

Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Benares.

THE recent communal riots in Benares which resulted in the death of 15 persons and injury to 194 are most deplorable. It appears that a Muslim trader in foreign cloth, whose shop was vigorously picketed for some time by Congress volunteers and who refused to cease trading in foreign cloth, was shot dead. The tension caused by the murder soon took a communal turn and led to communal riots with murder, arson and pillage for accompaniment.

It is well to realise, however, that the present tension, excitement and particularly, the picketing activities of Congress volunteers are indirectly responsible for such crimes. Notwithstanding the Mahatma's behests repeated in all solemnity and earnestness, picketing as practised is not always, nor even generally, peaceful persuasion. It is as often as not just coercion, pure and simple. The Muslim merchant as well as the Hindu merchant of Amritsar who was also reported to have been shot at for persisting in the sale of foreign cloth have been martyrs in the cause of individual liberty.

Persistence in picketing foreign cloth shops is bound to lead to greater trouble in the future. Even those merchants who had agreed to seal up their foreign cloth stocks were under the impression that it was a temporary prohibition, intended to further the cause of Indian swaraj and that after a time—in some cases actual dates were defined—it would be open to them to dispose of the stocks and save themselves from financial loss and ruin. But the recent pronouncements of the Mahatma that under no conceivable circumstances or at any time would the Congress withdraw its ban on the sale of foreign cloth have disillusioned the complaisant merchants. While some of them have begun to dispose of their stocks secretly, others have openly revolted against the sacrifices imposed on them. Picketing will in future be even

less peaceful in its effect on the harassed merchants than it has been, and unless it is called off at once, much mischief will result. Swadeshi, by all means but no "picketing", please.

* * *

Bikaner Expounds.

REPLYING to the Municipal Address at Bikaner the Maharaja of Bikaner entered on an elaborate exposition of the achievements of the Round Table Conference and explained why the Princes agreed to enter into a federation of British India and Indian India.

It was our considered view that the time had arrived when we, both of Indian States and of British India, must be captains of our own souls, monarchs of our own fate; and it was our natural and strong desire that we should be masters in our respective houses. Some times this is expressed by the phrase 'Dominion Status' and at other times by the term 'Responsible Government'. I thank God that we have placed both within India's grasp. The frame work of the constitution framed in London established Responsible Government in India.

While we are not blind to the great work of the Conference and the distinguished part played by the Maharaja of Bikaner, who by his devotion, ability and personality was naturally fitted to lead the Princes' Delegation, we may be permitted to draw attention to one or two implications of his speech which give room for misgivings. It is gratifying that the Princely Order shares the British Indian view that India should come into her own and slip off British tutelage. But does the R. T. C. constitution release the Princes from British domination? Has it been agreed that hereafter the relations between the Princes and the Paramount Power will be strictly governed by the treaties and *sanads*, and that conventions and usage which have grown up during the last many decades and are not in strict conformity with treaty rights and obligations will be set aside? Will the R. T. C. constitution restrict the exercise of the unlimited rights of paramountcy by the British Government? Either it does or it does not. If it does, the Princes will, the Maharaja cannot deny, become greater autocrats than they have been. They will owe no "responsibility" to the British Government, or the Federal Government or their subjects. If it does not, the Princes will be no more free from British influence than they are today. And they know well what that influence is and how pervasive it can be. To put it in strong, though perhaps exaggerated, relief, the Princes will be under the new constitution either despots or puppets of the British. The protestations of the Maharaja that they will be neither lose much of their convincing force.

The Maharaja also attempts to dissipate the fear that the new constitution places the Princes in a dominating position over British India. Well, he modestly claims for the despots or puppets equal representation with British Indians in the Upper House of the Federal Legislature and "a smaller percentage with weightage" in the Lower. If this does not amount to

"dominating" British India, it would be interesting to know what his idea is of a "dominating position."

The Maharaja's speech brings cold comfort to the subjects of the States. They realise that the extravagant claims of the Princes will bring them no relief, much less improve their status. He told them that the widening of the basis of political power in the States was a matter entirely for the Princes to decide in its proper time. It may be "constitutionally correct" but the Maharaja and his brother Princes will do well to take to heart the wise words spoken by another and more enlightened representative of the Princes at the R. T. C. In a speech distinguished by its robust nationalism, by a proper perspective of the communal problem and a true appreciation of the "full force of the democratic surge" in India, Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan of Mysore, said:

One is reminded of King Canute's elaborate rebuke to his courtiers. I do not think democratic sentiment would in any event stop short at the boundaries of the States; the wisest course is to recognise and understand the new forces and adjust ourselves to them.

It ought not to be difficult for the Maharaja of Bikaner to realise that the arrangements proposed at the R. T. C. do not give satisfaction either to British Indians or the subjects of the States. The best course would be for the Princes to act on the advice of Sir Mirza Ismail, introduce democratic institutions in their States and allow them to elect their representatives to the Federal Chambers and transfer the rights of paramountcy to the Federal Government. But either of them will not be an unacceptable half-way house. The Princes may complete the transfer of power from England to India by conceding paramountcy to the Federal Government, which is as much their own as that of British India or they may introduce democratic institutions in their States or at least permit their subjects to elect the States' representatives to the Federal Chambers. If the Princes are sincere in their desire to slip off British domination, let them make themselves responsible to the Federal Government or their subjects.

The Transvaal Bill.

THE report, if true, that the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, which was due to come up for discussion in the Union Parliament, has been dropped will be received with immense relief in India, as it will be in South Africa. The thanks of India are due to the Union Government as well as to all those who strove and strove successfully to bury the Bill. The Indian community in the whole of South Africa made common cause with their brethren in the Transvaal and stood solidly by them in their troubles. The speeches and resolutions passed at the last session of the South African Indian Congress were certainly strong but not unjustified. Embarrassing as they might have been to the Agent of the Government of India, it is all the more to the credit of Sir Kurma V. Reddi that his diplomatic representations on behalf of the Government of India bore fruit. The Agent's task is no bed of roses. Constitutionally, he is not the spokesman of the South African Indians. He is the Agent of the Government of India, which unfortunately encounters the suspicions of the South African Indians for reasons not directly connected with their status in the Union. There is no justification for this suspicion whatever, for though it may not be open to the Agent to take into his confidence the officials of the Indian Congress with reference to his negotiations with the South African Government and his correspondence with the Government of India, he has always kept himself fully acquainted with the local Indian point of view, and we have no doubt, faithfully represented their views to both the Government of India and of

the Union. At any rate, though the Agent does not take his "instructions" from the local Indians, there is hardly a step that he has taken without being sure of its acceptability to them. Whatever be the attitude of the present Government of India with regard to Indian Swaraj, they have always been at one with the Indians in regard to the status of Indians abroad—a fact which might well receive greater recognition.

