

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Postponement of Mahatma's Fast.

INDIA heaved a genuine sigh of relief at Mahatma Gandhi's decision to postpone his fast which was to commence on Monday last in protest against the refusal of entry to Harijans into the Gurumayoor temple. From the statement of his reasons in support of the postponement it would appear that he recognises the impossibility of the Viceregal sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill being available before the date fixed for the commencement of the fast. In the circumstances it was inevitable that the fast should stand over till the Government's decision in regard to the Bill was known. If the decision is favourable, there would, it is to be supposed, be no need for him to put his grim resolve into practice. What if it should turn out to be otherwise? For a reply to this question we shall not be required to wait for very long. In the meanwhile requests are pouring in upon the Viceroy to give or withhold his previous sanction to the Bill according as the person making the request is in favour of or opposed to the removal of the disability against the untouchables contemplated by the Bill.

It is difficult however to persuade oneself that the opposition to the Bill is based on reason. It would perhaps have been intelligible if the mover of the Bill had, as if by a stroke of the pen, proposed to throw open all Hindu temples to untouchables, without regard to local sentiment. The Bill however does nothing of the kind. It is based on the principle of local option and provides for local opinion being

given all reasonable opportunities to express itself before the Harijans are admitted to any temple. Principally it vests the initiative in the matter not in any outside authority but in the people of the locality themselves. Thus it is provided that the question whether a particular place of worship is to be thrown open to untouchables shall, upon receipt of a requisition signed by fifty people, be referred by the trustee of a temple to the voters who would be municipal or local board voters according to the situation of the temple; and its portals would be opened to the Harijans only if it is found that the majority of the voters favour such a course. Where a trustee decides of his own motion to admit Harijans to the temple in his charge, the voters in the locality are given the right of objecting to the decision and demanding that it be not carried into effect without the voters being given an opportunity to approve or disapprove of it, as the case may be. The danger of too frequent references to the voters on the initiative of social reform enthusiasts is guarded against by the provision that where in a particular case the popular vote was found to have gone against the concession of the right of temple entry to Harijans the question should be regarded as closed for one year. There is thus no risk of hasty action under Dr. Subbaroyan's proposed scheme for securing to untouchables the right to worship in Hindu temples just like any other sections of Hindu society and the Viceroy would do well to allow it to come before the Madras Legislature in its next session.

Reactionary Muslims in Conference.

To judge from the resolutions passed and the speeches delivered at the All-India Muslim Conference which met last week in Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, its principal purpose appears to have been to discredit efforts for communal unity which have been going on at Allahabad and Calcutta under the leadership of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The idea of holding its session at the present time seems to have encountered opposition from a section of local Muslims whose attempts to force entry into it led to disorder. Though the Conference claimed to represent All-India Muslim opinion, the hollowness of the claim was exposed by a largely attended Muslim public meeting held in Calcutta itself two days later, in organising which nearly a dozen Muslim organisations had combined. This meeting unanimously expressed the view that the Conference was "illegal, unconstitutional and unrepresentative inasmuch as the constituent elements of the Conference were opposed not only to the holding of the Conference but to the procedure adopted by the holders of the Conference in excluding practically all the Muslim organisations which constitute the Conference."

Another factor which discounted its importance was the fact that one of its ex-presidents,

Mr. Shaukat Ali, who was till recently an extreme communalist, was actively supporting Pandit Malviya's efforts to unite the different communities. Nothing daunted, the president in his inaugural address did his best to add to the difficulties of those who were engaged in the difficult task of bringing the communities together by disparaging these well-meant endeavours. It goes without saying that he stood for the Premier's communal award though, perhaps to conceal their unqualified satisfaction, he was careful to add that its acceptance by the Muslims gathered under his banner was "subject to minor adjustments in details." His passionate plea for the separation of Sind and for one-third representation for Muslims in the Central Legislature lost much of its force by the announcement of the British Government's favourable decision on both these points.

Mr. Yusuf Ali is keen not so much on central responsibility as on provincial autonomy and would not like the latter to wait for its introduction along with that of the former. What more proof is needed to show that the gathering he was addressing did not consist of the nationally-minded Muslims? To Muslims of his way of thinking undiluted separate electorates are the *sine qua non* of their political existence. His uncompromising opposition to the joint electorates formula arrived at at Allahabad on the ground that it would adulterate separate communal electorates would have been quite intelligible, but, curiously enough, he tried to make it appear that the formula was nothing but "separate electorates in disguise." And yet for a wonder he opposed it tooth and nail! If the Allahabad arrangement provides separate electorates under another name, it is difficult to see why Mr. Yusuf Ali should not favour its acceptance by his co-religionists seeing that the Muslim community would suffer no substantial disadvantage thereby while gaining much good name for facilitating unity by its acceptance of the arrangement. The proposed electorates, according to him, have "all the disadvantages of separate electorates and none of the advantages," but in his speech as reported in the press we are unable to discover any attempt to substantiate this statement.

Bengal Communal Deadlock.

WHEN the Unity Conference at Allahabad adjourned in order to meet at Calcutta on the 27th of December, the hope was generally entertained that other disputed points having been satisfactorily got out of the way, the Bengal impasse too might after all not prove insoluble. But as recent events will have shown, the hope has been dashed to the ground and the sub-committee of the Conference, finding its task almost hopeless, has adjourned to February 4. On the resumption of the communal conversations in Calcutta, the Hindus showed a tendency to stick firmly to their resolve not to allow a statutory majority to the Muslims, but later relented to the extent of letting them enjoy the privilege for a period of ten years and no more.

Not being in a mood to surrender two of their seats in order to make up the Muslim majority, however, they coupled this concession to Muslims with the condition that the latter must join them in bringing pressure to bear upon the Europeans who, under the Prime Minister's communal award had been allowed excessive representation in the Bengal Council with a view to the required seats being taken out of their quota. This conditional offer proved unacceptable to the Muslims. They wanted their majority fixed by law and unlimited as regards time. They could not reconcile themselves also to the majority being made dependent upon the Europeans

agreeing to forego two of their seats. The deadlock reached between the two communities was apparently found incapable of a solution especially in their present temper with the result that there was nothing for it but to postpone further negotiations.

The Bengal difficulty having absorbed the sub-committee's attention to the exclusion of everything else, it found itself unable to bestow any thought on the promotion of a communal agreement for Assam which was also reserved for consideration at Calcutta. As the Bengal communal solution showed signs of being more and more elusive the suggestion was made that the Assam question be tackled first but failed to receive support.

Indian Women in Conference.

FROM all accounts, the Indian Women's Conference held at Lucknow under the presidency of Lady Vidyagowry Ramanbhai seems to have had a successful session. It will be remembered that the first session of the Conference was held in Poona six years ago when it was expected to handle problems relating only to female education. With the lapse of time however the scope of the Conference came to be widened with the result that it now devotes its attention not only to educational but also social problems affecting Indian womanhood.

The presidential address earnestly pleaded for the introduction of compulsory education which alone would facilitate the banishment of many social evils found to be prevalent among women, and would enable them to understand their rights. It is a sign of the times that divorce which used to be the subject of much heated controversy not very long ago at social conferences and in newspapers has come to be looked upon as a necessity and received the wholehearted support of the Women's Conference. The working of the Sarda Act for the prevention of early marriages is regarded with keen dissatisfaction by women which found vent in a special resolution on the subject.

