

Servant of India

EDITOR : P. KODANDA RAO—OFFICE : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S HOME, POONA 4

VOL. XIV No. 11. }

POONA—THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 1931.

{ INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15s.

CONTENTS.

	Page
TOPICS OF THE WEEK.	125
ARTICLES :—	
The New Situation.	127
Tannery Labour in Bombay.-I. By S. V. Parulekar.	129
The Economic Implications of Falling Prices. By B. Ramachandra Rau.	130
REVIEWS :—	
Japanese Economic History. By D. R. Gadgil.	133
American View of India. By Shripad R. Tikekar.	135
SHORT NOTICES.	136

Topics of the Week.

The Gandhi-Irwin Agreement.

THE Gandhi-Irwin Agreement published on the 5th inst. is without doubt a triumph of commonsense and statesmanship. It was worthy of the great personalities who negotiated it. Both Lord Irwin and Mahatma Gandhi have shown rare courage in putting their signatures to it, for they knew full well that the compromise, as is the case with all compromises, would draw on them the harsh and impatient criticism of the extremists on either side. Mr. Churchill has succeeded in shaking Mr. Bpldwin's support of Lord Irwin. And the Mahatma has been threatened with a revolt from some of his erstwhile followers. But they will have the satisfaction that they have the support of the great bulk of the people of India, of Britain and of the world who take an intelligent interest in the affairs of India.

The text of the Agreement consists of two parts; one relates to the constitutional issue as it emerged from the Round Table Conference and the other to the situation created by the civil disobedience movement. With the significance of the first part we deal in the leading article.

In the second part the Congress agreed to drop non-cooperation and civil disobedience and all the concomitant activities; and the Government in its turn agreed to withdraw the Ordinances, release political prisoners, restore confiscated property, reinstate Government servants who resigned their offices, in so far as it is open to them to do these things, and to permit the picking of salt by poor villagers living along the coast for local consumption. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel was perfectly entitled to say, as he did in his speech in Bombay last week, that those who did not participate in the civil disobedience movement had no right to criticise the Agreement. Nevertheless he will permit us to say that we deprecate the vesting of discretion in the District Collectors in restoring movable and immovable property confiscated for non-payment of taxes. The properties are returnable "unless the Collector of the District has reason to believe that the defaulter will contumaciously refuse to pay the dues recoverable from him within a

reasonable period." The District Collectors in certain places have been notoriously vindictive, and it is very undesirable that any discretion should be vested in them in closing the civil disobedience chapter. The properties should be returned to the parties irrespective of the Collector's opinion. If they refuse to pay up the taxes in time, it will be open to the Collectors to proceed against them under the ample powers given them by the Land Revenue Code. We trust that the local Governments will see to it that the generous and liberal intentions of the Agreement are not frustrated by the tin-gods in the districts.

The Mahatma and the Princes.

THE Mahatma has done the right thing in his own inimitable way in appealing to the Princes as he did in his Press interview on the 5th inst. He claimed that the Congress had with great wisdom and great restraint refrained all these years from interfering in the affairs of the Indian States, partly in order that, "by reason of the self-imposed restraint, to make its voice heard by the States on a suitable occasion". And he declared: "I think that that occasion has now arisen." He therefore appealed to the Princes not to shut their ears to the Congress appeal on behalf of the subjects of the States. As regards federation, he said, "An undiluted autocracy however benevolent it may be and an almost undiluted democracy are an incompatible mixture bound to result in an explosion" and he therefore appealed to them "not to take up an uncompromising attitude and impatiently refuse to listen to an appeal from or on behalf of the would-be partner." The Princes will do well to pay heed to the appeal of the Mahatma. They must recognise that when Great Britain herself is willing to terminate her autocratic control over India and offers to cooperate in terminating her rule, it is up to the Princes to emulate her noble example and take pride and pleasure in democratising their States. There are not wanting Indian Princes who would respond to the call of democracy in India, but they are apparently deterred from so doing for fear of violating the team spirit of the Indian Princes. The time has arrived when they should in the larger and nobler interests of the Motherland cast off hesitation and give a bold lead to their brother Princes.

Muslim Fanatics.

While as a result of the Gandhi-Irwin agreement the political atmosphere has considerably cleared and goodwill and peace are observable on all sides, some Moslem communalists as represented by the All-India Muslim Conference appear to be determined to sound a discordant note. The Working Committee of this Conference recently met at Delhi and passed certain resolutions which, to say the least, are as amazing as they are short-sighted. The Committee claimed to speak in the name of the Muslim community, but nobody knows how far that claim is justified. According to this Committee,

the Hindus are bent upon establishing a Hindu Raj in India and the British Cabinet has entered into an unholy alliance with the Hindus in ignoring most of the Muslim demands. To say this about a British Cabinet which showed the utmost solicitude for the proper protection not only of this or that minority but of all minorities while at the same time displaying a genuine desire to ensure the development of democratic institutions in a healthy atmosphere is to distort facts. But this is not all. The Committee has gone the length of demanding that there should be no Dominion Status for this country and no responsibility of the executive to the legislature until that part of the Muslim community which the Conference represents is satisfied that the Moslems are given protection; in other words, the Conference wants the constitutional work done in London undone, which is not a sensible proposition. The Working Committee was so far blinded by rank communalism that it even asked Muslims to boycott the Round Table Conference in its further stages. In advocating this suicidal course, it is playing into the hands of Churchill and company among the British Conservatives, who recently came to a similar decision for Imperialist considerations. The Working Committee decided to send a deputation to England "to prevent the British Cabinet from pursuing further the anti-Muslim policy." We must say the Conference does not know who the real friends of democracy are when they rail in this way against the Labour Government. But the Conference is apparently anxious not so much for democracy as for the communal electorate with all the evils it brings in its train. The proposed deputation will also be charged with the duty of warning the British public that any constitutional advance without a satisfactory communal settlement will "result in civil war." This is language of fanaticism. If the Conference only mean to emphasise, if in somewhat vehement terms, the need of a communal settlement as desirable to the lasting solution of the Indian political problem, there can be no two opinions on the point. As a matter of fact the proceedings of the London Conference show a very distinct realisation by all parties of the importance of such a settlement. Mahatma Gandhi is straining every nerve for the purpose. His appeal to the Hindus to do everything to reassure the Muslims ought to convince every reasonable Muslim that he is their best friend among the Hindus. To talk of civil war when there is every prospect of matters being settled by negotiation and discussion is the height of unwisdom. It is refreshing to turn to the appeal issued by Mr. M. C. Chagla to all nationally-minded Muslims to rally round the banner of joint electorates. He says judgment went by default against them in London and the impression was created that the Muslims would have nothing but separate electorates. This is not a fact, as is becoming increasingly clear every day. It is to be hoped Mr. Chagla's appeal will not go in vain.

Commercial Equality.

THERE has been considerable misgiving in Indian circles, particularly, commercial circles, as to the import of the paragraph in the Report of Minorities Sub-Committee of the R. T. C. relating to commercial equality between Indians and Britishers in India. The relevant clause runs as follows:

At the instance of the British commercial community, the principle was generally agreed that there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies trading in India and the rights of Indian-born subjects, and that an appropriate convention, based on reciprocity, should be entered into for the purpose of regulating these rights.

