

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### The S. I. Society's Anniversary Session.

THIS year's anniversary session of the Servants of India Society lasted as usual from the 12th to the 18th inst. The occasion was utilised for a close scrutiny of the R. T. C. proposals for Indian constitutional reform. These discussions were led by Pandit Hirdaynath Kunzru, the vice-president, who, as is well known, is in charge of the political work of the Society and were freely participated in by members and associates. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who very kindly responded to the Society's invitation to attend the session also gave them the benefit of his views on the different subjects that engaged their attention. While opinion as expressed at these meetings favoured a federal basis for the Indian constitution, it strongly disapproved the Sankey Scheme on the ground that it did not expressly provide for the election of States' representatives to the federal legislature, but left full freedom to the Princes to arrange for the representation of the States therein in any manner they thought best. Dissatisfaction was also expressed that while the rulers of Indian States were assured of full internal autonomy, they were allowed a voice in the administration of purely British Indian subjects by the promised inclusion of their representatives in the federal executive. But the provision in the Sankey Scheme that came in for the strongest condemnation at these meetings was the one which proposed to allow the Princes' bloc to vote on motions of non-confidence in the federal ministry. This coupled with the provision of a two-thirds majority of both houses of the federal legislature for such motions to be effective would, it was feared, make the ministry virtually irremovable. The financial safeguards were universally regarded as erring too much on the side of caution.

Mr. M. D. Shahane who has been working in C. P. for the last two years but whose admission to the Society as a member was postponed last year on medical grounds was admitted to membership during the Session. Though the Society's finances are in none too prosperous a condition, it has decided to admit three new members on probation. It is needless to add that the Society is venturing to undertake new responsibilities in the full confidence that when its difficulties are widely known the generous and public-spirited public will not be slow in coming to its aid. The internal administration of the Society also received serious consideration; and it was decided to celebrate its jubilee next year.

### Congress and R. T. C.

WHATEVER doubt may have existed as to Congress participation in the resumed Round Table Conference has been dispelled by the resolution of the Working Committee which met at Bombay in the first half of this month. Mahatma Gandhi had more than once publicly insisted upon the communal settlement as a condition precedent to his taking part in the Round Table Conference; and also seems to have pressed that view on the Working Committee itself. But the Committee overruled him and it was Mahatmaji's "essentially democratic nature" that impelled him to accede to its wishes. The resolution no doubt makes mysterious reference to "other conditions being equal" which has not been so far authoritatively elucidated. But this, it is widely believed, means a proper effectuation of the Gandhi-Irwin agreement on the part of Government. We trust that by interpreting the terms of that settlement in a liberal spirit the Government will make it easy for the Congress to be represented at the Conference. But no one is so foolish as to suppose that mere Congress participation unaccompanied by a lasting solution of the communal difficulty is going to lead automatically to an unquestioning acceptance by the British people of the national demand. It is clear that that demand will be met only in so far as it has the solid backing of public opinion behind it. The absence of the Hindu-Muslim unity will thus serve as a great handicap to Indian delegates attending the next session of the R. T. C. as it did in the case of those who went to the first one. No wonder therefore that Mahatma Gandhi exclaims: "I have wisdom and patience enough to wait for it (real power) if necessary and know that such waiting may be a process of hastening." The view is sometimes expressed by some Hindu cynics that if the Muslims show no disposition to come to terms with the Hindus the best way of meeting the situation is for the latter to show less eagerness for Swaraj. But those who take this view almost despair of any agreement with the Mahomedans and attribute the unreasonableness of the Muslim attitude to a desire to exploit this eagerness. Mahatma Gandhi too seems now to see

the desirability of "waiting" though naturally he and every normally-minded patriot will see to it that the "waiting" period is as short as possible.

#### The Maharaja of Patiala's Scheme.

THE scheme of federation prepared by the Maharaja of Patiala has elicited the following comments from the *Indian Social Reformer* :—

The Maharaja of Patiala published this week his plan of how to proceed towards bringing about the federation of British India and the States. His Highness candidly avows that he had changed his mind since he returned to India from the Round Table Conference, that he now regards it would be dangerous particularly for the smaller States to enter into the Federation individually, that they should first federate all the States under the suzerainty of the Sovereign, and later on join British India with greater prospect of safeguarding their interests and helping national progress. Many of the premises of the Maharaja are wholly untenable on the face of them as, for instance, when he implies that there is more affinity between Patiala and Sangli than between Patiala and the neighbouring British districts in the Punjab or between Sangli and the neighbouring Bombay districts of Poona, Dharwar and Belgaum. The Patiala scheme is full of such faults. It bears in fact the same relation to a true Federal Constitution as a child's kindergartten cottage does to the Viceroy's House in New Delhi. . . . From the British Indian as well as from the States' Peoples' point of view—both are in substance identical—the scheme outlined in London is quite as objectionable as the scheme adumbrated from Patiala. When Princes disagree, the people have, perhaps, a chance of coming by their own. From this standpoint, the publication of the Patiala scheme is by no means a calamity. As we have often said, it is far more important that the right thing should be done than that something should be done instantly. The anxiety to have the matter settled in hot haste is itself suspicious. "If it were well that it were done, then it were well it were done quickly." That was Lady Macbeth's argument to incite her husband to despatch Duncan, but it is not an argument for statesmen. The elimination of the official block in the Legislature will not be much of a gain if it is to be replaced by thirty or forty members from Indian States imbued with the doctrine of the laws of natural allegiance, alias, the divine right of Princes. The British official in the last resort is responsible to a democracy even though it is a remote and inaccessible one, and whatever may be his private opinion, so long as he holds his office he must see to it that his reasoning does not contradict, not at least flagrantly, the fundamental principles of the British constitution. Unless these fundamental principles are accepted by the States entering the Federation and embodied in their constitution, the representatives from British India and those from the States will, to all intents and purposes, be speaking mutually unintelligible languages in politics and administration. It is not at all desirable from the point of view either of the States or of British India to form an incoherent Federation for the mere purpose of satisfying Lord Reading and Sir Samuel Hoare and to induce them to agree to "responsibility at the centre," which will in truth make the centre more irresponsible than at present, and, worse, banish the very idea of the rights of citizens from the realm of practical politics for at least a whole generation.

#### Economic Advisory Councils.

THE report of Sir Arthur Salter on Economic Advisory Councils having proved still-born, it is not necessary to discuss its main features at any length. Sir Arthur, in giving the history of such organisation in other countries, points out that they fall

mainly into two categories: "expert" and "representative." The recently created Economic Council in Great Britain is a purely advisory "expert" body, while on the continent similar Councils aim at being representative of the opinion of various aspects of economic life. It is but natural that while the expert body remains almost invariably advisory, the representative type of Economic Council tends to assume somewhat greater political importance. The post-War cry for giving due importance to functional organisation found its echo in the position assigned to Economic Councils in the Weimar constitution. Though the Councils started in many continental countries in later years have not been given a position of similar importance, it is plain that their influence will prove a steadily growing one. Sir Arthur Salter, when weighing the case for the type of Economic Council to be established in India, quite rightly inclined on the side of the "representative" type. And having decided upon this type, he naturally recommended that on the part of Government "serious attention to the advice of the Indian Councils would be imperative and where it was not adopted at least an adequate public explanation of the reasons for rejecting it would be expected." It is, however, obvious that in a country where the executive has yet to be made responsible to a parliamentary legislature a suggestion for this type of responsibility to an extra-constitutional advisory body is distinctly premature. When even the accredited representatives of the people cannot hope to influence governmental policy touching vital points in their economic life, it could not be expected by one acquainted with Indian political conditions that the advice of an economic council would be seriously listened to. Under the circumstances it might easily have been foreseen that the Government would not, and considering the impending constitutional changes also, could not take any action on the report. An expert body like the Agricultural Research Council could easily have been set up, but a representative body with pretensions to voice influential opinion cannot be fitted in to the Indian constitution to-day. Sir Arthur's tour will however not have proved utterly sterile if those responsible for framing our future constitution at the R. T. C. give some attention in their deliberations to the recommendations contained in his report. Indeed, the creation of functional organisations of the nature of an Economic Council may go some way to allay the fears of the Government and the English community regarding the possible reckless management of financial and other matters by the Indian legislatures of the future.

