

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### Dr. Ambedkar's Proposal.

IT will be remembered that the Poona Pact, the result of Mahatma Gandhi's fast of September last, provided for the selection by the Harijans themselves of a panel of four Harijans for every seat assigned to them under it. These primary elections were, it was settled, to be followed in due course by the regular general election in which Harijans as also the other sections of Hindu society would take part. Dr. Ambedkar now wishes to do away with the stage of primary elections on the ground of cost to Harijans and to provide for one general election in which, however, he wants that no Harijan candidate standing for a seat reserved for the depressed classes should be declared elected unless he gets 25 per cent. of the votes of the depressed class voters. Does this mean 25 per cent. of the depressed class votes polled or of the votes registered ?

However that may be, the proposal merits dispassionate consideration by all concerned. Before sailing for England for the meetings of the Joint Select Committee, Dr. Ambedkar discussed it with Mahatma Gandhi, who though unable to pronounce his judgment upon it off-hand has since rejected it. He contends that the essence of the Poona Pact was to prevent a cleavage of Hindu society into Harijans and non-Harijans. To this end it provided that both sections competing for and voting in a general election should have opportunities of influencing their mutual choice. The new proposal, if accepted, would strike at this fundamental idea underlying the Pact and would virtually tend to separate the Harijans from non-Harijans. It is not difficult to see how this would come about. Under Dr. Ambedkar's formula a candidate for a depressed class seat to be successful need not have a single non-Harijan vote so long as

he is able to secure the full quota of 25 per cent. of Harijan votes. A depressed class candidate, though securing more non-Harijan votes than any of his rivals, will under his formula stand no chance of being declared elected if his quota of Harijan votes is even 1 per cent. less than the prescribed proportion. On the other hand, one getting not a single non-Harijan vote but getting 25 per cent. of the depressed class votes would be looked upon as having succeeded at the election. One need not have very keen powers of perception to realise that the proposed arrangement will facilitate the return to the legislature only of those Harijans whose mental horizon does not extend beyond their own community. It was in order to prevent this kind of an exclusively communal outlook that the elaborate electoral arrangements forming part of the Poona Pact were devised. To accept Dr. Ambedkar's proposals in these circumstances is to help to make the Harijans communal fanatics which it must be the aim of all well-wishers of the country to avoid at all costs.

At first sight Dr. Ambedkar's proposal appears to be modelled on what is known as the Mahomed Ali formula. But even a cursory glance at the latter will show the erroneousness of such a view. It may be pointed out that the two differ in one important particular. While Dr. Ambedkar lays down only the minimum proportion of the votes of his own community which a Harijan candidate must secure in order to ensure his success, Mr. Mahomed Ali prescribed the same in the case not only of the community to which the candidate belongs but even in that of other communities as well. He wished to provide that no candidate could be declared elected "unless he secured (1) at least 40 per cent. of the votes cast of his own community; and (2) at least 5 per cent. of the votes cast of other communities wherever he is in a minority of 10 or less per cent.; and 10 per cent. where he is in a larger minority or in a majority." In fairness to Dr. Ambedkar it must be admitted that he makes no claim that his proposal is in any way similar to Mr. Mahomed Ali's.

Dr. Ambedkar's contention about the whole arrangement being unduly expensive to the Harijans has doubtless much to be said for it; and cannot, we are afraid, be dismissed as airily as Mahatma Gandhi does. It may be, as he says, that for some years there may be no more Harijan candidates for inclusion in the panel than the prescribed number, with the result that contested elections for Harijan seats appear to him a contingency of the remote future. But all this is mere guess work and may not be justified by experience. Anyhow it does not seem to us the part of prudence to assume that all Harijan elections would be unopposed. From the point of view of making the elections less costly to Harijans, the wiser course would seem to be to dispense with primary elections and to adopt something like the Mahomed Ali formula in their case, the

definite proportion of communal and general votes necessary for a candidate's success being subject to negotiation.

#### Bengal and the Poona Pact.

THAT the Bengal Hindus of the upper castes have a legitimate and serious grievance against the status assigned to them in the British Government's Communal Award is amply proved, if proof was still necessary, by the brochure which Sir N. N. Sircar, Advocate-General, Bengal, recently published. In assessing the status to be given to Europeans, the Government apparently took into consideration not only their number but several other qualifications, like education, commercial and industrial importance, etc. But in the case of the Hindus, who, tested by these same qualifications, deserved a representation far larger than what their number alone warranted, received less than the Muslims. In order to give over-representation (on a population basis) to the Europeans, Government had to filch away some seats from the Hindus and the Muslims; and they filched far more from the Hindus than from the Muslims.

The complaint of the high-caste Hindus of Bengal against the Poona Pact is not so clear. As Mr. Thakkar has pointed out in a recent issue of this paper, Dr. Ambedkar demanded larger representation for the Untouchables of Bengal than was ultimately agreed to. But whatever be the merits of the Pact, it is rather puerile to attack it on the grounds that Bengal Hindus were not invited to the Poona Conference, were not represented thereat and that they had never accepted it. As a matter of fact, Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, for one, was invited. Having to preside over the Malda session of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Conference, he was unable to go to Poona. If Babu Ramananda Chatterjee and the *Modern Review* are representative of Hindu opinion in Bengal—and there is no reason to doubt it—the Pact was not denounced in Bengal at the time it was published. In the October issue of the *Modern Review*, the esteemed Editor, Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, urged that the Pact should be viewed from the point of view of Harijans, and so viewed, it demonstrated how their own countrymen gave the Harijans more than double representation which the foreign Government chose to give them in the Communal Award. "That we should be more just and considerate to our own countrymen than foreigners is only natural, and therefore, not to be proud of." He had even telephoned to Dr. Moonje agreeing to the latter's proposal that Harijans should be given cent. per cent. of the Hindu seats. This was indeed very generous and was indicative of the mood of people like Mr. Chatterjee at the time. It is true that, writing on the Poona Pact as it affected the Bengal Province, Babu Chatterjee in the same issue of the *Modern Review* said that the reservation of 30 seats for the "Depressed Classes" in Bengal was "unnecessary." But that was as far as he would go. Serious dissatisfaction with the Pact may not be read into this because it would mean that Babu Ramananda Chatterjee wished to be generous and over-generous to the Harijans in the other Provinces at the expense of the high-caste Hindus of those provinces: which is inconceivable. The fact of the matter is that the Mahatma's fast, both by its idealism and coerciveness, put the whole of Hindu India, of every province, in a soft mood towards the Harijans, and as a result, the Pact was signed. It may be reopened on its merits, but may not be attacked on extraneous and untenable grounds of Bengal's non-participation in the Poona deliberations.