The present campaign against untouchability received the enthusiastic backing of the Conference which also lent its approval to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill permitting the entry of untouchables into Hindu temples and other similar bills and asked the Zamorin to allow the unrestricted admission of the so-called untouchables to the Guruvayoor temple. So keen was the Conference upon securing for Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill legislative facilities that it wished to send a deputation to the Viceroy in order to plead with him not to delay his previous assent to it more than he can help. The plan was however frustrated by the Viceroy's refusal to receive the deputation probably because he does not need to be convinced as to the desirability of the reform. Every rightly-minded person will echo the Conference's prayer for the success of the efforts at communal unity initiated by Pandit Malviya and Maulana Shaukat Ali.

The Future of Coorg.

THE future of Coorg is naturally a subject of much anxious thought at present among its people. A representative conference recently held at Mercara considered the question and arrived at some conclusions which have been cabled to the Secretary of State. It would appear from these that Coorg would like to be raised to the dignity of a full-fledged Governor's province, endowed with a system of government fully responsible to the people. The fact that the area would be unable to balance its budget without outside help did not escape the attention of those assembled to consider this important problem. The gap however would not be as big as in the case of the N. W. F. Province nor in that of Sind or Orissa.

which has been promised the status of a separate province, all that Coorg would need to enable it to enter on its more dignified existence being "some opening balance" and an annual subvention of only Rs. 5 lakhs. It has been urged by the Conference that this should come from the Central Government, failing which Coorg should be amalgamated with Mysore as a separate district.

Its wish to start on its new career with the help of the Government of India, which is so ungrudgingly given to the Frontier Province and would in all likelihood be available to Sind and Orissa is quite intelligible. It was perhaps the departure made in the case of the Frontier province that emboldened the Mercara conference to set up a claim for similar treatment at the hands of the Central Government. What is however not equally clear is its desire to cast in its lot with Mysore in case its aspiration to set itself up as a responsibly governed entity should be made impossible by the refusal of the Central Government to come to its aid. If it was joined to Mysore, not only would there be no immediate prospect of getting responsibility for itself, which is what it has set its heart upon, but it would have to be content with the status of a district as part of an autocratically governed State. On the other hand, if Coorg elects to join hands with Madras, —an alternative which was open to it at the time of introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms— it would form part of a province which promises to be autonomous before very long. This would secure to its people the blessings of what would amount to self-rule which would be impossible in Mysore at any rate in the very near future.

National Medical Help.

MAJOR M. G. NAIDU'S address as president of the All-India Medical Conference held at Lucknow during Christmas week is important as drawing attention to the medical needs of the country and suggesting a remedy, which, though it might strike some as somewhat chimerical, nevertheless deserves serious consideration. According to the standard laid down by the European Conference on Rural Hygiene organised under the auspices of the League of Nations last year, there must be at least one qualified doctor and one qualified nurse to a maximum of every 2,000 persons if they are to receive effective medical aid. Sir Nilratan Sircar's estimate of 1½ lakh qualified doctors for this country, to which Major Naidu referred in his address, must have been based on this standard. Major Naidu however raises the number to two lakhs which, like everybody else, he knows, cannot be turned out overnight.

He also recognises that it is no use expecting the Government in their present straitened circumstances to do much more to satisfy the country's medical needs. But for us to allow avoidable loss of life and sickness in the rural areas without doing something to check it, if it can possibly be done, till the Government finds itself in a position to provide adequate medical relief, would be equally disastrous. To get over the difficulty, Major Naidu suggested for the consideration of his professional brothers assembled at Lucknow a scheme of national medical help, to which he has devoted some thought. His idea is that a society devoted to the propagation of health should be formed under the auspices of the Conference and that the work of fighting disease should be conducted by this new institution. To the question how to get the requisite number of medical men, his answer is:

"Let each independent medical man capable of doing so take up a number of apt pupils and train them for work amongst the poor. Let each medical woman train a number of mid-wives and doctresses... Let the men trained

by us be sent out into the neighbouring villages to render aid within restricted and clearly defined limits. Thus every medical man will be a university unto himself and his pupils. Then, when better days dawn and national universities function independent of superior control, these pioneers in the outlying parts may be collected and, examined again with a view to giving them certificates to practise and entering their names in the national register."

Even the proposer of the scheme does not appear to labour under the illusion that the arrangement suggested by him is wholly satisfactory; but his retort is that till really satisfactory arrangements are forthcoming, "it is better to die with semi-medical aid than no aid at all". It is to be hoped that till this scheme proves practicable, his exhortation to his co-workers to turn their attention to the villages rather than to the big towns will not have fallen on deaf ears.

Articles.

SAPRU-JAYAKAR MEMORANDUM.

THE memorandum jointly submitted to the Secretary of State by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar on the eve of their departure for India sums up clearly the points for relaxation of the so-called safeguards which they urged at the R. T. C. upon the British Government. It might be useful to comment *seriatim* upon these points.

How Many States Must Join?—The British Government has made establishment of federation dependent upon (1) half the number of States coming in and (2) a Reserve Bank being set up. The authors of the memorandum think that entry of half the States is too hard a condition. What would be the proper number to insist upon is not mentioned. It would appear that they think that it is unnecessary to insist upon any. If no State, upon being invited to do so, expresses its willingness to join the federation by a certain date in February, then they suggest that federation may be supposed to have become an impossibility, and the question of British Indian reform alone may be taken in hand. This seems to suggest that, in their opinion, even the entry of a single State is sufficient to justify bringing a federal constitution into operation. It should be remembered in this connexion that it would not be obligatory under the scheme outlined at the R. T. C. for all the States which elect for federation to accept as federal all the subjects which it has been generally agreed are suitable for being placed on the federal list. Even this list, which is small enough in all conscience, they can further cut down as they please, in so far as their own administration is concerned. To push the proposition in the Sapru-Jayakar memorandum to its extreme, therefore, one could say that, if only one State came in for one subject, however small the State and however insignificant the subject, even this would be enough to form an effective federation. Obviously this cannot be the meaning that is in the mind of Sir Tej Bahadur and Mr. Jayakar, and it would have been helpful if they had stated what proportion of States (if any) in their judgment would

have to accede to federation before the federal machinery can be set in motion. According to the *Hindu*, "an appreciable number of States" must come in. We wonder if the Sapru-Jayakar condition would be any stiffer.

Reserve Bank—The conferment of financial responsibility upon the legislature is made dependent by the Secretary of State upon a Reserve Bank not only being set up but also being brought into successful operation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar do not quarrel with this position. But they say that the formation of the federation itself need not be postponed to the establishment of a Reserve Bank, as may perhaps be decided by Sir Samuel Hoare. What actually was said by him is this: the constitution will be passed on the assumption that a Reserve Bank was in being. The Government will do everything in its power to satisfy the conditions necessary for bringing a Reserve Bank into existence. If, however, it is found eventually that it cannot be started by the time the federal constitution is otherwise ready for being put into execution, the Government, before deciding what should be done to meet the situation, will consult Indian opinion. It would be open to Government in these circumstances to come to a decision in favour of holding up the constitution till financial conditions improve. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar wish to prevent this at all cost and they propose therefore that if a Reserve Bank cannot be established special powers might be vested in the Governor-General for the exercise of "adequate control over monetary policy and currency," as was recommended by the Federal Structure Committee of the first Round Table Conference. The demand made in the memorandum, therefore, amounts to this: financial responsibility may be postponed till a Reserve Bank comes into being, but not the federation itself. Although Sir Samuel Hoare has for the present declared against this, he may agree in the end, for it is not much of a concession. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar agree that the Reserve Bank should be of the orthodox type and be free from political influences, but they insist that at least 75 per cent. of the capital should be provided by Indians. This is a very desirable condition, and we are sure that they have taken care to see, in putting it forward, that its fulfilment will not unnecessarily delay the creation of the Reserve Bank itself, as they fear that the condition about half the number of States joining will delay the federation.