#### Increased Income-tax in Mysore.

ONE of the measures thought of by the Mysore Government this year for meeting its budget deficit was an increase in the rates of income-tax. It will be remembered that in opening the last session of the Representative Assembly the Dewan bespoke its support to that measure. One should have thought that the Representative Assembly, claiming as it does to represent the common people, would have given its cordial approval to such an equitable taxation proposal. But, curiously enough, it belied this expectation by rejecting the underlying principle of the Government proposal for increased income-tax. Convinced of the desirability however of throwing additional burdens on shoulders well able to bear them, the Mysore Government did not allow the matter to rest there. It introduced its proposals in its Legislative Council which met later on and which, to the general satisfaction of the people, has passed them. For this the Council deserves praise. Not that the Income-tax Bill did not encounter opposition in the

Mysore Legislative Council. The opposition was based on the ground amongst others that the Government had failed to carry out a cut in their officers' salaries. The reason however which prompted the Government to prefer an increase in income-tax rates as a means of filling the gap between its income and expenditure was plain. While the reduction in salaries would have affected only a limited number of their servants, enhanced income-tax rates would touch a larger number of people and would yield greater revenue. Nobody can deny that there is considerable force in this argument. This is not to say that the pruning knife should not be applied to the salaries of Government officers. That ought certainly to be done wherever possible; but the question should be judged on its own merits and quite apart from the contemplated increase in the rates of income-tax. It is highly misleading to present it in the form of increased income-tax rates, vs. reduction in officers' salaries, as indeed was done by some speakers in the Mysore Legislative Council.

The manner in which the measure was handled by both these bodies suggests the reflection as to which of them is the truly popular house, the Representative Assembly or the Legislative Council? As a rule the more numerous house is the more popular one. But in this particular matter the supposed popular house failed to safeguard popular interests, while the upper house, going by its strength, admirably stood by the people. Anyhow the constitutional position of the Assembly seems to be anomalous.

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#### Working of municipalities in the Punjab.

THE recent resolution of the Punjab Government on the working of municipalities clearly shows how lamentable their condition is. One would naturally expect that with the lapse of time inefficiency and mismanagement in regard to municipal affairs would suffer diminution. The facts given in the resolution however tell a different tale. Inertia, self-interest and favouritism combined with communalism in recent years are the prime causes of this unfortunate state of things which is by no means peculiar to the Punjab. In the case of the premier municipality, viz. that of Lahore, the establishment charges swallow one half of the net income! One need not be a very practised financier to see that the Lahore municipality spends an absurdly disproportionate portion of its income on its establishment with the result that such public utility services as education, sanitation, etc. have to be starved. Nor does the municipality appear to be particularly anxious to see this proportion brought down. For, we are told, an inquiry by a Retrenchment Committee three years ago failed to effect any reduction worth the name in its expenditure on its staff. Then, in common with municipalities in other parts of the country it has a number of members who take an undue advantage of their position in order to delay their own payment of municipal dues as much as possible. But let nobody run away with the impression that Lahore is the only or even the worst example of its kind. There are many municipalities about which similar complaint is made in the resolution. This is very unfortunate. But with communal feeling running as high as in the Punjab, he who includes communalism among the causes for the present municipal inefficiency runs the risk of being misunderstood, as the writings in some Muslim papers on this Government Resolution show. That however is no reason why a veil should be drawn over the real state of things.

The municipal expenditure on education during 1929-30 stood at a little over Rs. 18 lakhs and was higher by Rs. 84,000 than that for the preceding

year. The increase of nearly 5,000 in the number of children attending schools in municipal areas was due to the introduction of compulsion in as many as 19 municipalities during the year. Compulsion has had a very desirable effect at Amritsar where, we are told, the number of girls receiving instruction rose from 239 to 2,732, and where as many as 95 per cent. of boys of school age were at school and that too without resort to the penal provisions of the Compulsory Education Act. Leaving Amritsar aside, we are really glad to note that the "the education of girls is rapidly expanding."

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#### Idar in 1929-30.

NOTICING in our issue of Oct. 30 last the administration report of Idar State for 1928-29 we ventured to point out an inaccuracy in the educational statistics given in that report. The matter seems to have attracted the attention of the State authorities with the result that in the report for 1929-30 the mistake has been corrected. The report for 1928-29 mentioned 16.2 as the proportion of children in receipt of instruction in the State to the total population. The fact of the matter however was that the figure represented the proportion of children at school, not to the total population but to the total school-age population. During 1929-30 the report for which has recently reached us this proportion went up to 19.3, which is satisfactory as far as it goes. But the aim of the State authorities should be not only to make primary education free as they have already done, but to make it compulsory as well, if only to secure proper return for the money spent upon the education of the people. By no other means, as the educational authorities of the State must have found out by now, can the tendency to relapse into illiteracy be effectively checked. We would therefore suggest that the introduction of compulsory primary education in the State should be delayed no longer. This will necessarily require a large outlay of expenditure; but this is, in our opinion, not beyond the capacity of the finances of the State, if only the ruler could be induced to curtail his personal expenses and those of the ruling family. "Domestic Charges" which, we suppose, is another name for Palace Expenses, came to Rs. 4,15,000 in 1929-30, an unexplained rise of Rs. 38,000 over those for the previous year. But, let us add, this was not all that was spent upon the ruler and his family. There are several items in the expenditure side in the State accounts, like e. g. Motor department Rs. 51,000, Mewan Khana (Guests) Rs. 21,000, Electric Department Rs. 34,000, Palace Dispensary Rs. 7,740, Stables Rs. 10,000, Body-guards Rs. 4,600, State Band Rs. 2,800 which have a great deal to do with the ruling family. If all such items which are none too easy to discover are put together, it will be found that the ruler and his family consume very nearly one-third of the State revenue. Not even the staunchest champion of the princely order can deny that it is too high a proportion; and that it needs to be lowered very considerably. While during 1929-30 the expenses of the ruler and his family went up to nearly Rs. 6 lakhs, nation-building services like education and medical relief had to be content with a paltry Rs. 1½ lakhs! But this is bound to continue unless the new ruler makes it his first task to apply the pruning knife mercilessly to his Palace expenditure and contents himself with a fixed civil list. Side by side with this reform, the new ruler should also make a beginning in the direction of introducing responsible government in the State by bringing into existence a legislative council with an elected majority and with full control over the State budget.

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## Articles.

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### A BAD STRATEGY.

