37 I.L. R. Bo., 542, I. L. R., 36 Bo., 91). We do not intend to-day to discuss in this article the various irregularities which we have noticed. We will therefore only briefly indicate some of them here, leaving it to Government to assure themselves by referring the questions to their legal officers. *Verb. Sap.*

(1) After the notice in form Q issued by the settlement officer, Mr. Jayakar, was a second notice not necessary, and was it issued when (a) the Settlement Commissioner altered the groups and rates, and (b) Government further revised them in their resolution of 17th July 1927 and again later in their press note of March 1928?

(2) Could the revision settlements of Bardoli and Chorasi talukas, not sanctioned by Government till 19th July 1927, be "introduced" with any decency during the revenue year 1926-27 and levied from 1927-28? Was this a *bona fide* introduction in the past year or only a nominal compliance with the letter of the law and not its spirit? If this was no evasion of section 104 of the L. R. Code, how is it consistent with the direction in Government Resolution No. 1447 dated 27th February 1901, that "the land revenue settlements should *invariably* be introduced between the 1st of August and the date of the *first instalment of the land revenue*", i. e., 5th January (rule 85 (d) and rule 86), to ensure which Government have given the further direction that "care should be taken to submit proposals for revision of settlements in time to obviate any avoidable loss of revenue, which might otherwise result from non-observance of these orders"? Moreover if this was not so, how could remissions due in the year of introduction be given effect to in the same year as ordered by Government in the Resolution just quoted (*vide* also G. R. No. 1396 dated 27th February 1903 and No. 5508 dated 13th August 1903), since the full assessments had already been collected before 17th July 1927?

(3) Have the attachments and confiscations been *strictly* in accordance with the intention and prescriptions of the law and the rules and the executive orders of Government? (*Vide* Sathé's L. R. Code, pp. 245 to 271)? Were confiscated lands not put up to sale, but entered as waste and then given out to other persons for nominal amounts, thereby defeating the purpose of section 183 of the L. R. Code and defrauding the defaulters of the surplus proceeds of sales to which they are entitled? Were more lands confiscated than was actually necessary in every case for realising the amounts due? Were milch buffaloes and other live stock and moveable property also distrained and sold "for a song," although, on Messrs. Jayakar and Anderson's own showing, the sale value of the confiscated lands alone averaged as high

as 40 to 94 times the assessments, thus proving that there was no call whatever to seize such animals or moveable property in addition?

(4) Lastly, has H. E. the Governor satisfied himself from Mr. Jayakar's report that the officer made his inquiry in accordance with the direction in G. R. No. 800 dated 2nd February 1900? If so, how many of the 137 villages did he visit and *how many persons did he meet and question* on the subject of rents, sales, improvements, and new rates? For there is no information at all on these points in Mr. Jayakar's report. Still in the view of the Land Revenue Assessment Committee (paragraph 44 A), this is most necessary. According to them, "the settlement officer spends several months in touring the taluka under revision, in the course of which *he visits nearly every village* and takes the opportunity of *consulting the villagers* on the spot and hearing *what they have to say*. Their views are taken into the most careful consideration by him and his proposals are made with the fullest knowledge of local conditions *as expressed by the people most intimately concerned*... When the proposals finally come before Government, therefore, not only have they passed through the hands of all the superior revenue officers... but *local opinion has also had ample opportunity of expression and all objections are laid before Government and carefully scrutinized before orders are passed*." Is this, we ask, a true picture of what actually happened in Bardoli, emphatically denied as it is by the people there? And if not, how is His Excellency the Governor or the Hon. the Revenue Member able to say that a full inquiry has been made, and that there is no need whatever for another, as is demanded by the people, with one voice, nor by them alone?

A RETIRED REVENUE OFFICER.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

GENEVA, June 21.

THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

THE Eleventh Session, of the International Labour Conference closed last Saturday, and the closing sessions were, as usual with these huge gatherings, very much hurried. There were signs of weariness, and more than once the Director of the Labour Office who was the Secretary General of the Conference reminded the delegates about their business at Geneva, as the quorum necessary for voting purposes was sometimes lacking. If the Conference did not extend further, it was due, as the Deputy Secretary-General remarked, to the time saved by the new system of telephonic interpretation, by which means translations of the speeches into one or more other languages were given simultaneously.