#### Punjab Communal Settlement in sight ?

OBSERVERS of contemporary events need hardly be told that Bengal and Punjab have been the disappointment of all those who have so far tried their hand at the task of settling the communal problem in this country. Even the Allahabad Unity Conference of last year promoted by the revered Pandit Malaviya and Maulana Shaukat Ali, to mention but the latest instance, broke on that rock. The news from Simla foreshadowing a communal settlement for the land of the Five Rivers which follows the lines of a similar attempt successfully made in C. P. in September last will therefore be welcomed all the more sincerely throughout the country. It is true that the proposed formula has not yet been authoritatively published; but the news possesses all the appearance of being genuine. Under this arrangement there will be one general register of voters reflecting the strength of the different communities in the population. Seats will be reserved for them in the legislature and will in no case be less than the proportion allotted to the various communities under the Premier's Communal Award of August last. At the moment unlimited life seems to be contemplated for the proposed communal settlement; but it is to be supposed that future legislatures will be free to modify it in any manner they choose. The formula concerns itself also with communal representation in the cabinet and the services. In regard to the former it is proposed that one half of the strength of the provincial ministry should be Muslim and the other half should be distributed between Hindus and Sikhs combined and it has been agreed that this part of the agreement, though not included in the statute, will be observed as a matter of convention. Recruitment to the public services too will be in the proportion of 50 per cent. for Muslims, 30 per cent. for Hindus and 20 per cent. for Sikhs, which does not take into consideration the claims of the European and other small minorities. It is estimated that under this settlement Hindus and Sikhs will together be able to influence about 100 out of a total of 175 seats in the Punjab legislative council. We cannot say that the settlement is an ideal one; but there can be no gainsaying the fact that it is a step in the right direction and constitutes a considerable advance on unadulterated separate communal electorates splitting Indian society into separate watertight compartments. With the Punjab problem thus settled, there is every reason to hope that a similar arrangement in regard to Bengal would become possible before very long.

#### Baroda in 1931-32.

IN noticing in our last issue the Baroda administration report for 1931-32 we referred only to the progress of social legislation in the State. Here it is intended to draw attention to some other features of the State's administration. Before doing so it may be stated that throughout the year covered by the report the Maharaja continued to be away in Europe fully justifying the public complaint about his being an absentee ruler. It may be he was kept in touch by correspondence with the progress of events in the State; but this can never be a satisfactory substitute for personal contact as a result of his stay in the midst of his subjects. As can be easily imagined, his prolonged and repeated sojourns in foreign lands—the last one was his 21st visit to Europe—have to be financed ultimately by his subjects without any *quid pro quo*. Can this be regarded as fair to them? If, as is suggested in some quarters, His Highness's health necessitates his continued stay in Western lands, how can any body be blamed for thinking that the time had arrived for him to transfer

his mantle to shoulders that can successfully withstand the rigours of the Indian climate? In this connection it must in fairness be pointed out that the palace expenses during 1931-32 were less by about Rs. 3 lakhs than during the previous year but yet consumed more than one-tenth of the State revenue. We had hoped that the report would furnish some satisfactory explanation of this welcome decrease; but all the enlightenment that is vouchsafed is that the Palace spent less. This is on a par with the conduct of a boy who on being asked to account for his late arrival in school one day gave the very intelligible explanation that he was late. We wish that future reports would make honest attempts to explain such welcome decreases and unwelcome increases in a more specific and pointed manner.

Another unsatisfactory feature of the year's administration was the complete absence of any meeting of such toy legislature as the state possesses. Out of its membership of 28, 10 used to be elected by Mahal panchayats. But as these have disappeared, the new arrangement seems to be that the Durbar nominates persons to the Council on the recommendations of Prant panchayats. If this is the real state of things, can it be regarded as a forward step? Then, again, the present constitution of local bodies like municipalities and local boards with their official presidents can hardly be said to be abreast of the democratic spirit of the times. When, we wonder, will the Maharaja see fit to liberalise their constitution and substitute the existing apology of a legislative Council by a real one broadbased on popular will and enjoying clearly defined powers in the field of finance and legislation? It does no credit to the Maharaja's reported love of free speech that his State should yet be unable to boast of a single independent political journal, nor can we congratulate him and his Government upon the lack of a well-defined abkari policy. It is high time this was declared to be total prohibition to be reached in, say, ten years. It is a matter for satisfaction that though the number of educational institutions was reduced by about 100 specially due to the State policy of the elimination of insufficient schools, the number of students increased by 10,000 from 243,000 to 253,000—69 per cent. of the total school-age population.

#### Gurukul and Vidya Mandir, Trichur.

As its latest report shows, the working of this institution which is devoted to the education mainly of Harijans is full of interest to workers for the uplift of the depressed classes. The Gurukul is the residential section and the Vidya Mandir the day school. Instruction is imparted free and covers the primary and secondary grades. Out of the 277 pupils on its rolls 162 are Harijans. The Gurukul has 26 inmates varying between 10 and 16 years in age, who get free boarding, 18 of them being Harijans. The boarders have the benefit of the constant supervision of 10 teachers who reside in the Gurukul and belong to the higher castes. Every attempt is made by the conductors of the institution to impress upon their charges the value of manual work. To this end all work in the Gurukul like cleaning, cooking, washing, gardening and tending the cows is done by the boarders themselves. This is necessary in view of the fact that a large majority of the recipients of literary education exhibit a tendency to look down upon manual work of any kind. The arrangement made by the authorities of the School for settling boys' complaints against one another, besides being novel, has great educational value. We shall allow the report itself to describe the arrangement: "The boys gather at 8-30 p. m. to attend the Children's Republican Court which is presided over by a tribunal of three judges elected from

among themselves. Here all complaints preferred by boys against their mates are heard and disposed of with the help of their own advocates. There is also a juvenile police force to investigate complaints and prosecute delinquents... Appeals against the decrees of the Court are however heard and disposed of by the teacher in charge, who has also to approve all verdicts and punishments before they are executed." Some other features of the school's work are also equally noteworthy, to which limits of space forbid any reference here. Suffice it to say that the activities of the institution have a high nation-building value and deserve support from all having the welfare of the country at heart. Its immediate requirements, are a sum of about Rs. 25,000 required for building residential quarters and class rooms, for providing a dispensary, a small workshop for vocational training, a gramophone and educational and scientific equipment. It is earnestly to be hoped that the large-hearted and generous public will see to it that the very useful work being done by the institution is not allowed to suffer for want of financial support.

## Articles.

### YET ANOTHER FAST.

ONCE again the Mahatma has startled, shocked and stunned the world by his sudden announcement on Sunday last of his resolve to fast for twenty-one days from the 8th inst. to the 29th. Not even his closest associates had the slightest premonition of the impending decision until it was actually taken by the Mahatma. Rather, imposed on the Mahatma by the "Voice." For the fast was not of the Mahatma's seeking. When the urge came, he says, he resisted it but his resistance was in vain. He would not have resisted it if he had been convinced of its righteousness and necessity. Apparently, he has been coerced against his own better judgment.

The fast is "unconditional and irrevocable." There is nothing that his friends and admirers can do which will obviate the fast. It has no specific and defined objective, however difficult of attainment, the achievement of which will save him the torturous ordeal. On the last occasion, the objective was the revision of the Government's Communal Award—something definite. And it was done. But on this occasion it is all different.

Not that the Mahatma has no objective at all. There are several; only they are diffuse and intangible. Though not dissatisfied with the progress made by the anti-untouchability movement, he would wish all workers to do their very best to eradicate the evil; he would wish all those workers, who for base and irrelevant motives have indulged in Harijan work, to save it from themselves; he would convince the Sanatanists that his Harijan work was no deep political game but a religious dedication. But above all, the fast is motivated by a subjective purpose. "It is particularly against myself. It is a heart prayer for the purification of self and my associates." It is a religious seeking for "self-purification" which "can only come by fasting and prayer."

The precipitation of the fast has undoubtedly been due to "shocking cases of impurity" among his

workers having come to his notice. "I want more workers of unassailable purity." The Mahatma feels that a cause which he had espoused in the spirit of religious dedication has been sullied and exploited by some workers drawn to it by motives wholly different from his. This knowledge anguished him, and caused the tempest which, he says, has been raging in him for some days. By this fast he appeals to those impure workers to leave the cause alone.