“NOMINATION by the Princes is bad, wholly bad at any rate in the lower house, which is to be a popular house. The question must therefore be raised at the R. T. C., and pressure must be brought to bear upon the Princes to agree to election—election in some form or other and in some measure or other; but the pressure must be gently applied. For, after all is said and done, we have only the resource of moral suasion at our disposal; we have no power of compulsion over the Princes. The Princes are already shying at federation, and our insistence upon election may make them withdraw even their hesitant support from it. And we must never forget that federation of some sort is any day better than no federation. Therefore press your claims as far as you can, but you must know well when to yield, and, hard as it is to think so, in all probability you will have to yield.” This is the line of reasoning of most of those who are or expect to become members of the Round Table Conference, and even of others whose one anxiety in life is not to be classed with irresponsible demagogues. It must be recognised that even this attitude of mind is better than that adopted by members of the Federal Structure Committee, for the published report of its proceedings makes it clear that none of them dared as much as mention election with reference to the States, so completely overawed were they by the Princes. If the members to be now added to the Committee raise the question, albeit with the inward intention of dropping it as soon as the Princes show their annoyance, even then it is an advantage. It is something to stand up to the Princes even for a short time.

Dr. Tara Chand, who is contributing a series of thoughtful and learned articles to the *Leader*, is one of those who would advise members of the Conference to put up a fight for the election of the States' representatives, but those who put up such a fight must do so, according to him, with the consciousness, as vivid as possible in their minds, that they are certain to be defeated in the end, and they must teach themselves to take the defeat as philosophically as possible. His line of attack is this. He would try and convince the rulers that nomination is to their own disadvantage. Responsible government at the centre is bound to lead to the formation of political parties, and the States' representatives too, if they are to pull their weight, must join one or the other of these parties. If the representatives are elected, they may well do so. But if they come in by nomination and receive their mandates from the Princes, it is obvious that they cannot join the parties without dragging the Princes along with them, which is undesirable in the Princes' interests. The rulers must be above parties. The only effect of nomination therefore will be “to deprive States' representatives of their due weight in the affairs of the federation.”

All this is sound, but we all know that the rulers are not often alive to their enlightened self-interest! Have we not appealed, in vain, to their self-interest in the matter of democratising their autocratic rule? Such democratisation can be demonstrated to conduce to their individual good as indisputably as election of States' representatives in the federal legislature. But the Princes have always taken a narrow view of their self-interest on the question of responsible government in the States and they cannot be expected to take a long-sighted view of election. Dr. Tara Chand too is not oversanguine. He is willing to allow the Princes to determine “the qualifications of electors and representatives and methods of election” in case they agree to election. But he knows that they will not, and in that event he will himself acquiesce in nomination and would counsel acquiescence to members of the R. T. C. He would not even press for nomination, if allowed now, to be replaced by election after a certain period, as he is very careful to do in the case of other reservations and safeguards. These must be, he insists, of a transitory character, to be automatically terminated. Not so with nomination; it may continue indefinitely. It is obvious that Dr. Tara Chand is not happy in taking up this attitude, but he is convinced that in the matter of federation British India is wholly at the mercy of the Princes, and that being so, he believes that we must accept federation on the Princes' own terms with as good a grace as possible.

We have already expressed our own opinion that it is better by far for British India to be content with reforms such as those outlined in the Government of India despatch on the Simon Report, which do not purport to establish responsible government at the centre, but which in fact provide for more responsibility than is possible under the R. T. C. proposals. Even if the responsibility under these proposals is judged to be a little more (this is the highest at which the claim can be put) than the responsiveness provided for in the Government of India scheme, the latter must be preferred to the former inasmuch as we shall get rid under the Government of India scheme of the incubus of a nominated element to the extent of one-third of the whole legislature with which we shall be saddled under the R. T. C. proposals. If we get firm hold of this fact in our minds, we shall realise that we are not so helpless as many of us imagine. On the contrary, far from being at the mercy of the Princes, it is within our power to place the Princes at our mercy. Let us get ahead with our own reform, with the reform in British India, and when we have taken the next step—this next step may be at least as long as the one for which the Government of India despatch provides—the Princes will desire to enter into federation with British India on any terms that the latter may dictate. Our terms are moderate. We are willing to let the Princes manage their own internal affairs in what way they please, subject of course to the exercise of paramountcy, which impose upon us the duty of preventing and correcting gross misrule. All we insist upon at the present moment is that they shall introduce election for federal purposes. On the

method of election too we may be willing, with Dr. Tara Chand, to listen to any difficulties that the Princes might have to put forward. No one will therefore accuse us, when the time comes for us to dictate terms to the Princes, that we are exploiting their helplessness. We cannot appreciate the statesmanship of those who, when they can choose their own battle-ground, deliberately prefer a ground where defeat can be their only portion to one where victory is certain. If on the other hand we disabuse our own minds of our helplessness and disillusion the Princes of their power of blackmailing us, we can get the Princes to accept election here and now and need not wait till the next step in constitutional reforms is taken for federation of the right type and on a wholly popular basis to come about.

S. G. V.

### THE WORLD CRISIS.

NO understanding of the deep-lying political currents, which disturb the course of world affairs today, can be possible until the serious and universal character of the economic depression is fully realized. The prediction, made two years ago by some economists who based their calculation on the inflation of credit in the United States, that the world was threatened with the gravest financial and economic crisis it had ever yet experienced, has come true. The present world crisis is not only cyclical but exceptional. It has struck at the economic life of all the important States without exception and consequently poisoned the springs of every form of human activity.

In Germany, during the period of the depreciation of the mark, rationalisation and concentration in industry were resorted to vigorously and vast amounts were spent over factories and plants, but neither the savings of the German people nor the credit of the nation after 1929 could be enhanced to the level demanded by these commitments. The result has been impoverished farming, phenomenal unemployment and impossible burden of public expenditure. Austria, notwithstanding all the efforts of the League, has failed to regain solvency. In Great Britain the pound sterling may gage the dollar out, but industry as well as commerce are in a sorry plight with the curve of production showing no sign of recovering from its fall. In the United States, no less than in Great Britain, since 1929, production has been falling and high wages, the hire purchase system and bounties to agriculture have all proved ineffective and artificial props to prosperity, impossible to be maintained indefinitely. In France too, more suited than any other of these States to resist such shocks owing to its nature and organization, there are signs not only of a financial but also of an industrial crisis. The commercial balance of France suggests diminishing trade, which the world crisis may explain, and also diminishing production, showing the disturbance to the economic organization of the country.

The obvious answer of the economist in a situation such as this is that there should be the restoration

of the balance through the operation of the inexorable law of supply and demand. Production, he would probably argue, was artificially stimulated by the abnormal demand in the years following the war, and until production falls back again to the measure and power of ordinary consumption, no improvement need be expected. The statement would be true of a world in which economic forces were allowed unhampered play, but such a hypothetical universe only exists in the text-books of theoretical economics. For social and political reasons Governments cannot countenance this natural method of readjustment which is expensive and dangerous in suffering.

If the discussions in the recent session of the Council of the League of Nations and the European Commission have done nothing else, they have at least served to transport the Austro-German customs union proposal to its proper economic context. No one who has watched the dangerous state of public feeling all over Europe which attended the publication of the project at first could minimise the importance of restoring this eminently economic discussion to its proper background. But the League has done more. It has applied its traditional method to a dangerous controversy and thus prevented not only the situation from getting worse but also perfected its own mechanism for applying similar brakes. That method consists in finding means for marking time and for dissipating passions, and the reference to the World Court of the legality of the proposed union, in view of Austria's obligations under the Treaty of St. Germain, is an admirable pretext. When it is realized that belief in Germany's withdrawal from the League organization in the event of the Council discussions going wrong was widespread the British Foreign Minister's services in carefully conducting this delicate matter will be appreciated.