THE TWO ITEMS.

The agenda of the Eleventh Conference comprised two items, Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery and the Prevention of Industrial Accidents including accidents due to coupling on Railways and those involved in the loading and unloading of ships. By 76 votes to 21, the Conference adopted a Draft

Convention concerning the creation or maintenance of minimum wage-fixing machinery in trades, particularly home-working trades, to be determined by each State. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, speaking on behalf of the Government of India, explained that the reason of our Government Delegates remaining mere observers as regards the discussion on this point was the peculiar constitution of India which rendered the Government of India unable to operate this Convention. The Provincial Governments would naturally be the agents responsible for the working of the Convention, though the Government of India would be the party committed to the International Labour organisation. The Central Government had not yet been able to ascertain the position of the local Governments in the matter, and it had to be borne in mind that the conditions in India were peculiar, and neither from the point of view of industrial advance nor of organisation of Labour were they comparable to the conditions in western countries. Mr. Chaman Lall, retorting, attacked the Government of India and blamed it for raising futile excuses and for not taking the existing Labour organisations into its confidence. By 81 votes to 18 the Conference adopted a Recommendation embodying general guiding principles for the application of the minimum wage-fixing machinery embodied in the Draft Convention. These guiding principles are three. In the words of Mr. Chaman Lall, "first, that the wages that are going to be fixed should be fixed with due regard to the living conditions of the workers, that is to say, that this principle incorporates the principle contained in the Peace Treaty, namely, that a living standard should be the basis upon which any arrangement is to be arrived at. The second principle is that the workers, as well as employers and those interested, have a right to go before the national Government and demand an enquiry into a particular trade or industry in which wages are so low that a minimum rate has to be fixed. The third principle is . . . the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women."

Regarding the prevention of industrial accidents, by unanimous votes the Conference decided to place on the agenda of the next session the general prevention of industrial accidents and the protection against accidents of workers employed in the loading and unloading of ships. By 94 votes to 5 a draft questionnaire relating to the prevention of industrial accidents in general to pave the way for next year's discussion was adopted. A draft questionnaire concerning the protection against accidents of workers employed in loading or unloading of ships was also adopted by a unanimous vote, and similarly, the Conference decided that the opinion of the Joint Maritime Commission should be obtained on the maritime aspects of any proposed draft Convention on this subject, and should be communicated to Governments. As regards automatic couplings, by a unanimous vote, the Conference adopted a resolution in favour of the appointment of a Joint Committee of Governments, employers, and workers to study the question of coupling accidents on railways, with

special reference to the use of automatic couplings. The resolution outlining the steps which should be taken to assist the "Safety First" movement, and the recommendation that the International Labour Office should be authorised to continue its comparative study of national safety legislation, also unanimously adopted, were calculated to bring about an amelioration in the prevention of accidents.

• THE RESOLUTIONS.

The Conference adopted, in most cases unanimously, Resolutions in favour of enquiries into the causes which impede production, industrial relations, the effects of rationalisation on conditions of employment, housing conditions, dangers to motor-vehicle drivers, risks attending one-man driving of locomotives, collective bargaining in agriculture, re-education and re-employment of disabled persons, and conditions of work in the textile industry. The other Resolutions dealt with voluntary associations for the support of the organisation, freedom of association, calendar reform, the observance of article 405 of the Peace Treaty, and the establishment of national labour departments. Some of the Resolutions related to the introduction of additional official languages in the transactions of the organisation and were referred to the Governing Body.

OUR SOUTH AFRICAN LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

DURBAN, June 14.

INDIAN EDUCATION IN NATAL.

IN his speech to the Natal Provincial Council the Administrator announced on the 30th May last that the Executive Committee was in full agreement with the conclusions of the Indian Education Enquiry Committee and asked the Council's sanction for a further sum of £9000 being added to the Education Estimates for providing further facilities for Indian education. If that was approved, it would mean that the whole of the subsidy received from the Union Government in respect of attendance of Indian children would be used for the education of these children. During the course of the debate it was contended by one member that the Report of the Committee should be discussed by the Council, while others maintained that no purpose would be served thereby, and that it was quite sufficient that it was laid on the table. Mr. Dyson, the Chairman of the Committee, spoke at length defending the Report. He repeated the astounding statement put into the Report that the Administration's policy in the past of preventing the educational development of Indians beyond a certain point was in harmony with the wishes of the majority of the people of Natal! In Mr. Dyson's conception of the "people of Natal" the Indians and the Natives, who together form the overwhelming part of the "people of Natal", are just non-existent! Only the European minority fill the picture. Even so, it is a sin against that section to maintain that they approved of the misappropriation of the funds placed at the disposal of the Province by the Union Government for Indian education. In the next breath Mr. Dyson admitted that all sections of the population had a right to education, and that it could not be disputed that the Administration had not given sufficient education to Indian children. He went on to say that the Indian community had a right to claim that the subsidy of five guineas per head for Indian education should be spent on Indian education; and he assured