This has been interpreted to mean that India would

not be free to protect Indian industries against British competition and even to consider, much less pass, a measure like the Coastal Reservation Bill. Considering that the clause was the subject of prolonged and anxious deliberation, and that it has received the approval of such Indian businessmen as Sir Pheroze Sethna, Sir Cowasji Jahangir and Mr. H. P. Mody, let alone the other British Indian politicians except Mr. Jinnah, it should be surprising if such a restrictive interpretation was correct. On their return to India the Indian commercial delegates reassured Indian opinion that it was not so. They contended that under the clause India was not precluded from discriminating against British interests if the interests of India demanded it. Writing in the *Review of India*, the organ of the European Association, Sir Hubert Carr, who was the leader of the delegates who represented British commercial interests in India at the R. T. C. and who naturally figured prominently in the discussion of this matter, agreed with the Indian commercial delegates. He said that the interests of the British mercantile community in India were best served by agreeing to the Indian demand for swaraj—

Provided that the Europeans from Great Britain and Northern Ireland trading in India shall have the same rights as Indian-born subjects. Not one iota has been given in this direction. The position at the beginning of the Conference of the British mercantile community has been retained throughout, and opinion here generally favours the further protection of these rights by means of a trade convention. In the formulating of this convention certain points will require careful negotiation, for during the past years the *Chambers of Commerce in India* have accepted a certain degree of discrimination as justifiable, such, for instance, as that indicated in the *Indian Tariff Commission and the External Capital Committee's Report*.

It is quite clear from the italicised passage that discrimination against British interests is not altogether ruled out. Mr. Gavin Jones, another representative of British commercial interests in India, confessed at the Round Table Conference that the opposition of his constituents to the Coastal Reservation Bill was not because of its discrimination but its unreasonable character. He said, "In the Assembly we would not have raised great opposition to the Bill which was introduced in that connection if it had been a reasonable one." The discussions on the subject in the R. T. Conference made clear two points, which, in a sense, are opposed, to each other. Equality between Indian and British interests was freely offered. The Nehru Report had anticipated it already. But at the same time, it was made clear that India should have the right to discriminate if she considered it necessary. The drafting of a formula to embody these contradictory policies taxed the ingenuity of the delegates. The net result was the formula ultimately accepted. The key word in the clause is "generally" in the sentence, "the principle was generally agreed that there should be no discrimination..." An exceptional discrimination in the interests of India is not ruled out. The wording of the formula, however, will bear improvement.

Co-operation in Kenya.

AFTER years of non-participation in the municipal and legislative bodies in Kenya, the local Indian community, or at any rate a section of it, has raised the ban and the Indian seats in the Mombasa and Nairobi Municipal Boards have been filled by nomination. There are many circumstances which called for and justified such a reversal of Indian policy in Kenya at the present moment. The Hilton-Young Commission had recommended that the common franchise should be the goal

of Kenya; the Labour Cabinet had definitely pronounced in favour of the common roll. It is now the accepted policy of the Imperial Government; only its introduction in Kenya remains. Sir Edward Grigg, who was no friend of the Indian or the Native, has gone and in his place, has just arrived a new Governor chosen by the Labour Government, which is in itself a reassuring factor. The Government of Kenya has given an undertaking that the participation of the Indian community in Municipal and Legislative Councils, while still the communal roll is the law of the land, will not be interpreted as involving any the slightest departure from their policy of the common roll. Such an undertaking was perhaps forthcoming from the Government of Sir Edward Grigg. But it failed to inspire confidence in the Indian public. Once the policy of the common roll has been accepted by the Imperial Government, and the authorities in London and Nairobi were such as to inspire confidence in the Indian community, it was desirable for the Kenya Indians to drop their policy of non-participation, refrain from an unnecessary sacrifice of the interests of the Indian community and render the task of implementing the common roll easier. We are happy that a certain section of Indians has taken its courage in both hands and decided on abandoning the attitude of noncooperation, and we hope that the dissenters will also soon change their angle of vision. Nothing is gained but much is lost by persisting any longer in the boycott of municipal and legislative institutions, even from the point of view of facilitating the introduction of the common roll.

* * *

Cochin.

COCHIN is one of those well governed States, of which there are not too many. Their Highnesses who attended the Round Table Conference tried their best to create the impression that Cochin was the rule and not the exception; how far they succeeded is more than we can say. But those in touch with conditions in Indian States generally will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the picture sought to be painted of life in Indian States by some of the Princes in London does not faithfully reflect the facts. All the greater reason therefore why Cochin should be praised for what it has done for its citizens. As for education, almost the whole of the school-age population appears to be receiving some kind of instruction. We are glad to note the special efforts that are being made by the State to improve the moral and material condition of the depressed classes. The chief items in the programme of their social and economic uplift are intensive propaganda to remove their untouchability. The Director of Public Instruction is their ex-officio Protector which ensures for them proper educational facilities. There is a fixed civil list of five lakhs which is not exceeded. The finances of the State are also in a flourishing condition, its assets exceeding one crore. The only criticism we would allow ourselves relates to its abkari policy. The report does not say what it is; but we daresay it is still the traditionally bureaucratic one of maximum revenue from minimum consumption. It is high time this was brought in line with the present-day sentiment on the subject. We need hardly point out that this is in favour of total prohibition, which should, in our opinion, be the goal of its abkari policy. True, it cannot be enforced immediately without dislocation of the finances of the State; but there is no reason why an attempt should not be made to reach the goal within a stated time-limit, say, fifteen years. We strongly urge upon the Cochin Government the desirability of an early declaration in favour of prohibition to be brought about as early as possible.

Articles.

THE NEW SITUATION.

RIGHTLY and naturally the terms in the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement which refer to the constitutional development of India are of far more importance and significance than those which refer to the cessation of "war" between the Government and the Congress. The fact that hereafter the Congress, under the leadership of the Mahatma, will cooperate in formulating the constitution of India will make a vital difference to the atmosphere in which the Round Table Conference, deliberated in London and there will be, at any rate, there should be, a realignment of the currents, cross-currents and under-currents that shaped the conclusions of the Conference in London.

The clause in the Agreement which refers to the constitutional issue runs as follows:

As regards constitutional questions, the scope of future discussions is stated, with the assent of His Majesty's Government, to be with the object of considering further the scheme for the constitutional Government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India, for such matters, as for instance, Defence, External Affairs, the position of the minorities, the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations.

Even among those who participated in the deliberations of the London Conference there was some difference of opinion regarding the acceptability of federation and safeguards. In India generally there has been a more critical attitude towards them. But the acceptance of these two fundamentals by the Mahatma and the Working Committee of the Congress sets the seal of approval, as it were, of India to them.

In accepting these contested conclusions of the Conference the Congress has not given away India's case. In the press interview which the Mahatma gave on the same day on which the Agreement was published, he made it clear that he wanted the substance of independence and that neither federation nor safeguards should restrict it. "Congress will not be deterred from any consideration save that of incapacity from pressing for the fullest freedom." It seeks to make "federation responsible and the safeguards, reservations, or whatever other name they may be known by, such as would promote the real growth of the country along political, social, economic and moral lines."

The Mahatma expressed surprise that the Princes readily agreed to join the federation. In other quarters, surprise was expressed that the British Indian delegates agreed to federation and the representation of Indian States in the Federal Assembly by the nominees of the Princes. Others have chafed against safeguards and reservations. Such adverse criticism as there has been of the conclusions "noted" at the R. T. C. has emanated mostly from those who looked at them from their particularist points

of view and failed to view them as a whole, and in relation to the circumstances which cramped the discussion. A glance at these circumstances in proper perspective may help not only to a better understanding of the achievements of the Conference but also reveal the adverse factors which should in the second stage be eliminated.