Financial Safeguards.—The memorandum agrees to treat the "army budget, salaries and pensions of the services" as a first charge on the revenues. The summary received in India is rather doubtful as to the position that is taken up by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar as regards the service of loans. It cannot be that they do not agree to include this item also as a first charge. The memorandum, as telegraphed here, says: "As regards service (of) debts, the signatories think the Governor-General should be empowered to intervene only when the security of the British or Indian investor is impaired by the action of the Finance Minister." They are

probably willing to concede special power of intervention to the Governor-General in relation to borrowing, with a view to prevent, as Lord Reading said at the second R.T.C., "the raising of loans at bad rates of interest." A general power of supervision and control over the finances they naturally refuse to vest in the Governor-General. Similarly they object to the provision in regard to the previous assent of the Governor-General to the introduction of bills on currency and monetary policy. They do not see the need for it after the formation of a Reserve Bank. The need for it, according to men like Lord Reading, consists in this, that while the Reserve Bank is entrusted with the detailed management of currency and exchange, within the limits prescribed to it by legislation, this governing legislation it cannot control. For instance, it has no power to fix the rate of rupee-sterling exchange; its business is to maintain it. The fixing is done by the legislature, and Sir Samuel Hoare thinks that the Governor-General's previous assent would prevent any legislation being adopted which will impair the financial stability of India. The Indian point of view is that we ought to have control over financial legislation as well as administration.

Commercial Discrimination.—The two points that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar make in this connexion are that India ought to have an unfettered right (1) to foster infant industries and key industries and (2) to prevent undue competition. In respect to the first, the conditions suggested by the External Capital Committee have already been accepted, and in regard to the second, the representatives of European commercial interests themselves have not asked for any restrictions being imposed. For instance, Mr. Benthall said at the second R. T. C.

"There is of course a complaint that big corporations may come into the country and form monopolies. If it is found that external capital is exercising an unhealthy monopoly, there is no reason why legislation on the lines of the Sherman and Clayton Acts in America should not be introduced, or the Commercial Trust Act in New Zealand, which deals with restraints of business and prohibits the giving of rebates with a view to exclusive dealing, selling goods at unreasonably high prices, attempts to control wholly or partially the demand or supply or price of goods in New Zealand.

"Similarly, on these lines, to ensure a fair deal for small Indian companies, the Government would be fully empowered to exercise control over maximum and minimum rates so as to ensure that a weak company would not be squeezed out by a strong company cutting rates unfairly. There are many precedents for such legislation in most countries.

"Again, if in any trade an unfair system of rebates is established, it would be within the power of the legislature, without discrimination, to deal with such a matter if it could be proved that the system was in any way hostile to the interests of any small and well-conducted concern."

Lord Reading too said, "If it is unfair (competition) you are obviously entitled to legislate against it, and no one would ever make a suggestion to the contrary."

Fundamental Rights.—Finally, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar press for reduction of the

army expenditure, abolition of the India Council and the insertion of fundamental rights in the constitution. On the last point they are not convinced by Sir John Simon's logic. Sir John Simon thinks it queer that elementary rights of citizenship should be

made statutorily available to one unit of federation (British Indians) and withheld from the other (Indian States' people), but Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar see nothing queer in such an arrangement.

AN OPEN LETTER

TO SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU AND MR. JAYAKAR.

IF there are any politicians in the country who have pinned their faith to federation it is the pair of you two, and it is a sad thought that you should have been compelled, in your joint memorandum to the Secretary of State, to contemplate the possibility of having to work a federally organised constitution on a non-federal basis. The chance of such a thing happening is no doubt remote, for it cannot be that, by the appointed time, even one State will not come forward to join the federation. But that you should feel a doubt on the matter and give public expression to it is full of significance. My immediate concern, however, is with what you suggest should be done in case a federation becomes impossible on account of the unwillingness of the States to come in. You say: "If no State is ready to join the federation, then British India should be endowed with central responsibility with the necessary adjustment in the constitution." I suppose the adjustment that you have in mind here is in regard to details like the size of the legislature, etc., which of course will have to be changed, but the broad framework of the constitution will be maintained intact; and at any rate you do not envisage any curtailment of the powers conferred upon the legislature as a result of the withdrawal of the States.

If you can ask for the same *quantum* of self-government when the Princes stand out as when they stay in what happens to the claim usually made, which I am sure you support, that the Round Table constitution has come to be cast in a generous mould only because it includes the States? Surely, it stands to reason that such rights as were secured on the ground of British India entering into a federation with the States should be withdrawn if eventually a federation does not come about. What such rights are you know best of all, for you have done more than anyone else in obtaining them. Would you not be prepared to score them out from the claim that you would prefer should you find that the constitution has after all to be worked on a unitary basis and does not take in the States? So far as the British Government is concerned, it has all along proceeded—and you are more responsible for this than any other leader—on the distinct understanding that the States will be a party to the working of the constitution. The declaration made by the Prime Minister at the end of the first Round Table Conference has these words: "His Majesty's Government has taken note of the fact that the deliberations of the Conference have proceeded on the basis accepted by all parties, that the Central Gov-

vernment should be a federation of all-India, embracing both the Indian States and British India in a bi-cameral legislature." And then it says further: "With a legislature constituted on a federal basis, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognise the principle of the responsibility of the executive to the legislature." Federation was thus made by the British Government an indispensable condition of central responsibility. But you now ask for central responsibility—and, if I understand your position aright, the same measure of responsibility—without federation. Cannot the British Government then say with every justification, "We are not committed to the grant of central responsibility for British India at all. No claim can be made for it on the ground of what took place at the Round Table Conference." The very principle of central responsibility will thus be in question in the new circumstances, and in any case it cannot be carried as far as you took it at the Conference. For did you not yourselves argue, in urging for self-government, that since the States would supply such a large conservative element, there was no harm in the British Government turning over to Indian hands practically all that could be turned over? Did not your reasoning in short amount to this, that an internal check in the shape of the presence of the Princes' nominees in the legislature did away with the necessity for the application of any external checks? If the internal check is now removed, the need for external checks will have to be granted.