the Council that it would be no hardship to the Europeans. It would be interesting to know when and how the Administration got the mandate of the "people of Natal" for the earlier policy and for the subsequent denunciation of it. Nevertheless we have reason to be grateful for the change of policy and to thank the Provincial Council for passing the extra Education vote.

It is not smooth sailing yet. In my last Letter, I referred to the Acting Superintendent of Education in Natal, Dr. C. T. Loram, and to the apprehension that his views on Indian education may not appeal to the enlightened Indian community here. His influence is already visible: Mr. Dyson went back on his recommendation in the Report that Mr. Sastri's Indian Training College should be staffed by qualified lecturers from India; and he says that he did this on the advice of Dr. Loram. It is an open secret that it is well-nigh impossible to find European teachers with sufficient enthusiasm for running the Indian college; it is generally the failures in European schools that are spared for Indian schools. Of Indians competent to run the College there are none in Natal. Hence it was that Mr. Sastri proposed to import competent and enthusiastic teachers from India. The proposal received the support of the permanent Superintendent of Education, Mr. Hugh Bryan, and of the Education Committee. Now at the instance of Dr. Loram, Mr. Dyson has changed his mind.

It is expected that the site for the Training College in Durban will be made available to Mr. Sastri in about another month, when arrangements will be made to lay the foundation stone. The site is only two acres in extent and the plans for the buildings have had to be altered accordingly.

INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Indian education in the Transvaal stands on an entirely different footing from that in Natal, though in the result it is equally deplorable. The blame for it must be shared by the Indian community with the Administration. By normal standards the number of Indian children of school-going age in the Transvaal is estimated at 3,500. This is perhaps an overestimate; for an appreciable number of Indians here live without their families, and consequently the school-going population must be less than the normal. No figures are available as to the number of children actually at school. For besides children attending purely Indian schools, there are others who attend Eur-African schools, and their number is not separately computed. There are 10 Indian schools with 847 scholars in them. This separate schools system was initiated in 1913; prior to that date, Indian children attended the Eur-African schools.

Primary education is free, but not compulsory. Books and stationery and sometimes lunches are provided free. All Indian schools are Government schools; there are no aided Indian schools. The policy of the Administration has been that if the Indian community in any place desired a school, it should provide a building for it; and then the Government steps in and runs the school. No Indian school teaches beyond the full primary stage; few even that far.

There are 5 European and 23 Indian teachers in the Indian schools. Of the latter 2 are graduates, 2 Intermediates, 1 Matriculate, 8 have received only primary education and 10 have not had even that. As for professional qualifications, only 3 have Teachers' certificate, 2 have had some sort of training and 18 have had none. Compared with Natal the teachers in the Transvaal are very well paid indeed, the minimum salary being £10 a month.

The Union Government pays a subsidy of £6 per Indian child to the Provincial Administration of the Transvaal against £5. 5s. in Natal. Since the total number of Indian children at school is not definitely known, it is impossible to say what the subsidy amounts to and whether the whole of it is being spent on Indian education. Taking only the purely Indian schools the subsidy last year was estimated at £4,482 while the salaries of the teachers alone amounted to £4,794. To which must be added the cost of books and materials and the cost of administration. It is, therefore, claimed that the Provincial Administration has been supplementing the Union subsidy.