He might have caused the dismissal of such workers if he knew of them and if they were engaged by his organisations and thereby rid the movement of the undesirables. He might have merely appealed to others unknown to him to leave the cause alone. But that is not the way of the Mahatma. He hopes to save the movement not by ridding it of undesirables but by reforming them, ennobling them and redeeming them. He hopes that by self-suffering and self-sacrifice he will spur his disciples to purge themselves of their weaknesses and help them to do so and at the same time increase his own stock of moral power to rise himself and raise others. More than once before the Mahatma has inflicted fasts on himself to atone for the faults and failings of his disciples whom he subjects to severe discipline and austere self-denial.

The Mahatma habitually lives on a plane where the normal standard of every day human conduct seems neither adequate nor relevant. Before the moral grandeur of his present sacrificial attitude all comment is abashed into silence. Once again is he about to fulfil the old scriptural saying: "Greater love hath no man in this that a man lay down his life for his friends."

### THE RAIL-ROAD CONFERENCE.

WE do not think that either the Finance Member or the Chief Commissioner for Railways has cause to congratulate himself upon the sequel of the Rail-Road Conference that has just reached its official termination. The genesis of this Conference was outlined by His Excellency the Viceroy in his opening speech which was elaborated by further contributions from Sir George Schuster and Sir Guthrie Russell. Between seven and eight hundred crores of the tax-payer's money has been invested in the railways. For the last three years the railways have been unable to meet their normal obligations. This year there has been a definite loss on their working. This position cannot be continued without serious damage to the solvency of the railways. Though the continuing depression is the principal cause of this unfavourable situation a very considerable part of the railway deficit—officially calculated at between  $1\frac{1}{2}$  and 2 crores of rupees—is due to the competition of the growing road traffic. The financial solvency of the Central Government depends in a considerable measure upon the contribution received from the Railways, and the future allocation of revenues between the Federal and Provincial Governments is intimately dependent on the financial position of the former. The Government of India were, therefore, well justified in entertaining a plan like the Rail-Road Conference to obviate at least one of the obstacles in the path of railway finance.

It appears to us, however, that the meeting of the Conference was ill-timed. Economically, none of

the Provincial Governments nor any one of the Associations claiming to speak on behalf of the Passengers and Goods Shippers are in a position to welcome any scheme which might result in curtailing the yield of local taxation and the convenience of traffic. Politically, the talk of completely autonomous provinces has too often been indulged in by responsible officers of the Government to lose its significance on the leaders of certain provinces. The simplest proposals for coordination outlined in the official resolutions were met by remonstrances the terms of which must have sounded strange to the ears of members of a still unitary government. "They would not tolerate", said Sir Mohammed Yusuf, Minister of the U.P. Government, "any interference from the centre in matters which were purely their concern, specially after the introduction of the reforms." There was widespread criticism voiced in Conference circles to the effect that railway interests seemed to predominate in the minds of the conveners, Mr. Conran Smith of Madras delivered a home truth. "Any restriction must be," he declared, "in the interest of passenger traffic generally and not of railways only. The solution lay in the provision of improved facilities for travel by rail."

The proposals of the Government of India were in short these: that uneconomic competition between railway and bus traffic should be checked by regulation or grant of monopoly; that provincial road schemes should not be detrimental to railway interests; that provinces should concentrate on the development of feeder and connecting roads, chiefly in the rural areas, leaving the railways as the principal arteries of communication; and that on the administrative side Communications Boards should be set up to bring about the necessary coordination along these lines. The Government of India also offered to consider favourably proposals to float Road loans if the Provincial Governments concerned were able to produce really economic schemes. With administrative control and restrictive central authority staring them in the face, and the prospect of loan relief receding in the background it is not surprising that the Provincial representatives showed an almost utter lack of appreciation of the good intentions of the Central Government.

We have always held that in the new constitution insufficient provision has been made to secure uniformity of policy in matters of essential national importance. The significance of the by no means cordial proceedings of the Rail-Road Conference will, we hope, not be missed by the Government of India and its political advisers. The Viceroy very correctly said that the subjects coming before the Conference were of national importance and that many of them transcend local boundaries. But the question is: has the future Federal Government enough authority to secure coordination where coordination is deemed to be essential in the national interests. We fear, not, and the Government of India know it. In fact it was with a view to settle this matter before the actual inauguration of the new constitution that the Conference was convened at an otherwise unsuitable time. It seems as though the Central Government has already waited too long and the initiative in the matter has passed out of their hands. Not only with a view to check unfair competition and to safeguard central finances, but even in the interests of the employees and patrons of rival traffic services the common government must have adequate powers to ensure the necessary regulation and uniformity. Unless matters are to be allowed to drift to a worse state in future, we urge that the Government representatives at the Joint Parliamentary Committee should ensure the inclusion of sufficient coordinating powers in the Constitution Act.

With respect to the present difficulties of the Indian Railways we are not convinced that the Government of India has exhausted all the normal channels of improving their financial prospects. The economic and administrative efficiency of the Indian railways leaves much to be desired. The convenience and paying capacity of both the passenger and goods traffic are not systematically consulted in regulating rates and conditions. Some of the Company managed railways are the worst offenders in this respect and these are suffering from an ever increasing competition from road traffic. We agree that some coordination between rail and road is necessary, and that, failing an agreed settlement, the constitution should secure to the Federal Government adequate powers to enforce a common scheme in all its area. Before, however, railway administration is radically overhauled so as to satisfy the requirements of economy, efficiency and convenience the Government of India will not receive the moral backing of the country which is necessary to make its proposals acceptable to the provinces.

### TRADE UNION UNITY.

WRITING on December 12, 1929, in this paper on "the Nagpur Split and After", I ventured to make the following observations:

"So far as the non-communist trade unionists are concerned, their path and duty are clear. They cannot have anything in common with the communists. They propose to carry on their work independently of and in opposition to the communists. Parallel organisations of the industrial workers on trade union and communist lines are inevitable for some time. Merging or amalgamation can come only when the one or the other is defeated in a fair fight."

These words have remained as true to-day when the Trade Union Unity between the Indian Trades Union Federation and the National Federation of Labour has been achieved at Calcutta towards the end of the last month as when they were written three and half years ago. The unity that has been achieved has not brought on one platform all those forces in the trade union movement which were separated at Nagpur. The communist organisations and those which swear by Mr. M. N. Roy, which are as much communist in their philosophy, ideals and methods as the communists themselves but which abhor the word "communist" in their propaganda, have chosen to remain out of the Calcutta decisions and will continue to work under the All-India Trade Union Congress with its two wings—one the communist wing and the other the M. N. Roy wing. The Calcutta decisions which have been heralded as having brought about unity in the trade union field are not as unrestricted as they appear to be at first sight; their scope is, in point of fact, confined to those non-communist organisations many of which had already come under the Indian Trades Union Federation and others of which, mostly railwaymen's organisations, had chosen to remain aloof from any central national organisation. The National Trades Union Federation which comes into being on and from the 10th of May, 1933, as a result of the amalgamation of the Indian Trades Union Federation and the National Federation of Labour, will, therefore, contain the same trade union forces

which the All-India Trade Union Congress used to contain before the advent of the communists in and from 1927.

