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## Topics of the Week.

### MacDonald's Visit to the States.

MR. MACDONALD'S visit to the United States makes it practically certain that an agreement will be reached between the two countries in respect of the limitation and reduction of naval armaments. If there was one single cause to which the breakdown of the Coolidge Conference was due it was the prominence given to expert opinion and the lack of diplomatic preparation behind it. From the present conversations the naval experts have been rigorously kept out and the political chiefs in the two countries have taken up the negotiations directly in their own hand. Mr. Hoover and Mr. MacDonald present a striking contrast in several respects, but, if for different reasons, each of them has the will to peace in a remarkable degree. The result can therefore be safely anticipated that a definite stop will be put to a race in naval armaments as between the two most powerful naval powers. But the agreement, when it comes about, will be used only as an instrument for persuading Japan and the two Mediterranean naval powers to reach a Five-Power agreement. There is little doubt that after an Anglo-American understanding such a Five-Power agreement will not be long in coming. Japan is only too willing to come in; the other two powers too will not hold out long. At any rate a Five-Power Conference, proposed to be held early next year, will meet under the best of auspices. When naval disarmament—or, to be more precise, limitation and reduction of naval armaments—has taken place, the way will be clear for taking up the question of military disarmament, which presents greater difficulties. Never were conditions more favourable for world peace than now.

### Congress President.

THE election of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the Congress chair is a great personal triumph, on which he is to be warmly congratulated. The great qualities of intellect, character and personality which he has exhibited to such an eminent degree at an early stage of his public career had in any case marked him out for the very high honour which has now come to him. Even those who would have preferred to wait for some time before they would call him to the office of Congress President were never lacking in appreciation of these high qualities of the Pandit; their hesitation was merely due to the fact that next year, which may easily be the most critical in the annals of Modern India, qualities were required in the accredited leader of the country of which the young Pandit has not yet had an opportunity of giving concrete proof. It is idle to conceal the fact that the hesitation in some quarters of the Congress was great. As soon as it became known that Mahatma Gandhi could not be persuaded to reconsider his refusal unless he felt sure that his policy would find acceptance in the Congress, proposals began coming in that the final choice of the President need not be confined to the names put up by the Provincial Congress Committees; even hints were dropped that some names were put up in the belief that, as against Mahatma Gandhi's, they had no chance. For this reason, it was said, the list would have to be revised; in any case the A.I.C.C. could go outside the names proposed and select a veteran leader such as Pandit Motilal Nehru for the third time. The nervousness thus displayed is quite understandable. One who is committed to a declaration of independence even if Dominion Status was obtainable on September 5 instead of on December 31 and who looks upon passive resistance as the normal weapon of political warfare is not, it is felt, exactly the person to lead the country which has already been committed, for good or evil, to the declaration of independence and a recourse to passive resistance on the New Year's day in circumstances which are by no means problematical now. There is of course this thing to be said in favour of the choice: if under Pandit Jawaharlal's leadership passive resistance is not launched and independence is not proclaimed upon the fateful day, then the country will know that there are insuperable difficulties in translating these fancies into actuality. Mahatma Gandhi has been declaring in public meetings, in advance of the Lucknow decision, that he is firm in his resolution to head a no-tax campaign in pursuance of the Calcutta Congress resolution, and certainly Gandhiji means what he says; but considering the reasons which dictated his refusal of the Congress presidency, he must appear to some to be engaged in something perilously like whistling to keep up his courage. It is to be earnestly hoped that the Congress decisions in the coming session will be guided by a wise statemanship.

### "Failure" of the Sastri Mission.

THE *Indian Daily Mail* says in its leader of Oct. 1: "Mr. K. C. Roy, whose speech in the Legislative Assembly on the subject (of East Africa) on Thursday was markedly intemperate in some parts, indulged in an indiscriminate attack not only on the (Hilton Young) Report, but on Mr. Sastri's mission and the Government of India for denying the Legislative Assembly an opportunity for discussing the Report. Notwithstanding Mr. Roy's dictum, we venture to think that the Report is an extremely able one and it has taken a fair view of the position of Indians in East Africa. . . . If Mr. Sastri's mission was a failure, it was because, unknown to him and perhaps also to the Government of India, the Baldwin Government had authorised Sir Samuel Wilson to inform the European leaders that the communal electorates will not be disturbed. This stiffened the attitude of the Europeans and, as Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas said, forced the commercial community among them which has been inclined to take a liberal view on the question, into conformity with the settlers' policy of white domination. The discredit for the failure must rest, not with Mr. Sastri, nor with the Government of India, but with the Baldwin Government which in the vain hope of being returned to power, indulged in this bit of underhand dealing with the Kenya Europeans."

### The late Mr. S. M. Paranjpe.

THE news of the death of Mr. Shivram Mahadeo Paranjpe will be received by people all over the Deccan and what is called "greater Maharashtra" with profound grief. In his college career he laid the foundation of the Sanskrit erudition for which he was ever afterwards noted and which gave a certain dignity to his style of writing, by securing the Bhagwandas Scholarship and the Zala prize in M.A. His early fame was made as Editor of a weekly newspaper in Marathi which in a short time he made the organ of advanced nationalist opinion in the Deccan. His style was trenchant and marked by a powerful irony which at times rose to the highest point of eloquence. In 1908 he was incarcerated for sedition which incapacitated him from vigorous journalistic work for a few years; this period however he utilized in putting forth a mass of literary work which has placed him in the front rank of literati. Since 1920 he had come to believe in the creed of non-co-operation and had shown himself a staunch supporter of the Gandhian school of thought, working for Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and undiluted Swaraj for which latter he worked through his paper the *Swarajya*, his second journalistic enterprise. Every one could see that latterly he had been using his influence to bring about an understanding between the several parties in the Deccan and for the last few months he was working for the popularising of the Nehru Report as a common platform for such a *rapprochement*. Among his varied activities must be mentioned public speaking and by common consent he was one of the best exponents of that art and used it very successfully in his nationalist propagandist work. The public life of this Presidency has suffered a great loss by his demise and it may be years before this place is taken by another leader with such sterling qualities.

### The Progress of the Marriage Bill.

THE Assembly has shown determined resolution in passing the Marriage Bill by an overwhelming majority. Fantastic attempts to introduce certain exemptions which could not stand the test of reason

were ruthlessly set aside; one of these related to Brahmins among whom it was said post-puberty marriages were forbidden by religion as well as custom. Nothing can be more pitiable than that a community like the Brahmins which is expected to give a lead in intellectual matters should try to exempt itself from the operation of such a beneficent piece of legislation. A futile attempt was made by some Muslim members to exempt the Muslims from the operation of the Bill on the ground that the provisions were against the Shariat and thus departed from the recognised policy of religious neutrality to which the Government were pledged; their own coreligionists however made short work of such arguments. It is deplorable that the Bombay Ulemas are still continuing their agitation against the Bill by making representations to the Viceroy. Equally unsuccessful were the attempts to postpone the operation of the Bill to a period two or three years hence. The most important of the items which went to make up the array of arguments in favour of the Bill is the support given to it by the All-India Medical Conference. We are sure the gloomy prognostications of Mr. Acharya would never be fulfilled. The picture conjured up by him of maternity before marriage resulting from fixing the age of marriage at 14 is highly coloured and is the product of an imagination which outruns the sense of reality. What is wanted is more facts and fewer phrases. Equally unfounded are the fears entertained by Mr. Sessa Iyengar that the Bill will place a premium on blackmailers. As we expected the Council of State has caught the spirit of obstruction prevalent in the Assembly and many of the members in that Chamber supported a motion for the postponement of the consideration of the Bill but fortunately it was defeated. Sir E. Haroon Jaffer became the spokesman of the Muslim opposition in the Council of State and referred to the considered opposition of a large number of Ulemas to the marriage legislation. We think however that the assurance of a lawyer of Mr. Jinnah's position that the Bill did not affect the Muslim law at any point ought to be a sufficient answer to such pleas. Despite all the opposition, the Council of State has passed the Bill and we are sure it will in due course receive the assent of the Governor-General.