The curricula of European schools are also the official curricula in Indian schools. But in practice great liberties are taken with the authorised curricula by the schools committees consisting of some influential Indians. According to the Regulations, the Education Department may constitute on its own initiative schools committees consisting of elected representatives of the parents of the pupils in each school; but if fifty per cent. of such parents demand it the Department is bound to constitute such committees. They are entitled to advise the Department regarding the personnel of the staff, etc. The principle underlying it is that the parents should have a voice in the management of the school, an excellent principle. It does not absolve the Department, however, of responsibility for the efficiency of the school. In the case of Indian schools this principle has been grossly abused. It has been said already that in the matter of Indian education the Department insists on the Indian community providing the building. The initiative is thus left to the Indians, who, particularly in the Transvaal, seem to be sectional in the extreme. The Memon Muhammadans desire a separate school from that of the Konkani Muhammadans, and of course, from that of the Tamils and Gujaratis. Each of these communities build separate school buildings. The one or two leading people of each community constitute themselves into School Committee, and the Department acknowledges them forthwith.

No care is taken to see that the schools committees are properly constituted. The self-constituted committees are wholly incompetent to advise the Department in educational matters; and the Department has fallen into the habit of accepting without question or scrutiny the recommendations of these committees and thereby abrogating its responsibility for the efficiency of the school. The Department has been indifferent to and neglectful of Indian education; and the school committees have been incompetent. And between them the education of the innocent children has suffered greatly. The teachers, who are mostly imported from India, have been selected for qualifications other than teaching. They are primarily Muhammadan priests or Hindu accountants first and school-masters only afterwards. Most of the teachers are incompetent to teach the official curricula; but this it is not considered a handicap. Wide liberties are taken with the official curricula without any authority from the Department. Urdu, Hindu, Tamil and Gujarati, the teaching of the Koran and other religious literature form the principal fare. And yet the schools are Government schools and the teachers are paid by the Government.

The contrast between Indian education in Natal and in the Transvaal is striking indeed. In the former the community eagerly seek the right type of education. The Education Department has been sympathetic, but the Administration has been repressive. In the Transvaal the Administration has a broad-minded policy, but the Department has been

Thus doubly handicapped, the League of Nations entered upon life. In spite of these drawbacks and notwithstanding all the coldness and all the criticism to which in its early days it was exposed everywhere, it can already show a record of marvellous achievements, too many to be enumerated. A few examples, however, may be given.

Take, first, the change of attitude towards Germany which is directly traceable to the existence of the League. All through the war and even when it ended, the feeling against Germany amongst "the Allies" was, speaking generally, one of intense bitterness. Germany had been aggressor, and therefore, said the victors, Germany must suffer, Germany must be disarmed and Germany must pay. Germany accordingly, in disgrace, was not in the original League. It was a League of Victors rather than a League of Nations. Who could have expected that in seven years' time, the past forgiven, Germany would be received as a member of the League and, with a permanent seat on its Council, once more freely and frankly recognised as one of the major States of the world? Yet in the year 1926 this became an accomplished fact!

Again, in the work of economic reconstruction, no one could have anticipated the enormous progress that has already been made. In 1922, for instance, the finances of Austria seemed in an absolutely hopeless condition. In 1926 her financial stability was assured! This rapid recovery and a similar—even more striking—experience in Hungary must be placed entirely to the credit of the machinery set in motion by the League of Nations. It is to this machinery also, and to the unprejudiced study of facts which it has brought about, that we must look for the cure of unemployment, so wide-spread in many countries after the war. Trade has been paralysed and poverty has been rampant, not because there has been any shortage of food-stuffs in the world, but because there has not been free communication between country and country. Customs barriers have been increased and have been liable to more frequent and more sudden changes than before. Under the auspices of the Economic Section of the League Secretariat, a great Economic Conference was held in May 1927. This Conference, consisting of nearly 200 members, chosen from many trades and occupations, with various qualifications, representing every shade of responsible opinion, and chosen—with the exception of eleven—by the Governments of the world, looked at the subject of economic recovery not from a national but from a world point of view, and saw that what was good for the whole was best also for the component parts, and that what looked like individual or national wisdom in the imposition of protective tariffs was really collective insanity. The Conference recommended accordingly. If only the various people could see it and could compel their Governments to accept the recommendation!