It may be asked, and in my opinion rightly, why the trade union unity, restricted as its scope undoubtedly is, took such a long time to fructify. The answer is not, I consider, far to seek and lies in two facts: one, a very interesting phenomenon of human psychology in our public life and two, the method adopted to achieve unity. At Nagpur after seceding from the Trade Union Congress, twenty-four Unions affiliated to it and including a large number of railwaymen's unions met in a separate conference and decided to form a new central organisation to be run on purely trade union lines. The constitution of the new body was to contain, it was further decided, "a clause excluding Unions and men with communist tendencies from being affiliated to or represented" in it. The new body with its constitution containing the above clause was inaugurated, after going through the necessary formalities, in July 1930. But it was found that the railwaymen's unions which had seceded from the Congress and were a party to the decisions of the meeting which resolved to form a new organisation, declined to join the Indian Trades Union Federation. They chose a middle course of sitting on the fence without having anything to do with either the Congress or the Federation. By retaining their connection with the Congress, they would be called communists which most of them were not; by joining the Federation they would be called "reformists" which they were but would not like to be called such. This phenomenon, though interesting, is not peculiar and is to be found in all spheres of public life. In the political field, for example, there are hundreds of men and women who are not Congressmen and whose principles and methods are not different from those of the Liberals but who have been making herculean efforts to show that they are not Liberals. Such a mentality is largely, it cannot be denied, a creation of the foreign rule in this country. The point I want to emphasise is this: the aloofness of the railwaymen's unions created one more complication in the way of achieving unity and delayed it to a certain extent.

The second cause responsible for the delay was the method adopted in achieving unity. The Railwaymen's Federation never felt comfortable in the position of aloofness and took in 1931 an initiative in opening negotiations. It would have been well advised if it had confined its efforts to the terms of the resolution passed by its annual convention in 1931 which stated that the negotiations for unity should be on the basis that "individual unions should be given freedom in certain matters and the power of coercion by the Central Organisation should be used only by a nine-tenths or some such considerably large majority." This basis would have facilitated the work of unity if the negotiations had been confined to the central organisations such as the Congress, the Federation and the Railwaymen's Federation. I recognise that the Congress



might not have accepted that basis: or even if it had accepted it, the friction inside the new organisation might have continued with the play of majority versus minority. In the former case, unity between the railwaymen and the Indian Trades Union Federation would have been achieved earlier than to-day and in the latter case there would have been a complete unity in the whole of the labour ranks—leaving the future to the strength of each party in the country. But Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, a stalwart in the political field but quite a new recruit in the labour field and also ignorant of the past troubles in our movement, was fired with the ambition of bringing about not only unity but also unattached unions under the banner of a central organisation and organised what came subsequently to be called a Trade Union Unity Conference whose work lasted for nearly two years. It was overweighted with unions which were never before affiliated to any central organisation and which are likely to remain aloof even hereafter. But their strength prevented the early settlement of the matter. Another mistake that was committed was that, instead of adopting the formula evolved by the Convention of the Railwaymen's Federation, the Trade Union Unity Conference invited suggestions for union from all and sundry and selected what was called the "Platform of Unity" proposed by a communist and put forward by the members of the Girni Kamgar Union, one of the two Unions responsible for the Nagpur split. The Platform contained most of the elements of mischief which created the split in 1929; but to it Mr. Jamnadas Mehta hugged tenaciously and began to make modifications. The position was further complicated by the fact that the Trade Union Unity Conference hardly ever contained, except for a few members of the Railwaymen's Federation, the same personnel of representatives: they used to change according to the place where the Conference was held. The discussions that took place at these gatherings convinced Mr. Jamnadas Mehta that there was hardly anything common between the communists and the trade unionists and he soon found that as soon as the Platform of Unity was modified and brought on the lines of *bona fide* trade unionism, the Trade Union Congress washed its hands of the Trade Union Unity Conference and left the latter to its fate. The issue was immediately narrowed down and confined to the railway unions and the I. T. U. Federation. It would have been graceful if Mr. Jamnadas Mehta had agreed to join hands with the I. T. U. Federation according to the assurance he had given at the Madras session of the Federation that in case the Congress would not accept the amended Platform of Unity, he would recommend to the railway unions that they should join the Federation. But here again the interesting phenomenon, to which I have already referred, seemed to have come in the way. Forsaken by the Trade Union Congress and embarrassed by the unattached unions, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta was left with no alternative but to start a new central organisation called the National Federation of Labour, with the

object of negotiating with the I. T. U. Federation and bringing about an amalgamation between the two. Mr. Giri, the idol of the railwaymen, who was a party to the starting of the new organisation, came in for a sharp and severe attack at the hands of his followers for having widened the gulf, instead of bridging it. If only Mr. Jamnadas Mehta and his friends had realised in the beginning the fundamental differences between the communists and the trade unionists and accepted the advice of Mr. N. M. Joshi and others to have negotiations between the railwaymen and the I. T. U. Federation, the painful agony of going through the unity conferences and starting a fresh central organisation with a view to ultimate amalgamation would have been saved and what has been achieved after nearly four years would have been achieved long ago. But that was not to be. Experience is the best teacher and it has proved to be so in this case at much cost and delay.

The two Federations have now been amalgamated under the new name of the National Trades Union Federation which comes into being on and from the 10th of May, 1933. The constitution of the new Federation will be the same as that of the National Federation of Labour with the modifications made at Calcutta. There is hardly any difference between this new constitution and the one of the I. T. U. Federation. The latter contained definite clauses precluding the communists and their organisations from joining the Federation: these clauses have now been put in another form by defining the Trade Union so as to include in its activities negotiations and joint action with the employers and putting the strike as a last weapon in the armoury of the union, by providing for sending delegations to Geneva and affiliations with foreign organisations of labour having the same or similar objects as those of the new Federation. The office-bearers and members of the executive of the new organisation are to be the same as those of the I. T. U. Federation with a few additions to the Vice-Presidency and the executive. For all practical purposes the National Trades Union Federation will be the continuation of the Indian Trades Union Federation with the addition of railway unions to its ranks. This is a great achievement on which Mr. Mehta and Mr. Giri and also the I. T. U. Federation deserve the warmest congratulations of the public and the workers. The new Organisation will commence its work where it was broken at Nagpur and I sincerely trust that that work will be of a character which will do adequate justice to the cause of Indian labour and improve its social, economic and also political conditions.

R. R. BAKHALE.

#### AMERICAN FINANCIAL SITUATION.

THE United States have re-established an embargo upon gold and abandoned the gold standard. The dollar has already fallen by 10% yesterday, and it is expected to drop further down. To M. Herriot and Mr. MacDonald, this will appear a

rather curious preface to their interviews with Mr. Roosevelt; these conversations, it will be remembered, were meant on principle, to hasten the return of economic order in the world!

What is the genesis of the present American decision, and what are its most probable consequences? Only a few weeks ago, President Roosevelt was declaring that he was opposed to inflation, and that he was going to defend the dollar. The financial situation of the United States seemed to justify his optimism. His sudden change has been brought about by the pressure of public opinion. During these last weeks particularly, the inflationist campaign had become louder and louder. Prominent people in industrial and commercial circles gave it their powerful support on the ground that "trade without gold is better than gold without trade," disregarding the fact that no permanent current of exchanges can be maintained on false money.

President Roosevelt seems to have opted for the well-known political tactics expressed in the paradoxical slogan: "I am their leader, I must follow them." Or to put it more charitably, he has decided to engage himself in the policy imposed upon him by American opinion and take the leadership of the movement so as to retain the control of it as far as it is possible.