Mr. C. F. Andrews has again, at another crisis, come to the assistance of the Indians in South Africa. Since his landing in the Union he has been unwearying in his efforts to bring home to the European community the iniquity of the projected Bill. It is no wonder he roused the wrath of the *Natal Mercury*, which, true to its diehard tradition and vulgar taste, indecently attacked Mr. Andrews. In refreshing contrast, the other British papers have opposed the Bill vehemently, and in so doing and in stemming the tide of injustice to the Indians, they have done a great service to South Africa and the British Commonwealth. The *Natal Advertiser*, for instance, fully realises the unhappy implications of the Bill. It said:

The proposed Bill does more than merely menace the economic life of the Transvaal Indian. It puts on him the legislative stamp of perpetual race ignominy. It singles him out as a kind of "untouchable." It applies to him the mark of the beast, and as a sort of leper he is set apart from any further contact with the world he has hitherto known.

Indian Congress in East Africa.

THE unhappy quarrels within the ranks of the East African Indian Congress need not by themselves be taken too tragically. Few institutions have been fortunate enough to escape such vicissitudes altogether. But we are particularly grieved that the split in the camp and the unsavoury accompaniments thereof should have occurred at this time and that they should have lent themselves to communal cleavages and antagonisms. Hitherto the Indians in East Africa, consisting of Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs and Goans, lived in happy harmony in the sphere of politics; their solidarity was the envy of India. It is amazing how prone Indians are to split along communal lines, however non-communal the provocation. We hope that whatever be the political differences among the Indians, they will effectively resist giving them a communal turn. India knows but too well how disastrous they can be and yethow difficult they are to eliminate when once introduced.

Quite apart from communal repercussions, even political differences are at this time far too expensive a luxury. The solidarity of Indians in East Africa has been of inestimable strength to them in their long fight for the common citizenship and the common roll in that country. Just at the time when the horizon is aglow with hope, it is a tragedy that there should be divisions in them and they should be accompanied by acrimonious and undignified exhibitions. The last session was an occasion when the attitude of Indians towards their participation in the government of the land should have been dispassionately reconsidered in view of the formal acceptance of the principle of the common roll by the Labour Government in England. It is possible to argue that it is no longer necessary or desirable that they should persist in their non-cooperation with the Government of Kenya. Then there was the all-important question of selecting a competent and influential deputation to proceed to London to give evidence before the Joint Committee. It is a thousand pities that at such a critical occasion the forces of division and disorder got the better of patriotism and statesmanship.

Articles.

FINANCIAL SAFEGUARDS.

THE prospects of an early settlement of our difficulties and the possibility of the acceptance by the Congress of the general framework set up as a result of the R. T. C. deliberations depend very largely on the view taken in Congress circles of the various safeguards and reservations which find a place in the reports of the R. T. C. sub-committees. To that section of Congress politicians, which is irrevocably wedded to the Independence resolution all safeguards are naturally anathema and there are no doubt many who would desire an immediate revolutionary change in administration and a clean slate for the future Swaraj Government to write upon. But it is generally agreed that if Swaraj is to be acquired at this stage by negotiation then certain limitations on the freedom of action of the Indian Government will have to be accepted during the period of transition. It is not so much the fact of these temporary limitations as their scope and character that will be disputed and it is certain that almost every one of the R. T. C. safeguards will be put to a searching examination before it is finally accepted by the Congress politicians or the Indian public. It is not, however, we believe, necessary to start this examination entirely afresh in each case as the Nehru report already contains on all the major points an agreed statement of the Indian case. The Nehru report is the latest and the most authoritative document of this nature available and as among its signatories appear the names of the late Pandit Motilal Nahru, Dr. Ansari and Mr. S. C. Bose, its standard should prove acceptable to the Congress even to-day. A comparison of the financial safeguards proposed by the R. T. C. sub-committees with the conditions contemplated in the Nehru report would be relevant and interesting.

One of the points round which controversy is raging is the examination of the Indian national debt burden. It is to be noted that the Nehru Report (vide sec. 71 of the recommendations) accepts the entire debt liabilities of the Government of India without any reservation and makes no demand for an enquiry. It is not clear what, according to the Congress, are the types of debts that are to be held acceptable and what are the others for which the future Government of India should not hold itself liable; the demand has hitherto been for merely an impartial enquiry into the whole question. It is, therefore, not possible to say what financial saving is likely to accrue as a result of the acceptance of this demand. By most standards, however, the saving brought about will not be considerable and the gain to India or the additional burden to England is not likely to be large. The question will mostly be one of prestige with both sides. In some quarters, even in England, this is not thought to be an unreasonable demand, and Dr. Thompson in his *Spectator* articles seemed to support it. But it is bound to be

strenuously opposed generally and it may be doubted whether other things being granted, it would be worth while pressing the demand too closely.

The next question to be considered is that of military expenditure. We are not concerned here with control of the army aspect of it. On its financial side the question turns mainly on the pace of Indianization; but as the constitutional position of the army under the R. T. C. proposals is somewhat peculiar during the transitional period, a direct comparison of it with the Nehru report proposals is not possible. The Nehru report guarantees (sec. 84) the existing scales of pay, etc. to all officers in the defence services serving India at the commencement of the new constitution but contemplates the setting up of a Committee of Defence one of whose first duties would be to advise the Governor-General in Council as to the practicability and the means of effecting retrenchment in the expenditure on defence compatible with the safety of India. The R. T. C. does not seem to have discussed directly the question of retrenching military expenditure but the Sub-Committee on Defence recommend that "immediate steps be taken to increase substantially the rate of Indianization in the Indian Army". The Committee also recognize "the great importance attached by Indian thought to the reduction of the number of British troops in India to the lowest possible figure and consider that the question should form the subject of early expert investigation". They further emphasize at the conclusion of their report that their recommendations are not to be taken as mere pious expressions of opinion but that immediately the Conference is concluded steps should be taken effectively to deal with them. Even this is no doubt indefinite enough. But if, as Mr. Jinnah desired, a clear indication is given of the pace of Indianization it would work out in practice very near to much the same saving as contemplated by the Nehru Report.

With regard to the services other than Defence the position taken up by the signatories of the Nehru Report is as follows. "In respect of the emoluments, allowances and pensions they [European services] would be entitled to on the establishment of the Commonwealth, we have provided a statutory guarantee. It is, however, our duty to point out that the Lee Commission was appointed in the teeth of Indian opposition; that its recommendations were adopted over the head of the Indian legislature; and we feel that the entire question of the source and method of recruitment of the services, their salaries, emoluments, allowances, pensions in the future will require re-examination in the light of the new political conditions created under the new constitution." Consequently the guarantee given to the civil services in the recommendations is not so absolute as that given to the Army services, but even for the civil servants it is provided that any one desiring to retire within three years of the establishment of the Commonwealth "shall be entitled to receive such pension, gratuity or other compensation as he would have received in like circumstances if the Commonwealth had not been established. Thus the Report complete-