It will be both hazardous and improper to anticipate the verdict of the World Court but, whatever it may be, Europe is not going to be cured of its ills by following the letter of the law. In the existing economic situation neither makeshifts nor adventurous remedies are going to be of any help. Make-shifts during the decade after the War, the League notwithstanding, have led to the present pause. Of the two main constructive proposals for reorganisation which hold the field, the French scheme, obviously favoured by the states of the Little Entente in general and Czechoslovakia in particular, is rather ideal and theoretical. It avoids, it is true, the danger of splitting Europe into opposing economic camps, as an Austro-German Union would almost inevitably tend to do, and is general in scope. But, to put it into effect would require agreement among so many Governments as to postpone more or less indefinitely any relief it might be expected to bring. The French scheme follows closely the lines on which the recommendations of the World Economic Conference of 1927 were made and these, despite the general enthusiasm with which they were received at the time, still remain to be translated into action. On the other hand, whatever the obvious economic merits of the Austro-German plan may be, so long as it causes

such far-reaching political repercussions in France and in the states bordering on Austria as the last few weeks have witnessed, the harm it will do must exceed the good it may bring.

It must not, however, be supposed that there is no escape for Europe from this dilemma. Political paths often follow incongruous lines, and there are already signs that the proposed union and the discussions on it have put forces into motion which may ultimately lead to a satisfactory solution. The Governments have now begun to realize that the organization of economic cooperation is no longer a matter for theoretical speculation but for urgent consideration and prompt action. Czechoslovakia has shown a new readiness to make tariff concessions to her two partners in the Little Entente, by which a greater portion of their cereals may be exchanged for commodities manufactured in Bohemia. The talks which Monsieur Briand and Signor Grandi held in Geneva recently in the light of the Austro-German proposal augur well, it is stated, for the future of Franco-Italian relations. And, finally, now comes the announcement that when the German Chancellor meets the British Prime Minister officially in London next week there is every likelihood of the question of Reparation payments being examined anew.

R. R.

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## Our European Letter.

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### THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

GENEVA, JUNE 1.

THE fifteenth session of the International Labour Conference began its sittings on Thursday under the presidency of Monsieur Sokal, formerly Minister of Labour in Poland and a member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. Mr. E. B. Poulton who declared the Conference open welcomed the Delegates in the absence of the President of the Governing Body of the Office Monsieur Arthur Fontaine, owing to illness, exposed at the outset the general disabilities with which the Conference had to struggle. Out of the 46 States represented only 30 had sent in complete delegations and the reasons put forward by the Governments concerned for following such a course were hardly convincing. There was, besides, a general tendency to hold up social progress, but on the other hand it was a great opportunity, for the problem of the international limitation of hours of work in coal mines which formed part of this year's agenda touched an industry which lay at the very foundation of the present industrial civilization.

Monsieur Sokal, in his opening address, referred to the existing economic depression as essentially international in character and pointed out the convergence of present-day social policy and economic reconstruction:—

The present crisis teaches us that it is fundamentally necessary to modify the economic and social structure of the world by concerted international action. In this connection there arises a problem, which has always confronted us whenever any task, no matter how unimportant, has been attempted by the International Labour Organisation. I mean the interdependence of social and economic questions. How often has this problem been evident at Sessions of the Conference, in the Governing Body, and in the criticisms and appreciations of our work. I do not intend to revive the controversies which have been carried on for many years past on this subject. I only want to point out that it has recently assumed a different aspect. One of the most marked features of contemporary economic history is the influence which social ideas have exercised on economic life, and, if I may say so, the ennobling effect of social considerations. At the same time, the social ideals which inspired the authors of the Labour charter and the members of the first session of the Labour Conference have themselves undergone a certain development. Those who in the past regarded social reform solely as the realisation of certain humanitarian reforms affecting the workers are coming to appreciate more clearly the purely economic importance of those reforms. Social policy, which has hitherto been dominated entirely by moral ideals, is beginning to seek for allies in the economic sphere. This is one of the most noticeable features of contemporary social life. The idea that social legislation may be a powerful force capable of influencing economic life is spreading. The question of the reduction of working hours is an example. This important social reform, which the workers of all countries have made their first demand, is beginning to be regarded as one of the means of regulating production. The reduction of working hours as a means of combating unemployment and overproduction has ceased to be a demand put forward by workers alone. Without expressing any view on its significance in this respect, I may point out that it is very frequently mentioned in discussions on the means of preventing unemployment. Economic and social life are thus tending towards greater unity. Economic policy and social policy are two aspects of one problem—the direction which should be given to production, commerce and consumption. These two departments of public and international activity are as closely interdependent as different organs of the body.

I have ventured to quote at such length from the President's speech not only because it is an interesting theme which can be illustrated in economic history by the classical instance of the abolition of slavery but it is likely to form an important part of this year's deliberations. The three items on the agenda are:—1. The age of admission of children to employment in non-industrial occupations. 2. Hours of work in coal mines, and 3. Partial revision of the Convention concerning employment of women during the night, of which the second one is likely to lead to lively scenes in view of its previous history and its bearing on the present state of the coal industry. But the debate on the Report of the annual work of the Organisation by the Director of the International Labour Office, Monsieur Albert Thomas, will be no less important in view of the prevailing economic depression, a subject to which this year's Report has been entirely devoted. The President has said:—

We should be out of touch with reality if during this Labour Conference all our actions were not dominated by a realisation of the difficulties confronting us and of the necessity of endeavouring to overcome them by all the means at our disposal.

And the Director recognises :

The Office considers that, in the thick of the present, unprecedented situation, it is the obvious and primary duty of the International Labour Organisation to consider whether the measures it has advocated and recommended or prescribed for general application are adequate for the new conditions, whether they should not be developed or possibly transformed in their character and their scope, or whether, again, in view of unexpected reactions, they should not be abandoned. In a word, should the International Labour Organisation maintain its traditional policy of action against unemployment in the present position of the problem?

The controversy will be rendered all the more piquant by the tendency, which has long existed in certain quarters and which the industrial depression has only served to accentuate, to sacrifice Geneva before the altar of economic nationalism, an illogical but characteristic reaction. The Director gives an instance of it in his Report when he refers to the pamphlet entitled *The Industrial Situation*, published by the National Confederation of Employers' Organizations of Great Britain, where it is stated:—

It is idle to think a country like ours, which depends on its export trade for its existence, can, in the industrial world of today, continue to set up and maintain standards of living and public expenditure regardless of those of its competitors without paying the price of unemployment. . . . In that connection we feel it our duty to dispel the impression that the removal of these disparities and the recovery of the British industry will come from the activities of the International Labour Organization at Geneva.

On the other hand, as Monsieur Thomas himself has not hesitated to point out, customary complaisance cannot provide a solution:—

If the States do not strictly observe the provisions of Article 405 (of the Treaty of Versailles), or if they observe them only in the letter by laying the Draft conventions (passed by the Conference) before Parliament but without endeavouring to ratify them, then the principle of mutual obligations on which the Organisation is based will be undermined and the future of the Organisation is doomed.

The situation which the fifteenth International Labour Conference is called upon to consider is such as to justify fully the warning which Mr. N. M. Joshi administered two years ago to the Organisation in his famous speech which may be entitled "Geneva or Moscow?" The note which he struck leaps to one's mind almost inevitably in the present discussion.

## Reviews.

### THE CENTRAL BANK OF CENTRAL BANKS.

THE BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS. By PAUL EINZIG. (Macmillan, London.) 22cm. 242p. 10/6.