The financial crisis of the United States has its origin in the enormous credits consented by the banks at a time when prosperous transactions favoured easy and prompt returns. The economic depression has prevented farmers and producers from paying their debts and the situation of the banks has therefore become impossible.

President Roosevelt did his best to avoid inflation at first, and endeavoured to save the situation by drastic measures, chiefly based on the restriction of credits; a fairly large number of bankers and creditors consequently became an unwilling prey to bankruptcy. Yet this bold and ruthless method did not suffice to reassure public opinion; what was most wanted really was a rapid rebirth of commercial prosperity. It is with that aim in view that inflation has been dictated to the Government. Agricultural and industrial producers, as well as businessmen, know well that the multiplication of paper-money stimulates the buying capacity, while prices tend to rise on the home-market, and the value of existing stocks is enhanced. The exporters also have suffered from the "dumping" caused by the devaluation of the pound sterling; they too pressed for a devaluation of the dollar which would give them an equal chance in the world-market. Owing to those circumstances, Mr. Roosevelt was compelled to renounce orthodoxy and engage himself in the present adventurous policy.

The lead given by England in September 1931 has certainly played a great part in the present financial orientation of the United States. The British devaluation has no doubt brought to England a considerable reduction in the deficit of her commercial balance (287 millions of pounds compared to 406), and an appreciable progress in the stabilisation of industrial production. Capital has begun to revert to the London monetary market, while in the United States, Germany and France, the depression was increasing.

It is difficult to evaluate the consequences of the American decision. But first of all, it must be noted that the financial situation of America is very different from that of the other countries who suffered inflation before. Contrary to previous cases, Americans have got a favourable trade-balance, they possess important credits in foreign countries,

and they also retain very large gold-reserves which are prevented from leaving the country by especially strict measures. For all these reasons, the dollar is not expected to fall very low, and will doubtless be able to maintain the position that it chooses to adopt.

Practically speaking, the fall in the dollar will most probably have the usual consequences. The prices will go up in the home-market while they will decrease on the foreign market. Production will be stimulated in a corresponding measure and there will be a rise in industrial shares. In that sense it will be all the better if Mr. Roosevelt succeeds in keeping the situation in hand as he intends to do, so as to avoid speculation as much as it can be avoided under similar circumstances. Already the re-opening of Wall-Street is said to have been one of the most hectic days in the annals of American banking. The number of transactions in shares was over six millions! It is expected that President Roosevelt shall be given plenary powers and that a large majority in Parliament will agree to make him the "Dictator of the Dollar."

In the foreign market, American trade will benefit by the same advantages as those enjoyed by the franc formerly, and by the pound more recently. The Americans will therefore be able to fight the "dumping" due to the fall in the pound. The English will no doubt suffer from this, but not nearly as much as those countries who have remained faithful to the gold standard. France, Italy, Switzerland, etc., will remain powerless between the double offensive of American and British trade.

As far as international financial relationships are concerned, the American decision is bound to have important repercussions also. We shall soon begin to hear about them since the Washington conversations are just on the point of being opened. On the one hand, the fall in the dollar will bring a proportionate reduction in the European debts to America. And this will make M. Herriot's and Mr. MacDonald's mission easier than they had thought. But Mr. MacDonald, who was expecting to utilise the fall in the pound as a decisive argument and its eventual stabilisation as a trump card, will have been entirely disarmed by the fall of the dollar. Mr. Roosevelt's position has become stronger because he has now less concessions to ask from his opponents, and can therefore afford to be all the more ruthless in his exigencies.

Casting a retrospective glance on the post-war period, one cannot fail to see that Mr. Roosevelt's decision is nothing but the logical outcome of an impressive series of monetary revolutions. Switzerland and Holland are now the only two countries whose money has not become bankrupt or been submitted to some kind of upheaval in the course of the last twelve years or so. It is true that several countries have stabilised again and started on a new basis, but if their position has been strengthened at the time it is now made uncertain once more. Unilateral stabilisation can have no durable results. The denial of debts, and generally speaking the lack of honesty in respect of contracts and pledges, has no doubt been one of the most decisive agents of the present chaos. The moral crisis is as important as the financial crisis, and the latter can hardly be cured if the former is not improved upon.

Is it possible to build a new world on the present ruins? The conversations in Washington may help to do it if they can find a common basis to stabilise, not only money, but good-will, cooperation and simple honesty.

L. MORIN.

## Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, April 21.

### INDIAN AFFAIRS.

**W**HILST the Easter holiday brought about a lull in the concern of the British people in Indian affairs, now that we are heading towards the time when Parliament resumes, the *Morning Post* is returning to its congenial task of stirring up Conservative opinion against the White Paper.

I was talking to-day with a very acute observer of events here. In his view the Cabinet in their endeavour to maintain comparative unity in the Conservative Party have made a tactical error in not requiring Parliament to vote in support of the general principles of the policy set forth in the White Paper instead of leaving it an open question for some months until after the Report of the Joint Select Committee and the presentation of a Bill, during which interval the reactionaries and diehards, who are enormously active and apparently well-supplied with funds, would be concentrating upon the task of seducing the rank and file in the constituencies and the neutral middle-minded members in Parliament into hostility towards the official proposals. Undoubtedly that danger lurks in the background, but against it is to be set the counter-propaganda of the Government, the influence upon the Joint Select Committee itself, composed as it is of opponents as well as supporters of the official proposals, of their Indian associates whose names have to-day been published, and the evidence that it is anticipated progressive Indian organisations will produce before the Committee. I very sincerely hope that a decision has been taken by that section of progressive Indian opinion that is not engaged in the non-co-operation movement to send its most efficient and its best-equipped exponents to tender such evidence, which is, in my opinion, bound to have a very considerable effect upon public opinion here.

#### MR. POLAK'S INDIAN IMPRESSIONS.

At a Press lunch to-day, held under the auspices of the Indian Conciliation Group, the Rev. R. M. Gray presiding, in the unavoidable absence at the Hague of Mr. Carl Heath, as chairman, Mr. Polak, who returned to London last night, from his recent business visit to India, urged upon his hearers that they would do well to apprise the British public of the reasons for the grave dissatisfaction of all sections of progressive Indian opinion with the White Paper proposals. Nowhere were those reasons more clearly or effectively set forth than in the resolutions of the Indian Liberal federation, and the analysis issued by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Sastri. If, said Mr. Polak, any real advance were to be made in convincing British public opinion of the reasonableness of the Indian demands and the validity of the Indian criticisms, it was of the first importance that the British public should be acquainted at first hand with the Indian arguments.