ly accepts the responsibility with regard to pensions, gratuities and other compensations, and with regard to the already existing liabilities, it merely does not guarantee the same scale of pay, etc.—presumably even to the present incumbents in case they do not exercise the option to retire. Regarding the future, the Services sub-committee of the R. T. C. hold that the recruiting and controlling authority should be the Government of India. In this authority would be vested the decision on all questions regarding emoluments, etc. The recruiting would in all cases be effected by means of central and provincial Public Service Commissions. The Services sub-committee agree with the Nehru Committee in extending to members of the services the right to retire, but opinion in this committee was divided as to whether the period should be definitely limited to a maximum of five years or whether it should be for an unlimited term. The latter alternative is obviously extremely undesirable from the Indian point of view. The only difference between the R. T. C. proposals and the Nehru Report is that, while the former would make provision for guaranteeing the maintenance of the existing rights and safeguards of all persons appointed before the new constitution comes into force, the latter does not seem to do so in the case of those who do not choose to retire within three years. In this connection, however, it is but fair to point out that there is a possibility of difference of opinion in interpreting the Nehru Report. The passage from the introduction we have quoted does not seem to contemplate affecting the emoluments of present incumbents. On the other hand in the actual recommendations the terms of guarantee are different for the Army and the Civil Services. It is, therefore, possible to argue therefrom, as we have argued above, that the guarantee to the present incumbents in the Civil Services is not absolute. If this interpretation is accepted there is here an important difference between the Nehru Committee and the R. T. C. proposals.

The last point that may be mentioned with regard to the budgetary arrangements for the future is the Federal Structure Sub-Committees proposal for general reservation of powers to the Governor-General. The relevant sentence from the Sub-Committee's report reads as follows: "It would, therefore, be necessary to reserve to the Governor-General in regard to budgetary arrangements and borrowing such essential powers as would enable him to intervene if methods were being pursued which would, in his opinion, seriously prejudice the credit of India in the world." The statement is general enough to cover anything. It may happen that a Governor-General may fear that a change in the exchange ratio would seriously prejudice the credit of India though the majority of Indian financiers think otherwise. He would then be in a position to veto the change. The control over borrowing powers may again lead to undue interference. This particular safeguard seems too sweeping. But if it is as harmless as a strict interpretation of it would make it, it seems positively unnecessary. For unless the legislature follows definitely a policy leading to bankruptcy,

such intervention should be unnecessary. And as the consequences of such a course are always very much more serious for the nationals of a country than for its foreign creditors, the Indian Legislature may be trusted to steer a fairly safe course. In any case it is obviously necessary to have a very much clearer idea of these reserved budgetary powers before they are accepted as, if not salutary, at least harmless.

BRITISH OPINION ON PREMIER'S DECLARATION.

A perusal of the papers received from England by the last mail is interesting as showing what British opinion thinks about the Prime Minister's Declaration made a month ago this day. One thing seems to be beyond dispute, viz. that the Declaration has the imprimatur of the three great parties in British politics so that there is no ground for the nervousness observable in some quarters in India that if the Labour Government went out of office, in the near future the whole thing would end in smoke. This view has since been confirmed by the speeches of Messrs. Lloyd George and Baldwin committing their respective parties irrevocably to the policy embodied in the Declaration. There seems also to be general agreement that the Round Table Conference was a success. It is true it did not present India with a cut and dried constitution, but that was never its purpose. And to pronounce it a failure simply because it did not do what it was never intended to do is to ignore facts. Another thing which is almost universally emphasised and one which deserves to be noted by those in India who never lose any opportunity of ridiculing moderatism as "mendicancy" is that Indians and Britons met in the Conference as equals. As the *Times* points out,

The whole purpose of the Round Table project was that it should be an attempt to get away from begging to business—from the old humiliating attitude, as one Indian described it, of "a dog sitting up for a bone" to a frank interchange of views on equal terms.

On the question of a general amnesty, the British Press generally follows the lead given by the Prime Minister. It will be recalled he made the amnesty depend upon the cessation of the civil disobedience movement. In this connection the *Observer* calls attention to the Irish parallel.

The same issue arose in Ireland in 1917. The prisoners were released in the hope that they might come out in a new temper of reason and moderation. Instead they came out more extremist than before, and they wrecked the last chance there ever was, as it proved, for such a compromise between North and South as would have kept Ireland itself unbroken.

Whether there is going to be a repetition of Irish history in India time alone will show. But for the moment at any rate the prospects of a settlement appear to be much less gloomy than a little while ago. Much of course depends upon the attitude Mahatma Gandhi may choose to adopt, but not everything, and for the reason indicated by the *Observer*: "it is no longer possible that even the Mahatma can bind again all the vehement forces he has done so much to loose," an admission of the fact that his movement is no longer a one man show, as is fondly but wrongly supposed in some quarters.

The *Manchester Guardian* whose sympathy with Indian aspirations is beyond doubt argues that by the Prime Minister's recognition of the right of Indians to be responsible for the management of their own affairs they are given every opportunity of being the architects of their own fortune.

The way is clear now to all that India wants. But Indians themselves must work at creating their independence—creating in the sense of giving it a form. The principle of independence is finished with, and the details become all important.

In pleading for Congress co-operation in this work, it makes the following appeal to them which, we hope, will not fall on deaf ears:

It is difficult to admit defeat; surely it should not be difficult to admit victory. What Congress has so long wanted is ready to hand; if its leaders go on agitating against imaginary grievances, mouthing old formulæ, they may rob their country of what they have sacrificed so much to win for her—rob her of that and drift her into years of suffering and chaos. . . . To be a patriot is a fine enough thing—to make stirring speeches, to awaken enthusiasm, to go to prison or even to die for your principles. But the supreme test of a patriot's good faith comes when he is offered what he wants and has to make of it a thing of day-to-day adequacy in the coolness and monotony of day-to-day living.

To those who still look upon the Conference as a snare and a trap for Indian nationalism, the following remarks of the paper should serve as an eye-opener.

Mr. MacDonald's declaration makes clear beyond a shadow of doubt that this country no longer wishes to impose its will on India, is content that India should go her own way. *The Round Table Conference was the funeral of British Imperialism in India.* We do not expect Mr. Gandhi to be a mourner, but it would be ludicrous of him to go on non-violently non-co-operating because of a poor corpse. (Italics are ours.)

There is only a melancholy interest in what the *Daily Herald* points out, and what indeed has been noticed by everybody following the course of events with any care, that "there is no hairsbreadth, no split hairsbreadth, of difference between the Pandit's (Motilal Nehru's) declaration (to the special correspondent of the paper last summer) and Mr. MacDonald's declaration to the Round Table Conference." While the paper recognises that there may be difference of opinion as regards the scope of reservations, it remarks:

But it is only for a period. And in any case surely this "nicely calculated less or more" is matter for negotiation between friends, not matter for a life and death struggle between enemies.

That the Hindu-Muslim settlement is the *sine qua non* of the proper working of any constitution, however perfect, is a fact patent to everybody. If the parties come to an agreement, as every well-wisher of his country devoutly wishes that they should, nothing can be better. Failing this, as the Prime Minister remarked, "the Government will have to provide in the Constitution provisions designed for the purpose". In saying so we do not think he intended to do anything more than indicate a possibility. Curiously enough the *Morning Post* of all papers in the world reads into these words "a threat of coercion", and warns Mr. MacDonald against any "coercion of loyal minorities". In other words if the Government choose to coerce the minorities which, according to the *Post's* standards, may not be loyal the Government can apparently rely upon the support of that organ of British reactionaryism! What a hopeless back number and a downright Imperialist it is will be obvious from its view of the Premier's declaration.