WE heartily welcome this work by Dr. Einzig who deals in it with an entirely new, and therefore very interesting subject, viz., the project of the Bank for International Settlements. In successive chapters the author deals succinctly with the various topics connected with the Bank, such as its genesis, organisation, constitution and functions, its statutes, the

credit resources at its disposal, its relation to world prices, world bank rate and international gold clearing and closes with an analysis of its political aspects. In a series of appendices a number of documents and papers connected with the scheme of the Bank are included and should prove very useful for an intensive study of the subject.

The Bank for International Settlements is quite a novel institution, and though it has been established primarily to facilitate the payment of the German Reparations, as contemplated by the Young Committee of Experts on Reparations, the so-called auxiliary functions of the Bank are certainly far and away of more consequence and greater interest to the student of finance and the business community. Dr. Einzig is therefore perfectly justified in devoting the greater portion of his book to the treatment of the non-reparations functions of the Bank. Dwelling upon these functions, he envisages the wide possibilities of the Bank and its capacity to bring about a more equal distribution of the world's financial resources as between various countries, elimination of the abnormal discrepancies between interest rates that developed since the War, and especially stabilisation of the international price level in order to counteract a general and prolonged decline of prices. It is rather unfortunate that the Bank had not started functioning in 1929 so as to prevent the world-slump of that and subsequent years. At the same time the author is alive to the possibility of inflationary credit expansion though it is not imminent at the present moment.

The Bank is intended to serve as the Central Bank of Central Banks. Whether it would succeed in realising the various benefits expected from it, depends largely on the efficient co-operation between Central Banks of the world. That prospect seems to be rather remote as revealed by the aggressively selfish policy followed in recent years by the Federal Reserve Board of New York and the Bank of France. Another serious defect of the scheme for the Bank for International Settlements is its essentially European character and the inadequacy of representation on the Board of Directors granted to the smaller countries especially non-European countries whose interests are therefore likely to suffer. The author has either altogether ignored these defects or glossed over them.

Dr. Einzig is to be congratulated on the merits of his pioneering book on a technical and difficult problem which is sure to occupy a predominant position in the international monetary affairs. The style of the book is very lucid and quite praiseworthy.

S. G. BERI.

### THE GAEKWAD OF BARODA.

LIFE OF SAYAJI RAO III. MAHARAJA OF BARODA. Vols. 1 & 2. BY STANLEY RICE. (Oxford University Press.) 1931. 23cm. pp. 234, 292. 31/6 for 2 vols.

THIS is a semi-official biography of the present ruler of Baroda by one of his trusted executive councillors, Mr. Stanley Rice, who has now retired from the State service. As Mr. Rice is an ex-civilian from Madras and a well-known writer on eastern subjects, this biography of His Highness must carry weight with English readers, for whom it seems to have been mainly intended. Indians have never doubted the intentions of His Highness in his relations with the Paramount Power and have always been just and indulgent towards him.

The story of the struggles of His Highness to assert his dignity and the integrity of the state has been narrated with sympathy by the author and the

reader gets a peep into the inner working of the Political Department and its policy of pinpricks in its relations with Indian Princes, however high, and one cannot but sympathise with His Highness in his fits of irritation at the treatment received by him from the representatives of the Crown and admire his courage, perseverance and tenacity in the face of tremendous odds. The author performs the delicate task of holding the balance between the two parties to the unending controversies with an amount of tact and judicious discrimination that does credit to him. He, however, charges the Maharaja with want of diplomatic sense when he says:—

This want of diplomatic sense was the cause of half his unpopularity with the Government of India, and, with sections of the community. In pressing forward to the great goal of his ambition, the awakening of India, from the sleep of a thousand years, and the leading of her into the first rank of nations, he forgot that in a time of unrest an ardent Nationalism was liable to misconstruction. He had in fact no sympathy with revolutionary aims and tactics, and Swaraj with its ultimate goal of democracy had no attractions for him. When he talked of freedom from foreign oppression, he was thinking of another kind of freedom, the freedom from caste, from outworn creeds, from social restrictions which would enable India to move forward on the path of modern progress.

In the life of King Edward VII by Sir Sidney Lee, the author with reference to the then Prince of Wales' proposed visit to India in 1905, said:—

The Gaikwar proposed to absent himself from India during the Prince of Wales' tour—an absence that would appear to be a slight on the heir to the British throne. Lord Curzon took what was perhaps an unduly severe view of the Gaikwar's desire to leave India, but the King, while regretting the Gaikwar's absence, strongly held that his liberty should not be hampered by Viceregal action. Lord Curzon took the hint and the Gaikwar was able to gratify his wanderlust.

With regard to this Mr. Rice remarks:—

To him, and to his people, it was more important that he should be fit to govern than that he should return to Baroda for a three days' formal visit.

Mr. Rice explains the Maharaja's annual tours to Europe thus:—

The climate of Baroda is trying. December and January are glorious months, when the keen sparkling air makes one feel that it is good to be alive; November when the cold is approaching and February when it is gradually departing, are tolerable, but the heat of summer is intense, and when the rains at last break out and the temperature is moderated, there is nothing to exhilarate in the prevailing damp. September and October are the most enervating of all. The breeze drops, and the sun shining through the damp atmosphere on to damp earth gives the climate the character of a hot house. The Maharaja loves the cold. St. Moritz with its brilliant sparkling sky and its keen air is his 'tried friend.' Hill-stations in India will serve if nothing better is to be had, but they are a poor substitute for the bracing climate of Europe. The stir of Europe, with its social attractions and its political distractions, appeals to his mind.

After the War the Maharaja justified his stay in Europe by the plea that, since the Great War had revolutionised the social and political outlook there, it was necessary for those who tried to march with the times to study the conditions on the spot, for, he said, other countries are moving fast and we cannot afford to stand still.

While mentioning the employment of a French lady, Mlle. Lux, to teach him French in his old age as an example of his belief in the refining influence of the innocent intercourse of the sexes, Mr. Rice says:—

Like all virile men, His Highness delights in ladies' society which brings him in contact with the female point of view. For Queen Victoria, the revered of all Indians, he had a special respect and even affection; and in Europe where the women are as free as the men, he was able to gratify his taste for feminine society to the full.

Mr. Rice, while emphasising that whatever the advantages of the Continent, the true home of the Maharaja in Europe is England says:

Granted, that Baroda is always in his thoughts, wherever he is, and that he has made many pleasant acquaintances abroad, it is in England that he meets the largest circle of his friends, both Indian and English. There he can enjoy the society of all grades from His Majesty and his distinguished servants down to and beyond those more obscure people, who have in one capacity or another served the State of Baroda. The exchange of ideas with sympathetic and understanding men and women is to a man of the Maharaja's temperament the most soothing of medicines.

These extracts will show some of the considerations that influence the Maharaja to spend nearly eight months of the year in Europe. But the reasons given by the author are anything but convincing. In the first place, the Maharaja is Indian-born and Indian-bred. In the second place, during the War when unnecessary travelling was mercilessly discouraged, His Highness managed to live in India in comparatively good health. One must therefore conclude that the Indian summer or rainy season or autumn are not so bad after all and that if one only has the will, one can do without frequent trips to Europe and still be able to attend to the affairs of state without any substantial damage to one's health.