### The Indian Central Committee.

THE differences in the Central Committee have recently come to such a point that the dissentient members who are opposed to the draft prepared by the Secretary have moved a vote of no-confidence against the Chairman. Dr. Suhrawardy and three other members have prepared a separate draft which they are anxious to pass as the final report of the Committee, but so far Sir Sankaran Nair has managed to resist their pretensions. The Secretary to the Committee has tried recently to preserve a show of decorum by stating that the draft report has been passed with a number of modifications and that the meeting has been very amicable. But the puzzle as to which of the two competing draft reports has been passed has not been so far unravelled. It is rumoured that Sir Hari Singh Gour moved the no-confidence resolution saying that the Chairman has forfeited all confidence of the Committee by his arbitrary acts; but this motion was disallowed by Sir Sankaran Nair. What is likely however to produce a *debacle* is the way in which it is stated that Sir Sankaran Nair ruled that every paragraph of the report had been passed in spite of the fact that the four dissentient members expressed disapproval in a lump. Whatever may turn up later on it is clear that the recommendations of the Committee are not unanimous; it is very likely that the four members will present their dissenting reports or

minutes if the latter word is a salve to their conscience. The most disquieting feature of the whole situation is that communal differences have been fully exploited by Government by constituting such a polyglot Committee. After the repeated rebuffs that the Committee has already suffered we are informed recently that the Statutory Commission has refused to the Central Committee even the glimpse of their own findings and suggestions. Such are the privileges accorded to the members of a 'joint free Conference'! That the Central Committee, which was appointed to assist the Commission to bring out the Indian point of view in regard to all matters discussed, has failed to do so will hardly be denied by anybody after all these happenings. Instead of presenting to the world the joint aspirations of Indians the report of the Committee will only accentuate the sectional demands of the various groups in the Indian Legislature.

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#### Land Revenue Legislation.

ALTHOUGH in reply to a series of questions asked by Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar relating to the delay in the publication of the promised Resolution on land revenue policy and the upshot of the Conference of land Revenue Members Sir Frank Noyce made a statement showing the progress made by Provincial Governments in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee the general tone of the reply is far from satisfactory. It appears now that the promised Resolution may not be issued within a measurable distance of time since the Government of India are unable to make a final pronouncement without consulting local Governments and receiving their suggestions since land revenue is a provincial subject. But the Government knew as much when the Resolution was promised. It is also clear now that apart from an account of the measures placed on the Statute book embodying the principles of land revenue assessment the Government of India has received no memoranda regarding proposed new methods of revision from Provincial Governments so as to enable them to coordinate the several policies. With regard to the important question whether the local Governments have been asked to suspend settlement operations pending the enactment of fresh legislation Sir Frank Noyce kept a discreet silence and was not prepared to throw any light on the subject. It is inevitable that the public will continue to be in a state of suspense till the issue of the Resolution. It is difficult to guess what the reasons can be for this absence of frankness with regard to an important matter which concerns the well-being of the Indian cultivator. To us the suspension of fresh revenue settlements appears to be a reasonable deduction from the admission of serious defects in the present methods of revenue settlement. If new principles are to be evolved to enable us to arrive at the decision about an equitable share of the State out of the profits of agriculture, there is little reason for continuing to apply the old principles to any portions of land whatsoever. There ought to be no hesitation in announcing a suspension of further settlement operations.

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#### Primary Education Conference.

THE third session of the Primary Education Conference held at Bandra has done some good in ventilating grievances and offering advice to Government on the subject of educational progress. Mr. Hiralal Desai, Chairman of the Reception Committee, strongly urged the revision of the present constitution of the School-Board which is not conducive to the growth of primary education by the scope it has

offered for communalism. The new scheme which he outlines wherein a Central Board of Education takes the place of the Director of Public Instruction is however in our opinion too sweeping a reform and a bit too cumbersome as machinery for efficiently supervising education. Mr. Dasai's suggestion that the whole proceeds of the entertainment tax must be devoted solely to primary education will be acceptable to everybody. In his Presidential address Prof. M. R. Paranipe, referring to the failure of the Primary Education Act owing to the defects in the agency through which the Act was put into operation, complimented the Government on having frankly admitted the fact in their Memorandum to the Statutory Commission. He is right in thinking that the failure would have been avoided if the Government had not undertaken the introduction of compulsion in local areas and the transfer of schools to Municipalities and District Boards all at once instead of spreading it over a series of years. As regards finances he showed how during the last six years there has been an expenditure of only Rs. 21 lakhs on expansion; whereas it should have been Rs. 96 lakhs if compulsory education for boys and girls had to be fully achieved within a period of ten years. Among the sins of the Education Department Mr. Paranipe mentions the disallowing of medical inspection, twisting the interpretation of rules about the size of classes and the minimum number of trained teachers, purposely delaying the schemes for compulsion submitted by the local authorities. It is necessary in his opinion to protect schools and school-masters from the vagaries of local bodies and to revise the rules governing the distribution of grants-in-aid. As remedies for the wastage in primary education he suggested the encouragement of adult education which will overcome his unwillingness to send his children to school and the employment of teachers with better training. In conclusion he warned the Government against making secondary education dearer and thus depriving a number of village pupils of its benefits.

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#### Legislative Council in Phaltan State.

THE inauguration of a Legislative Council in the State of Phaltan in Satara District recently on the birth-day of the Chief Saheb at the hands of Mr. J. Monteath, Political Agent, is an event of great importance. We must admire the courage of the Ruler of a small State who has set a fine example to many a bigger State which is still carrying on its administration in accordance with anti-diluvian methods. The Council consists of 17 members of whom eight are elected by the subjects; although there is theoretically a narrow majority of the nominated element it is just possible that some of the nominated non-officials may combine with the elected members to carry resolutions incorporating the public demands. The Chief Saheb has practically promised in his speech to encourage the growth of conventions whereby the resolutions of the Council will be binding on the Administration; besides he has already declared that the goal of his administration is the establishment of responsible government. We are sure once the Ruler has realized the advantages of constitutional government in keeping his people contented and happy, he will not recede or retrace his steps. We hope to hear very soon of the fixation of the privy purse of the Ruler and of an orderly and well-balanced budget, allotting a due share to the several departments of the State. The Chief Saheb deserves the congratulations of all who are interested in the constitutional development of Indian States for the progressive spirit he has thus shown in dealing with his subjects by inviting their co-operation.