We agree with the Prime Minister in disliking the word "Safeguard"; our recollection of various safeguards of which the Irish settlement boasted is not exactly encouraging, and we believe that if the British Parliament were to be so rash as to part with so many realities of

power as the Prime Minister yesterday proposed, the British Indian Empire would thereby be destroyed.

That shows that the task of the Labour Government is not altogether free from difficulties.

According to Mr. Churchill, "the only possible conclusion which a stranger (not Mr. Churchill?) would draw from reading these (closing) speeches (at the Conference) was that the British people were anxious to wind up their connection with India as soon as possible"—a thing which he does not believe the British nation wishes or means. Commenting upon the very same speeches, the *New Statesman* asserts that Mr. Churchill "often talks nonsense, and sometimes mischievous nonsense, about Indian affairs" but says that in uttering the above sentence he puts "the truth in a nutshell." But he appears wrong to the paper when he tries to represent the British nation as not wanting it. "Surely it is precisely what the British nation does wish and mean. And the great achievement of the Conference is to have made that intention plain. The Conference has not solved the problem of India, but it has brought a solution very much nearer, by compelling the British people to treat Indian self-government not as a bogey or a project in Cloudcuckooland, but as an issue of practical politics, to be settled peacefully, cheerfully and as promptly as possible." In talking about the difficulties ahead of Indians, it rightly gives the first place to the Hindu-Muslim trouble. Then, there is the civil disobedience movement which the paper did not expect would be "called off immediately."

We do not count on Mr. Gandhi changing his mind—though we should not rule out that possibility—or the Nehrus and other Swarajist leaders saying thank you to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Moderates who have come to terms with Great Britain. There will be shouting, and there may be shooting in India. But we believe that the deliberations and proposals of the Round Table must presently weaken the Congress opposition.....

Writing about the work of the Conference, the *Nation* and *Athenaeum* emphasises the essentially "temporary character" of the safeguards which are "no more derogatory than the limitations imposed upon the Government of Canada in the early days of its dominion status." While it does not deny the existence of risks in the British Government's offer, "desperate conditions demand desperate remedies." It also frankly admits that "owing to the lack of any real popular support" the British administration in India has been growing less and less efficient. The refreshing frankness of following comments on present-day Indian conditions is most welcome.

We pride ourselves on having brought India peace, but for some months the casualty lists due to political fights have been at least on a Boer War scale. Our old love of political freedom is shamed by the fact that there are probably more political prisoners under lock and key in India than in the remaining five-sixths of this unhappy and uneasy post-war world. We like to think of ourselves as the protectors of the Indian "ryot," but he remains at the end of a world slump with standards of living which is still the lowest of any people past the nomadic stage. The idea that this deterioration can be checked by a further display of force, or by doubling the number of our political prisoners, could only come from men who are out of touch with the modern world. The objections to the bayonet theory of government and the Jallianwallah, Bagh method of restoring order are two fold. First, there is not a scrap of evidence to show that they have the beneficent effect so confidently predicted by Lord Rothermere, and, secondly, the present generation of Englishmen is less prone to this form of activity than was the last.

Though the British Government's proposals are generous enough, the paper finds it difficult to "think of any large group of Indians" who will support them. The Princes cannot have much influence in British

India; while the minorities would continue to be full of distrust until they are satisfied that the proposed constitution makes due provision for their protection. The depressed classes are "not sufficiently organised to be a valuable political force." As for the moderates, they cannot be said to have a too numerous following. The result would be that

unless the unlikely happens, and leaders like Mr. Gandhi and the Nehrus are prepared to co-operate, we must expect a continuation of extremist activities, designed to wreck the whole settlement. They will be made easier by the existence, over the greater part of India, of acute agrarian distress, which the ryot shares with agriculturists throughout the world.

The paper rightly deprecates any delay in putting the scheme into effect or any attempt "to water down" the proposals. With a view to prepare the country for the coming reforms it suggests that even under the existing law, land revenue and law and order should be transferred to Indian ministers responsible to the legislatures. So far so good. But we do not think that its suggestion for one or two from amongst the Dewans of Indian states who attended the Conference being made members of the Central Government would be a step in the right direction. Not that we have anything to say against the Dewans. But if the object is incidentally to make a gesture of good will to political India, what should really be done is for some elected members of the Assembly being placed in charge of some Central subjects. The elevation of a few Indians to Governorships for which the paper asks would also be generally welcome.

In a well thought-out article in the *Sunday Times*, Lord Peel makes a point which deserves serious attention. In his anxiety to ensure stability for the federal executive Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru made a two-thirds or even a three-quarters majority a condition to their being turned out of office. But it has not been clear to Lord Peel, as to many others, "how an executive which had come scatheless through this ordeal could secure the assent of its day-to-day proposals without the certifying powers of the Viceroy which had been so freely denounced." This is a difficulty which must not be lost sight of.

D. V. A.

SANKEY REPORT—ITS DRAWBACKS.

WITH the drafting and adoption of the Report drawn up by the Federal Structure Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference under the chairmanship of Lord Sankey, the first stage of the work of the Conference may be said to have come to a close. The Report which embodies the results of the most important Committee of the Conference is, however, incomplete in certain important particulars since it leaves unsaid many things which may well have been stated and which, if fully stated, would have presented a fuller picture of the structure of the future constitution of India as emerging out of the Round Table Conference than it does now, and would have enabled a more dispassionate examination of the scheme adumbrated therein.

The main point with which the Report deals and which has aroused the keenest interest in all quarters is the one relating to the responsibility of the central executive to the central legislature. On this question, it is gratifying to note that a whole, some and surprising change in British public opinion has come about during the last few days

owing to mainly the speech delivered by Lord Reading in the Federal Structure Committee as representing the view point of the Liberal Party. In it he admitted the necessity for introducing the principle of responsibility at the Centre, and the Report embodies that principle as being in itself of crucial importance in any future scheme of reforms. But there is room for strong suspicion as to whether after all the principle has merely been paid lip sympathy to by the framers of the Report or whether the latter secures anything like real responsibility of the executive to the legislature. Indian political opinion has always been insistent upon this latter feature as constituting the acid test of the adequacy or otherwise of any Reforms; but the reservations and limitations placed upon its fullest and completest recognition have, it must be said, detracted from the value of the Report and the work of the Round Table Conference.