However with you it was not a question of mere expediency, but of constitutional theory too, and this is the chief point that I wish to bring up against you. You favoured the entry of the States on terms which you would not otherwise have accepted, not only because to your thinking it alone would persuade the British authorities to part with substantial power—a viewpoint which is quite understandable—but because you held that, but for such entry, the British authorities would be constitutionally precluded from doing so. I well remember your saying that, in virtue of the treaties entered into by the States with the Crown, the Army can never come under the control of the India Government and the Secretary of State as the Great Moghul will never disappear, unless the States federate with British India, and, to bring your point home, you used to add, Can we have any power at all at the centre, never mind in what department, so long as the Great Moghul sits on his throne in Whitehall? Federation was thus to you not only a political but a constitutional necessity, and on this ground you used to advise your countrymen to accept

the Princes' terms, however unsatisfactory. Of course, you never said, Federation at all costs, but that was the substance and effect of what you said. It was no use pointing out to you then that you were virtually repeating Sir Leslie Scott's objections, which as an author or a supporter of the Nehru Report you yourselves had met before with signal success. In this Report you claimed the transfer of the Army control and the disappearance of the Great Moghul, irrespective of federation with the States. You went further and claimed the transfer of the rights of paramountcy, which you have now agreed to have vested in the Viceroy not only for a transitory period, but in perpetuity. For the Nehru Report's recommendation was that "the Commonwealth shall exercise the same rights in relation to, and discharge the same obligations towards, the Indian States, arising out of treaties or otherwise, as the Government of India has hitherto exercised and discharged." You threw this Report overboard at the R. T. C. and adopted Sir Leslie Scott's reasoning, which you had declared in the Report would put up, if true, "an effective barrier against the progress of British India towards dominion status, now and for ever;" and now you are again going back on this position and reverting to the Nehru Report—all for the sake of maintaining a constitutionally correct attitude!

Assuming that constitutional propriety will not necessitate any more changes, back and forth, two propositions stand out clear from your memorandum—

- (1) The coming in of even a single State will be enough to form a federation; and
- (2) British India can have without federation the same amount of power as with federation.

The first proposition dispenses with the need of approaching backward States and, in order to accommodate them, of accepting their reactionary conditions. It would be enough to make terms with a progressive State like Mysore or Travancore, which will make no difficulty, say, about the election of its representatives in the federal legislature, enlarging the federal list of subjects or guaranteeing fundamental rights in the constitution. Even if a federation were essential, we could form it in this way without accepting terms which are unacceptable. But you do not now think that federation is an indispensable necessity. You maintain that there is no reason, either in expediency or constitutional theory, for withholding from British India the powers which the British Government agreed to give at the Round Table Conference to the federation. We may well insist, therefore, in negotiating with the States, upon election and other essential features of a democratic government, which you could not insist upon before when you feared that without an agreement of the States—and a large number of States too, including backward as well as forward States—no self-government or anything like it would be possible. If, in the present state of your opinion, you will not try to remove from the Round Table constitution the many grave defects that are found therein, directly traceable to the influence of the States, the country will be entitled to fix the

responsibility for them upon you as the two most prominent architects of the constitution.

S. G. VAZE.

Reviews.

DANGER IN INDIA.

DANGER IN INDIA. By GEOFFREY TYSON.
(John Murray London.) 1932. 20cm. 133p. 3/6.

MR. TYSON, who is a journalist of long experience in this country, has written this book mainly from the standpoint of British trade and industries. Representatives of British trade and industries in this country were till recently disinclined to take any part in public affairs and devoted themselves to their business pursuits or their pleasures. They were inclined to consider their stay here as a sojourn for money-making, and their critics need not be blamed if they were referred to as mere exploiters. The political crisis has, however, shocked them into action, and the British commercial community here has begun to take a good deal of interest in the events which are happening in the country, though their attitude threatens to be, for the most part, like that of King Canute asking the waves of the sea to stop at a particular place and not to proceed further. Mr. Tyson wants British commerce to come out and take its due share in the body politic, but he wants to do so with the help of conjuring pictures to frighten them. Thus he says: "All the signs and portents indicate troublous times ahead for the British merchants, for the apostles of the new economic order—the Hajis, Thakurdas's Khaitans, and Sarkars—have already indicated the line on which their thoughts are running." It has become a fashion on the part of the British critics to consider every claim put forward for the economic development of this country or financial Swaraj as expropriation. Give the dog a bad name and hang it, appears to be their policy, and the aim and object of Mr. Tyson, throughout the book, appears to be the same. Later on he proceeds to rub in this very point in a different form. Thus he says:

"Already we are regarded as foreigners in the land which has housed our industries and commerce for the last 150 years (incidentally given profitable employment to millions of Indians) and which owes every scrap of its material and moral development during that period to the British connection. In the same country we are to be treated as helots in the future if a certain powerful section of Indian nationals have their way."

One may well mark the words that every scrap of our material and moral development has been due to the British connection! And Mr. Tyson would not apparently take into consideration the immense benefits which India has given to the British trade and industries; nor recognise the fact that the British Empire has become what it is because of India being included as a part of it. Mr. Tyson and men of his ilk now feel mortally offended if we put in our humble claim for a place in the sun and want economic as well as political Swaraj. Mr. Tyson calls this a "sinister plot," and observes that "if this sinister plot is to be met and defeated, it behoves the British community in the country to rid itself of its present slothful attitude to the work of legislatures," etc. etc.

Mr. Tyson is a believer in the myth of the so-called unholy alliance between Mahatma Gandhi and Bombay millionaires, and parades it for what it is worth. Prejudiced writers of Mr. Tyson's type overlook the fact that Mahatma Gandhi's attitude of

wide and broad-minded tolerance for the millowners and even British commerce is to be credited, to a large extent, with the happy result of keeping away, up to now, Bolshevism from this country. One wonders if British merchants resident in this country do not really and seriously appreciate the fact that it is Mahatma Gandhi, who is standing all along between Bolshevism and non-violence in this land. Unfortunately, journalists like Mr. Tyson have misrepresented the facts and done their level best to prove that whatever disorders there may be in this land are due to Mahatma Gandhi. The contrary, however, is true that the disorder, whatever it is, is due to the inaction of Government and to the reactionary forces like those of British commerce, which are ranged alongside it, and that the fact that this disorder has not grown very much is due to the gospel of peace and non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi.

With regard to "Safeguards," Mr. Tyson appears to admit that "useless and irritating" trading safeguards are not any real guarantee for the future of our (British) commerce and industries in India; but at the same time he wants a trade agreement which is based on the golden principle of "fair-play and equal opportunities" and which recognises "Indians and Englishmen as subjects of the same Sovereign and citizens of the same State." Mahatmaji himself has urged that there should be no racial discrimination as such, but looking to the conditions of Indian industries including shipping, no one can say that the progress of these will be assured without any discrimination whatsoever. The sympathetic attitude of some of the Europeans of Bombay towards the Indian political agitation and their desire to have such a political constitution as would lay to rest all the bitterness of warfare, does not appeal to Mr. Tyson, for he severely criticises the attitude of men like Sir Joseph Kay or papers like the *Times of India* "as a first class example of Bombay's desire for peace at any price, a sentiment which is strongly and bitterly opposed by the British business community in Calcutta." The book is not thus a good guide for the solution of the present-day problems and based as it is upon narrow parochialism and communalism, it is likely to do more harm than good.

J. K. MEHTA.

PROBLEMS OF CO-OPERATIVE BANKING.

CO-OPERATIVE BANKING. By N. BARON. (King) 1932. 22cm. 350p. 15/-

THE book gives an outline of the theory of Co-operative Banking and an analytical survey of its practice in various forms all over the world. The author distinguishes the primary units of co-operation which he calls Credit Associations from the higher financing institutions which are called Co-operative Banks. The present work is confined to the latter group.