He described the Indian problem as a human one, and stated that so far as he could judge there never was a time when the Indian administration was so little in touch as it is to-day with Indian sentiment or its representatives. Neither side trusted the other, or believed in its professions. The Indian scene was immersed in an atmosphere of suspicion

and distrust, and political dissatisfaction was accentuated by the widespread economic distress. There was not a uninfluential section of Moderate opinion that at the time that he left India had not yet made up its mind to co-operate during the Joint Select Committee stage on the ground that no useful purpose was to be served thereby. Mr. Polak stated that he had urged that every advantage should be taken of the Committee stage, in order to advocate Indian views and to put forward the Indian demands for a more liberal constitution than that which was already contemplated. He hoped, and it would seem from recent information, that other counsels besides non-co-operation would prevail. He had grounds to believe that a large section, possibly a majority of Congress people, if effective means could be given to enable them to record an authoritative opinion, would be found ready to transfer their activities from the field of non-co-operation to that of seeking to capture the constituencies and the legislatures under the new constitution, notwithstanding their very grave dissatisfaction with it, in order to achieve more fully the purposes and policy of the Congress. So far as the Moderates were concerned, they would almost certainly concentrate at the present time upon securing a declaration in the Statute that it was intended to be of a transitional character with full and complete Dominion Status in view at no distant date, and that it should contain provisions for automatic progress to that end. They would undoubtedly attack the safeguards, reservations, and restrictions in so far as they were not demonstrably in the interests of India. By contrast with the pessimism and gloom that was almost universal amongst the elder people, whose beliefs in British fairplay, promises, and pledges has been changed into disbeliefs, was to be set the assurance and optimism of Young India which did not disbelieve, since it had never believed. Mr. Gandhi's influence among the younger people appeared to have waned since his diversion of so much Congress energy from the arena of politics to that of social reform, and it might well be that in the not very distant future, unless average Indian sentiment were satisfied by the British Parliament and people, Young India would look to other leadership and other methods than it had hitherto followed for the achievement of Indian self-government and the control of India's destiny by her own people.

In moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Polak, Mr. Wilson Harris, the Editor of *The Spectator*, expressed great appreciation of the sanity and objective spirit of his remarks. He was of the opinion that the delay in taking a vote upon the general policy of the White Paper until after the Report of the Joint Select Committee was, on the whole, wise in that the interval should be used to advantage in educating British public opinion and Parliament, and obtaining a modification of the most objectionable and unsatisfactory features of the present proposals.

#### NAZISISM TRIUMPHANT.

There can be no doubt that Nazism has triumphed in Germany and has come to stay. It is necessary, therefore, for statesmen throughout the world to treat it seriously and to try to understand a phenomena that it connotes. It is as well to remember that the term "Nazi" is an abbreviation of National Socialist, and it may therefore be assumed that the tional return to monarchism is not a necessary consequence or within the immediate policy of the Hitler movement. It is far easier for Herr Hitler to remain Dictator in the presence of a President such as Field Marshal Hindenberg than it would be were a HoenzoHern to sit on the throne. At the same time it is necessary to understand that a real revolution has happened in Germany. Young Germany has



come into its own. It demands the freedom of Germany from the comparative thralldom imposed upon it by the Treaty of Versailles, and Young Germany sees no reason why it should be made to suffer for faults that it has never committed. Not only does it not believe in the old Biblical ordinance that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, it does not wish to admit that the fathers sinned at all. As a scapegoat has to be found, as is customary in Germany, it has been found in the person of the Jew. Whilst in some of its acute forms pre-War anti-Semitism was to be observed primarily in Imperial Russia, it was not indigenous to Russia, but was an importation from Germany. When anti-Semitism passed from Spain and Portugal it found a ready reception in Germany, both Catholic and Protestant, and it is therefore no new thing to find Jewish persecution in a peculiarly cruel and despicable form proceeding in the Germany of Hitlerism, under the specious guise, not of heresy-hunting, but of the demand for racial purity. No one who is not hundred per cent. German is to hold any place of honour or profit whether in the official or the civil life of Germany, and Jews are to-day being hounded out of the professions, trades and occupations in which they have built up so great a reputation of ability and aptitude, and have contributed so greatly to Germany's welfare. So much so that they have not un-often been described as being "more Royalist than the King". I am reminded of a story told of a bigotted Spanish King, who is said to have told his Cardinal Minister of his determination to drive out of Spain everyone with a taint of Jewish blood in him. The Prelate hastened to agree with the Sovereign that if it were possible it would be highly desirable to order such an expulsion. "But," he added, "Your Majesty will have to begin with yourself and myself". A later Sovereign, equally unwise but deprived of so wise a Minister, did order the expulsion of the Jews from Spain with results disastrous to that country, but contributing enormously to the wealth, prosperity, and prestige of those countries that afforded asylum to the exiles. Germany, too, will rue the day that she drives her Jewish population into ghettos or into exile. The Jewish temperament is too intense and dynamic safely to be thrust down into ghettos and every exiled Jew will be a standing advertisement of German bigotry and intolerance and a source of power and energy for the service of the country that gives him shelter. Already the European countries and America, some of whom, Great Britain in particular, were willing to press upon France the desirability of acceding to Germany's claim for treaty revision, to establish Germany in a position of equality with the victorious nations, are now asking themselves whether perhaps France was not right in protesting that Germany is not to be trusted, that she is at heart brutal and barbarous, and that such flare-ups as the present one are to be expected and anticipated in the natural order of things. Sir Austin Chamberlain undoubtedly voiced the sentiment of most Englishmen, without exception of party, when he declared that a Germany that could treat her own citizens in the way in which she has indisputably been treating the Jews, (and it may be added the Communists) is not to be entrusted with the control of the destinies of any other minority people through a revision of treaties. So unanimous and pronounced is foreign criticism of recent events in Germany that even the Nazi Government is being compelled to take account of it, if one may judge from certain thoughtful admissions in the Nazi Press.

#### THE RUSSIAN "TRIAL"

Now that the Russian "trial" is over and the judgment delivered the world's press has been able

to study the proceedings and to form a judgment upon them. It is significant that in hardly any organ of opinion whose view has any value has a word been uttered that is not strongly critical of recent events in Moscow. The conclusion almost unanimously drawn is that Russian industry, the Russian economic position, and Soviet doctrine must be in a very bad way to warrant so crude a travesty of justice. Nowhere is it believed, notwithstanding "confessions" obtained in ways that have been described in graphic language by a Russian Professor who had been unsuccessfully subjected to them, who was imprisoned thereafter without trial or sentence, and who subsequently escaped after two years of dreadful suffering to tell his story, that these British engineers had been guilty of any of the charges preferred against them by their Russian accusers. Nowhere, indeed, in the world is it thought that a "trial" of this character bolstered up by evidence that would not pass muster under any truly judicial system, could have taken place. The Metropolitan Vickers Company has been notoriously pro-Soviet in its endeavour to establish and maintain commercial relations with Russia. The engineers concerned are among their most trusted officials and are men at the head of their profession. It is inconceivable that they would have wished to destroy deliberately the product of their own skill, science, and craft. It is evident, however, that Russian incompetence and lack of skill have produced a serious set-back to the Five Years' Plan and it has been necessary to divert the attention of the people from the obvious failures. Here, too, a scapegoat had to be found, and it was discovered in the alleged counter-revolutionary activities of these foreign engineers, aided and abetted by a few ignoble specimens of Russian bourgeoisie mentality seduced to perform these crimes against the Soviet State. Two of the British accused have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment; one has been acquitted and the remainder have been ordered to leave Russia. Having in anticipation armed itself with the necessary power, and taking advantage of the fact that on Tuesday last the Anglo-Russian Commercial Treaty expired, the Cabinet this week obtained the King's consent to an Order in Council placing a prohibitive duty upon certain important Russian imports, as from next week. The measure has admittedly been taken in retaliation for the sentences imposed on the two imprisoned Englishmen in whose guilt notwithstanding the confessions retracted and subsequently reiterated in highly peculiar circumstances no one believed. If the Soviet authorities should decide to accept their petitions for commutation of their sentences and their release, the embargo will be withdrawn. If not, Soviet Russia will lose one of the best outlets for her agricultural produce, her timber, and her oil. It is true that some of our own engineers are likely to be thrown out of work, but public opinion generally would support the Government in the action that it has taken whether or not it is the best that could have been taken in the circumstances. What people in this country, however, are now asking after this demonstration of Russian "justice" is whether it is safe to have any commercial dealings with Soviet Russia, and whether the security of their employees in Russia can in any way be guaranteed. It is true that in some Labour papers comparison is made with the Meerut Conspiracy Trial and with extorted confessions that are not an uncommon feature in Indian criminal proceedings, but the comparison is irrelevant. Staged trials where the verdict and the sentence are canvassed in advance, and confessions extorted under terror or torture, are not recognised features of high policy in official India, however they may be in some other countries. But whether or not the

comparison is relevant two things are clear; one that the Meerut Conspiracy trial has in no way added to British prestige, and two that the suspicion is now very prevalent throughout the world that there is something rotten in the State of Russia, and that sooner or later it will no longer be possible to conceal the fact from the Russian people themselves from whom more effectively than from any other human group the facts of life have been concealed by those in control of their destinies.