It was, of course, agreed from the very beginning that there should be some sort of a division of functions at the Centre between a ministry responsible to the federal legislature and the minister or ministers who would be entrusted with those departments of the State which should be reserved for the control of the Viceroy and which they are to administer on his behalf and as his agents. It was also agreed, firstly, that Defence, Foreign Relations and relations with Indian States should be included in the category of reserved subjects and secondly, that the reservations should hold good only during a short period intended to serve as the period of transition from Viceregal to popular control. The phrase "period of transition" has no doubt not been properly or adequately defined at any time or by any one and no one is quite sure as to how long the period should last. This point has been left undecided even by the Federal Structure Sub-Committee, which has however pointed out in its Report the indispensable need for reserving to the Viceroy's control a formidable array of subjects, which virtually includes everything which Indian opinion deems essential for securing real power and responsibility to the people of India. It has also left undecided the question of the means to be adopted for deciding the time when and the agency through which the transfer of these reserved departments to the control of the federal legislature should be effected after the termination of the transitional period. It has been left a moot question whether a free vote of the federal legislature is enough to bring about the transfer or whether there is a necessity for a further constitutional enquiry and an amending Act being passed by the British Parliament for the purpose. If it is the former, the fact has got to find a place in the statute; if it is the latter, its acceptance will be tantamount to a repudiation of all the demands of Indians up to now for being accorded Dominion Status—a phrase which had been avoided studiously in the Sub-Committee's Report—and a negation of India's right to be saved further Parliamentary enquiries for judging and determining her fitness for further reforms.

Looking next to the question of the responsibility of the executive to the legislature, we find that the Report states it as the intention of the Sankey Sub-Committee that in order to maintain the stability and permanence of a ministry, it should be made removable from office only by an adverse vote of two-thirds of both the chambers of the federal legislature sitting together. This provision is a safeguard against instability almost with a vengeance; and it is a principle which, if accepted will militate against the ideal of genuine responsibility, because it enables a ministry to continue in office even when a distinct majority of the Legislature is opposed to it, thereby securing to itself to all intents and purposes an irremovable character. Again, it is wrong in principle and wholly undemocratic in theory that an Upper Chamber, elected, as it most probably would be, upon an indirect basis, should have an equal voice in deciding the fate of a ministry as the Lower Chamber elected on a popular franchise by the direct vote of the people. It is a question of omission—a feature with which the Report is replete, it being absolutely silent with regard to the basis of responsibility which it apparently ensures. Add to all this the fact that the two-thirds majority posited is to include the representatives of the Indian States also, who will naturally be the most conservative elements in the federal legislature, and then the beautiful picture of a responsible executive which has been drawn up and accepted in principle by the Round Table Conference will appear in its true colours!

The next point of reservation which detracts very substantially from the ideal of Dominion Status is the retention in the hands of the Governor-General of special powers to veto and certify measures passed by the Legislature and extraordinary powers to make and promulgate ordinances in times of emergency. These so-called extraordinary and emergency powers have frequently proved the Damocles' sword over the Indian constitution during the last ten years of the Montford dispensation; and no one who has the interest of the smooth progress of India along lines of full responsible self-government will be found willing to entrust the Governor-General with them, since there is nothing to warrant the conclusion that they will not be used to embarrass the legislature and override it on occasions as in the past. In fact, the dangers from this latter course must become more evident when an omnipotent legislature exists side by side with the Governor-General wielding almost all-inclusive overriding powers. Those dangers had been envisaged and stressed both by the Simon Commission and the Government of India's Despatch; and yet to seek to perpetuate them by giving them a fresh lease of life under the new constitution will be the height of unwisdom. Especially is this so when the legislature is to be reared up on the ideal of responsibility and when ministers look up to it and depend upon it for strength and support. It may be true that ministers will have to be taken into confidence by the Governor-General before he actually enters upon the perilous step of resorting to emergency powers;

but in the ultimate resort it cannot, but be conceded that the responsibility will be entirely that of the Governor-General who will have the right of determining what is or what is not an emergency. Of course, much depends upon the personality, Viceroy. Indeed, if the constitution is administered in a liberal-minded and statesmanlike spirit, the necessity for exercising these powers may not arise at all. But the entrusting of the Viceroy with such overriding authority of a far-reaching character is in itself a feature which cannot but be construed as detracting substantially from the theory and practice of full responsible government and as betraying a fundamental want of faith in the capacity and the readiness of Indian ministers to manage the affairs of the country and to meet emergencies if and when they arise. It has been suggested by the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri and others that the rigour of the reservations can be mitigated and the exercise of emergency powers may be strictly confined to the narrowest limits if in the Instrument of Instructions to be issued to the Governor-General a clause is incorporated delimiting his discretion to resort to them only to extraordinary emergencies; but it is doubtful whether this method goes sufficiently far to meet the requirements of the situation, when there is no statutory restriction. Nothing short of the removal of those powers will satisfy the people of India and it is to be hoped that in the discussions to be held hereafter such a change will be introduced.

On the all-important and crucial point of financial independence, the Round Table Conference, while conceding that finance should be transferred to the control of a minister responsible to the legislature, has practically taken away by the left hand what has been granted by the right by accepting the recommendation made in the Sankey Report that expenditure on the Army, Debt Services, Pensions and Salaries, which absorb nearly 80% of the total revenue of the country, should be beyond the control of the legislature. It is a commonplace criticism of the Government's financial policy that the Government of India at present spends far too much upon the Services mentioned above, which are all more or less unproductive and that the expenditure on them is incommensurate with both the financial condition of the country and the requirements of other branches of the administration, which are at present starved. There is of course much to be commended in the view that steps should be taken to establish a Reserve Bank with an independent directorate to look after and manage the currency and credit policies of the country; but real financial independence includes many things beyond a mere control over the currency system, as, for example the raising and spending of national revenues in the most profitable and beneficial channels; and looked at from this point of view, if the arrangement contemplated in the Report above referred to is to be implemented, it will mean that financial responsibility to the legislature will be a misnomer and a farce and financial independence a mere shadow. But having agreed to the principle of reserving the Army, the Foreign Affairs and the Pensions and Salaries of the Services to

the direct control of the Governor-General, we cannot very well complain if the expenditure on them also is reserved. It does not however preclude us from demanding first that the expenditure on these services, especially the Army, should be reduced to the barest and irreducible minimum both by the rapid Indianisation of the fighting forces and the reduction of the number of British units, and, secondly that there should be a statutory provision limiting the period of transition, during which these departments should be transferred to ministers responsible to the legislature, say, twenty-five years at the utmost, so that full financial responsibility may vest in the people subsequent to that period.