According to the author, "there are two main problems confronting Co-operative Banking at the present time: the need for a United National and International Co-operative Financial system to counteract the growing power of highly centralised international capitalist trusts and cartels; and secondly, the need for a credit organisation for individual wage-earners to release them from the clutches of money-lenders and usurers." Moreover, the Co-operative Bank spreads the services of modern financial machinery to sections of population which would otherwise remain outside the scope of banking. The scope for expansion is thus very wide and particularly so when it is realised that even in countries like England and the U. S. A. with all their century-old development of banking, it is possible for usurious rates

of interest rising up to 400 and even 800 % to prevail. Co-operative Banks have barely touched the fringe of the population which they claim to benefit.

The resources at their disposal are considerable. The savings of the working population—though small individually—represent colossal sums when combined. These sums are at present invested in savings institutions organised on capitalistic lines either by joint stock or state concerns. "Loan banks or institutions for lending money to the poor are of ancient date but savings banks for borrowing money of the poor are entirely of modern invention." The poor could find much better use for their money in co-operative institutions but these are not yet popular enough to attract the bulk of the savings. Hence the immediate necessity for proper organisation of such institutions on a co-operative basis.

Good progress has already been achieved in all the principal countries of the world in the direction of the development of co-operative banking. Besides financing national needs some of them have taken to financing foreign trade also. This is but a sequence of the extension of co-operative trade beyond the national boundaries and so long as the movement is conceived to be a substitute for capitalistic enterprise, this is a natural growth also. Hence in one of the concluding chapters the prospects of an International Co-operative Bank are discussed. Among the numerous advantages is the one of employing co-operative resources for co-operative purposes only. "Some of the Co-operative Banks have considerable surplus capital. Over 80% of the resources of ten leading banks is not used for co-operative purposes in their own countries and could be employed with profit by the International Co-operative Bank for co-operative activities in the countries where the development of the movement is hampered by lack of capital." If for purposes of co-ordination of national co-operative finance an Apex Bank is a necessity, an International Co-operative Bank is the next step, being the corollary of the extension of co-operation to the international sphere.

Throughout the survey the author very rightly emphasises the need for the co-operative spirit. This has been stressed by Lord Passfield also in the introduction. "Any attempt that is to be successful must be on the lines not of vocation but of neighbourhood—the Co-operative Society must be an association not of producers as such but of consumers or citizens as such." The banks must take very great care to draw a clear line of demarcation between co-operative and capitalistic enterprises as they are often liable to degenerate from their original ideal.

The book deserves to be closely studied by every one interested in co-operative banking.

S. GOPALASWAMY.

ENGLISH OBSCENITY LAW.

THE LAW AND OBSCENITY. By FREDERIC HALLIS. (Desmond Harmsworth, London.) 1932. 20cm. 40p. 2/-

THIS little booklet gives a short history of the law against obscenity in England and also all the more important arguments for its abolition. This law, which is practically the same in India, has recently received a good deal of attention on account of the prosecution and conviction of Mr. R. D. Karve in Bombay, and the book is a timely reminder that in the so-called free England, the state of things is not very much different. The law is fundamentally defective inasmuch as no clear definition of what constitutes obscenity is given. As the author says, "Obscenity cannot be defined. It is a relative

term. It signifies no objective reality, but the quality of a reaction of the human mind to the objects of its experience. It depends accordingly not merely upon the thing experienced, but also on the quality, character, and point of view of the mind which experiences it. It is essentially subjective... A certain picture is obscene to me because my mind reacts to it in that way. The same picture is not obscene to you because your mind does not react to it in that way... Any and every work of art or literature, in which the human body is somehow referred to, may be said to be open to either of these kinds of treatment, and the Bible perhaps more than most books."

In the Indian law things done under cover of religion are exempted from the law: otherwise, a very large number of pictures, sculptures, books, songs etc., will have to be considered obscene. The definition of obscenity, given by Mr. Justice Cockburn and generally accepted by all judges in the British Empire, viz. "matter with a tendency to deprave the minds of those whose minds are open to such immoral influences, and into whose hands it may fall," is so sweeping that practically nothing can escape it. After all, the human mind is capable of such a large number of associations of different ideas, that "those whose minds are capable of such an association of ideas as would bring in its train that contemplation of sexual or excretory processes as general convention regards as bad taste and immoral" will be depraved by any innocent thing whatsoever. The poor fig-leaf is an instance in point. This little bundle of chlorophyll molecules, by the simple process of association of ideas, has now become "obscene."

Another point in connection with the obscenity law is that it does not take the motive into account. The killing of a man maybe said to be either a brave deed (as in war), a necessity (as in self-defence), an accident, or murder depending upon the motives of the killer. But apparently, obscenity, even with the best of motives does not get any lenient treatment, as is seen in a case against the author of a book called "The Confessional Unmarked" written by Hicklin, with the intention of ridiculing the Catholic faith and popularising Protestantism. The book in question was, although admitted by the Court to have been published with an innocent or even praiseworthy motive, still condemned as an obscene libel.

What then should be the provisions of the law to protect the public from vicious obscenity? This question has to be considered from the point of view of the function of criminal law. "So long as men do not assault each other physically, or wrongfully interfere with each other's property, the criminal law must be content. It has no mission beyond the preservation of physical quiet. The peace of the soul is not its concern. This is the object of free individual effort. If, therefore, a work is such that it actively offends a person or persons who are *compelled* by the author or artist to contemplate it, so that a breach of the peace is thereby caused or threatened, the law has a right to interfere and must do so."

As it is, the question of whether an article or picture is obscene or not is to be decided by the opinion of the magistrate or judge and the law of obscenity serves as "the exclusive ally of convention and the suspicious enemy of change." That prosecutions of so-called obscene articles and pictures often serve to direct the attention of the public to them, is quite well-known. *The Well of Loneliness* would never have obtained the fame that it did, nor would copies printed in foreign countries been sold at fancy prices if the police had not prosecuted it. It is the very young and innocent which the law professes to

protect who are the first to be attracted to the so-called obscene article on account of the "haunting flavour of forbidden fruit."

Obscenity is the product of the thought that sex is something low, something to be ashamed of. It is the desire to repress and keep secret such a fundamental emotion as sex. Knowledge and freedom of thought are its natural enemies and those who defend the present law are fighting a losing battle against the forces of liberalism.

D. D. KARVE.

ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY.

ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1918-1932.

By MURIEL CURREY. (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, London.) 1932. 22cm. 330p. 18/-

THE Fascist movement in Italy is one of the interesting and important episodes in post-war Europe. Whether one agrees with the Fascist ideals or not, one cannot help feeling that Italy has become a World Power, thanks to Benito Mussolini and his Black Shirts. Opposed as the Fascist Government is to the "immortal principles" of traditional democracy, it has however admirably met the needs of Italy after the War. But lovers of democracy in their enthusiasm for popular government have misrepresented the achievements of the Fascist movement in the field of foreign affairs. Amazing stories about Italy's nefarious Imperialistic schemes of conquest and about her opposition to the League ideals are circulated by the Liberal Press of England, France and America. A good history of Fascist Italy is much wanted to remove the misunderstanding and misrepresentation based on ignorance; and Miss Muriel Currey has done a distinct service to Fascism by giving in this book a brilliant survey of Fascist foreign policy. She has treated the foreign policy of Italy since 1918 so as to point out the contrast between the conduct of foreign affairs by pre-Fascist and the Fascist governments.