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## Articles.

### THE TEST OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

THE new British government's policy has been on the whole very cautious, but, for all its caution and perhaps because of its caution, its practical accomplishments so far have been, as has been observed by the radical *World Tomorrow*, "nothing less than brilliant." Every unbiassed observer prepared to make due allowance for the position of special difficulty of the Labour party will endorse this provisional judgment. The real test of the Labour Ministry's sincerity and courage will however come not so much in the way in which it handles the unemployment problem at home or puts a stop to the armament race between the United States and Great Britain abroad, but in the manner in which it will overthrow the imperialism of the Conservative government. The *New Republic* of Aug. 28 has put the test thus: "Will the British trade unionists demand the ruthless exploitation of the tropics in order to help the unemployment situation at home? Will the "political" socialists allow outworn considerations of strategy and imperial prestige to affect British policy toward the demand of Egypt, India, and other parts of the empire for independence and home rule?" These two questions give expression to the misgivings which friendly critics of the government feel all over the world. It is in this imperial sphere that the Labour Cabinet is apt either to show itself too timid or too selfish. Even in this sphere the record of its first three months of office has not been bad. The first question framed by the *New Republic* has been answered by the MacDonald government by attaching a condition to the Colonial Development Loan that in the colonies benefiting from this loan there shall be no child labour under 12, no forced labour, and no long migrations of native workers disrupting family and tribal life. In thus inserting for the first time a sort of Labour Charter for the Native Races in Great Britain's advances to the Colonies, the Labour Government has shown that it means to give effect to the principle of Native Trusteeship although it may work to the disadvantage of the white settlers. The *New Republic's* second question also it has answered by offering to Egypt terms which are more liberal than those offered by the Baldwin government—terms which, if accepted by Egypt and implemented by Great Britain, will add, as has been well remarked by the *Irish Statesman*, that country to the British Dominions. Considering the past history of Egypt, the grant of Dominion Status may not be a particularly generous offer to that country; the maintenance of an alliance with Egypt—an alliance like those which Great Britain herself has been the first to condemn in others as a violation of the spirit of the League Covenant—may justly be criticised as evidence of the fact that the Labour government, while pressing forward vigorously in some matters, is willing to compromise in others. The best part of the proposed Anglo-Egyptian alliance consists in the clause which per-

mits of Egypt joining the League of Nations, thus subjecting, at any rate in theory, the operation of the alliance to the supervision of this body. The offer, far from ideal as it may be, shows withal that the Labour government would be prepared to move a few paces in advance of the Conservative government even where imperial policy is concerned.

How far the Labour government will be ready to throw off its timidity when confronted with a really big issue yet remains to be seen. Such an issue is presented by the Indian demand for self-government. The Labour Ministry will have to summon all the statesmanship it commands to its aid in solving the Indian problem and we shall soon know whether it will do anything to assuage the sentiment of deep and hot resentment created throughout the country by the appointment of the Simon Commission as a preliminary to the final settlement which can only be reached by co-operation and agreement. India thus constitutes the acid test of the Labour government's loyalty to its principles, but immediately the government will have on its hands a far simpler problem which it has absolutely no excuse to evade or temporise about. It is the problem of Kenya. In regard to this it is heavily committed by a series of past pledges of which the last was given just on the eve of its assumption of governmental responsibility, and it is fortified by a weighty state paper, the report of the Hilton Young Commission appointed by the Conservative government. In spite of the denunciations of it by Mr. K. C. Roy, who, for all his former association with this question, seems to be the most ignorant and wrong-headed of the Assembly members on the subject, this report is, as has been described in the Government of India's dispatch, on the whole an eminently fair and reasonable document. The implementation of the majority recommendations in their integrity will go far to meet the Indian case. Sir George Schuster, who as a member of the Young Commission, contributed largely to the maintenance of a right balance between the interests of the various races of Kenya, pleaded on behalf of the Government of India that it was only an advocate of the Indian claims, the final determination of which rests in other hands. This has evoked a heated protest from the leader of the Kenya Indians' deputation to this country, a protest for which, speaking frankly, there appears to be no adequate reason. The Government of India in fact can only be regarded as pleading for one section of the community of Kenya, and it is the function of the Imperial Government to whom it belongs to take the final decision to make the interests of this section reconcile with those of the other sections. Why such a statement of the existing state of things should be looked upon by Indians as a policy of surrender instead of the former policy of the championship of the Indian cause we are unable to understand. So far as we know, the Government of India never appropriated to itself the rôle of judge. It can never assume that rôle without grave impropriety nor will it for a moment be allowed to assume it. Even when in 1920 it indicted a very strong memorandum urging Indian claims, it did not play

the rôle of a judge or of a High contracting party. The memorandum was liked immensely, because it took a high line in urging the claims, but this does not change the character of its rôle.

The complaint of Indians with the Imperial Government is not that it plays the part of a judge; their complaint is that it plays it so badly; that it has one measure for the weak and another for the strong. In 1923 it made the pretence of taking the weakest element in the population—the natives—under its special protection treating both the other elements—Indian and Europeans—as would-be oppressors of the natives. Indians had no reason to quarrel with this policy provided only that it was worked equitably; for they have not the power, even if they had the desire, to oppress the natives. The weight of this policy could thus fall only on Europeans. The Imperial Government however soon realised its mistake and substituted for the Native Trusteeship policy of 1923 a policy of associating immigrant communities in the duties of trusteeship, the policy in short of making the would-be oppressor himself the native's protector. The Hilton Young Commission was charged to recommend how to apply this policy in practice; and the faults of the report are due to the fact that it proceeds from this false premiss. Within the limits set to it the Commission has done its work remarkably well; but no satisfactory solution of the problem is possible till what is called the Dual Policy again gives place to the Trusteeship Policy. The Government of India did wrong in accepting the new policy without protest, and the Kenya Indians too trifled with it for a time. The latter have now definitively rejected this policy, an indication of which is given by the fact they are opposed to disturbing the official majority of the Kenya Legislative Council. Mr. Kunzru, on the eve of his departure for England to place the Indian case before the British Government, made a statement which shows that the Government of India is not quite willing to abide by the recommendations of the Standing Emigration Committee. We do not know on what point differences have arisen; but our surmise is that whereas the Committee, like the Kenya Indians, stands out for the retention of the official majority, the Government of India is prepared to acquiesce in its relinquishment. This is not a mere detail but a matter of first-rate importance. If Indians once accept a non-official majority, their domination by Europeans is only a question of time. The retention of the official majority is required primarily in the interests of the natives, and it is a happy circumstance that in this matter as in most others the interests of Indians coincide with those of the natives. We hope that the Labour government will not merely carry out the terms of the Hilton Young Report, but that it will go further and restore the original principle of Native Trusteeship.