According to the author, His Highness is always a Maharaja even in his hours of relaxation and one of his sons once told a friend that His Highness was the Maharaja not only to his subjects and officials, but even to Her Highness and his children. This trait must have robbed the Maharaja of all domestic felicity which cannot really exist under such surroundings. The author succinctly sets forth the arguments in favour of Baroda's claim for Kaira and Ahmedabad Districts and to Okha Port and its share of the Indian Customs and Salt revenue. Without entering into the legal technicalities of the case, it may safely be said that Baroda has justice on its side; but as in these days of self-determination populations cannot be expected to change hands without their own explicit consent and since not a soul in Kaira and Ahmedabad Districts seems willing to exchange the satanic rule of the British Government for that of the Maharaja, one need not treat the Maharaja's claim for rendition with any seriousness.

I think enough has been quoted to bring out the special traits in His Highness' character. His Highness began his career as a ruler very well indeed; but during the last twenty years or so he has done precious little to keep up his reputation as an Indian prince of progressive views or to associate his people with the administration of the state owing apparently to his love of power. One must therefore set him down as an autocrat, perhaps well-intentioned, but still an autocrat. He wants independence for himself but is not prepared to grant the same to his subjects. Nine of the ten so-called elected members of the Baroda Legislative Council have recently resigned in protest against the Maharaja's policy of keeping the Legislative Council still purely advisory with an official majority and limited powers of recommendation! Mr. Rice is wrong when he says that all legislation is put before the Council. There are a number of amending Acts and even substantive legislation which



are passed by the Government without placing the same before the Council. In conclusion, let me say that Mr. Rice wields a facile pen, that the book is well illustrated, and that its get-up is neat and attractive.

G. B. P.

### SHORT NOTICES.

#### PASSING THROUGH GERMANY. (7th Edn.)

ED. BY KARLKIESEL. (Terramare Office, Berlin.) 1930. 19cm. 225 p.

THIS is a beautifully got-up booklet giving in concise form a summary of practically every sphere of German life that is likely to be of use to the traveller in Germany. The well reproduced pictures add to the charm of the book and help to give an idea of German landscape, architecture and the general civic life to the new visitor. To an old friend like the present reviewer it serves as a refresher of pleasant memories. One of the most interesting chapters is the one on the spirit of the new architecture in Germany. Simplicity and usefulness (*Zweckmässigkeit*) are the keynote of all new construction in Germany, be it a factory, a school or even a piece of furniture. Square, angular, no costly figures and mouldings to ornament them, one sees the new style of houses with their large sunny windows, glass balconies and little garden plots and envies the dwellers for the sun and air that they must be getting. The dispensing of external ornamentation serves to prevent dust accumulation and makes cleaning or repairing an easy job. Interesting information regarding the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal, vacation courses, etc. make the book a valuable source of information to students, travellers and general readers alike.

D. D. K.

#### THE TRAVEL TALES OF MR. JOSEPH JORKENS. BY LORD DUNSANY. (Putnams, London.) 1931. 10cm. 305p. 7/6.

TO entertain the members of the very select and exclusive "Billiards Club" (?) during one of those long foggy wintry evenings in London with an interesting narrative of one's own experiences in many parts of the world is an art possessed by very few people. The imaginary traveller, Mr. Joseph Jorkens, invented by Lord Dunsany, is an altogether delightful one and he is certainly very good company when he is in a mood to spin a yarn or two. The author of these delightful stories warns us beforehand that Mr. Joseph Jorkens would always tell a story in an evening to any one who offered him a small drink. One really begins to suspect that the length and the interest of the story would certainly depend on the length and strength of the drink offered to this old and affectionate rascal, Joseph Jorkens. We have also been warned that we should not believe a word of Joseph Jorkens. It all depends on our own moods and also how many drinks we ourselves had indulged in when keeping company with Mr. Jorkens.

These travel stories have been written in a most delightful and entertaining style. The author is on the whole remarkably true and accurate in describing local details and there are a number of passages of great literary beauty. The interest in all the stories is so well maintained that the reader skips from page to page with an eager desire to know what happens next and how the story finally ends.

The style suits the atmosphere of the stories in a faultless manner. The delicate humour and the gentle satire which characterize the whole book form a very attractive feature of the book. In these days

when millions and millions of words of English prose are printed and circulated every year which have only a very meretricious value, one rather welcomes Lord Dunsany's latest book for a permanent place in his private library.

S. G. SASTRY.

#### THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION. By MAURICE AMOS. (Longmans, London.) 1930. 19cm. 194 p. 3/6.

IT is an unpretentious work on a field which has been covered by very distinguished writers. The subject has been dealt with in a comprehensive manner, though the very size of the book has precluded from it details which are available in Prof. Lowell's standard two-volume work on the subject. Advanced students of constitutions will miss in it the brilliancy of criticism which is associated with Prof. Sidney Low's work, the clarity of exposition associated with such writers as Dicey or Marriott, or even the suggestiveness of criticism one comes across in Prof. Ogg's *English Politics and Government*. Sir Maurice presents a really useful work to his reader provided he does not look for these flights of excellence. Some of the topics have been presented historically—a method which makes for a better understanding of the constitution to the uninitiated. The author's treatment of all phases of the constitution is up-to-date, though the development of a cabinet secretariat seems nowhere to have been referred to—a development which is fraught with great significance from the constitutional point of view.

K. M. P.

#### MISS HADLEY'S FINISHING SCHOOL. BY CLARA IRENE PATTEN. (Meador Publishing Co., Boston.) 1930. 20cm. 143p. \$ 1-50.

THIS is a very pretty little story about two sisters in a small American town. As there is not enough money to keep up the old home, both sisters have to think about earning money. Much to the disgust of the elder sister who is bent on remaining true to the old ideals of gentility, the younger sister starts a restaurant, which she runs most successfully. The elder sister tries to start a "Finishing School," but there is only one pupil in it. The arrival of an aristocratic cousin from England causes great excitement in the American town. Everything ends up very happily, and the whole story can be read within two hours. The characters are lovable and interesting.

H. KOHN.

## Miscellaneous.

### I. L. CONFERENCE.

#### MR. BAKHALE'S SPEECH.

Following is the speech Mr. R. R. Bikhale as Indian Workers' delegate delivered to the International Labour Conference at Geneva on June 5, 1931:—

Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I deeply regret the circumstances in which the debate on the Director's Report was opened. Those of us who have come from far-off countries expected a full-dress debate on the problem of unemployment, which is the main theme of the Director's Report. Instead we began with recriminations and impeachments, and I do not know how we shall end. It is not for me to say whether those recriminations and impeachments were justifiable or not, but I am inclined to feel that, while forces are acting in different directions to undermine

the influence of Geneva and all it stands for, this Conference is entitled to know, through a suitable machinery, whether those who have solemnly owned their allegiance to the Peace Treaty and the International Labour Organisation have maintained their faith in them, and have carried out, both in the spirit and in the letter, the sacred international obligations enjoined upon them by the terms of the Peace Treaty and the International Labour Conventions. Looked at from this point of view, the information that has been supplied to us is indeed welcome, notwithstanding the objection taken thereto, and I congratulate the Director on the uncommon courage he has shown, and I admire him for the considerable risks he took, in placing that information before the Conference.