The other points which need elucidation and clearing up in the Federation scheme drawn up by the Sankey Committee are those relating to the position and status of the Indian States in the All-India Federation, of which it is now certain they will be willing and active members. Which is to be the paramount authority in regard to the States, what is to be the method by which the States' representatives in the Federal Legislature would be selected? What is to be the proportion of the States' representatives in the Legislature? What is to be the proportion of the States amongst the members of the Cabinet? And lastly where should the residuary powers in the constitution reside? These are very complicated and complex problems which are to be satisfactorily settled beforehand if the constitutional mechanism of the future Indian Federation is to work smoothly. The Indian States cannot support the ideal of a federation and at the same time set to themselves so many mental reservations, which practically nullify their enthusiasm, as regards their obligations to reform their internal administrations, their dealings with the Federal Government and their insistence on their right of dealing direct with the Crown through the Viceroy, and finally their powers to decide questions of British Indian interest. They cannot be the constituent members of a federation of All-India and at the same time profess allegiance to an authority outside and beyond the constitution of which they are a part; they cannot enter the Federation and at the same time say that they will not move with the times and try to bring their internal administrations to the level of the British Indian provinces as much as possible, so that there may be a certain amount of uniformity in the governmental institutions in the various constituent units of the Federation; and, lastly, they cannot be members of the Federation and prevent altogether the other parts thereof from discussing matters which they may consider peculiar to themselves, but which may in actual practice produce repercussions in the other parts of the Federation, especially when the idea of a Federation is to generate and increase that sense of common nationality and commonness of aims, but to which the arrangement above discussed is opposed. The Princes, if they want really to shoulder the responsibilities and obligations incidental to their entry into the Indian Federation and not merely share the advantages and benefits thereof, should come forward with a bold declaration of

policy with regard to all the matters referred to above and thus show by courageous action how far they are prepared to act the part of co-equal partners with the British Indian Provinces and peoples.

In concluding this review of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Sub-Committee, it has to be pointed out that, there are many gaps in it which have to be filled up and without the filling up of which the contemplated federal structure will be lopsided and incomplete and very much below the ideal of Dominion Status and responsible government demanded by Indian nationalist opinion. There is evidence throughout of over-cautiousness in making changes and of a readiness to provide safeguards against all conceivable and inconceivable dangers, safeguards which simply reduce to nothingness the concessions granted. No wonder Indian nationalist opinion and even sections of Indian Liberal opinion are disposed to look at the scheme with suspicion. It is however a matter for satisfaction that there is ground for the hope that amendments and changes calculated to make the Report more acceptable to Indian opinion will be seriously and sympathetically considered.

C. V. H. RAO.

THE COMING BUDGET AND A "CHANGE OF HEART"

THE return of the Round Table Delegates from the London Conference, the release of the Congress leaders and the recent momentous negotiations both at Swaraj Bhuvan and Delhi have raised an amount of wide spread interest in the country which is a sufficient proof of the importance attached by all classes of the public, politicians, businessmen, financiers, agriculturists, servicemen and the Government to the coming events of the next few months. The first essential looked for by the Congress is a "change of heart" on the part of the Government. One has to look in vain for a change not only in the rank and file of the Government Officers, but in those who are in a position to give a definite lead to others.

The General Budget of the Central Government is eagerly awaited every year by the mercantile community on account of the all important bearing it has on the course of the trade of the country and the turn it can give to it by the various proposals made therein. The next Budget will be presented in a few days to the Assembly by the Finance Member. He has now an excellent opportunity to show Government's "change of heart", if there has been one.

There are some ways in which Government can signally show that they have the interests of the country at heart. It is an open secret that the budget will show several crores of deficit, and proposals will have to be made to meet this. The military expenditure could be put down by some 7 to 10 crores without much difficulty. The tremendous fall in prices should enable them to do so in store purchases alone, let alone other economies. Mahatma Gandhi wanted the military budget to be reduced to one-half. A

drop of 7 to 10 crores will go a long way to meet his viewpoint. The obnoxious salt tax should go, and the Finance Member could meet it by dropping the allocation of 6 crores to the Debt Redemption Fund. This fund is commonly made out to be in the interests of Government credit. But it is really the other way about in India. In independent countries this fund is utilised to purchase Government Debt in the market, and the effect is to reduce the aggregate Government Debt, and thus lighten the interest burden year by year. But in India Sir Basil Blackett shrewdly invented the phrase "avoidance of debt" as being synonymous with "redemption of debt." In other words, instead of borrowing for capital expenditure, the taxed monies of the people are sent out of the country for the purchase of goods for capital works. In fact, it is practically of the same nature as "Home Charges" but disguised under a clever and charming phrase.

There is then the vexed question of the ratio. The costly efforts that have been made during the last five years to bolster up the 18d. ratio, efforts which have brought untold losses to the trade and agriculture of the country—are eloquent proof of the results of the administration of this country by an alien power, whose eyes are always directed to serve the interests of the "mother" country. The future financial historian of India will accord very prominent places to Lord Birkenhead and Sir Basil Blackett for the tragic part they played in foisting the unwarranted ratio on this suffering country. The immediate question now is: will the ratio be put back? It is believed by some that Sir George Schuster himself is tired of the efforts to maintain the present ratio and would fain acknowledge his predecessor's mistake. But the London City interests seem to have made a deadset against it, and there does not seem to be any chance of the Secretary of State agreeing to the lower ratio. From the point of view of the interests of the London City, which is so nervous of the efflux of gold out of England to Paris and New York, there perhaps is a lurking fear that more gold would be going out of the Bank of England if the ratio is lowered, that is to say, India would be another country like America and France, and come in for large imports of gold on the lower ratio. A sentiment of this kind in the London City circles is one which the most powerful Secretary of State can ill afford to ignore.

The iniquity of the higher ratio could, however, be partly mitigated by levying an increased all-round duty, say of 10% on overseas imports. The bounty set which the 18d. ratio gives to imports will be largely off, and the reduction of imports caused thereby will greatly relieve the exchange and enable remittances to be made to the Secretary of State. The London City interests will not look on such a measure, especially when it is put ostensibly for revenue purposes, with the same hot and panicky disfavour with which they would regard a lower ratio.

These are some of the methods by which a "change of heart" could be shown by the Finance Member in his budget proposals. A substantial

reduction of 7 to 10 crores in military expenditure, the abolition of the salt tax, an all round increase of 10% in import duties and a reduction in the cost of civil administration will, one may feel sure, satisfy even Mahatma Gandhi. Such proposals are in no sense heroic, but they will greatly ease Government finance, steady up exchange, give trade and industry substantial relief, give the political situation an entirely new outlook, and open out a vista of possibilities for a peaceful and prosperous India. If Sir George Schuster would look ahead and anticipate the verdict of history on his actions, instead of yielding to the immediate pressure of vested interests, he can earn for himself the good name of a man who, though he committed grievous mistakes, did his best to mend them at the earliest opportunity.

VERIFY.

THE ORIYAS IN THE SIMON REPORT-I.

NOW that the question of constitutional advance is so much to the fore it is intended, in these articles, to draw attention to the problem of amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts. First let us see what the Simon Commission has to say on the point. While discussing the need for provincial redistribution the Commission say:

An urgent case for consideration and treatment is that of the Oriya-speaking peoples, most, but not all, of whom are now included in Orissa, because we consider that so close a union as now exists between Orissa and Bihar is a glaring example of the artificial connection of areas which are not naturally related. We were so much impressed by this instance that we arranged in co-operation with the Indian Central Committee and the Bihar and Orissa Provincial Committee, for the appointment of a sub-committee to investigate it in more detail.

The Sub-Committee say:

The case of the Oriya-speaking peoples is based on the fact that although possessed of a common culture and language they are now divided among a number of separate administrative areas in all of which they form a small minority. They claim to be a distinct people with a history and tradition of their own. They claim that all the Oriya tracts should be amalgamated and that this single unit should be either a separate administration or incorporated as a whole with another. The Sub-Committee consider that the grievance was well-founded, the demand substantially supported by the people and the Oriya case is deserving of sympathy.