The question of the common electorates is comparatively simple. The Labour government will have on that matter the support of the Young Report. The Baldwin Government treated Indians in this respect

very scurvily; it let down not merely Mr. Sastri and the Government of India, but the whole Indian people in a most infamous manner. The inevitable result of this treatment is that Indians now demand that the establishment of common electorates shall not wait upon the consent of the Europeans. They never made such a demand before. They were quite willing to trust to the strong appeal which every sound principle must make in the long run to an intelligent people. The conversion of Kenya Europeans on this subject is a difficult task, but not altogether impossible. Indians were prepared to take the risk. But they found that the Imperial Government's agent—Sir Samuel Wilson—not merely made no attempt to bring about an agreement but prevented the Government of India's agent—Mr. Sastri—from doing so. He persuaded himself on his arrival in Kenya that Europeans would not agree to common electorates and told Mr. Sastri and the Indians who waited on him that the question of communal electorates shall remain closed. If a common agreement between the two races is to be reached in this fashion, it is no wonder that the Indian community in Kenya and Indians in this country do not want any longer to have this momentous question decided by the result of such a parley—no, no parley has taken place, but—by the result of observation of some official of the Imperial Government. Nor is there anything unreasonable in the demand, though we daresay the Europeans will think it very audacious, if not outrageous. But if it is not within the power of Indians or the natives to veto anything in the Report which they feel will affect them prejudicially, why should Europeans alone be enabled to veto what they have chosen to persuade themselves would be injurious to their interests. If common electorates are the right thing—and the Labour Government at any rate should need no persuasion on this score—they must be introduced, and the Kenya whites must be made to accept them with such grace as they can command. This will require some courage on the part of the Labour government, but not much. If it cannot summon even so much courage, we for our part will think very poorly of it, and as unfit to tackle the tremendously bigger problems which await it. If it is guided by its convictions we have no fear about the result: for on the principle of Native Trusteeship and on the much smaller matter of the mixed electorates its commitments are irrevocable. The only question is whether it will fall a prey to unprincipled opportunism. The *New Republic* says: "Critics are already asking whether (the triumph of the Labour party) is a triumph of principles or of opportunity." We hope—and also believe—it is a triumph of principles. We shall know in two weeks whether the hope and belief are well grounded in facts.

#### MARRIAGE REFORM.

**M**ARRIAGE, like all other institutions, is a creation of human beings, for the good and convenience of human beings. There is nothing superhuman about it. This is clear from the numerous forms of marriage that are at present current

even in a single country like India, to say nothing of other countries. It is therefore quite in the nature of things for suggestions to come forward in order to adjust this institution to the growing needs of civilised humanity.

We, in India, have at present various different forms of marriage that are recognised by law. A Hindu or a Mohammedan can marry as many wives as he likes or can without breaking the law. A Christian, on the other hand, can, be punished for bigamy, even if his personal law does not recognise other forms of marriage than the sacramental one. This anomalous state of things must be removed. A particular thing can either be right or wrong. But it cannot be wrong if perpetrated by one individual and right if done by another. Marrying two wives (or two husbands for that matter!) can be a crime or not a crime. But it should not be made to depend upon the religion of the individual. In fact, religion has got to be separated from all every-day things and confined to philosophy, meditation, etc.

In the days, when parents married off their boys and girls, they naturally paid more attention to religion, caste, family connections and such other external things. But in these days of marriage by consent of the parties concerned, less attention is likely to be paid to the environment and more to the individual who is to be the husband or the wife. Marriages between persons of different castes or of different religions will therefore take place much more frequently and the state has got to make some arrangement for the recognition of such marriages. The present state of things is highly unsatisfactory. As each and every religion wants to dabble in the details of the daily conduct of its followers, it has prohibited marriages between persons belonging to different faiths. It is therefore necessary at present to declare that one does not belong to any of the recognised religions, if one wants to marry outside one's faith. In a way, this is very good, especially from the point of view of an anti-religious man like the writer. But, it must be recognised that this kind of declaration does put unnecessary difficulties in the way of inter-communal marriages. A registration of marriages should really speaking have nothing to do with the religions of the parties. It should be sufficient if the two individuals are of age and enter into the marriage contract of their own free will. (The declaration referred to by the writer is no longer required.—Ed.)

We must here make a differentiation between permissive legislation and legislation involving compulsion. An act like the one prohibiting the marriages of girls below 14 years of age is a legislation which deprives people of some of the liberty they have hitherto enjoyed. That this deprivation is in the interests of society and has to be resorted to, goes without saying. Permission to marry any person who is an adult, or who may not belong to the same religion or caste, is legislation of a different type. It does not involve any compulsion. That orthodox opinion is opposed even to permissive legislation has been made quite clear

by the agitation against the Patel and Gour bills of a few years back.

A reform that is urgently needed, is the provision for the granting of divorce. Society must once for all recognise a few fundamental facts. Human nature is after all what it is and allowance has got to be made for it. A day may come, when all husbands and wives live in complete harmony with each other. But as matters stand to-day, a number of husbands and wives find it difficult to live together on account of differences in temperament or various other reasons. What does society gain by making no arrangement for their separation? Want of facilities for divorce simply serves to create a centre of dissatisfaction. The children of such a household are bound to have a very bad example set before them. Even in countries where there is a legal possibility of divorce, the conditions are so illogical that it is difficult for many people to get a divorce. In most countries, adultery is the only recognised cause for divorce, and that also has got to be proved before a jury. Are drunkenness or criminal tendencies or impotency not causes justifying the dissolution of a marriage contract? In fact each partner in a marriage should have the free choice of setting himself or herself free if she or he thinks it impossible to continue the original contract. The reasons of the disinclination should be a matter that does not concern the public at large. "Divorce for the asking" should therefore be the rule in any progressive state. Nobody would take a serious step like divorce without sufficient reason; and if there is sufficient reason, society does not gain anything by tying down two individuals, who do not want to stay together. It is in fact downright cruelty.

But all these things are made impossible by the control religion has on the daily lives of people. The first thing to be done, is therefore to remove this control of religion, that is, of people who lived thousands of years back. We have no business to submit to their tyranny. When that is done, marriage reform on rational lines will be an easy matter.

D. D. KARVE.

### RT. HON. SASTRI'S SIXTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

#### MR. BHOPATKAR'S TRIBUTE.

UNDER the auspices of the Bharat Sneha Samvardhak Mandal, the sixty-first birthday of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri was celebrated on the 22nd September, in the Saraswati Mandir Night School, at Poona. Mr. L. B. Bhopatkar, President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, presided, and Mrs. Saralabai Naik, Mr. D. G. Phadke and Rao Bahadur D. L. Sahasrabudhe made suitable speeches on the occasion.