Whatever may be the view as regards the channel through which the information has been placed before us, there is no mistaking the fact—and the last sentence of the speech of the British Employers' Delegate only confirms this—that some at least of the Governments and of the Employers have grown pessimistic about the raising of labour standards internationally through the International Labour Organisation. I believe that the workers, and particularly those in Asia, are equally, and perhaps more, dissatisfied with the slowness of the progress so far made. Is it not, I ask, a bad omen for any organisation when its component parts begin to show signs of despair as regards the results expected of their joint deliberations? It is, in my opinion, high time for the Conference to take stock of the whole situation and to consider, in view of the acute dissatisfaction felt in almost every quarter, whether the methods generally employed by the International Labour Office to achieve the desired results, do or do not require, consistently with the ideals and principles of the International Labour Office, a change even of a radical character, so as to replace the 1931 pessimism and depression by the 1919 optimism and enthusiasm. I would even venture to say that the examination of the social progress so far made as the result of the adoption of the various Conventions and Recommendations, of the legislative and other results obtained from their ratification and application, and the practical benefits actually accrued to the workers, should receive, almost immediately, a more concentrated attention and deeper consideration by the Conference, and this, it seems to me, is possible only if it is either put as a regular item on the Agenda or becomes the main theme of the Director's Report.

So far as the Asiatic countries are concerned, the dissatisfaction of the working classes is due, broadly speaking, to two main causes: (1) the failure to advance social progress in the direction of improving the working conditions and standard of life; and (2) the failure, if I may be permitted to say so, on the part of the Organisation to satisfy the legitimate claims of the Asiatic countries in getting them allied more and more with the actual work and machinery of the Organisation. In saying this, I do not for one moment underestimate the value of what has already been done by the Organisation in that direction. It delights me to acknowledge that the establishment of branches of the Organisation in India and Japan was a step in the right direction, and so far as India is concerned, it is with equal pleasure that I recognise the good and steady work that the Indian branch has been doing in my country. But I do consider and consider very strongly, that what has been done is only a fraction of what should have been done or should be done immediately. Out of the International Labour Office staff of over 400 men and women, India has been given only three posts! To take another instance: We have been associated with this Organisation from the time of its very inception, and yet the Indian workers have not

yet succeeded in getting effective representation on the Governing Body, although, thanks to the Workers' Group, in which I include the Amsterdam International, we have been given substitute representation on that body, of which, however, we could never take advantage.

While we are thankful for what has been done, and we appreciate it, it is no use disguising the acuteness and intensity of the dissatisfaction which we have been feeling and which, if it is so inclined, the Organisation can itself remove. Are we to suppose that India—a country which has sent men of the type of Sir Atul Chatterjee, Mr. Birla and Mr. Joshi as Government, Employers' and Workers' Delegates to this Conference—does not deserve more representation on the International Labour Office staff and on the Governing Body? Perhaps I may be permitted here to pay my tribute of appreciation to Sir Atul Chatterjee for his valuable work in Geneva, in view of his forthcoming retirement.

Are we further to suppose that India cannot claim more representation than has been given her because she is not the mistress of her house today? I desire to inform the Conference a little bluntly that, on account of the humiliations to which we have been subjected in our own country, and on account of the failure to recognise adequately the legitimate claims of India in international organisations, the Indian mind has become very sensitive, and is not in a mood to acquiesce in anything less than its legitimate dues. Far be it from me to suggest—and it is not in me to do so—that I am pleading here for a few more jobs for my countrymen. Let me assure the Conference that that is not so. No, that is not my object. My object is to bring to the notice of the Conference the causes of dissatisfaction inside the Organisation which must be removed in order to make it really and truly international and to demolish the serious accusation many times levelled against it that it is predominantly European and not international—a complaint which I see other Asiatic and oversea countries have also made in this Conference. I hope that my remarks will be taken in the spirit in which I have made them.

Two years ago, from this very rostrum, my distinguished predecessor, Mr. Joshi, sounded a note of warning and begged this Conference to accelerate the pace of social legislation and social progress if Geneva was to continue to count as an international force and as an effective alternative to that other force, which has been catching the imagination of the rank and file, particularly in Asiatic countries, on account of the grandeur of its ideals and promises, however unrealisable they may be.

Confining my remarks for the moment to India, may I ask whether Mr. Joshi was not wise in sounding that warning and whether it was given any heed by those who today control the destinies of my country? Those who know Indian conditions cannot place their hands on their hearts and say that that solemn warning was unnecessary and that it did not deserve any consideration. What has been the state of affairs in India during the last two or three years? I am referring only to industrial affairs. We have had strike after strike in the cotton and jute industries, in the iron and steel industry, and on the railways; we have had a serious increase in indebtedness owing to terrible economic distress; we have had under-employment and unemployment in many industries; and we have had retrenchment and rationalisation resulting in further economic distress and unemployment. None can possibly challenge these facts, if only they are collected and properly analysed. The result of all this is despair and despondency on the part of the workers which has, not

unnaturally, led them to seek avenues other than those to which the trade union movement here is accustomed, and which they think might yield better and quicker results. No wonder, Ladies and Gentlemen, that the workers should lose faith for the moment in their trade union organisation and the acknowledged trade union methods. It is a fact which has got to be acknowledged that the trade union movement was never so weak in India as it is today. This is an unmistakable proof that among the Indian workers there is today either the spirit of indifference and sullenness, or a tendency to resort to other measures for their salvation. It is common knowledge that the workers, particularly the railway workers, have developed a political sense and are taking a larger part in political agitation. During the recent civil disobedience movement some workers did take part in that movement and went to gaol. It is some satisfaction to us, who are devoting most of our time to trade union work, that the premier political organisation of India, the Indian National Congress, has realised the importance of improving the workers' conditions socially, economically and politically, and passed, in its last session, an important resolution on the workers' fundamental rights in the future constitution of India. I earnestly hope that that momentous declaration will not remain a mere pious hope, but will be honestly adhered to after the present political crisis is over.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, are we not entitled to ask what the Government of India, which is a part of this great Organisation, has done during these two or three years in the direction of improving working conditions and ratifying and applying the Geneva Conventions? One has only to turn to the pages of the proceedings of our central legislature to find that the ratifications and application of the more important Geneva Conventions and the consequent labour legislation have been few and far between and that the enthusiasm which they showed in the earlier years in giving effect to the international obligations, has now almost dried up. The Government of India have recently developed the habit of bringing in these Conventions towards the end of the session of the Legislative Assembly when the House is tired and thin and also, on some occasions, of placing the Conventions first before the Council of State, an Upper Chamber, and then submitting them to the Assembly which is the popular chamber. Are we to suppose that "international agreements or big humanitarian reforms are" in the words of the Director, "still only of secondary importance as compared with the contingencies of day-to-day politics" and that "the protection of the workers and social justice have passed into the limbo of things forgotten"? Since 1928 only two Conventions have been ratified by the Government. To give but a few examples: the three Conventions concerning the minimum age of children for admission in industrial employment, at sea, and in agriculture, have not yet been ratified (I admit that our Factories Act prescribes the age limit for admission of children for such industries as are covered by it.); the Convention concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth has not been ratified; the Convention concerning workmen's compensation for accidents has not been ratified, although we have the Workmen's Compensation Act; the Convention concerning sickness insurance has not been ratified; and lastly the Convention concerning the creation of minimum wage-fixing machinery has also not been ratified.

I may digress here for a moment, with your permission, to deal in one short sentence with the remarks that fell from the Employers' Delegate from my country. He said that tremendous progress had been made in recent years in the direction of improv-

ing the conditions of workers and in ratifying the Geneva Conventions. The time at my disposal is so short that I cannot possibly go into the whole question and place before you facts, which if properly understood, would bring home to this Conference that there is no foundation for what he said. The spiritual civilisation to which he has referred does not mean low wages, slums, and insanitary jobs. What do the strikes show, and what did the Indian employers do except to ally themselves with the Government?