## Review.

### CONTACT OF CULTURES.

**COLONIAL POLICY. 2 VOLS. BY DR. A. D. A. DE KAT ANGELINO,** Trans. from the Dutch by G. J. Renier. (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague.) 1931, 25cm. 530p. and 674p. 2 Guineas.

THIS book is an English abridgment and translation of the Dutch original. It has already been translated into more than one language, and is likely to become a standard work of reference for all students of the cultural contacts and administrative relationships of East and West. Volume I is a general study of the contact of East and West. The characteristic features of Eastern and Western civilisation in this "world" are analysed and compared. Thus empire-building is traced through the ages. In the modern world the modernisation of Eastern states from within, in Japan, China, Siam, Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey, is sympathetically described and studied in chapter VII. The parallel developments in the "Colonial World" are then noted, and the ultimate goal of all these movements considered in the last chapter. Volume II is devoted to a detailed study of the Dutch administration of the East Indies. The development of its administrative system, justice, education, political, social, agrarian and labour policies are all described in turn. The whole work is a monument of industry and scholarship, its tone is urbane and philosophic, and its style, if sometimes inclined to nebulosity and unnecessary circumlocution, is on the whole clear and straightforward.

We have said enough to show that Dr. De Kat Angelino's book stands quite apart from the ordinary manual of colonial policy, which considers colonies as political sources of raw materials, or possible markets for manufactured goods, which thinks of the inhabitants (when it thinks of them at all) as the privileged recipients of the inestimable benefits of (Western) civilisation. Dr. De Kat Angelino's outlook is broad and philosophic; he regards Colonies and Eastern countries in and for themselves, as possessing an enthusiastic life and destiny of their own, and not significant only in so far as they have contact with Europe. It is therefore the more interesting to note his ideas on the contact of cultures.

Dr. Angelino's view of this contact is synthetic. He believes that both East and West, Asiatic and European countries, have their own inner being or soul; that each should preserve that soul, without which no progress would be possible but that in order to take their place in the world of to-day, Eastern countries need to graft on to their existing cultures some of the features of Western life. The corollary of this: that the West must also drink of the contemplative spirit of the East, is not so clearly brought out. Perhaps this is because he holds that those ideas and institutions which are essential for parti-

icipation in the new world order exist in the West rather than the East.

From the foregoing it can easily be seen that Dr. Angelino does not accept Spengler's morphological view of history, according to which cultures pass successively through the periods of germination, blossoming, fruition and decay, from fresh spring to eternal winters. The Eastern cultures are not so many lifeless forms incapable of further development and reviviscence. Each culture has its soul, which can expand and contract, grow and decay, borrow from others or shed the accretions of other ages and countries; the seasonal analogy does not hold. Here he has expressed a great truth; no people can perish so long as they preserve their own soul, their spiritual autonomy, intact and no people can prosper without it.

There is equally little support in this book for theories of racial superiority like those of Dr. H. Stoddard. The life and character of a nation may be influenced by climate, by history, by racial factors, but each has an equal right to existence, a contribution to make to the whole life of humanity. The Greeks of the fifth century B. C., he points out, were the product of a double fusion of barbarian Aryans with civilised Mycenaeans of the Mediterranean race.

In contrasting the spirit of East and West, Dr. Angelino allots group feeling and passivity or world-renunciation to the East, individualism and activism or world acceptance to the West. There we find a society organised in clans and castes, which too often cramp and stunt the individual's development, as compared to a society based upon the individuals who organise themselves into nations and too often invade the liberties of others. Over against the village with its self-sufficing "Swadeshi" economy is set the town with its factories, its large industries, its cosmopolitanism and its world economy. Over against the world renunciation, the other-worldliness of Buddhism and Hinduism, is set the activist and world-accepting view of Christianity, and particularly of Protestant Christianity. Nation and clan in politics, town and village in economics, single and joint family in social relations, ascetic and social reformers in religion, the contrast can be seen in every department of life.

These contrasting characteristics would seem to point to marked dependence, a marked appreciation and borrowing. But Dr. Angelino goes further. He seems to hold that the West has something to give for which the East can offer nothing in exchange. He calls it the "Mysterious Power of the West," and it is this secret which is the basis of his philosophy of colonial policy. This Mysterious Power of the West, he thinks, is its dynamic spirit of action, the restless desire for change and movement which may degenerate into anarchy and materialism, but has also prompted the whole development of Western civilisation from the philosophy of Plato to the relativity of Einstein. That spirit, he thinks, is the product of the monogamous household, the equality of masses and of internal self-control manifesting itself in creative and disciplined action. It is this spirit which the East must borrow — either by its own action and under its own control, as in Japan, Siam, Turkey and Persia, or under the direction of some outside power as Holland in the East Indies, and Great Britain in India. We now arrive at Dr. Angelino's conception of colonial policy; it means the cultivation of the best interests of the peoples themselves and the repudiation of old fashioned Imperialism. The Colonial Power presides at a great cultural grafting operation, by which the secret power of the West is added to the body of Eastern

culture, in order to fit it to take its place as an integral part of the developing world order. The Colonial Power, like a good doctor, looks forward to seeing his patient healthy and strong and anticipates his own disappearance, but like a good doctor, while the operation is still proceeding it is the judge of the patient's condition, of the amount of grafting permissible and the patient must implicitly obey his orders.

Such a theory is the highest development of the conception of trusteeship. But it will be noticed that the colonial power is still judge and jury in its own case; it is still held to possess superior knowledge which renders its action in its colonial territories unilateral and irresponsible to the people themselves. The East is still to learn from the West, not both from each other.

Dr. Angelino's interpretation may be questioned on grounds both of fact as well as of theory. His antithesis between Eastern and Western culture seems to be too absolute; characteristic "Western" features may be found in the East and vice-versa. Women are educated and enjoy a high status in Burma and Siam, and the monogamous household is to be found in many parts of the East; inner discipline manifesting itself in outward action has been cultivated for centuries by Brahmins, Chinese mandarins and the followers of Buddha; Islam, which cannot be neglected, is eminently an activist and world-accepting religion. On the other hand Christianity is not always an activist creed; in its Roman Catholic form in Southern Europe and South America, and in its various Eastern developments it has something of the static quality of Hinduism. Again, a village economy still exists in large parts of Central and Eastern Europe.

We would suggest that the "Mysterious power of the West" is something which is not specifically Western at all, but rather a complex of factors each one of which may be formed separately in other parts of the world, but nowhere else in combination. This concentration in the West to-day is due to historical causes amongst which must be reckoned the Renaissance, the discovery of the New World, the growth of science and the Industrial Revolution, Nationalism and Calvinism. The monogamous family is only one of these complicated factors, while the emancipation of women came after rather than before the growth of Western power.