The Chairman winding up the proceedings said that he made his acquaintance with Mr. Sastri for the first time about the year 1907 on the P. Y. C. Gymkhana Tennis Court. Mr. Bhopatkar and his friends then in the prime of their youth could not resist the temptation to give vent to their youthful exuberance

in the company of their elder friend Mr. Sastri. But Mr. Sastri took everything in the most sportsmanlike fashion and certainly it was this same sportsmanlike spirit which he carried in his later life into his political career that has enabled him to become one of the foremost among modern statesmen. Mr. Bhopatkar also dwelt on the varied nature of Mr. Sastri's attainments, but he said that the secret of his greatness lay in none of these things but in his stupendous self-sacrifice and sincerity of purpose. While a quick grasp of facts coupled with unlimited powers of expression promised for him an unprecedented success in the legal profession at a time when lawyers were only few, he embraced the least remunerative career of a school master, because he firmly believes in the spread of education as the most vital factor in the regeneration of his country. And in the natural course of events when the time came for him to become the head of the institution he served, he left even that for a pittance by becoming a life member of the Servants of India Society. From that time onwards he has been working with hardly a moment of respite for the cause of his country. As regards Mr. Sastri's sincerity, Mr. Bhopatkar observed that his own testimony should be taken as final as coming from one belonging to an entirely different political creed. In all Mr. Sastri's utterances, both written and spoken, the echo of a deep sincerity would be audible even to his most virile opponents. These qualities make him the type which is rarely met with in India at present when the country is not as prolific in great men as it was a generation ago. It should be the devout prayer of everyone to preserve for many years to come this "gem of purest ray serene".—*The Indian Daily Mail*, 26th September.

## Our European Letter.

### THE ASSEMBLY SESSION.

THE general discussion of the League in the Assembly has just terminated and the Committees are now busy. The principals, Messrs. MacDonald, Briand, Henderson and Stresemann, have spoken, and the general impression that this session has been unusual in that it is given to quiet policy making and consolidation has been confirmed. As the *Journal de Genève* says, the Delegations are raining ideas, each one of which opens a new chapter in the history of the League.

The Labour Party came to power in Great Britain with a programme an important item of which was promotion of world-peace and support of the League. No one can now say that this pledge has not been fulfilled or that it has been kept in a niggardly spirit. Following upon Mr. MacDonald's assurance that the British Government realised that the task of world-peace could be said to have been adequately met only when all the thorny problems of the day including the situation in the East were brought under international jurisdiction came Mr. Henderson with some suggestions refreshing in their novelty. It is something of an experience to find

the spirit of whole-hearted loyalty on the part of the British Delegation at Geneva after years of suspicion and scrutiny. This is nowhere more evident than in dealing with the general expenditure of the League. It was the custom in former years to blame the League invariably for what was supposed to be its expensive machinery and its extravagant methods. Mr. Henderson, taking a new line, has defended the Secretariat and pleaded for the security and advancement of the staff. The Secretariat, the finest international civil service, is the element of solidarity and continuity through all the shifting scenes of the League's activities. Its personnel gathered from various parts of the world usually works behind the scenes and represents a remarkable degree of talent and efficiency. Those who were originally drawn into the League's service came here largely on account of their enthusiasm, but now that the League is an established institution young people of promise are not attracted to it unless security of tenure and advancement are assured. The lucrative careers which commercial enterprises throw open these days are such that the emoluments which the League can offer are not so high as they may seem. Mr. Henderson's concern is to look into these conditions and to revise them.

The other notable idea to which the British Foreign Secretary addressed himself is the unification of the obligations under the League's Covenant and the Kellogg Pact. The latter condemns all wars unequivocally whereas the former not only indirectly envisages the possibility of war but also directly employs it as a penalty to be exercised collectively on an aggressor. Apart from the obvious contradiction in ideas in these differing points of view to both of which the same nations have subscribed, there are evidently loopholes here which may be employed unscrupulously. Where a definite code of law takes the sovereign place in the international system it is essential that this code should be free from irreconcilable conceptions. There should not be conflicting obligations particularly in view of political complications. In the absence of any such attempt at unification these irregularities might become dangerous in the event of a conflict between the United States and one of the principal European Powers. Mr. Henderson has consequently urged the revision of the Covenant, a measure which is understandable on the part of a Government actively pursuing negotiations for friendship with the United States.

A similar plea for moving forward came from the Chinese Delegation. The Chinese, who have been indifferent to Geneva for a long time, would now seem to appreciate the opportunities here for the advancement of their cause. In the last year or so they have urged their claims for national recognition with laudable persistence. They want to get rid of the bane of extraterritoriality and they leave no means untried for it. In the International Labour Conference they brought forward the argument that not until uniformity of conditions which unified control would render possible was assured could China seriously set about the inauguration of advanced

labour legislation. In the Assembly they urge the putting into operation of Article XIX of the Covenant which provides for the revision of obsolete treaties. In Geneva there is recognition of the practical difficulties in this regard but there is also the appreciation of the fact that the League would be failing in its purpose if it did not heed the call from China.

India has not been behindhand. For the first time that we have had an Indian to lead our own Delegation he has not been hesitant in putting forward our national claims. In a speech marked for its directness, calm restraint and forcefulness Sir Muhammad Habibullah warned the Assembly that the time had come for Geneva to take note of the discontent about the League in the East in general and India in particular. He added that India should be given the responsible place in the League's councils to which she was entitled. These remarks have been interpreted as a demand for a seat on the Council and coming from an Indian they have a peculiar urgency. The Indian Delegation should have satisfied itself by this time that, so far from being extravagant, such ambitions are possible of realisation, provided there is a certain continuity in policy on the part of the Delegations coming here and provided also that there are necessary facilities for India being in close touch with the activities at Geneva. We ought to go forward with the League and the time has come to consider seriously the question of having a permanent Indian Delegation here. Any such development must, of course, rest on the secure basis of the appreciation in India of the opportunities which Geneva affords for national advancement. This appreciation can in turn be created only by our representatives taking a bold attitude such as Sir Muhammad has done and by the Government of India giving them sufficient support and keeping them free of the interference of Whitehall.

*Geneva, September 12.*

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## Reviews.

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### INDIAN BANKING.

**INDIGENOUS BANKING IN INDIA.** By L. C. JAIN. (Macmillan.) 1929. 23cm. 274p. 15/-.

DR. JAIN'S work is a very interesting attempt to study indigenous Indian banking and he has tried to make it very realistic by maps, diagrams and statistical aids. The theoretical conclusions of his book have been stated already by the existing writers who are merely considered as text-book writers. Though our author has made a very free and liberal use of the treatment, conclusions and arguments of the reviewer there is no mention of the reviewer's book anywhere.

In the conventional manner of a doctorate thesis he proceeds to say that there is no literature on the subject but when one glances at the academic padding of the book it becomes clear to him that there is no unearthing of new facts from old manuscript records of the Government or new materials collected from

sources not made use of by the previous writers. Even after having access to the India Office and the library of the British Museum we wonder why the writer has been unable to make quotations of a few relevant lines at least from manuscript records. Even in the chronological treatment of the subject-matter no new information has been unearthed. The precise issues which the indigenous bankers solved in the past have not even been studied. For instance the development of "out currency" as a nominal unit of currency by the Nanawatees of Ahmedabad is not referred to. The conducting of private lotteries is not mentioned and the issuing of copper and silver coins from the Native Mints so as to make confusion worse confounded, is not thoroughly dealt with.

In chapter II he makes no reference to the recent regulations laid down with reference to acceptance of Hundis, etc., by the Calcutta Marwari Association. This Association is not even mentioned.

Coming to the methods of indigenous banking the chief forms of loans and hundis are dealt with and there is a profuse and detailed reference to vernacular names and superstitions of these classes of people. The Telugu "yedu" (i.e.), numeral seven, is never pronounced by the bazar dealers even. It is always "six plus one." So also numeral twenty is not pronounced. It is "sologa."