One more instance of the beneficent influence of the League may be noted here. Germany and Turkey

used to have colonies. President Wilson's plea that there should be no annexation in consequence of victory did not carry in the Peace Conference, but a compromise with the old school of Imperialists was effected, and what is known as the Mandates System was devised, by which certain influential and advanced States received "mandates" for the assistance control of peoples not sufficiently strong to stand on their own feet and regulate their own affairs. If, to begin with, there was misgiving as to a system which might turn out to be only a hypocritical form of annexation, its operation, through the persistent goodwill of those who have administered it, has dispelled doubts and fears. Annual reports are called for from the mandatory powers, these reports are scrutinised by an impartial Commission, explanations are asked and suggestions offered where necessary, appeals from dissatisfied subjects are inquired into, and steps are taken to see that incipient abuses are nipped in the bud. When colonial administration is thus made answerable to the public opinion of the world, there is little chance of the colonies being exploited in any selfish way by the administrators.

The League of Nations is essentially a democratic institution. It is not the creation, and it does not depend upon the approval, of autocratic rulers who, being liable to whims, could never form a stable foundation for an edifice so vast in its proportions and so diverse in its architecture. Diplomacy must now be conducted in the light of day. The League of Nations has prospered because it has appealed to enlightened public opinion in all lands. It thrives on the good-will of "the average man." For the most part, its officials have caught the idealistic spirit of its founder. With firm faith that the soul of the world is good, and that the unsophisticated heart of mankind responds to what is noble and right, and condemns what is wrong, they work by persuasion, not by command, assured in the long run of the wholesome effect of public opinion, "that uncrowned and anonymous royalty."

Those workers in connection with the League of Nations, whose lectures are here offered to the public, are under no illusion as to the gigantic tasks still remaining. In the idea of its original promoters, one of the main objects of the League was to prevent war. The accomplishment of this primary object is not yet nearly in sight. Governments have not begun to take seriously the question of Disarmament. It is true that there are worse evils than war, such as the traffic in women and children, evils which, equally with the question of disarmament, have hitherto defied solution. But our hope for the future is all the greater for the fact that our international workers, fully conscious of these evils, have shouldered the burden of them as part of their task. Everything, in fact, that disturbs the harmony and the happiness of the world comes under their review. And they have the consciousness that they are working in line with the best spirit, not of this age only, but of all past ages too, for the League of Nations, while something new in the experience of men, is not an "innovation." Long before 1919, in various departments of activity

intellectual and philanthropic, international co-operation was practised.

A very interesting suggestion is made in one of the lectures reported in these volumes, viz., that the question of the future administration of Indian affairs should be submitted to the League of Nations. Englishmen say they are in India for the benefit of India. Indians say that the British are in India for the benefit of Great Britain. There is truth in both statements, and fortunately there are Indians—like Mr. K. T. Paul and the editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*—as well as Britons, who realise that for good or for evil the destinies of the two peoples are inextricably linked. It might, however, conduce to a happier settlement of the present controversy if the British Parliament were to see its way, with the concurrence of the Indian people, to place the issue for final decision before a representative and impartial body like the Assembly of the League, its Council or its Permanent Mandates Commission.

A. R. LOW.

BRITAIN'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE.

BRITAIN'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE. (Ernest Benn Ltd., London.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 503. 2s. 6d.

THE present book is the report of the Liberal Industrial Inquiry prepared by various special committees in connection with the Liberal Summer School. The array of names, politicians and economists, is imposing, the method appears exhaustive and the conclusions are hopeful.

There is hardly any aspect of the industrial world that has been left out and though we are not in any way to accept all the Committee's estimates and conclusions, we cannot help being well impressed with the spirit of sincere research and frank inquiry that pervades the whole volume; it is however a business inquiry and unduly lacking in social regard and human interest. But "there is a silver lining," viz, it is becoming more and more apparent that the economic interest of capital is intimately bound up with the just claims of labour and this happy coincidence allows sanguine expectations as to a peaceful and speedy solution of many social problems; once self-interest is in harmony with duty the human being turns into a very nice gentleman indeed. This is not very flattering for our precious little species nor does it speak much for our idealistic ambitions; but we may rejoice whenever the opposition between matter and spirit grows less fierce.