This combination of circumstances has placed the West for the moment in a position of dominant power. But at the same time it appears to many that the inner urge which gave to all this power a moral purpose, the core of which was Calvinism is now losing its vitality. Without a moral purpose this power must inevitably oppress weaker groups and ultimately turn upon itself in self-destructive conflict. There are clear signs of both these developments in the last thirty years. It is here that the East may have its contribution to make by reinforcing the spiritual elements of the West in the battle to redeem the soul of the new world order. "Ex Oriente lux" is still true to-day as in the past. The word of the Buddha: "Never shall hatred cease by hating, by not hating shall it cease;" and of Christ "My Kingdom is not of this world" are the words which the world needs to-day. The world of science, of industry and finance must learn to mix "sub specie æternitatis" — in the sight of eternity — or it will perish miserably like many a world before it.

T. G. P. SPEAR.

## Miscellaneous.

### INDIA'S ASPIRATIONS.

BY MR. P. KODANDA RAO.

IN his closing address to the Round Table Conference the Lord Chancellor said optimistically that India would realise "nearly all her aspirations" within the lifetime of the current Parliament. It is not inappropriate to recall at this stage the aspirations which moved India and which prompted her to seek the Round Table Conference method. Briefly put, India desired self-determination, self-government and democracy. Since the birth of the Indian National Congress, since the first dawn of political consciousness among Indians and as the result of their contact with and study of British institutions, Indians desired to implant and develop in India self-governing institutions of the democratic and parliamentary character. The Great War, India's participation therein and the utterances of statesmen of international fame and eminence gave added emphasis to the method of achieving democratic self-government by self-determination, which was implicit in self-government. Mrs. Annie Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill and the Nehru Report and the Nehru demand for a Round Table Conference were the evidences of this new sense of self-determination. The composition of the Simon Commission was a mortal affront to this new sense. The Commission was, therefore, boycotted and its report was flung into the waste paper basket in outraged mortification. The Commission method was in consequence abandoned and the Round Table Conference method adopted. The essence of the new method was that the future constitution of India would be negotiated by the representatives of India and Great Britain; decisions would be taken at the Conference, which would subsequently be ratified, as it were, by the British Parliament as a matter of form. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald once actually spoke of a "treaty" between India and England which the British Parliament would be called upon merely to ratify. There was no place under that scheme for a joint parliamentary committee to sit in judgment over the proposals of the Conference, with full liberty to make alternative proposals. The Conference method suffered a sea-change after Sir Samuel Hoare took charge of the India Office. He proposed in the first instance to abandon it, but was persuaded ultimately to restore it. He did it half-heartedly. Though the third Round Table Conference met and discussed, it was apparent that the centre of gravity had shifted from the Conference to the Government and the British Parliament. The White Paper has clinched it, as it were. The British Government gave decisions not only on matters which Indians could not agree upon, as in the case of the communal claims, but also on matters which were not discussed at all and, in some cases, have actually gone back on such "agreements" as were "noted" during the course of the sessions, as no less an authority than Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru pointed out. And now the White Paper is to be submitted to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which, in the opinion of Sir Samuel Hoare, will be "the most important stage in the shaping of the constitutional reforms." This is a return to the Birkenhead method, the antithesis of self-determination.

It is futile to kick against this landslide. It is a lamentable fact that India did not speak with one voice even in this matter of self-determination. The

growth of national sentiment has not proceeded far enough to subdue sectional consciousness, racial, religious and communal.

Apart from the method, India wanted self-government of a democratic character. Hoping to facilitate the transfer of power from London to Delhi British Indians, who had hitherto confined their attention to the introduction of responsible government in British India, agreed in London to a federation of British India with Indian States. They sacrificed democracy for the sake of facilitating self-government. Whatever the constitutional proprieties of the case, the British Government was not exactly keen on transferring power to British India, which it feared, would inevitably be captured by the non-cooperators, the exponents of the independence school, the socialists and the communists in India; by those who had called the British Government "satanic," who created the impression that a free India would repudiate foreign liabilities and who would boycott British goods and ruin British trade. It was no doubt constitutionally open to the British Government to confer responsible government on British India alone and transfer to it its obligations towards the Indian States. Apart from the constitutional possibilities, the British Government was so powerful that it could do anything with impunity and not be effectively challenged. But the Government was not exactly persuaded to transfer responsibility to British India, in view of the activities of the non-co-operators. On the other hand it exploited to the full their sacred responsibilities towards the Indian Princes and contended that no transfer of responsibility to British India was possible without the consent of the Princes. Not until the Princes released the Paramount Power of its duties by them, could it divest itself of them and transfer them to others. For strategic reasons the British Government began now to exaggerate the importance of treaty rights and obligations, the "sovereignty" of the Princes. The transfer of power from London to Delhi was thus made contingent on the consent of the Princes and their joining a federation. They would provide the stable element in the new constitution and counteract the radicalism of the Congressmen, save India for the British Empire, and, thanks to the retention of paramountcy in the Crown, act as the tools of the British Government, and the guardians of British interests.

A federation of the peoples of the Indian States and of British India would not subserve the purpose of the British Government, would not provide the stabilising element in the new constitution and might even strengthen the radical forces represented by the predominant political party in British India, the Congress. It also suited the vanity of the Princes, their fancied notions of their internal sovereignty, that the States should be represented by the nominees of the Princes and not be elected by their subjects. Besides, it suited both the British Government and the Indian Princes that the States should have larger representation in the federal government than was warranted by any rational consideration. It made the new constitution more safe for the British interest and it gave added amplitude to the sovereignty of the Princes. Acceptance of these demands of the Princes would negative democracy which British Indians had always cherished. It was a heavy sacrifice, and in the opinion of some eminent British Indians, too heavy a price to pay for self-government. British Indian leaders, wisely or

unwisely as only the future can show, made that sacrifice and paid that price.

They hoped to secure at least Self-Government. The British members of the Round Table Conference under the leadership of Lord Reading agreed to responsible government provided the Princes joined a federation. The Princes, under the leadership of the Maharaja of Bikaner, had emphatically maintained that they would federate only with a responsible British India. They cherished their sovereignty; they would be absolute sovereigns in their own States and in such matters which they would voluntarily transfer to the federation they would share their sovereignty with the British Indians, leaving only a few matters, like dynastic rights, to be dealt with by the Crown.

The White Paper dashes even these to the ground. Responsibility is to be transferred to Delhi only to the extent that Delhi agrees with London; if Delhi differs then London will prevail. According to the press reports of the proceedings of the Chamber of Princes, Lord Willingdon frowned on the Princes' proposal to delimit paramountcy. So the paramountcy of the British Government remains untouched and uncontrolled. In what are proposed to be federal subjects, the Princes were hitherto sovereign at least *de jure*, though not *de facto*. When they join the federation and submit them to federal jurisdiction, they are not sharing their sovereignty over these subjects with the representatives of British India but are formally and *de jure* surrendering them to the control of the British Government. Neither the Princes nor British India will have self-government worth the name. By virtue of paramountcy, the British Government can control the internal administration of the States, and the dynastic rights of the Princes; and as the repository of over-riding powers, it can control the administration of the federation. It is a negation of self-government.

The White Paper thus negatives self-determination, self-government and democracy in India.—*The C. S. S. Review.*

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