The British Indian delegates went to the London Conference to secure by consent and negotiation the transfer of political power from London to Delhi and from a small alien bureaucracy to a board-based democracy in British India. They realised that the greater the agreement between the delegates from India the better the chances of its being accepted by the British Parties. Rightly or wrongly, the Congress had declined to participate in the Conference. On the other hand, its policies and the utterances of some of its acknowledged leaders and in particular, the famous demands put forward by the Congress leaders from Yerawada Jail in August last, created apprehensions, not wholly justified perhaps, but none the less natural under the circumstances, that the Congress was the enemy of Great Britain, and that if it had control of the political machine in India, it would embark on an anti-British policy. A demand for examination of the public debt of India led to fears that it was a prelude to its wholesale repudiation. Gaya loomed larger than Yerawada. Then there was the boycott of British goods and preference to foreign goods over British where Indian goods were not available. These and other impracticable policies contained in the Congress leaders statement from Yerawada, whatever justification the Congress had for flourishing them, were not calculated to foster among the British people a feeling of trust and confidence in the Congress. It was avowed in London that politicians represented by Messrs. Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar had not the allegiance of the majority of politically-minded Indians; that they were in a minority and that in a general election in the present temper of the country, they had no chance of being returned to power. Political power was bound to pass into the intransigent hands of the Congress. It was naturally contended that it was expecting too much from average human nature to ask the British people to give their willing consent to the transfer of power, which they wielded so long unchallenged, from London to Delhi if it was to pass straightaway into the hands of those whom they had reason to fear to be their enemies. They might be induced to agree to the transfer if their apprehensions were proved groundless or guarantees and hostages were given against unfriendly and vindictive reactions. The association of the Indian Princes with the future Government of India offered the necessary guarantees. Their presence in the federal Government would give it the stabilising element and make for gradual evolution of the Indian constitution without precipitating catastrophic changes. From that point of view, it even became necessary that the Indian States' representatives should be nominees of the Princes and not the elected representatives of the peoples, for the latter were more under the influence of the Congress than of the Princes. The

participation of the Indian Princes, as such, in the Dominion Government of India and not merely a federation of Indian States with British India, became vital to any possibility of transfer of power from London to Delhi by consent. And if the Princes joined the British Indians in the demand for the transfer of political power, it would be irresistible. And so it happened. It was the action of the Indian Princes in solidly backing the British Indian demand for transfer of responsibility that really secured the consent of the British leaders to it. If the British did not entertain, and the Congress had given no room for, misgivings regarding the attitude of the Congress towards the British, the provision of heavy ballast in the shape of the Princes and their nominees would not have been felt necessary. As it was, the utmost that the Indian delegates to the Conference could secure was the transfer of political power from England to India, but the policies of the Congress made the further step of transferring it to an Indian democracy impossible for the moment.

There was another reason why the British Indians had to seek the co-operation of the Princes at whatever cost. The Princes had it in their power to insist that the British Government should remain in India and retain control over the Army adequate for the purpose of meeting their treaty obligations towards the Princes. And that would mean that the transfer of the Indian Army to Dominion control would have been rendered remote. It thus appeared that, whatever constitutional lawyers might say, the consent of the Princes to Indian autonomy was essential; they held the whip-handle.

The Princes, no less than the British Indians, were anxious to terminate the domination of the British Government and win freedom for themselves. They were not seeking merely a change of masters, from the British to the British Indian. The federal legislature, if composed on the basis of representation according to population, would have British India as the predominant partner, and unless the Princes have confidence in British Indian leaders, they would hesitate to put themselves under them. Here again the policies of the Congress and the utterances of some of its leaders did not tend to infuse confidence in the Indian Princes. They did not feel like trusting themselves to a Federal Assembly dominated by the Congress, and least of all, to agree to the States' representatives being elected by their subjects.

While they did not wish to come under the rule of the Congress, they still wanted to shake off the grip of the British Political Department. They could do so only if they joined in the British Indian demand for autonomy for India. And they did. They however took care to insist on safeguards against British India dominating over them. It led them to insist on the fullest possible autonomy being given to the Indian States and the fewest possible powers being delegated to the Central Federal Government.

And in this they had the sympathy and support of the Indian Muslims, who, for their own purposes, wished the same policy extended

to the British Indian Provinces. The Muslims were more keen on breaking up the unitary government of British India, making it a federation and endowing the units with the maximum of autonomy, than on federation of British India with the Indian States or the grant of responsibility in the Central Government. The Muslims sought to ensure Muslim Raj in the provinces which have a Muslim majority and render it immune from interference from the Central Federal Government, which would be predominantly Hindu. To them federation of the two Indias merely meant greater preponderance of Hindus, for there were more Hindu Princes than Muslim. Again, they attached more importance to autonomy of the provinces than to the autonomy of India. They actually opposed the grant of responsibility in the Centre if they were not granted the provincial autonomy they desired. The Congress, of course, was not responsible for this attitude of the Muslims, except that, as Mr. Chagla put it, most of the nationalist Muslims were in the Congress camp and were precluded from attending the Conference, and influencing its deliberations. There can be no doubt, however, that if the Congress had a solution acceptable to nationalist Hindus and Muslims, it would have had an indirect, but none the less powerful, influence in the deliberations of the Conference.

The situation at the London Conference was a complex of cross-currents. The Princes, the Muslims and the British had different interests to promote or safeguard. It was only the British Indian delegates of the Liberal persuasion that stood for autonomy and democracy for the whole of India. They had, however, to make concessions and accept compromises in order to persuade the Princes, the Britishers and the Muslims to toe the line. They could not secure their whole objective; they had to be content with autonomy and for the time being forego democracy.

Now that the Mahatma and the Congress have agreed to drop non-cooperation, and offer cooperation, the position is entirely altered. With characteristic energy and devotion the Mahatma has set about creating confidence where distrust prevailed. The Mahatma has appealed for cooperation from the Princes and the Britishers and the non-Congress parties in India. He has dropped the boycott of British goods and even gave preference to British goods over non-British foreign goods. He has declared that obligations, like public debt, will be scrupulously honoured. That ought to allay and extinguish the apprehensions among the Britishers that the Congress is hostile to British vested interests and will resort to vindictive measures against them. That ought to render the safeguards regarding finance, public debt, currency and British commercial interests superfluous. Equally superfluous will be the provision for a ballast in the Central Government to guarantee stability to the administration. It will no longer be necessary, even from the British point of view, that the Indian States should be represented in the central

legislature by the nominees of the Princes. The Dominion Government of India will run no special risks if the States' representatives are elected. If the cooperation of the Princes secured autonomy for India, the cooperation of the Congress will secure the further step, democracy for India. Safeguards are required not against an irresponsible and hostile democracy in India but against the perpetuation of the bureaucracy of the British, the autocracy of the Princes, the theocracy of the communalists and the plutocracy of the capitalists, Indian and other. The interests of India require these safeguards and it is for us, in India, to fashion them.

TANNERY LABOUR IN BOMBAY-I.