In a review like this it is not possible to give even a bare summary of the contents of the book. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the chief problems dealt with in the book. The much debated Adriatic question, a problem which was the real cause of misunderstanding between Italy and Yugo-Slavia, is described at great length in the first 80 pages. Under the Pact of London of 1915 Italy had been promised by England and France certain territories east of the Adriatic on the ground that they were inhabited by a population predominantly Italian and that they were necessary for her security. The Yugo-Slavs also laid claim to the territories on the ground that they were inhabited by Slavs. At the Peace Conference President Wilson ignored the Pact of London as it was a secret treaty, and England and France, unwilling to offend Wilson, did not carry out the Pact of London. The situation was complicated by the determination of Fiume, a city not mentioned in the Pact of London, not to be placed under the rule of the Yugo-Slavs and demanded annexation to Italy. The Italian Delegation, unfortunately, thought that to demand the fulfilment of the treaty was to abandon Fiume and that to demand Fiume was by inference abandoning the treaty. On the other hand, the authoress rightly points out that the question of Fiume had an entirely different origin. It was not Italy which demanded Fiume, it was Fiume itself which demanded union with Italy and, applying the principle of self-determination, Fiume should have been allowed to join Italy. But the weakness of the Italian Cabinet and the economic difficulties of

post-War Italy prevented the Italian delegates from making a bold stand at the Peace Conference. The Adriatic problem was settled to the detriment of Italy's interests and Miss Muriel rightly points out that the Allies, instead of siding with Italy, supported the Yugo-Slavs, a group of races which consisted of some ex-enemies like Croats and Slovenes. Italy was discontented not only because she did not realise the promised "compensations" of the secret treaty, but also because the Allies supported the claims of Yugo-Slavs some of whom like the Croats and Slovenes, had fought on the side of Austria.

Disgusted with the unsatisfactory settlement of the Adriatic problem and the unequal distribution of the colonial territories of the ex-enemies, Italy came to lose faith in the League of Nations as an organ destined to establish the reign of international justice and perpetual peace. But with the advent of Fascism, Italy's position in the international world was considerably improved. Mussolini had the advantage of the strong backing of the country while the pre-Fascist Ministers had not. He realised that Italy stood to gain by the League of Nations and through diplomacy and occasionally by showing his "mailed fist" as in the case of the Corfu incident, established Italy as one of the essential factors in European politics. But the strong hand of Mussolini, while it enormously increased the prestige of Italy, earned for the Dictator the reputation of being a danger to peace.

An important feature of Fascist foreign policy has been the rivalry between Italy and France in the Balkans. The authoress points out that while France's interests in the Balkans are strategic and political, Italy's are strategic, political, and commercial. France seeks allies for some possible future war with Germany or Italy, in which strategically Yugo-Slavia would be of the greatest importance. For Italy her relations with the Balkan States are not only a question of national security or political prestige, they are of vital interest from the point of view of commerce. To Italy the undeveloped parts of the Balkans are valuable as markets to buy and sell, but for that she wants peace. To protect her interests in the Balkans, Italy concluded an alliance with Albania in 1924, but Yugo-Slavia and France declared that Albania had become an Italian protectorate. The authoress shows how the Pact was completely in accordance with the League of Nations Covenant and designed to put a stop to intrigues in the Balkans. Albania is Italy's Belgium, that is to say, just as Belgium is a pistol pointed at the heart of England, so Italy can be attacked easily from Albania. "Belgium had always been ready to fight to its last man and its last shilling to prevent any great power from holding the Belgian coast, and yet nobody suggested that England proposed to establish a protectorate in Belgium." The authoress also quotes the views of a well-informed Military Correspondent of the *Times* who says that the fears expressed in Belgrade of an Italian landing in Albania with the object of an attack on Yugo-Slavia were absolutely without foundation. But apart from strategic considerations, the Albanian people would never allow their country to be controlled by Italy.

Miss Muriel is to be congratulated on having brought out this splendid account of Italian Foreign Policy since 1918. We have no hesitation in saying that for all who are interested in the important developments of international affairs since 1918, these pages provide new and significant material.

M. V. SUBRAHMANYAM.

THREE HISTORICAL TABLES.

COMPARATIVE TABLES OF MUHAMMADAN AND CHRISTIAN DATES. Comp. by Lt. Col. Sir WOLSELEY HAIG. (Luzac.) 1932. 20cm. 32p. 2/6.

WITHIN the small compass of thirty two-pages, Sir Wolseley Haig has printed three Tables, compiled by himself and enabling one readily to convert dates in the lunar years of the Muhammadan era of the *Hijra* into the corresponding dates in the Christian era. Though the tables do not bear any headings they can easily be identified with some that are published and are already being used by 'students of Oriental History who are able to use original authorities.' Table I corresponds to Table XVI—*Initial Days of Muhammadan Years of the Hijra*, given in the Indian Calendar by Sewell and Dixit published in 1896; Table II with Table IX—*Table giving the Serial Number of Days from the end of a year A. D. for two consecutive A. D. years*—in the same learned work; and Table III follows the same line of calculation with regard to the Hijra year, involving nothing more than a few elementary additions of the most simple type. There are no doubt some paltry differences; but they are not sufficient to warrant the omission of a frank admission of the compiler's indebtedness to these great authors. Thus, to begin with, the first year of the Hijra where Dixit had begun with 223 A. H., and ended with 2000 A. D. where Mr. Dixit stopped at 1900 A. D. in Table I, cannot be taken as a serious proof of the originality of the compiler. Sir Wolseley Haig has added one more column for calculating the serial number of days in the Christian leap year. This may be considered as an additional facility. But he did not profit by Mr. Dixit's tables which he has compiled for two consecutive years.

To those, therefore, who are familiar with similar tables already in vogue, Sir Wolseley Haig's compilation is certainly one too many in the field. And though his tables may be welcome as a handy booklet, for the limited use to which it can be put, scholars cannot be satisfied without referring to the more detailed and standard works on the question. We are aware of at least three of the kind which are more authoritative—Wusteuferd Mahler's "Vergleichungs-Tabellen unter Mohammedanischen und Christlichen zeitrechnung" first printed in 1854 (second edition 1926), "The Indian Calendar" by Sewell and Dixit (1896), and L. D. Swamikannu Pillai's "Indian Ephemerics."

Every one of these three standard publications referred to above explains and makes use of the fact of the Muhammadan leap years, in framing their tables for converting dates. Sir Wolseley Haig only uses the fact in putting the English Dates for Hijra New year's Day without mentioning it in his introduction. He, however, makes too much of the new style of the Gregorian Calendar. Sir Wolseley Haig does not refer to the Muhammadan leap year even in his Table III, which is specially designed for the Muhammadan year and months, wherein a mention of the fact was expected. Calculating from the initial dates given against the first day of every Hijra year the duration of the Hijra year would seem to vary between 354 and 355 days without any reason! This would set any one thinking. It was but proper therefore for Sir Wolseley Haig to refer to the leap year among Muhammadans if he was aware of it. It is certainly a very great mistake and is surprising in an author of his standing especially when he allows it to be believed that all the Tables are of his own compilation.

D. V. KALE.

WORLD AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS.

THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION IN 1930-

31. (International Institute of Agriculture, Rome.)
1932. 24cm. 426p. 25 lire.