It is, for instance, admitted that "the maintenance of the highest practicable level of wages is the common interest of the community, the workers and the employers". Unhappily the just wage-system that is proposed is somewhat indefinite and unphilosophical; three elements are taken into consideration: (a) a minimum below which no worker should fall; (b) standard wages corresponding to the skill and effort required from the worker; and (c) a variable element (profit-sharing) dependent upon the prosperity of the concern in which the worker is employed. The minimum wage is not determined in any way and it is conceived as varying with every industry; we suggest that such a minimum should be the "living wage" which is the economic translation of the human value of man's labour; but the living wage as a minimum varies not with the various industries but rather with the economic productivity of the

various districts; namely the adult's day labour is intended by nature to supply him with all he needs in the region he lives in. If fasting is ever necessary, let it be made plain that it is in the nature of a sacrifice and not a normal restriction.

But the Liberal School is liberally minded and it is refreshing to see capitalists advocating the distribution of wealth among the workers.

"The existing distribution of the ownership of property or capital in this country is so grossly unequal as to constitute a social danger and to give substance to the complaint that the nation is divided into a small owning class and a large working class. It is essential that every possible means should be taken to amend this evil by bringing about a more general diffusion of ownership."

The whole book is full of sanguine resolutions but betrays deep anxiety about the industrial crisis in England. The momentum of an early start has spent itself, the industrial system is antiquated, social discontent is rife; unemployment is severe, birth-rate is falling, international competition is keen: in short there is little hope for a continued British industrial supremacy unless there be a change, sincere and thorough-going, in the national life, readjustment of the economic system to new conditions, the creation of a peaceful atmosphere and mutual good feeling in the social and international world.

Such are the broad conclusions of the very interesting and deep study of British Industry.

A. LALLEMAND.

A CANADIAN SOCIAL WORKER.

J. ALLEN BAKER: A MEMOIR. By E. B. BAKER and P. J. NOEL BAKER. (The Swarthmore Press, Ltd., London.) 1927. 8½ × 6. pp. 269. 7s. 6d.

THE name of Allen Baker cannot be familiar to many in India, but none the less his services to humanity are many and striking. Born in Canada, he had a hard struggle for life during his boyhood and youth. But his coming to England in 1866, at the age of twenty-four, marked the turning point of his life. He came to build up his father's business, but stayed away till the end of his life. Success in business, however, is the least important part of his life work. In spite of growing work in the office, he found time to take an active part in Adult Education. And when his sterling work among the poor and the illiterate led him, in open election, to the London County Council, he ardently interested himself in removing housing congestion, and in mitigating the drink evil. He was also mainly responsible for electrifying London's tramways and for the purchase of some of them by the Council from private contractors.

By far the most important part of his life, however, began with his entry into Parliament in 1905. A Quaker by birth and a staunch Pacifist all his life, he took particular interest in promoting international peace. In regard to the rapid growth of armaments, it was a standing complaint of his that Britain always set the pace to the rest of the world in the matter. But mere complaints did not satisfy his energetic soul. Believing strongly that the Church was the only institution which could work strenuously and steadily for peace, but that national boundaries divided it hopelessly, he sought to bring about a better mutual understanding between, first, the British and the German Churches, and, then, between the British and the American Churches. Subsequently, he worked hard for a conference of all the world churches. But when this conference was actually going on at Constance in Germany, the

great war broke out. This meant a great blow to him but he was not unnerved. To mitigate the evil he could not prevent, he at once set about doing ambulance work and, in connection with it, went about a good deal from country to country, in spite of grave dangers. The end came in 1918, silent and peaceful,—the end of a life, full and strenuous, though not noisy.

S. P. SARMA.

SHORT NOTICES.

PARENTHOOD—DESIGN OR ACCIDENT?

By MICHAEL FIELDING (The Labour Publishing Co., Ltd., London). 1928. 6½ × 4¼. pp. 96. 1s

IT has been the general complaint in England that while birth-control is practised by the rich who on economic grounds do not need it, it is practically unknown to those who stand badly in need of it, viz. the poor. This book is meant for people with whom family limitation is an economic necessity. The language is lucid and simple, technical terms being avoided as far as possible. Being written by an experienced doctor, the layman will naturally have no fear that it would preach anything which may be detrimental to health. Indeed it is claimed for birth-control that it will promote health and happiness. The author has divided his subject under three heads—the meaning of birth-control, its methods and the objections raised against it. His description of the wretched life which women in the lower orders of English Society are forced to lead, while it makes heart-rending reading, establishes the need of contraception in their case beyond doubt. Then there are the diseased women in whose case it is a crime to posterity to bear children. But the author does not content himself with merely preaching birth-control; he also tells us by what means it could be brought about. This part of the book is of much practical use. The other chapters devoted to a discussion of medical, sociological and ethical aspects of birth-control also merit careful perusal.