After considerations of the alternatives of the transfer of territory as a whole to a particular province and the creation of a sub-province, the Sub-Committee was in favour of the creation of an Orissa province, although it recognized that the decision involved the larger question of sub-division of existing provinces on linguistic basis.

If we make due allowance for the attempt at making the official documents all-comprehensive, this recommendation of the Simon Commission really means much more than it seems at first. At another place (vol II, p. 111) while discussing tracts not wholly excluded, they write, "we have already recommended that the claim of the Oriya-speaking areas to be recognized as a separate unit should be promptly considered." Thus it is clear that Orissa's case has been recognized to be of far greater urgency than that

of Sind. But what the Commission seem to give with one hand, they take away with the other, for, when we examine their detailed views, we find that they militate against their pious wishes and doubts are generally raised as to their sincerity of purpose. Let us see what is the nature of their detailed views.

The recommendations of the Commission, as regards extension of the present boundaries of Orissa are based on the ratio of the Oriya population in the outlying tracts of the present Orissa division. But the Oriyas point out that only a generation ago their ratio was immensely higher in those areas and even the present available census figures have been hopelessly manipulated against them by interested parties. The Sub-Committee recognized the validity of this claim and have recommended that special precautions should be taken to ensure the reliability of returns at the next census. But the authorities do not seem to take due notice of this vital recommendation. What we propose to drive home is the fact that while considering the case of these areas, not only the present but also the past or, what the Commissioners would like to call, the historical causes, must also be given due consideration.

A few years ago a responsible member of the Bihar and Orissa Government propounded the novel theory that Orissa was a deficit division. But it is a relief to know that the Atlee Committee has found the thesis unwarranted. It says:—

Estimates of revenue and expenditure were presented which were disputed and which depend to some extent on unascertainable factors. The Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that with strict economy the new province could just pay its way, if income and expenditure remained just as at present but the normal income could not provide for a large measure of development for the needs of backward areas or for the periodic ravages of flood and famine. The question of the establishment of a separate province, therefore, depends on the financial relationship between the central and provincial governments in respect of deficit areas.

There is every reason to hope that finance will not be an insuperable difficulty. First, the boundaries of the newly constituted province will, with proper regard to justice and equity, be considerably extended by any independent tribunal like the Boundaries Commission and the revenue would greatly increase thereby. Secondly, in view of the economic unity of India and of the fact that the different parts of India should develop with equal pace as far as practicable, Sir Walter Layton's proposals for distribution of resources between the central and provincial governments seem to be equitable and sound, and if their substance be accepted the areas that appear to have deficit would considerably improve their position. The revenues of Orissa would be considerably augmented by its share in the general excise on salt and tobacco. Again, the Oriyas are ready to shoulder a higher burden of taxation if they are given a separate province. The future Central Government is going to accept responsibility for the backward tracts if not for the deficit areas and this would relieve Orissa of a lot of expenditure. Indeed, the financial difficulty appears to be a mere

myth. Orissa is rich in natural resources, which the Oriyas hope, would be exploited by a Government entirely their own. That would be a considerable source of expanding revenue.

BHOGABAN MOHANTI.

(To be continued.)

Reviews.

ECONOMICS OF EMPLOYMENT.

GOLD, CREDIT AND EMPLOYMENT. FOUR ESSAYS FOR LAYMEN. BY G. D. H. COLE. (Allen and Unwin.) 1930. 20 cm. 165 p. 5/—

MR. G. D. H. COLE has done a very valuable service in publishing in book form his four essays. All of them, as the writer points out in the preface, have a bearing on the problem of employment. Mr. Cole is well-known to economists as well as to the public as a vigorous thinker and a clear writer and his philosophy of guild socialism gives him a place in the honoured list of constructive speculators in the field of economic thought.

In the first essay Mr. Cole makes a strong appeal for a clearer understanding of the currency and banking policy of the country and wants the Government to play a more intelligent part in the regulation of prices and the supply of credit. He puts his view rather bluntly when he says that the effective maintenance of gold as the measure of the value of our currency involves a complete subordination of our financial policy to world forces and a direct dependence of our issues of currency and credit on the ebb and flow of gold. In his second essay Mr. Cole makes a very clear appeal for a managed currency and for a little more 'wisdom' on the part of statesmen and financiers. Mr. Cole is right when he states with emphasis that many things besides the quantity of gold or currency affect the price level. Mr. Cole says that "if the supply of gold in each country does not automatically adjust itself to each country's needs, the case for allowing our internal supply of currency and credit to be governed automatically by the supply of gold falls to the ground." His plea for a new principle lies in his demand for a managed currency. So far Mr. Cole is on the right path. But even Mr. Cole must be aware that to ask for more wisdom in those responsible for the regulation of credit and currency is not exactly the same as having it; and as Professor Gregory once pointed out, it is just possible that an automatic system may still be better than a 'managed system' which can be mismanaged easily.

The third of Mr. Cole's essays is a very interesting one. The author makes a frantic appeal to the Government to employ all the unemployed in a number of ways: slum clearance, water supply, land development, canals and ports, social amenities on roads, and on railways and so on. Characteristically he puts the whole thing in a nutshell. "On the one hand we have about a million and a half of men and women waiting for work, on the other an inexhaustible supply of useful work waiting to be done. Are we really so incompetent as to be quite unable to bring the two together. He wants the labourers to be paid a standard wage and otherwise treated as normal workers. Mr. Cole wants Government to compel private employers to 'rationalise,' to bring industries under drastic public control and to play a large part in helping to supply capital which they must have if they are to be made reasonably efficient and productive.

The question of 'money' is examined by Mr. Cole. He thinks that the many millions already spent on unemployment benefit and poor relief to those out of work have been thrown away in so far as the securing of any valuable return is considered. The only sound policy in Mr. Cole's view would be this: to meet by loan such expenditure as would definitely and directly be productive of an equivalent return in the future and to meet all other expenditure out of taxation. In so far as employing men involves economic loss, the taxpayer must foot the Bill. But Mr. Cole is optimistic to an extravagant degree. While he accuses Mr. Thomas of 'want of imagination,' his own runs riot. It is easy to make general statements of a type, but it is a very serious thing to work out a plan by which more than a million workers can be employed on work of sorts on trade union pay without certain definite guarantees.

In the last of the group of essays, Mr. Cole indicates the weakness of the British banking policy in relation to industrial progress. He also wants that there should be 'rationalisation' of banking policy before industrial revival can be secured and indicates that a great responsibility lies with the bankers in the re-organisation of Britain's industrial leadership.

Mr. Cole has kept up his reputation for lucidity in exposition in these essays and they form a group of aggressive opinions which are a challenge to the slow-moving methods of the British administration. One wonders what Mr. Cole would have thought of the Government of India and its attitude towards India's industries and the Indian unemployed!!

S. V. AYYAR.

MEDIAEVAL TRAVELS.