THIS book is a general survey of agricultural conditions all over the world and is more of the nature of a reference work than a general treatise. As such, it does not easily lend itself to a review in a short compass. Tracing the growth of the agricultural depression all over the world, it is shown how this is closely connected with the general trade depression, which however is not so linked with certain monetary conditions like the accumulation of gold in France and the U.S.A. as is sometimes made out. In America the fall in prices has been very pronounced in spite of this gold accumulation. The dissolution of the large scale markets of Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Russia, the monetary disorganisation following the war, and the present state of international liabilities, all which hinders trade in produce, have given an exaggerated importance to metal as the medium of international accounts. The crisis having become more acute, the farmer frequently finds himself unable even to cover his expenses.

Market conditions, international action, measures of relief taken by Government and voluntary organisations, and the condition of agriculture in various countries, all have been dealt with in detail. In India, the Banking Enquiry Committees have gone into the question of relief to the farmer and have come to the conclusion that the credit needs of the ordinary cultivator will be met by the cooperative credit societies, that there is need for the establishment of Land Mortgage Banks with a strong element of Government control, and that the standardisation of *hundies* throughout India together with the establishment of licensed warehouses for produce in rural areas will facilitate the movement and marketing of crops and flow of surplus funds to meet agricultural needs. The book is well arranged for easy reference and is of great value to the student of Agricultural Economics as a source of information regarding agricultural conditions in different parts of the world.

GUNDAPPA S. KURPAD.

REGENERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRIES.

THE RUIN OF INDIAN TRADE AND INDUSTRIES. By B. D. BASU. (R. Chatterjee, Calcutta.) 20cm. 206p. Rs. 2/6.

AT a time when "Buy Indian" has become a common slogan, the readers of this admirable little volume would be greatly interested to note how the impacts of western domination led to a complete breakdown of Indian industries and changed the very character of an export and import trade. Political domination of the British, points out the author, gave them ample opportunities for a free exploitation of Indian resources. Selfishness and jealousy of the English commercial community dominated the motives of the British Parliament and in the determination of policies the whole weight of political power was thrown in their favour. Free trade was forced upon India. Every attempt was made to protect the British manufacturers by levying exorbitant duties on the imports of Indian manufactured goods, while raw materials were admitted free. Thus behind heavy tariff walls prospered British industries and the talk of free trade with India came later when they had established a firm footing in the markets of the East. This revolutionised the character of India's trade and the scales of the balance stood

heavily tipped in favour of England and quite against Indian interests. Our country which once prided itself on the glories of its manufactures had to content itself with the meagre status of an exporter of raw materials. Its social and economic institutions quailed under the impact of foreign competition whilst the Government stood aloof piping a chorus of "let alone" or *laissez faire*. Special privileges were granted to Britishers in India and the development of railways and along with it some other large-scale industries flourished under the aegis of foreign capital. The purely Indian concerns received little direct aid from the Government. It is no wonder then that Indian industries perished for want of support and encouragement by the State. Not only this; in the early days of the East India Company's rule, the Company's agents followed the most unscrupulous methods in their dealings with Indian artisans who were forced to divulge their trade secrets which had been so jealously guarded by them as precious family treasures. These facts have been amply borne out by numerous statistics and quotations from official records and by the evidence of several witnesses who appeared before Parliamentary Committees.

The author therefore makes a passionate appeal to Indian national sentiment for revival and encouragement of Swadeshi industries with the help of the triple weapon—"Swadeshi, Boycott and Charkha", and cites parallel illustrations of other countries. "Swadeshi and boycott", argues the author, "are the two aspects of one and the same thing. One cannot flourish and thrive without the help of the other. Whenever any independent nation has tried to foster and develop its home industries—that is Swadeshi—it has not been able successfully to do it without practising at the same time the boycott of foreign goods".

It may be noted in passing that the book raises certain very controversial issues and arguments at times tend to become one-sided and unconvincing. Even the efficacy of the remedies suggested at the end can very well be doubted, though the sentimental appeal underlying them may be more touching. The treatment of the subject is lucid, interesting and very appealing in certain places, and the book well deserves the attention of every Indian interested in the welfare of his motherland.

S. G. PURANIK.

SHORT NOTICES.

THE MONOPOLY OF CREDIT. BY C. H. DOUGLAS. (Chapman & Hall, Ltd., London.) 1931
20cm. 128p. 3/6.

MR. DOUGLAS is a mechanical engineer who thinks deeply and writes strongly. His book is short, but being profound and spicy, will engage a reader with delight, thought and of course confusion. His thesis is that the cause of the present industrial depression and unrest is essentially financial, that is, due to lack of power to buy and not due to lack of power or will to produce. To him the fundamental defect of the financial system in all its three essential aspects, viz. the credit issue system, the price system and the taxation system, is that money is "loaned" to a bank's customers and not "given". He maintains that if civilisation is not to disappear altogether, there will, within a comparatively short period of time, arise a situation in which bankers as at present understood will be replaced. His vision, as may be gathered from the addendum, he submitted further to his evidence before the Macmillan Committee (and reprinted in this book), is that the form of organisation that should arise for the future is a great limited

company such as "Great Britain Limited" or better "British Empire Limited" (in which the natural-born British subjects would be bondholders).

K. B. MADHAVA.

THE LAYMAN'S LAW GUIDE. By A. C. SEQUEIRA. (Taraporewalla, Bombay.) 1932. 20cm. 287p. Rs. 3.

LAW is no longer the concern of the lawyer alone; it is much more the concern of the individual citizen. Never before was it so increasingly concerned with great social experiments. The merely practical lawyer, with his conservatism, his narrow legal formalism and his love for precedent, can hardly prove adequate to the needs of the present day. He must learn to read his law in the context of the problems in economics, political science and the technique of administration.

From the citizen's point of view the claim of law to obedience depends upon "what it does to the lives of individual citizens." "Of this result they alone can judge; and the rightness of law, therefore, depends upon their judgment of it." Mr. Sequeira's attempt to familiarize us with the laws under which we live deserves to be commended. Through the reform of the law lies the road to progress. But before the average citizen can undertake to offer criticism of the law or agitate for its reform he must have some definite, even if general, notions of the laws that govern his social relations. Our average citizen is not even aware that he is presumed to know the law.

In a neatly got-up and handy volume the author presents, within a small compass, practically all the legal information that an average citizen is likely to need. The provisions of the various branches of law are arranged in a series of propositions which Mr. Sequeira deduces from the Statutes and the Case-Law and sets forth with lucidity and accuracy. The general plan and arrangement of the book, however, could have been more systematic. The business man will find in the book a helpful and comprehensive work of reference; for a student of law it will make interesting and refreshing reading.

M. B. S.

AN IDEALIST VIEW OF LIFE. By S. RADHAKRISHNAN. (Allen & Unwin.) 1932. 23cm. 351p. 12/6.

THIS is a reprint of the Hibbert lectures delivered by the author in London and Manchester in 1929. Seldom does one come across such a magnificent work dealing fairly with all the "isms" challenging the spirit of religion and showing their weaknesses and then asserting the supremacy of the spiritual view of life embodied in the Vedantic philosophy of India. Prof. Radhakrishnan is a past-master in this branch of knowledge of physical sciences and has clearly shown how they fail to solve the riddles of the why, when, whence and whither, which always knock at the gates of human intelligence. Materialism, Scepticism, Agnosticism and all others similar issues, he has shown, pale into insignificance when the grand ideal of the life unfolded in Vedant Philosophy looms large before the thinking mind and gives a new orientation to it.