While commenting on the interest charges, the most important of the recent phenomenon noted down by the Controller of Currency in the 1927-28 report escapes his attention. The Imperial Bank's Hundi rate and the Bank rate have been the same throughout 1927-28. What is the significance of this? How have we to recast our definitions if this tendency were to continue in the future? What have been the causes that have led to this phenomenon? These and such other problems are nowhere studied in this book.

Chapter V is a faithful reproduction of the views given to us by the Royal Commission on Agriculture. At least in this chapter he fails to maintain the distinction between the money-lender and the indigenous banker. Accusing the previous writers of this very same charge, he must undoubtedly have been more cautious in the use of these terms. We notice the same tendency in the last chapter.

The next is a somewhat lengthy chapter on Bankers and the Joint-Stock Banks. The author attempts to summarise the history, the present position and future of the Indian Joint Stock Banks and the Imperial Bank of India. Even here dependence on previous writers is too easily apparent. The chief services of the Imperial Bank have not been properly estimated.

In the next chapter the defects of the indigenous bankers are referred to as three in number. The failure to attract deposits, to create an open discount market and the failure to become real leaders in the rural credit situation are considered as the chief defects. The previous legislative attempts were mainly in the direction of curbing usurious money-lenders and ought not properly speaking be given so much space and attention in a book dealing with



indigenous banking. Here at any rate there is a tacit confession that he too was forced to comment on the money-lender as he is after all a species belonging to the genus of "indigenous bankers"—a banker qua banker being unknown in this country. The section on co-operation as an attempt to create rural credit has not been dealt with in a spirit of critical acumen. Here is a faithful summary of recent reports on the subject. Even the newly arisen Land Mortgage Banks do not escape his attention.

Even in the final chapter, which unfolds his constructive recommendations, there is not very much originality of thought. Indigenous bankers have to start indigenous banks, develop bills, establish contact with Joint Stock Banks and break down the isolation between the bazaar and the organised money market so that a Central Bank can control the credit structure on right lines. The self-same recommendations have been preached from our house-tops in season and out of season for the past dozen years.

Lest our remarks be misunderstood, we must point out the main excellences of this book. The author has tried to avail himself of the printed available sources of information and has produced a book which is at once readable and very interesting. It speaks volumes for the author as an adept in the art of compilation. He has compiled various reports and publications and Chapter I shows his art at its best.

Anyhow the book will remove the long-felt want of a readable sketch of indigenous banking and its present and future position in the credit structure of this country. There is no doubt that it is the outcome of hard labour spent on the available materials. He has utilised information mostly from sources which he does not always disclose.

The reviewer's regret is that it does not go further and even after receiving training in research in the London School of Economics, I wonder why the author should not attempt to deal critically with some of the new facts and figures that have been presented of late. Should the indigenous banker be deprived of deposits? How and to what extent did the early European Banks finance foreign trade? Their new fangled suggestions have not been dealt with thoroughly. It is erroneous to presume that the early European Banks rushed into the sphere of foreign trade and have been financing it. The economic sphere is not a vacuum and just as outside air rushes in to fill a gap, new entries cannot successfully displace old ones in the economic field. What about the Company's monopoly of trade? How has the "investment been spent?" Such other relevant facts should be properly studied before we can hastily conclude that the earliest European Banks prior to 1813 financed the foreign trade of this country.

B. RAMACHANDRA RAU.

## TURKEY'S EMANCIPATION.

**TURKEY TO-DAY.** By GRACE ELLISON. (Hutchinson.) 1928. 24cm, 288p. 18/-.

*"For the Turks to have achieved the transfiguration of their country is a stupendous piece of work. That men, and women too, can have gone into the melting-pot, a crushed, defeated and finished people, and come out of it, as they have done, strong, healthy, purposeful citizens has astonished even a sincere friend like myself. To me, with no axe to grind, no newspaper's policy to satisfy, paying my own way and therefore free to say what pleases me, this dangerous operation has proved a complete success".*

THUS writes Miss Grace Ellison in the concluding chapter of her very interesting book. No one is better qualified to write about Turkey's emancipation than Miss Ellison. She is a sincere friend of Turkey, and her friendship is the result of her personal contact with all that is the best and noblest in the Turkish nation during her five long visits to Turkey spread over a period of 20 years. As "an English-woman in a Turkish harem" the authoress has depicted the "Scenes from Turkish Life" in a most vivid and realistic manner; and if in "Abdul Hamid's Daughter" she has bemoaned the miseries of the Turkish women to whom even God's light was denied, if she has given expression to the throbbing of their heart and the aspirations of their soul in "A Turkish Woman's European Impression," and if she has watched their development as "An English Woman in Angora" she now rejoices in "Turkey Today" to find her Turkish sisters having at long last come into their

own, and enjoying such a position of equality with men as has never been the lot of any other women in any part of the world. The secret of this extraordinary achievement is not far to seek. If women were shut up in harems, if their souls were crushed under the weight of age-long customs and if in the recent times they are victims of the repressive policy of Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan who would not tolerate the slightest transparency in their veils, men in Turkey were equally in bondage, the *Hotjas* (or *Mullas*) had denied them liberty of conscience and action, and under the autocratic rule of their Sultans their lot was worse than even that of the nations who have been under foreign yoke for ages.

After the war when the Allies tried to impose upon Turkey the so-called "peace" terms that would have enslaved the nation worse than ever, and they encouraged Greece to try to divest the Turks of the most vital part of their homeland, women were as much roused as men to the paramount need of the hour in order to make a final and desperate bid for freedom, and both men and women fought shoulder to shoulder against their common enemy. It was a woman, Halida Hanum, who first preached the gospel of independence and roused the Nationalist Turks to action, and when Mustapha Kemal Pasha led the valiant Turks to face the Greek onslaught, Corporal Halida Hanum was at his elbow not only in the inner councils of war, but also in the trenches. Therefore when at last freedom came to Turkey women not only shared it equally with men but in the changed circumstances they

occupied such a position of advantage that they got their natural rights even without having to ask the men for them. "Strange it was for one like myself", writes Miss Ellison, "who saw women's freedom in England bought at the price of a titanic struggle between themselves and a liberal Government, to see the women of Turkey given their freedom without having to ask for it, and that freedom sponsored by the ruler himself. Indeed, it is the Ghazi, the head of the women's movement who has defined what are 'women's rights'".

"To write about the women's movement in Turkey", says the authoress, "is almost writing about what does not exist. The women's movement is a kind of junior partnership in the men's movement of progress, and there seems no reason for, or possibility of, women wanting a separate movement." Since the Ghazi has ordered that women shall be professors, doctors, lawyers, artists, and writers on exactly the same terms as men there is no need to open separate institutions. He sees no sense in such assemblies as "Women Artists" and "Women Dramatists". "Why label your work 'woman'?" asks the Ghazi. "Is it a plea for mercy, or just to encourage others less competent?"