R. A. RAIRKAR.

CONTRACEPTION—ITS THEORY, HISTORY AND PRACTICE.

BY MARIE C. STOPES. (John Bale Sons and Danielson Ltd., London.) 1927. 8¾ × 5½. pp. 480. 15s.

THIS is the second edition of Dr. Stopes' well known book. It is meant to give in a concise and lucid way all the information necessary on the subject for the average individual. The section on contraceptives is written with a decided bias towards the pessary which goes by the author's name. The theory about the absorption of semen and its important effect on woman is not at present accepted by many people. This point was specifically put to all witnesses before the Committee of the National Council on Public Morals when every one denied that the absorption of semen had any good influence on the woman. This however does not detract from the value of the book which is indispensable to everybody interested in the subject of contraception.

A. R. SANE

CORRESPONDENCE.

OPPRESSION IN DEWAS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—I wish to draw attention to two cases of the exploitation of poor ignorant cultivators going on in

Dewas State (Senior Branch). Whether the cultivators are willing or unwilling to pay, for several years past the authorities of this State have been extorting from them 25% on their holdings, ostensibly for the erection of a temple for the public at Dewas town; but no such temple is in evidence, and it is not known how the collections under this head amounting to a few lakhs have been spent.

While these collections were being levied, His Highness the Maharaja enacted a law, Act 1 of 1921, according to which all the cultivators were required to acquire proprietary rights in their holdings by paying 3 years' land tax; and if they delayed in putting in their applications, say, if a cultivator applied 7 years after the issue of this law, he has to pay 10 years' land tax for obtaining the said rights. The collection of these nazaranas in some cases has been, I am told, accompanied by force.

As though their cup of misery and woe was not full to the brim, another burden was inflicted on them. His Highness the Maharaja issued a proclamation in December, 1926, enjoining on every cultivator in his State the duty of showing his respect by paying 88% to 100% as "Lagan Patti"—a marriage tax in honour of his son's marriage which occurred on the 22nd December 1926.

Owing to these exactions cultivators have been ruined, and many have been forced even to leave their homes and wander about from place to place with their families and children in search of employment to keep them from starvation.

Numerous petitions to the Dewas State authorities, and to His Highness the Maharaja himself praying for the removal of these burdens, have proved unavailing. In consequence of this stern and determined attitude of the Dewas authorities and of His Highness the Maharaja to collect in full all these taxes, the cultivators have been compelled to submit petitions to the Political Agent, Manpur, enumerating their grievances, and praying for redress. Yours, etc.

R. B. THOMSON.

Indore, June 18.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- JUSTICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW. By WILLIAM A. ROBSON. (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.) 1928. 8¼ × 5¼. pp. 346. 12s. 6d.
- THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AMERICA. By GEORGE PEEL. (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.) 1928. 8¼ × 5¼. pp. 330. 10s. 6d.
- A SURVEY OF SOCIALISM. By F. J. C. HEARNSHAW. (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.) 1928. 8¼ × 5¼. pp. 473. 15s.
- ESSAYS ON THE GITA. (1st & 2nd series.) By AUROBINDO GHOSE. (Arya Publishing House, Calcutta.) 1928. 9 × 5¼. pp. 379, 501.
- INDIA: ITS CHARACTER. By J. A. CHAPMAN. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford.) 1928. 8¼ × 5¼. pp. 84. 3s.
- NAVIES AND NATIONS. By HECTOR C. BYWATER. (Constable & Co., Ltd., London.) 1927. 9 × 5¼. pp. 285. 12s.
- THE TRIUMPHANT MACHINE. By R. M. FOX. (The Hogarth Press, London.) 1928. 7¼ × 5. pp. 147. 5s.
- RECONSTRUCTION OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN CHINA. By CHILING YIN. (The Commercial Press, Ltd., Shanghai.) 1926. 7¼ × 5¼. pp. 171. \$1.20.
- MANUAL OF DAIRY FARMING FOR INDIAN STUDENTS. By B. K. GHARE. (Macmillan & Co. Ltd., Bombay.) 1928. 7¼ × 5. pp. 302.