Prof. Radhakrishnan has marshalled his arguments (adducing, where necessary, many views from different authors) in such an eloquent and persuasive manner that the reader becomes not only convinced but charmed with the wealth or the knowledge he has brought to bear upon his theme and is left wondering at the vastness of his learning and the acuteness of his penetrating intelligence. A spiritually-

minded reader however misses the finishing touches of self-experience in this book.

V. M. BHAT.

Miscellaneous.

MAYANUR RURAL RECONSTRUCTION.

OPENING OF NEW BUILDING.

IN the midst of a large gathering of friends and well-wishers from all parts of the District Mr.

T. R. Venkatarama Sastri opened on December 28 the new building of the rural centre at Mayanur worked by the Servants of India Society.

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri in declaring the building open made a few remarks, in the course of which he expressed his great pleasure in opening the centre. What appealed to him most was the young men the centre was able to attract, both for study and survey of rural problems, as well as education and propaganda. He said the building was part of a large scheme of providing a home for workers as well as a central school for training in agriculture and citizenship for the benefit of the surrounding area whose foundation was to be shortly laid by Dr. Rajan that morning. Mr. Devadhar, President of the Servants of India Society, had always been promoting such social centres in various parts of India. Even though it was considered owing to the activities of the late Mr. Gokhale that the Society was a purely political body, it should not be forgotten that even the late Mr. Gokhale emphasised social service activities as a permanent feature of the Society's programme of work. The rural centre at Mayanur had come into being as a result of the public response to the work of Mr. K. G. Sivaswami, in the District. In February 1931, the Trichinopoly public requested the Servants of India Society to continue its activities by lending the services of a member. The acquaintances formed during the times of relief of distress caused by floods or famine and during co-operative propaganda by the members of the Society in the district also enabled the Society to continue those activities by a permanent organisation in a rural area. Mr. Devadhar had appealed for funds, a sum of Rs. 25,000 being required both for the workers' home and the central school and he said that they owed a duty to the young men gathered in the centre to work for the country's cause on small family allowances and they should make it possible for the workers to continue their good work by material support.

The whole party then adjourned to the garden on the roadside where Dr. T. S. S. Rajan laid the foundation-stone of the Central School building situated on a piece of land, about one acre in extent, kindly given free by Mr. N. R. Vasudeva Aiyar, Retired Station-Master and a local landlord.

In laying the foundation-stone Dr. Rajan considered it a great privilege to initiate the school owing to the fact that all the young men working in the centre were well-known to him for their enthusiasm and persistence and the proposal was to run a common school for all classes of people without distinction of caste, creed or sex. The experience of rural work during the last three years had shown to those young men that after all institutions like panchayats and co-operative societies could not work efficiently unless there were trained leaders with a broad outlook. The education imparted should comprise civic knowledge, agriculture and cottage industries and a working knowledge of the vernaculars so that the youths trained might go back to the village instead of keeping away from it. Another idea of the proposed school was to provide a cheap residential

life which would make it possible for poor agriculturists to give cheap education to their children. While they found in their midst numberless missionaries from foreign countries spending huge amounts on social service, it behoved them to nationalise such services by giving encouragement to full time missionaries as those young men who had dedicated themselves for the cause of the country. He was therefore glad to heartily join in the appeal made by Mr. Devadhar for Rs. 25,000, which should be considered very modest, considering that it had to be incurred in capital expenditure in providing cheap permanent structures both for residence and for teaching.

REPORT OF THE CENTRE.

A report of the work done by the Centre was submitted by Mr. K. G. Sivaswamy Aiyar, the Secretary, who also explained how a home where workers and people might meet and exchange experiences was a pressing need. The report stated:—

The objects of the centre are (a) to create the national, secular, and civic outlook for better living among the people, (b) to build up public opinion and leadership by methods of representation, arbitration and publicity, (c) to stimulate corporate effort for civic amenities and (d) to promote individual economic enterprise for agricultural improvements and cottage industries. It operates over 91 villages, 12 in Musiri Taluk partly for Adi-Dravida uplift and partly for temperance propaganda, 6 in Lalgudi taluk for temperance and better living propaganda, 10 in Karur Taluk for adult education of Adi-Dravidas and encouragement of Co-operative Societies both for the latter and the caste people, 30 in the dry area of the Kulitalai Taluk through the Village Panchayats, thus covering 58 villages on the whole in Trichy District and 33 villages more in Gobi Taluk of Coimbatore District through the agency of the Coimbatore District Urban Bank.

During the year under report 15 tracts were issued on civic rights, village amenities through corporate effort, agricultural co-operation and indebtedness, abstinence from drink, and Swadeshi. 10 centres among the caste people in Gobi Taluk and 6 in Trichy District among the Adi-Dravidas have brought together young men for bhajans, readings, weekly meetings and periodical conferences and books worth Rs. 180 were freely supplied to them on matters of health and general knowledge, 12 of them conduct night schools, 4 purchase daily papers and 24 volunteer workers in these Leagues undertake social work by way of increasing school attendance, undertaking temperance propaganda, and assisting generally in the spread of new ideas.

With a view to level up the inequalities in the social life of the village special attention has necessarily to be devoted towards improving the labour conditions and the position of women. The programme of work in this direction has been interesting the Caste people in Adi-Dravida uplift, special schools, special co-operative societies for thrift and small loans, house sites for the labourers, better housing, drinking water supply, temperance propaganda and young men's Leagues. 15 honorary workers meet periodically, make surveys of needs, represent them to the authorities concerned and hold mass conferences for creating the desire for better living among them. 12 schools, started with great difficulty by putting up buildings and finding teachers, were closed except two owing to financial stringency and attention is being paid hereafter to admit untouchable boys and girls in existing schools.

Temperance propaganda is undertaken mainly among the Adi-Dravidas with one paid worker and 6 honorary workers in 4 taluks of Trichy District and two honorary workers in Gobi Taluk of Coimbatore District.

Activities are also undertaken which would train the masses in corporate action and a wider outlook, and the leaders in village administration. As honorary organiser of Panchayats, the secretary of the Centre has ample opportunities for undertaking these lines of activities.

The village panchayat is also a training school for leadership. To persuade people to raise funds to finish a work within the official year, to meet the demands of modern standardised administration by way of returns, reports, budgets, and proper accounting, to make surveys of needs, persistently to press for grants, to augment panchayat sources of income are all a good training ground in administration.

The village panchayats require sympathetic guidance and funds for providing civic amenities. The Secretary of the Centre delivered 5 lectures on Rural Economics at the Coimbatore Co-operative Institute and had then published in the vernacular papers. These lectures dealt with the need for legislation for reducing agricultural indebtedness.

Training classes are held once a quarter (a) of the workers of the two centres at Mayaur and Gobi, (b) of the secretaries of Youth Leagues, and (c) of the teachers of the Panchayat Schools, for a single day when regular lessons are given on village problems. Once a year students of colleges are taken round for village gatherings with a view to acquaint them with methods of rural uplift work. A scheme of training of 3 months every year for a period of 4 years was sent up to the Government for aid which was refused owing to financial stringency. It is proposed to start a central school.— *The Hindu*.

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