The secret of Turkey's phenomenal success is this that the Turks have raised Nationalism to the high position of a religion. "It does not require much time or study for any one visiting the country to realize that Nationalism is the religion of the people, the National Pact their Prayer book, the story of the struggle for independence their New Testament. Everywhere you find a copy of the Pact at the bedside; many carry it in their pockets".

"What", Miss Ellison was asked, "can be more sacred to me than the book which gave me my freedom? Choose any passage from it you will and I will preach to you by the hour upon the text. The Koran we recite, as we have always recited it, at the bidding of the hodjas, without understanding the words, without feeling or thought. I know the full meaning of every word in the National Pact. So do my wife and children. The day of Islam has passed. We needed a new religion to rouse the people to regeneration, we have found one in Nationalism and the story of our second birth".

*When Turks, a homogeneous people, professing one religion which is democratic in its outlook and which helps rather than retards human progress, have found it necessary in the interest of national consolidation to put all their faith in Nationalism and carry out its dictates with all the religious devotion and fervour that a nation can be capable of, how much more is it necessary for the people of India, divided into numerous castes and creeds, to adopt Nationalism as their common denomination and resolve to subordinate their individual and communal religions to the supreme feelings and sentiments of Nationality?*

Miss Grace Ellison's book provides for Indian Nationalists a great object-lesson in the story she has written with so much ability and knowledge of the Turkish Nationalism and all the great things it has achieved in the short period of seven years.

KHADIJA YAKUB HASAN.

## THE SPIRIT WORLD.

**SIBYLS AND SEERS.** By EDWIN BEVAN. (Allen & Unwin.) 1928. 20cm. 189p. 7/6.

BELIEF in a spirit world is as old as the human race. "One may see that this belief presupposes, as its background, a general view of reality which some people would reject *in toto* as a delusion. It presupposes . . . that a spirit world exists beyond or behind or above the every-day world which we see and handle, the material world governed by uniform natural law." "The simplest view of the world therefore confronted primitive man with two disparate kinds of movement in material objects; it gave him, beside the material world, a world of souls and soul-life—or that it give him, beside the material world, a world of consciousness, a world to which immaterial things like desires and emotions and values belonged. Of course, primitive man did not reach a clear conception of spirits as immaterial, as wholly divested of bodily form or attributes—a conception which even the Greeks hardly reached before Plato."

Mr. Bevan does not concern himself with the whole range of dealings between men and the spirit world, but with knowledge, that is, not only the spirit world itself, but knowledge also about the every-day visible world, so far as it is obtained, not by observation and rational enquiry and human testimony, but was communicated by spirits. The belief that communications could come from the spirit world was by no means confined to the primitive stages of human culture. It retained its hold upon the minds of men in the great civilizations of antiquity (the Babylonian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek, Roman); then throughout the Mediterranean lands under the Roman Empire; then through the Middle Ages; and right on to the present day. "We have to look around to see that there is nothing incompatible between the possession of modern scientific knowledge in the most eminent degree and adherence to some form of this belief."

A large proportion of educated people still believe that changes in the material world are sometimes caused by spiritual agency other than that of incarnate spirits. The spiritualists including Sir Oliver Lodge believe that they have established communications with discarnate spirits through mediums and table-turning. The Catholic Church believes in evil discarnate human spirits to whose influence some physical phenomena may be traced. On the other hand the Liberal Protestant holds that the material world moves only by fixed mechanical laws, like a flung stone. Yet the movement of the universe as a whole is due to spiritual causation: God flung the stone. The rationalist of course denies that there can be any interference with the sequence of material mechanical processes in this world except from conscious beings in the flesh. According to him, human psychology too has fairly uniform laws of working, so that you can calculate beforehand what a man will do. But Mr. Bevan holds that the uniformity of a man's action is a uniformity brought about by stability in purpose. "A man of formed character goes on willing the same kind of things." "Spiritual uniformity is thus in its very nature differentiated from the mechanical uniformity which holds of inanimate matter." He indicates the absurdity of the rationalist's position by suggesting that somewhere, at some point in the material process, a spiritual cause comes in—a desire, an emotion, a thought—which makes the movement of certain particles of matter different from what it otherwise would be. Mr. Bevan attempts to undermine the rationalist's position by quoting a statement of an eminent physiologist when questioned whether any consciousness, not that of

the writer, could make the writer's hand move. "Not a bit more inexplicable," said the scientist, "than that any thought you have in your mind can make your hand move to put it on paper. That to-day is a mystery and enigma to science quite as complete as the other." Then he comes to the conclusion, which could be accepted by all, that before the great facts of life and death we and primitive men stand alike before mystery!

In the chapter entitled "Travellers beyond the Bourne" the revelation is considered to be knowledge which had reference either to this world or to the spirit world. There are several ways in which knowledge may be obtained. "First of all, it might be obtained if some one belonging to this world went to the other world and came back to tell his experience; or, secondly, it might be obtained if some one belonging to the other world came into this world to give a revelation; or, thirdly, beings in the other world, without actually coming into this one, might send messages." Summing up the first method, Mr. Bevan says: "It is noteworthy that with the solitary exception of St. Paul—unless you like to add to these doubtful cases and the case of the author of the Book of Revelation—there is no single instance given us of a man visiting the spirit world which is not either mythological or literary fiction." It would be of some interest to Indian readers to note Mr. Bevan's remarks on an Indian Sadhu who claims to be in touch with the spirit world. "It is fortunate that Canon Streeter has been able to study a living man, the Indian Christian Sadhu Sunder Singh, who says, apparently with complete sincerity, that he often passes through trance-experience, in which his spirit visits heaven and converses with its denizens. He can report what they look like and what they say to him. When Canon Streeter, in his book about the Sadhu, comes to discuss the value of such visions, he lays stress on the differences between *form* and *content*. He thinks, for instance, in the case of the Sadhu, that a great deal of his detailed description is imagery made up of traditional materials, which is a mere *vesture* for certain spiritual apprehensions taken by Canon Streeter to be the *content*".

*Epiphany* is the term used by the Greeks to indicate the appearance of a god to men. "Only the Divine Being, coming from that world into this, could declare what the other world really was." Beside the spontaneous self-manifestation of the gods, one of the beliefs which went with magic was that the gods could be induced to appear by invocation. Frauds were no doubt practised as in the case of the faked manifestation of God in Kingsley's *Hypatia*. But Mr. Bevan aptly remarks that the possibilities of hypnotic suggestion should not be forgotten, when people say that they have seen the gods. The gods seem to have appeared to men to give them instruction—Demeter had shown men how to grow corn for food; Athena had taught men how to weave and so on. In this connection Mr. Bevan makes a pertinent remark which will be of interest to students of comparative religions. "The gods of the pagan mystery-cults might be called 'Saviours,' but were not held to have come down in the same sense as the Christian Saviour." According to the author, in ancient days, in attempting to have dealings with the spirit world we never hear anything like a *séance*—a corporate effort by a group of people sitting in a circle and holding hands to induce or enable the spirit of a dead person to communicate. In ancient times the spirit was called up by the expert magician. Then comes the method—"A being or beings in the other world, without actually coming to this world, could send messages." "First, then, the simplest of the modes was that a denizen of the other world should utter words in a voice audible to men here, a voice from

heaven. Secondly, instead of vocal utterance the message might be sent to men in writing, a Himmals brief, a letter from heaven. Thirdly, natural objects in this world might be caused by divine power to assume a certain appearance or to move in a certain way, according to a system of signals, of sign-language, which the instructed amongst men could read—omens, signs in the sky, the flight of birds, the intestines of a sacrificed victim. Fourthly, the minds or tongues of men might be moved by divine (or daemonic) power; sometimes images arose in their imagination especially through dreams, or thoughts, emotions. Bits of knowledge came to them, which they recognised as communicated by some Power not themselves, and which they could then pass on to other men—revelation and inspiration."