IT may be quite truthfully asserted that the conditions of workers in no other industry in the City of Bombay are more deplorable than those of the tannery and leather workers at Dharavi. To attempt to give a detailed description of all the aspects of the conditions of tannery workers is a difficult task. The conditions of their life and work are very pitiable, wretched and vile. It is necessary to see with one's eyes the situation of the place to realise their miserable conditions and to appreciate fully well the extent of their wretchedness. Dharavi is within the island of Bombay and situated to the extreme north. It is located in low-lying land. With a narrow filthy creek on one side and marshy land round about, the place constitutes a constant menace to the health of the inhabitants of Dharavi. It is surrounded by trenches which are for the greater part of the year full of dirty water which spreads through the whole of the locality a very foul smell and which has proved to be the breeding places of malarial mosquitoes and the source of poisonous gases. There are besides numerous pits dug for earth and lime-stone for the manufacture of bricks and mortar. In consequence, the whole district gets submerged under water for over four months in the year and becomes a vast breeding place for mosquitoes. Even a casual visitor to the place, happening to pass through the streets just after sunset, can hardly escape stinging bites of hundreds of mosquitoes. It can be better imagined than described how very injurious and unwholesome to health must the locality be to those individuals who on account of dire economic conditions are forced to live and work in that place, which is made much more disagreeable by the unbearable stench that emanates from the tanneries in the area.

Within the area of Dharavi there are twenty-three tanneries, out of which seventeen are working at present, the rest being closed down owing to depression in trade. They vary in their sizes, the number of workers varying between one hundred and a dozen. They are all owned by private individuals with the exception of one. In all tanneries except this one, the system of tanning raw hides is the old one which requires two months to tan hides into leather. The only factory in which any mechanical power is used is the Western India

Tannery. In the other factories manual labour is used. The raw hides have to go through eleven different processes before they are finally ready for sale.

The number of employees in the tanning industry at Dharavi is about one thousand and five hundred. The most interesting and important feature to be noted in this connection is that all of them without exception have migrated from the Southern-most parts of India. They speak Tamil and a large number of them belong to the Tinnevely district. Their principal occupation in their native districts is the cultivation of the lands of the rich landlords and it is superfluous to add that they have to lead the most miserable sort of life there. Though nominally free, they are usually slaves in almost every sense of the word, earning by the ceaseless sweat of their brow hardly enough to stay the pangs of hunger and to clothe themselves with rough rags. Till a score of years ago some of them were actually bond serfs and there are instances on record which show that it was no infrequent thing with them to mortgage their nearest relatives with the landlord as security for the repayment of a loan! They are to be found in large numbers in every village of the Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura and Tinnevely districts, doing all the dirty and hard work for the benefit of the rich. To supplement their meagre earnings as agricultural labourers they take to the profession of tanning raw hides, in which art they have attained a degree of skill, mostly by industrious and laborious habits, which is equalled by few. As agriculture in their own native districts cannot absorb them all, a large number of them have necessarily to migrate to other industrial centres to find work. India has tanneries at various places such as Madras, Cawnpore, Hyderabad, Bombay Karachi, etc. and it will be found that the tanneries in every one of these places employ a large number of workers who come from the most distant parts of Southern India as they happen to be masters of the crafts in the leather industry. As the industry of tanning raw hides involves hard manual labour and is, in addition, most injurious to the health of the workers, it depends upon a comparatively small community for its man power.

Housing Conditions :—To give a graphic description of the houses in which the tannery workers live is a very difficult task. Irrespective of the fact that Dharavi happens to be situated on low-lying marshy lands, the sanitation in this part of the City has been criminally neglected by the Bombay Municipal Corporation. It has been notoriously malarious and the Corporation has so far done nothing to mitigate the evil. With the exception of the main one all the roads in the locality, which are rugged and uneven, are submerged under accumulations of slush, overflow from drains and mud during the rainy season and as a consequence they become impassable. Ditches are to be found in the midst of the locality which are full of dirty and impure water. The Bombay Municipality, which wages a relentless war against the owners of wells in the rest of the island, has ignored their existence in Dharavi! The

drainage of Dharavi has been woefully neglected.

Almost all the workers live in sheds constructed by the owners of the factories in which they are employed. The sheds vary in their sizes and accommodate a large number of workers. A shed of the dimension of 23 feet by 20 accommodated 30 men; another shed which was 10×2 feet accommodated 16 persons and a third one, which was 8×12 feet and which accommodated six workers, was only three and a half feet in height! A very negligible number of workers who happen to live with their families share the same shed with other workers after constructing near one end a temporary partition of broken planks, gunny bags and sheets of kerosene oil tins. The sheds are without plinths. In the case of only a few there is a small hole in one of the walls which serves the purpose of a window. The hall is their kitchen, their dining room, their dressing room and their sleeping apartment. No ray of the sun can enter the room at any time; that is how they are built. There is hardly light sufficient to discern things clearly even during the day-time. Neither gentle breezes nor fierce winds find entrance to the place. The sanitary conditions round about the dwelling places are horrible. The people bathe in the open in the absence of bath rooms. A stranger who might venture to step into one of those sheds feels himself suffocated. These hovels without ventilation and sanitation are utterly unfit for human habitation.

The workers have to pay no rent to their employers for the shed which they occupy. All the factory-owners have constructed sheds within the factory premises for the workers to live in. In the early days of the industry the factory-owners, who had to bring the workers from the Madras Presidency,—this particular class of labourers being unavailable in Bombay—, were forced to offer the tempting conditions of free dwelling places to the workers! There are also instances which show that the materials for erecting the sheds were provided by the proprietors of the factories and the workers erected the sheds. But the proprietor is under no obligation to provide sufficient accommodation to each employee. They might share the available space with the rest of the workers in common or might choose to rent a room. But it needs hardly be said that the worker who cannot afford to spend out of his very scanty earnings anything on rent is content with the meagre accommodation that is available.

(To be continued.)

S. V. PARULEKAR.

THE ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF FALLING PRICES.

NOTHING gives so much concern to the Indian public at the present time as the abnormal fall in wholesale and retail prices of farm produce and staple commodities. Masses of people find great difficulty in securing enough income to get on with their usual avocations or discharge their

obligations. They are persistently clamouring for a remedy. The recent appointment of a committee in the Madras Presidency is only a translation of this desire.

The gradual fall in prices of commodities at the present time as compared with those of a year ago would reveal that prices have fallen roughly by twenty-five per cent.

Index Number (Base Year) 1913... 100.		
		India (Calcutta).
January 1930	...	131
February "	...	126
March "	...	125
April "	...	123
May "	...	121
June "	...	116
July "	...	115
August "	...	114
September "	...	111
October "	...	108
November "	...	104

If a study of the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette* is made, the corresponding fall in retail prices can be noticed.

Economic theorists tell us that prices of primary products, being largely in the hands of the labourer and his family, are governed by the direct pressure of demand and supply. The supply of prime commodities and agricultural goods has been on the increase, and has greatly increased, thanks mainly to the bounty of nature. In consequence, some fall in prices is inevitable even if other factors have been constant. Many of our prime commodities are subject to world competition, *viz.*, wheat, cotton, tea, and minerals, and as their price has fallen in value the domestic producers cannot hope to find a better market elsewhere for these products. It is a realisation of this situation that makes the producers to clamour for artificial restrictions on output. An example of this tendency is the tea restriction agreed upon between growers in India, Ceylon, Java and Sumatra. Again, we cannot easily estimate the carry-overs from previous years. A bounteous harvest of rice and jute and a heavy carry-over from previous years means a top-heavy market for these products, and a serious fall in prices naturally ensues. The habits of the consumers are also changing and the effect of this has to be taken into consideration. When artificial silk is produced, the demand for cotton and wool shrinks. If the demand for a commodity diminishes, more of it will have to be exchanged in order to purchase the same requirements of the agriculturists. Whatever might be the actual reason for the fall in prices of our commodities, it must be distinctly understood at the outset that no one set of causes can be responsible for the downward grade of falling prices of each and every important commodity.