A VOYAGE TO SURAT IN THE YEAR 1639.

By J. OVINGTON. Ed. By H.G. RAWLINSON. (Oxford University Press.) 1929. 20 cm. 313 p. 12/6.

INDIA drew a large number of travellers from the West throughout the seventeenth century. Some of them came in search of adventure, others came in quest of trade and a limited few, like Thevenot, were seekers after knowledge. The unknown has its charms as well as its risks and they travelled from port to port, from mart to mart, from one provincial capital to another. Sometimes they accompanied a caravan, not seldom they enlisted in the native army. Bernier secured the patronage of influential courtiers, Tavernier could count among his customers many crowned heads, Mannucci claimed many acquaintances among the great and sometimes set up for a skilled physician, though he had previously served as an artillery man, Hamilton sailed from port to port, Fryer and Carre travelled inland and they came across many curiosities and eagerly listened to the gossip of the countryside. Ovington's personal experience of things Indian was, comparatively speaking, less wide and more limited than that of the above-mentioned writers. He visited Bombay on his way to Surat and was unwilling to stay long in that island which had earned the evil reputation of being the white man's grave. His sojourn in India was limited to Surat but his "Voyage" was welcomed by his countrymen as a valuable addition to the literature on India. The zoologist who works in his laboratory with stuffed bodies and dried skins is not necessarily less informed than the naturalist who studies wild life in its natural environment. Ovington was an excellent observer, eager to learn but he could not rise above the common prejudices of his time and clothes. For the Roman Catholic clergy of Madeira he had not a good word to say, Mahomed was to him nothing but "a vile im-

postor" and "a false prophet" and he even speaks of pig-eating Mahomedans! But he was a genuine admirer of the good manners of the Surat Bania and did not hesitate to paint the lawless English seaman in their true colour. He tells us how the simple Negroes learnt to swear in English from the sailors and "when the English sailers at that time perceived the softness of the Indian Lascarrs; how tame they were to all their cruelties, how patient and submissive to their Force and Arms, and how willingly they endured the spoiling of their goods, rather than engage their lives in a bloody contest; they no sooner returned for England, but they imbarck'd again upon a new Design with some more Europeans to turn Pirates, and rob these harmless traffickers in the Red Sea." They were much worse than the Sanganian pirates for the latter scrupulously observed their promise as we learn from Ovington. The value of this work cannot be overestimated and it was translated into French early in the eighteenth century. Mr. Rawlinson and the Oxford University Press, therefore, deserve our gratitude for publishing a fresh edition of this rare work. But we wish that the editing had been more thorough, the word "Shabash", a common term of applause, for instance, was derived, according to Ovington, from Shah Abbas of Persia. The author was unfamiliar with the language of this land but the learned editor might very well add a note. It is far from our intention to undervalue his work but the average reader now-a-days expects the editor to point out all inaccuracies in the text. The derivation of Fidalgo from *filho do algo* seems rather fanciful and the Portuguese form is not *Hidalgo*. "Praya" it might be noted is a Portuguese word for "beach." We hope that a few more notes will be added in the next edition and students of Indian History will also welcome Ovington's account of the coins of the kingdoms of India, Persia, Golconda, etc. which has been omitted from the present edition.

S. N. SEN,

SHORT NOTICES.

THE KEY OF PROGRESS, A SURVEY OF THE STATUS AND CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN INDIA. BY SEVERAL CONTRIBUTORS. ED. BY A. R. CATON. (Oxford University Press.) 1930. 20cm. 250p. 7/6.

THIS little handbook, consisting of a series of Studies of the Indian woman in industrial and rural life, finds the key of progress in wider education, improved conditions of health and sanitation, and a fuller entry into public affairs by women themselves.

Statistics given show that only 2% of the women are literate, that Government expenditure on female education is almost negligible as compared with that on boys, whilst the need for compulsory education is seen to be even greater amongst girls than amongst boys, since even in the most advanced provinces, 3 out of every 4 girls fall out before reaching Class II. *Purdah*, early marriage, lack of financial support, dearth of trained teachers and the difficulty of unmarried teachers living alone in villages where 87% of their pupils are to be found, are the conditions alleged to be responsible for this state of affairs.

With regard to health, improvements in hygiene and sanitation, and better provision for maternity and child welfare are needed to cope with the devastating prevalence of preventable disease. The women of India are deeply interested in such movements, but must demand a more adequate Government financial support for such services, in a country where the female population is 120 millions whilst the number of women doctors and health visitors is

but 400 and 250 respectively! Social service holds out valuable opportunities to the widows of India. Could they be persuaded to come forward for training? The provision of better housing for industrial workers, the improvement in the legal status of women, welfare schemes and maternity legislation, and above all the provision of centres in villages for the education and training of rural women offer the best methods of dealing with the difficulties which lie in the path of progress.

The future of India lies in the hands of its women, and whilst it is encouraging that they are increasingly taking their share in civil and political life, much wider effort is needed adequately to cope with the many problems that confront them.

MISS TODHUNTER.

BOMBAY TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW. EIGHT LECTURES. BY A. R. DALAL & OTHERS. ED.

BY CLIFFORD MANSHARDT. (Taraporewalla.)
1930, 24cm. 104p. Rs. 4/-

THE book under review is a compilation of eight lectures delivered under the auspices of the Nagapada Neighbourhood House, Bombay, in the 'Building a Better City' series which was undertaken with the laudable object of 'revealing the strength and weakness of our common life, with the hope that practical suggestions might be made for properly capitalizing the potential elements of strength, and reconstructing or in some cases completely eradicating, the elements of weakness.' The idea of arranging such a series of lectures with a view to acquainting the present and future citizen with the different problems of the city or the town is a novel one in India and deserves to be more widely followed. It is a very valuable method of educating the municipal voter, whose number is growing larger and larger every day because of the modern democratic tendency of widening the franchise and doing away with the barriers of colour, sex or property qualifications, and focussing his attention on a number of problems concerning his town or city, in shaping the future of which he has got a hand because of his right to vote. Educating the municipal voter is a problem of national importance for as De Tocqueville said: "Municipal institutions constitute the strength of a free nation. A nation may establish a system of free government but without municipal institutions it cannot have the spirit of liberty." The city may rightly be regarded the cradle of democracy and perhaps its home. It is the laboratory of representative self-government.

The eight papers presented in this book deal with the social, communal, educational, economic and labour problems peculiar to the city of Bombay and each subject is dealt with by a prominent citizen who has made a special study of the same and about which he can speak with authority. A perusal of the book is sure to prove very interesting and instructive and it will certainly serve its purpose by going a great way towards educating the 'future masters' of the city of Bombay—the *urbs Prima* in India. The book has been beautifully printed and nicely got up.

K. G. S'PANI.

HISTORY OF BISHNUPUR RAJ. By ABHAYA PADA MALLIK. (Chuckervetty, Chatterjee and Co., Calcutta.) 1921. 18. cm. 148 p. Rs. 2/8

A SMALL principality in a distant corner of Bengal, Bishnupur retained its independence long after the

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