"When the gods wish to speak to men, in the Greek myths, they descend in visible form and converse as man with man. To the Hebrew, God was indeed transcendent, but He was at the same time always near. The Hebrew could speak to God at any moment, and hear God's voice at any moment." In this connection the author remarks: "I remember an Indian friend of mine telling me how forcibly the Book of Psalms struck him in this respect, coming to it fresh from another religious sphere—the intimacy of praise, expostulation, prayer, confession, questioning, a converse of Person with Person."

Mr. Bevan admits that it is hard to draw any hard and fast line between the voice from heaven and the voice within the soul. Socrates was guided by his "Daimonion"—a sudden, strongly felt inhibition. The Jews had the *bath-qol*, which was not the Voice of God, but the *daughter* of the Voice. In Egypt we first meet a written message from the gods."

Mr. Bevan gives a text of the Letter of Elkasaites—a real document which was believed to have come from heaven and is the sacred book of the Christian sect of the Elkasaites. The letter has had considerable influence in Europe not only in the Middle Ages, but also in modern times. "In India, where tradition before the Buddhist period was mainly oral, the idea of a letter from heaven does not seem to occur."

The Chapter—God in the Breast—is interesting. Cicero's distinction between divination "by art" and that "by nature" is maintained. The ancient world believed in the interpretation of dreams and in the frenzy of the Sibyl, and interpretation became a specialised art. The possession of the ecstatic body by an alien personality may be an instance of multiple personality or of morbid mentality. "The appearance of an alien personality assuming control is often so complete that many missionaries to-day who have come into contact with so-called devil-possession in China or India are convinced that the possession is a fact, that an evil spirit does in these cases gain control. But in the prophets of old this sense of "otherness" seems to indicate the higher reaches of the human spirit rather than the expression of morbid mentality. Plato thought that the beatific vision was due to the latent memory of a pre-natal direct vision of "*ideas*."

Finally we come to "ecstasy and dream"—"just as tradition of pagan philosophy regarding dreams and demons went to form the conception of Christians regarding inspiration by devils, so the pagan philosophical tradition regarding oracular possession went to form the conceptions of Christians regarding inspiration by God." It is not every man who is worthy of becoming an organ for the Divine speech, but it is he who has reached the supreme degree of virtue and wisdom. The human spirit, when it reaches the end of its highest effort, may lose itself in God. To be interested in the spirit world may be considered a superstition or a lack of mental stabi-

lity; but it is a fascinating subject, and Mr. Bevan has given a masterly survey of the subject, so far as the ancient world has had anything to do with it,  
D. S. RAMACHANDRA RAO.

### SHORT NOTICES.

**THE INDIAN FERMENT: A TRAVELLER'S TALE.** By H. G. ALEXANDER. (Williams & Norgate.) 1929. 20cm. 253p. 7/6.

THIS is a record of travel done "with the spirit and with the understanding also." The author is a Quaker interested in the problem of opium, who travelled through India for five months collecting information about his subject, and interviewing and staying with the leading Indian personalities everywhere. The result is a book which is almost the exact antithesis to "Mother India"—which is indeed incidentally very effectively exposed from time to time and which should do as much to aid mutual understanding as that publication did to poison it. The book is in the form of letters which record in a very interesting way his changing feelings as he proceeds from place to place.

The book shows the writers' shrewdness (the League, the Paton and the Andrews "openings" on p. 49 is an amusing example), humour, knowledge, love, of nature and power of grasping the essentials of an argument or a situation. Above all, it has imagination as well as mere sympathy and a sense of justice, and is thereby raised at one stroke into the front rank of travel books. The author can enter into the mind of others and see things with their eyes, and those who know how much they have received, are also those who have most to give.

For the English reader the book is often salutary and chastening reading, and for that reason we believe its chief value will be in England where it will help to counteract "Mother India," the complacency of official speeches, and the pity-stimulating descriptions of the horrors of the Indian village beloved by many missionaries. It is incisive and unsparing without being rancorous or dull. The Indian reader will nod his approval with much of the book, yet he will also find much to stimulate thought and reflection. Its value for India is perhaps as a revelation of the mind of a singularly open-minded and intelligent Western observer on a short visit to India, and his reaction to the ferment of ideas and policies which bubble and boil in the national cauldron to-day.

T. G. P. S.

**BULLETINS ON CHINESE EDUCATION, 1923.**  
(The Commercial Press, Shanghai.) 20cm. \$2.00.

THIS is a collection of sixteen essays on the different aspects of the educational progress in China and those who are interested in the educational advancement in India will find room for interesting comparisons in the essays on 'Vocational Education', 'Physical Education', 'Women's Education', 'Higher Education', 'Elementary Education', etc., and particularly instructive are the statistical summaries toward the end.

"Three things conspired to make possible a new period of Chinese renaissance. The first was the Chinese Revolution of 1911, the second was the return of the American portion of the Boxer indemnity and its exclusive use for educating Chinese students in the United States and the third was the great war of 1914-18. The

success of the Revolution gave the Chinese people a sense of self-confidence, while its failures in the political aspects forced a number of leaders to turn attention to social and intellectual problems. The return of the American indemnity made it possible to bring a large number of young Chinese into direct contact with the scientific, social and historical background of modern civilization. The Great War furnished China with a period of breathing space during which native industries were gradually developed, relative prosperity was restored in spite of political disturbances and many social and intellectual problems hitherto untouched were one by one brought to the front."

It will be difficult to give even a rough idea of the problems discussed in the book and the readers who get interested in Chinese education must read about them in the book itself. We would however refer to one essay in particular which describes an activity which is so far unknown to the educational administrators in India. In the year 1922-23 Dr. Wm. A. McCall, Ph.D., of Teachers' College, Columbia University, was invited to China by the Chinese National Education Association for the Advancement of Education to undertake the work of educational research. He concluded his essay thus:

"The four fundamentals of education are: the pupil, the educational objective, the methods and materials of instruction, and measurement. Without measurement we cannot adequately know the pupil, for we cannot determine his capacities and abilities. Without measurement we cannot evaluate objectives, define their amount so as to regulate, emphasise, or make them visible so as to motivate both pupil and teachers. Without measurement we cannot evaluate the methods and materials of instruction, for their work is known only by their measured effect. In sum to test all things and hold fast that which is good is as pre-requisite to progress in education as it has been to the correction of our practical philosophy or the improvement of every form of life upon the earth".

If only our educationists will remember these words and try to collect data before making assertive statements about the value of certain syllabuses and methods, a large number of controversial questions will soon disappear.

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