Were natural deflation taking place the immense addition to the output would be welcome. A similar movement was experienced in England after the Napoleonic Wars a century ago, when prices continued to fall for over thirty years as a result of great

industrial inventions. Neither artificial limitation of credit nor restriction of business was responsible for it.

The quantitative Theory of Money teaches us that greater supply must be offset by the greater purchasing power brought about by financial expedients or monetary policy. But if the existing purchasing power is not used to the full by the people in anticipation of further fall in prices it will tend to bring about a further fall in prices. Increase in population and their effective demand must be equivalent to the increased supply. We must see the real explanation for falling prices in the increase of goods and currency. Prices would and ought to have been constant if the increase in the purchasing power had been commensurate with or in proper proportion to the increase in goods. Output and supply of staple commodities have increased and have outstripped the demand caused either by increase in the purchasing power as in the Western countries or the increase in population. We in India lack efficient warehouses to store the carry-over in good condition for future consumption. Witness the poor facilities for storing grain, although it is fully realised that properly preserved old rice would gain in value rather than lose it. Secondly, railway freights in most cases are too high to permit of the transport of the surplus crop to places where it is needed and where it will fetch a better price. Prices have fallen and they are not followed by a general cut in wages, Government salaries, interest rates, etc. Falling prices and steady nominal wages ought to have augmented the purchasing power of the wage-earners. But nothing is known regarding wage-levels as the Government have given up publishing the useful publication entitled "Prices and Wages in India" since the year 1923.

Manufacturers, be they Indian or foreign, have increased their output by rationalization. But they find it difficult to sell their goods as the producers of the agricultural and prime commodities receive less in payment for what they have to sell. Added to this, the general lack of confidence in the immediate political future makes the manufacturers cautious. Export trade, under such conditions becomes adverse and the consequent contraction of exchange business makes it impossible for the Government to maintain the rupee at the 1s. 6d. ratio. The decrease in currency in the eleven months from March, 1930 to February, 1931, which comes to Rs. 42 crores, is not the sole cause of the present tendency of falling prices. The trading and commercial public commit a mistake in looking upon this decrease with grave anxiety and profound alarm. Contraction of currency was inevitable as a result of the fall in prices itself.

Looking ahead the possibility of getting back to higher levels of commodity prices seems to be very remote indeed. Knowing full well that economic prophecy is mischievous and futile, the opinion may still be hazarded that it is indeed difficult to climb back to the old-time price-levels of 1925, 1927 and 1928. Firstly, the fall in prices is not local but extends to all countries of the world. The follow-

ing index number of prices would make the point clear.

(1913 Base year : 100).

	U. K.	U. S. A.	Japan	Ger- many	France	India
	"Econ- omist"	Labour- Bureau	(Bank of Japan)	Official	..	Cal- cutta
Jany. 1930	123.7	133.8	152.2	132.3	463.3	131
Feb. "	121.0	131.9	151.0	129.3	564.4	126
March	119.4	130.1	148.1	126.4	552.8	125
April	117.2	129.9	145.7	126.7	548.4	123
May	115.8	127.7	143.1	125.7	541.5	121
June	113.2	124.4	137.0	125.5	532.7	116
July	111.5	129.3	133.5	125.1	537.6	115
August	109.3	120.3	132.7	124.7	531.7	114
Sep.	105.2	120.6	129.6	122.8	523.9	111
Oct.	104.0	118.3	124.4	720.2	508.2	108
Nov.	101.9	—	—	120.1	493.5	104

The drop in prices in India is greater than elsewhere, with the exception of France.

In all the important countries an attempt is being made to stimulate trade actively by lowering money rates and by appealing to the customers to make effective purchases of commodities. The eminent British Economist, Prof. J. M. Keynes, opines that the disastrous fall in prices can be remedied by almost reckless expenditure on the part of the English people instead of allowing their bank deposits to lie idle. Cheap money resulting from a deliberately conceived monetary policy would cure the trade depression. The international monetary position, however, does not make the pre-war gold standard a feasible proposition at present.

An appeal for increased consention cannot undoubtedly be made in this country. Firstly, the wants of the Indian people are much less than those of Westerners. Secondly, Indian monetary system is inelastic and the creaking mechanism of the money market cannot be expanded by means of easy money rates till the financial year is over by the last week of March 1931. A high bank rate of 7 per cent deters excessive borrowing, restores the exchange situation and lessens the demand for currency. The first and the third results cannot be achieved in the present busy season. It is conceivable indeed that second result might be brought about by this method. Unless the excess of exports is free to assert itself the natural rise of exchange to the par point will not take place. When a high external value is pitched upon, the external demand is bound to fall, for with their gold prices falling, foreigners would not consent to pay high prices for Indian commodities.

As the attendant social dangers of a fall in prices are very many, drastic remedies have to be taken to ameliorate the situation. Agricultural business and manufacturing activity will not run on an even keel if prices are declining fast. The inevitability of loss restricts manufacturing activity. The agriculturists do not regulate the quantity of production with reference to the price-level alone but even these conservative-minded people will not fail to be struck by the gravity of the situation. Industrial as well agricultural un-employment will show a distressing increase. Reduced purchasing power would arrest manufacturing business further and would lead to a

further fall in wholesale and retail prices. National income and revenue would decrease and fresh taxation would have to be levied to cover the deficit. These are the woeful consequences if this tendency of falling prices is allowed to continue. If the present policy of reducing the amount of money continues we cannot get rid of the trade depression. Monetary deflation and industrial progress stand opposed to each other. Immediate trade requirements and the exigencies of the rupee exchange stand in direct conflict.

A vivid appreciation of the above difficulties would make the people realise the necessity of solving this problem. A policy of masterly inactivity might be advantageous sometimes in the field of politics but certainly not in the economic field. The present policy of merely contracting the currency with every fall in prices and every downward move of the exchange value of the rupee would not improve the situation. Monetary deflation cannot cure the trade depression. Precise and bold action alone would meet the exigencies of the situation. State, municipal and domestic finance must be overhauled in the light of the present-day circumstances of the price-levels. Increasing economy and efficiency in national administration are absolutely imperative at this stage. It is also by these means alone that the real burden of national and private debts can be met.

If the price-levels of foreign countries should rise it would help us to a certain extent. It was the rise in the American price-level and not the real and drastic monetary deflation that was pursued by England during the years of 1920-1925 that enabled the restoration of the sterling back to pre-war parity gold. The Right Honourable Reginald McKenna admitted this fact tacitly.

A genuine economic revival and not mere credit inflation is the real remedy for the present world-wide depression. But so far as the domestic situation is concerned, it is apparent that the costs of Governments and wages have to be reduced. The scaling down of wages with reference to the price-level is imperative. Sir George Rainy admitted that this has to be done in the case of the lowest paid railway servants, receiving Rs. 30 per mensem. There were days when Rs. 15 was the lowest wage in this country. As a permanent reduction of wages is unwise, a sliding scale of wages can be set up easily in Government Service and there need be no set-back in the near future as regards Governmental schemes of expansion. This is indeed a far-reaching remedy pregnant with many possibilities. But it requires an efficiently constructed Index of the Purchasing Power of Money with a variety of specially constructed secondary and sub Indexes. The Economic Council that is to be created should prepare these things for this country.