Of the Conventions ratified, the one regarding unemployment is only technically ratified, and I shall deal with this matter in detail if I get an opportunity to speak on the Report of the Committee on Article 40j. Even as regards the Washington Hours Convention, which calls for a revision at the end of ten years, we do not know whether the Government of India have moved in the matter and given any opinion as to the necessity of such a revision, on which we are very keen. I must respectfully say that with such a record of inaction and failure to carry out international obligations, I fear that Geneva may not continue to inspire the confidence of the Indian workers. There is already a section in our movement which has boycotted Geneva and still another section is getting lukewarm. I am anxious to see Geneva brought on to its legitimate plane of international activity and solidarity, and I appeal to this Conference and to the Government of India with all the earnestness at my command that effective steps should immediately be taken to restore confidence in the Indian workers by making up the leeway and giving full effect to the Geneva Conventions and recommendations; otherwise there is little hope. It is poor consolation to us to be told that we must await the report of the Royal Commission on Indian Labour. I attach the highest importance to the recommendations of the Commission—which was appointed as the result of continual demands from the workers, and which the Indian employers never asked—a Commission on which had sat some of the best of my countrymen and our British friends, and I expect some good results from it; but the point I want to emphasise is that the appointment of that Commission cannot and should not be made an excuse to put off, as has unfortunately been done, the labour legislation which is overdue.

May I here draw the attention of the representatives of the Government of India to the significant declaration made by the British Government Delegate that "whatever may be the outcome of those things (which are enumerated in his statement) the British workers will be protected against the forces making for insecurity"? May I invite the Indian Government Delegates here to make a similar declaration at this Conference with regard to the Indian workers?

Lastly, Ladies and Gentlemen, you are aware that we are on the eve of a big political transformation in India. In the new India that is emerging we are endeavouring to secure for the workers and the peasants their due political and other rights so as to obtain for our country a real democracy, under which social and labour legislation will grow more rapidly with the creation of suitable machinery to develop the workers and peasants physically, educationally, socially, economically and politically.

In this endeavour we must see with the utmost vigilance that a uniform standard as regards social and labour legislation and the development of the workers and peasants in every direction is achieved and maintained and that no inter-provincial competition is allowed to interfere with that progress. We are rather apprehensive today that the tentative proposals of the Round Table Conference in respect to

labour legislation and administration are most likely to have an adverse effect on the aim we have in view. Mr. Jouhaux's resolution that may come before this Conference will, I hope, give me an opportunity to place our point of view before you, and I therefore do not deal with it here. Suffice it for me to say here that we expect to come out of the present crisis with success to India, and that in the new regime we hope to improve the standard of living and other conditions of life much more rapidly than we have been able to do for so long and that the workers in India will come to be in a position to march shoulder to shoulder with our comrades from other countries who are more favourably situated. In this ambition of ours we count upon the sympathies and support of all the countries which are represented here.

## Correspondence.

### MUSSOLINI'S ITALY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—I have just read with great interest Mr. Ranga's article in your issue of the 16th April on Mussolini's Italy. Mr. Ranga writes with ease and charm, and cannot fail to please his readers. In justice, however, to Fascist Italy I feel some of his statements require to be corrected.

Of course in a way Mr. Ranga puts himself out of court by frankly admitting in his first sentence that he never was in Italy before 1923, that is, until Fascism had begun. He has therefore no idea what those things were from which Fascism lifted up the people. Without that contrast before his eyes—the contrast of Italy as it was before and as it is after Fascism—no one can possibly judge Mussolini or the movement fairly. I was in Italy on duty in 1920, just when everything was at its worst and blackest before Fascism came to save the situation. But my acquaintance with the country goes back as far as 1884. I can assure Mr. Ranga and I beg him to believe me that as late as 1920 one could hardly in any real sense speak of an Italian nation, that corruption was rampant everywhere, that dishonesty was so prevalent that it seemed an ingrown part of the Italian character, and that Marxism was epidemic and Lenin openly acclaimed. It seemed almost impossible at that time that anything could save Italy from immediate utter collapse into the horrors of Communism. Those who loved and venerated the history of Italy grew almost sick with fear. They watched it as we now watch Spain.

What have we today? An Italy purged and purified, an Italy strong and vigorous, a country proud of her past and conscious of her future, a people with moral sense and dignity, efficient, active, and not unworthy of their destiny. The change is due to one thing, Fascism, and to one great political genius—one of the greatest the world has ever seen—Mussolini.

Please let it not be thought that I approve or like everything in the Fascist state. I do not. I was not myself born with a particularly disciplined character. On the contrary I dislike restrictions of any kind, particularly on thought and speech among educated men. Moreover long years spent in government service have given me a strong distaste for official control and interference. The exaggerated Puritanism of much in Fascist Italy also strikes me,

I confess, as merely ridiculous. But temperamental differences should not be allowed to withhold anyone from giving credit, where it is due.

Now, Mr. Ranga by his use of the phrase "backed by capitalists and landlords", certainly implies and perhaps himself believes that Fascism is inspired and maintained by these classes. This however is wrong. It is indeed a fact that at a certain stage Fascism found support in some rich men who saw in it the only defence against Communism and a "proletarian dictatorship." But the working classes were its main force. They are so today. Fascism as a matter of fact is the direct offspring of syndicalism, and was first inspired by the young workman hero of Italian syndicalism, who was killed while fighting bravely in the trenches. Hence business men soon found out to their disappointment that under Fascism they would be checked and controlled for the whole nation's good; so they have been and still are today. This also is the reason why Fascism fights what is wrongly called "socialism"; for from the first syndicalists and social democrats had been at daggers drawn.

Mr. Ranga is also incorrect in saying that Mussolini's claim of efficiency for his regime is unjustified or that, for instance, "trains ran just as satisfactorily in democratically governed Italy as they do now." That they most certainly did not. They ran exceedingly badly, and they were filthy to an unspeakable degree, while station staff and porters were both insolent and dishonest. The present regime simply cannot be denied efficiency, whatever political quarrel one may have with its principles. Nor is it fair to imply that only tourists are impressed by Fascism. I can assure Mr. Ranga that every foreigner tells the same tale, who knows Italy well. I may, for instance, cite my own father-in-law, who has known Italy intimately for some forty years and speaks Italian like a native and who has absolutely no political bias in favour of the system. He is emphatic on the vast benefits conferred by Mussolini on his country and the Italian people.

Mr. Ranga also fails to mention that Fascist Italy (a) has been the only country in the world so far which has offered any solution to the issue between Capital and Labour and provided legislation and an administrative system which preserve industrial peace together with equity, and (b) has alone introduced a logical method of election by constituencies truly representative of the divergent interests of a modern State, instead of the absurdly obsolete system of territorial constituencies.

The underlying fact is that in Europe as it now is, democracy in the nineteenth century sense is as dead as mutton. It may *perhaps* survive in the British Empire. It simply cannot in any continental country. The choice is only between Bolshevism and Fascism. No one who has any experience of what the Bolshevik state and a dictatorship of the proletariat really means—its sheer misery, its grinding squalor—can possibly doubt for a moment which is better. It cannot be doubted even by those who still have a tender fondness for other times, as Mr. Ranga evidently has for the nineteenth century, and I myself for the eighteenth. We live after all in the twentieth century; for us the only way is that to which Mussolini's Italy points. Yours, etc.

OTTO ROTHFIELD.

Vichy, May 14.