The price level of Government services, wages and interests and cash rents paid to the landlord should be related to price-level of commodities. There is no other rational way of attaining real economic salvation.

Those who have fixed incomes must increase their consumption outlay so that the supply or production might be absorbed. This is not a plea for unstinted extravagance. Wise outlay on the articles of production which minister to our efficiency should be made by all people, specially those who receive fixed wages or salaries. But these form a small portion of the Indian community. The bulk of the people belong to the producer's class which is hard hit by falling prices. Cash rents lag in relation to prices and the agricultural people naturally suffer and the landlords and the Government stand to lose in the long run. There is again a lag in the price-level of Government services and of interest on previously incurred debt and of wages. Hence the general inability of the producers to flourish in times of falling prices.

As credit expansion is neither feasible nor wise, our efforts need not be directed that way. Credit expansion, which runs ahead of economic expansion, cannot but produce an atmosphere of unreal optimism even in Western countries. Cheap credit does not by itself promote trade revival. It would be as disastrous as a natural calamity, such as failure of rain or storms or floods which tend to restore a high price-level to agricultural food-stuffs all of a sudden. Even such catastrophes will not raise agricultural prices and improve agricultural profits for over a number of years. Fleeting but not permanent prosperity would result from this situation. It conduces to class advantage rather than national advantage as a whole.

B. RAMACHANDRA RAU.

Reviews.

JAPANESE ECONOMIC HISTORY.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE CIVILIZATION OF JAPAN. 3 VOLS.

By YOSOBURO TAKEKOSHI. (Allen & Unwin.)
1930. 25 cm. pp. 565, 555 and 466. £ 3/3.

THIS is indeed a monumental work. Through these substantial volumes Mr. Takekoshi unfolds the economic history of Japan in all its phases. The story ens in the dim legendary past and is continued down to the beginning of the Meiji Era. Mr. Takekoshi tells us in the preface that he was induced to undertake this work largely because of his desire to remove the prevalent misapprehension in the West that Japan's recent rise was very abrupt. A perusal of Mr. Takekoshi's volumes would, no doubt, dispel the idea that Japan is a mere *parvenu* amongst nations with no record of steady historical development. But it would not help to explain how a nation which had consistently followed a policy of rigid isolation for so many centuries was able suddenly to adapt itself to the ways of an entirely alien civilization and win for itself a proud place in a world so dominated by the West. It is to be desired that Mr. Takekoshi with his deep study of his country's history had attempted to answer this intriguing question.

The beginnings of Japanese recorded history are to be placed in the sixth and the seventh centuries of the Christian era. Japan was then just rising out of conditions of primitive barbarism and the

influence of the continental Chinese civilization was beginning to be strongly felt in all spheres. Thus the opening chapters of the first volume deal with the changes in the land systems brought about in imitation of the Chinese and the introduction of Buddhism in the land. These early centuries were comparatively peaceful and recorded a steady rise in civilization and prosperity. The Emperor was still powerful and the landowning military nobility had not yet risen to the position of absolute dominance. The climax of the early era of Japanese history is to be found in that highly refined, withal curiously exotic, civilization of the Imperial court in the eleventh century. But already long before this time economic forces were working to bring about the rise of the feudal nobility. The great reform of the seventh century consisted in making the ownership of land communal on the Chinese model. A fixed acreage of land was allocated per head and except in the case of special grants the possession of land was not reckoned hereditary. The land was also liable to be continually redistributed. It is doubtful whether this system was ever fully put into operation, and being extremely unsuited to Japanese conditions, it very soon began to decay. This decay was chiefly due to the engrossment of land by local military nobles and the temples. The state lands thus continued to diminish in area and a class of privileged landlords began to arise. The temples and the nobles being further exempt from taxation, the tenantry on these lands was much less burdened than the tenantry of the State. Thus it came about that state domains languished and their revenues fell while the nobles found their lands fully cultivated and their power increasing. It was this process that chiefly brought about the eclipse of Imperial authority and placed the real power in the hands of the clan-heads. This process had been completed by the eleventh century and the warrior class of landowners ruled Japan almost entirely unchecked for nearly the following five centuries. During this period the dominant position was held successively by the Taira, the Minamoto, the Hojo, and the Ashikaga clans, the Emperor throughout remaining the nominal head of the State. Though some one clan was no doubt temporarily in the ascendant these centuries were virtually anarchic in their character. Violent tribal warfare was extremely common and ordered progress was impossible. There was some progress, however, chiefly due to an increase in the foreign trade of the country. The land system was during this period completely feudalised and there arose a bewildering variety of types of sub-infeudation. The foreign trade of the period centred round the tribute ships to China. It is to be noted that among the largest of the capitalists engaged in this trade were the large Buddhist temples. The great feudal lords were also anxious to participate in this lucrative trade. The trade was however extremely limited in size owing to a series of restrictions laid by the Chinese in the first instance and in the later centuries on account of the rise of a formidable class of Japanese pirates. In the internal trade of the country the period witnessed the rise of the 'Za'. This may be compared to the western merchant guild and was to be universally found in all branches of commerce. The entire absence of controlling authority at this time was such that the Za's were able to usurp authority even over portions of public highway and levy toll on them on their own account. Another symptomatic phenomenon was the so-called benevolent administration which was a decree-very often issued in the fifteenth century, involving an almost total cancellation of outstanding credit obligations. This prolonged anarchy was put an end to by the rise in the sixteenth century of a succession of able generals and statesmen. The advent of the Portuguese at about the same time completely

changed the complexion of Japanese society. The first among the succession of the great Japanese of the sixteenth century was Oda Nobunaga who swept aside the feeble Ashikaga regime and completely destroyed the power of the old feudal lords of the Zes and of the temples! His early assassination left the work of reconstruction in the hands of his greater lieutenant, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. For the first time now for some centuries Japan obtained a strong central government. The power of Hideyoshi can be gauged from the fact that he felt himself during the later years of his career safe enough even to undertake an invasion of Korea. Hideyoshi's reforms were all-embracing. He aimed at a centralization of the State and at granting complete freedom of trade. In order to avoid the risk of a repetition of a period of anarchy he brought about the disarmament of the peasants; this in its turn gave rise to the peculiarly dominant position of the Samurai in the later centuries. He undertook a complete survey of the land and thus increased the revenues of the State. He was, however, not able to undertake the work of taxing the feudal lords and the result thus was, as Mr. Takekoshi points out, an increase in the burden on the farmers.

The greatest economic event of the century was undoubtedly the advent of the Portuguese. They were in the beginning received with open arms and especially after the local lords had perceived the profitability of the trade that followed in the wake of the Portuguese there was exhibited a very considerable eagerness for attracting Portuguese settlements. With Portuguese came the Christian missionary and the studied deference with which the Portuguese trader treated the missionary gained for the latter patient hearing and later on numerous converts. Religious toleration was conceded as a matter of course and the influence of Christianity grew apace. Contemporaneously there took place a considerable expansion of Japanese abroad. This era of free movements was, however, destined to last for a very short time. For long Hideyoshi showed himself not only tolerant of, but positively well-disposed towards, the Catholics and the Portuguese. Of a sudden however he interdicted the preaching and practice of Catholicism. No definite explanation of this change of attitude is afforded to us. We have read of Christian accounts of this change which ascribe it to the severe criticism of the morals of Hideyoshi by Christian missionaries. This however seems palpably absurd. It seems most likely that Hideyoshi became very early keenly alive to the dangerous character of Western penetration. The intolerant attitude of the Christians towards other faiths, the absolute authority wielded by the Christian missionary over the Japanese convert, so subversive of state authority, the arrogance of the Spanish commander who pointed in a map to the extent of the Spanish Empire, in order to frighten his Japanese captors, and finally the information received of the establishment of what was virtually Portuguese rule at Nagasaki were enough to lead a shrewd statesman and a fiery warrior of Hideyoshi's type to decide upon the banning of Christianity in Japan. The persecution of the Christians was for a long time not undertaken vigorously; and it was perhaps after the confirmation by Dutch and English adventurers of the sinister character of Portuguese intentions that Hideyoshi was finally confirmed in his resolve. Whatever the reason the consequences of the step were momentous for Japan.

Though Hideyoshi was the great builder of the new Japan, the peculiar form of the society in succeeding centuries or the dynasty which ruled it were not his work. It was Tokugawa Iyeyasu who was responsible for this. Mr. Takekoshi has brought out saliently the change caused in feudal society in Japan

owing to the introduction of fire arms by the Portuguese. In Japanese mediaval feudalism no clear distinction obtained between the warrior and the peasant class, and between the supreme land owner and the actual cultivator there existed a numerous class of holders of minor feudatory rights. The fire arms, however, brought into being the fortified castle, and the castle the hereditary warrior class. The old society with its graduated classes and absence of unsurmountable barriers was transformed. In the feudal society of the Tokugawa age we have the supreme feudal lord and his retainers of the Samurai class on the one hand and on the other the mass of the cultivating tenantry. After Hideyoshi's death Tokugawa Iyeyasu remained undoubtedly the most powerful man in Japan and after the final overthrow of Hideyoshi's party he became easily supreme in the land. Iyeyasu took the most elaborate precautions to ensure the continuance of his dynasty, the chief among them being the careful placing in command over the strategical points of lords who were among his most faithful adherents and the compulsory periodical stay of all nobles and their families in the new capital Edo (the modern Tokyo). Iyeyasu also persisted in the policy of keeping the foreigner out and the persecution of the Christians. With slow degrees this policy became more and more hardened and during the reign of the third Shogun, Iyemitsu, Christianity was entirely stamped out of Japan. All Japanese were forbidden to leave the Japanese shores and foreign trade was restricted to a limited number of Dutch ships who were allowed to come to Nagasaki. Japan was now hermetically sealed and the social development of the succeeding centuries was entirely unaffected by what was passing in the world outside.

Mr. Takekoshi's first volume deals with the period up to the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The next two volumes contain a very detailed history of Japan under the Tokugawas. The type of Japanese society and Japanese policy throughout these centuries was utterly fixed and underwent but little change. In economic life, however, a very considerable development took place in all spheres except foreign trade. In this sphere indeed the conservatism of Japanese Governments was such that even the tonnage of vessels was fixed at a low maximum. Mr. Takekoshi having given himself ample space to spread over deals exhaustively with a variety of topics. In the second volume he deals with such subjects as the finances of the Shogunate, the foreign trade of Nagasaki, the fluctuations in the price of gold and silver, the various debasements of currency and attempts at currency reform and the rise of the new type of guild—the *Tonya* or, the middlemen traders' association. The two latter subjects have been specially and thoroughly dealt with. The Shogun's finances were never very secure and coinage debasement was too obvious a temptation. Thus varieties of currency multiplied and the currency system was in a state of chronic disorder during the whole period. In a society so dominated by privilege, economic privilege was bound to grow and all sorts of monopolies and other rights took form, whether by state approval or in disregard of it. These various types of privileges described by the generic name "*kabu*" were transferable and were readily bought and sold. There were, therefore, guilds and similar organizations of traders, of industrialists and of artisans. The most flourishing business of the times was the trade between Dacca and Edo and the history of the *Tokumi-Touza* furnishes the example of a close combination of a powerful group of these Japanese monopolistic traders. The Shogun and the *Daincyos* (feudal lords) being all powerful, however, the duration and security of economic privilege was very doubt-

ful and the concerns of merchant millionaires were apt to be brought suddenly to a termination. It should here be mentioned that Mr. Takekoshi has deserved well of his readers by scattering throughout his narrative of events a series of personal sketches which are highly interesting besides being highly illuminative of the character of the different periods of history. The second chapter of the third volume contains an interesting account of guilds and other privileged bodies in one of the minor ports showing the universality of this type of economic organization. Other subjects in this volume are the finance and marketing of the agricultural products of the feudal estates through the Osaka traders, the development of marine transport, the condition of the agricultural classes and the various episodes foreshadowing the inevitable opening up of the country to foreign intercourse. Two excellent chapters towards the end deal with land and taxation and agrarian administration. These show how the more enlightened feudal lords took pains to develop their estates and also throw a flood of light on that peculiar institution of Japanese agrarian society, the *Gonin-gumi* (the five-men company) which may in some respects be compared to the early English frankpledge. It had, however, a much wider scope and much greater social importance. It not only helped the maintenance of peace and order but also helped to create a feeling of social solidarity and promoted economic cooperation. With the opening of the fifteenth century the shadow of the foreigner lay heavy on Japanese politics and the extremely complicated series of events just before the restoration of the Meiji all turned on the issue of the admission of the foreigner. Slowly the inevitability of this came to be recognised. The gradual influence of Dutch scholars, the sense of powerlessness inspired by European war-ships, the constant pressure of Russians and other powers brought about this change of attitude and Commodore Perry's bombardment clinched the issue. Japan, henceforth, ceased to be an isolated unit and became a member of world polity.

One of the most peculiar characteristics of Japanese history is its remarkable continuity. It has been perhaps less marked by catastrophes in the period of recorded history than any other important nation in the world. Japan's island situation away from the main arena of human history kept it safe from invasions; and the Japanese, on the other hand, but rarely thought of a continental empire and never until the twentieth century succeeded in gaining and maintaining one. Chinese civilization and Buddhism in the earlier period and the contact with the West in recent times have no doubt affected Japan powerfully, but their impact has never been so sudden or violent as to upset the traditional foundations of society. All Japanese institutions have thus a peculiar character of their own. The Samurai or the *Tonya*, for example, though they could be compared with institutions of a similar character elsewhere, are really unique. The rigid stratification of Japanese society seems almost caste-like until one notices that it was possible for an impoverished Samurai family to enrich itself by adopting a son of a wealthy merchant family. Mr. Takekoshi is, however, not much concerned to point to the uniqueness of Japanese institutions. He is rather at pains to indicate the similarity of all economic evolution. This he does very well. We would only complain that he drives the method of analogy rather hard. The detailed comparison of the little-known combination of the *Zas* with the Hanseatic League is hardly convincing. The author also seems to entertain a naive belief that all economic societies must pass through three definite stages at given times and tries definitely to establish that Japan was all along exactly three centuries be-

hind England in economic evolution!!

Only a few other points of criticism arise. One acquainted with the history of other Asiatic countries, especially India, may be tempted to differ from the author's view that the compulsory isolation of the Tokugawa period necessarily meant a great loss to Japan. The treatment of all topics in the book is exhaustive except that agriculture is not treated as fully as we would have liked. We would also have given much for a few chapters on the development of industry and industrial organisation to which almost no attention is paid. There are a number of extracts from public and private documents inserted in the book; in translating the date of these documents the author has given the month in terms of the Christian calendar, the year, however, is retained in the Japanese era form. This is hardly helpful. In passing, we may note an instance of positive error on p. 287 (Vol. I) where it is stated that Calicut is "a small village eight miles north of Calcutta."

Mr. Takekoshi has rendered great service by writing these volumes and deserves the thanks of all students of the history of economic society and the development of human civilization.

D. R. GADGIL.

AMERICAN VIEW OF INDIA.

THE POWER OF INDIA. By MICHAEL PYM.
(Putnams, London and New York.) 1930. 316 p.
\$. 3.50.

THIS is really a very interesting book written about India in a crisp and fascinating style. Various aspects of Indian life, social, political and economic, are presented therein and the whole picture they make may be taken to represent the peculiar American view of this country. Unlike Miss K. Mayo, the authoress of this book has a sympathetic heart towards India. She has shown deep study, and close firsthand knowledge of social problems. Her experiences in Peshawar, Delhi and Hyderabad (Deccan) with ladies of various classes and cultures, provided her with materials to write about Indian women in general.

After going over the first hundred pages or so, you begin to think that Michael Pym was amazingly partial to some of the Indian States. You find her showering praises and compliments upon the excellent rule of H. E. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad, "the richest man in the entire world" (p. 113.) A special chapter—The Valley of Diamonds—is devoted to the description in detail (only the bright side) of the administration of that very well known State. In an appendix the Berar question has been treated in detail and the manner of treatment confirms the suspicions of window-dressing. Hyderabad is "the only strong Muslim centre left in India" against whom, the authoress tells us, "Hindu extremists conduct a certain amount of political propaganda..." and contribute "scandalous articles to American Press."

"The Gandhi cap and the little black pill box hat of the city Hindu almost disappear to be replaced by brightly coloured *paggaries*. The people seem straighter, they look at you more directly, and salute you with ready friendliness" (p. 269). One more illustration of her hasty and partial judgment with regard to Indian States would suffice. The Chief of Patiala appears in print on art paper "with a few of the state jewels" but not a word is said about his exploits and achievements in many other fields that fill the pages of a certain report!

Whatever be her reasons for "boosting" the Chiefs and Princes, she has, in doing this, exposed

certain dark spots in British administration which boasts in season and out of it, as being just, civilised and liberal. Extracts from official reports and documents quoted by her in her book show how very unscrupulously the Indian Maharajas and Princes were deceived and cheated by various heads of the British Government in India. In the course of the same exposition, an attempt is made to show with the help of authoritative reports that an organised system of draining India of her wealth had been continued all these years of so called benevolent British rule.

According to the authoress, the real power of India lies in her spiritual teaching. "India is God-intoxicated" says Michael Pym, and "India has realised God." In order to stress her points she has shown the superiority—or call it speciality—of Indian culture in maintaining its own against immense odds. She cites historical references to prove that almost all of the foreign invaders of India have early or late settled down in the country. "In the conquered people were absorbed the conquerors." This process of becoming one with the Indians could not however take place in the case of the European invaders, because the authoress contends, "Christian philosophy, unlike the Hindu or the Muslim, is political and anti-cultural. "Christianity," she asserts, "fanatical to a degree, exterminated not only every other religion.....but every other culture it could possibly reach." (pp. 219-20)

In the short space she has devoted to the political aspect of the Indian problem evidence is not wanting to suggest her ignorance and lack of sound judgment. Shivaji and Tilak are quoted. "First post-Mutiny conspiracy against the British" our American journalist informs us, "began in Poona, where Gangadhar Tilak published his violent anti-British articles in his paper the Kesari." The usual adjectives and details of "chitpavan" Brahmans are used to make the description look real. "Shivaji was a Maratha bandit whose utter daring and unscrupulousness brought him to the top. His most famous exploit was the murder of the Moghal General Afzalkhan."

She charges Mahatma Gandhi with vanity. "There is too much "I" in his general make-up" she complains. To her mind, Gandhi's autobiography "is an act of exhibitionism." She compares him with "rather third-rate authors and movie stars at Women's club luncheons in Mid-Western Cities." While conversing with her at Saharmati, Gandhi remarked that "the power of American woman was based upon something equally discreditable to her and to the men." That probably might be the cause of her prejudice.

Whatever that may be, Michael Pym has certainly taken great pains in gathering materials for her book. She has placed before the English-reading public a fairly correct and connected idea of what India is really like and excepting some few observations here and there, her conclusions are not unfair, due allowance, however, being made for journalistic make-up of the "copy." The book is characterised by her broad and liberal view, by her sympathetic attitude, by her desire to search the truth and to do something for India. The book may be read with advantage by Indians also, although it is meant for foreigners.

SHRIPAD R. TIKEKAR.

SHORT NOTICES.

INDIAN WOMANHOOD TO-DAY. By LILIAN A. UNDERHILL. (The Highway Press, London.) 1930. 20 cm. 24 p. 6d.

THE theme of this book is one of absorbing interest to every Indian reader. It is a theme worthy of a Dr. Besant or a Sister Nivedita, of any writer gifted with sympathy, imagination, impartiality and learning. We therefore opened this booklet with great expectation. We must however confess that we have been deeply disappointed not merely at the scrappy treatment of the noble subject but at the biased, subjective viewpoint of the writer. The substance of this booklet is that 'until India is leavened with Christianity, she will be unfit for freedom.' This missionary outlook of the writer has coloured the treatment. We are told that in the West mutual trust and moral standards, honesty and uprightness are the rules of everyday life,—all of which were the results, not of civilisation, but of Christianity alone. According to the writer, true equality is given only by Christianity, and this statement she tries to substantiate by proving how sympathetic Jesus was to fallen women; and on the strength of this anecdote of Jesus, the writer does not hesitate to place Christianity far above Islam and Hinduism! Though the writer of this booklet is convinced that the *Pardha* is pernicious and must go, she is still of opinion that neither men nor women are ready for the change, for both men and women need first to be educated up to the new freedom. She says: 'If the women and girls are to come out of their limited and protected seclusion, there must come into being a new moral standard, a new law and order, without which the last stage may well be worse than the first.' Our readers will easily infer that Christianity is to supply this new moral standard. Already Christianity, in the opinion of the writer, has deeply influenced modern Hindu thought. "The influence of Christians in India is out of all proportion to the comparative smallness of their numbers." And this book seems to have been written with the object of stimulating this inadequate supply of Christian workers. "The demand for Christian welfare workers is far in excess of the supply, they are wanted on every hand." It is useless to examine in detail the views of the writer when we clearly see the real object of writing this booklet. Her ignorance, personal bias, political prejudices—all incapacitate her for handling the theme. If there is to be a true understanding between India and England, the less such books are written, the better.

D. V. ATHALYE.

SHADES AND SHADOWS. By RANDOLPH EDMONDS. (Meador Publishing Co., Boston.) 1930. 20 cm. 171 p. \$1.50.

IN the book of six dramas written to be read rather than to be acted, Randolph Edmonds, a Negro author, shows the working of a heart that sees in their nakedness the crudities and cruelties of man's efforts. His bizarre treatment of subjects shows up much of the so-called polished things of civilization and makes us long for the simplicity and naturalness of a rural life and religion, of men that live next to Nature, who instinctively know things. The Negro author imperceptibly gives us a part of his heart and that is useful to the world.

FATHER YESUDAS.