

The Servant of India

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Copies of the Week.

Whittling down of White Paper.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE'S evidence before the Joint Select Committee must have disillusioned many who had built up great hopes of improvement in the White Paper proposals as a result of the Committee's deliberations. As a matter of fact the proposals which were none too progressive are constantly undergoing a process of being whittled down still further; and the Secretary of State's evidence constitutes an important stage in that process. Whatever the fate of central responsibility, undiluted provincial autonomy at any rate was universally expected to emerge out of the Committee's discussions. But thanks to the views expressed before it by the Secretary of State, even these modest expectations seem destined to disappointment. There are many points in his evidence which call for detailed notice, which must stand over till fuller reports of his evidence become available. In the meanwhile it is intended to confine our attention to only one or two topics in the evidence. He revived the proposal of the Simon Commission for inclusion in the provincial cabinets of a non-elected Minister to be appointed on the advice of the Ministers. But perhaps it is more correct to say that the revival took place not at his hands but at those of some members of the Committee, his contribution being a promise to give careful consideration to this further dilution of provincial autonomy. We should have thought that the chorus of opposition with which the suggestion was received when originally put forward by the Commission would have shown to Sir Samuel Hoare the extreme

unwisdom of thinking any more of it on the present occasion. But he is apparently unwilling to profit by past experience.

Another point in his evidence which has caused much disquiet is his advice to Indian opinion to consider the establishment of Second Chambers in the provinces with a view to reassuring British opinion. After the decision in the White Paper to saddle only three provinces with Upper Houses, there was a general disposition to regard the question as closed. Not that public opinion in any way approved of the contemplated step. In at least one of the three provinces marked out for being encumbered with less popular Chambers side by side with more popular ones, this course of action was decided upon in defiance of the dictates of public opinion as expressed in the legislative council. Sir Samuel Hoare now wants this defiance to extend to all provinces without distinction, all of which augurs very ill for the success of the new constitutional experiment. All we can say is that in this matter at any rate he does not stand to lose if he decides to be guided by public opinion.

Great emphasis was laid by him on the desirability on the part of the future Governors keeping in the closest touch with their Ministers. Such a direction to them may in all likelihood find a place in the Governor's Instrument of Instructions. It is hoped that as a result of such contact between the Governors and Ministers, any occasions necessitating the exercise of their special powers by the former might be avoided. We have no doubt that that hope will be widely shared. But supposing unfortunately the Ministers find themselves unable to accept the Governor's advice and the Governor feels called upon to overrule them in the discharge of his special responsibilities, what will be their fate? According to the Secretary of State, in such a case they will either resign or be dismissed by the Governor. Under the present constitution, if the Ministers succeed in securing their re-election, the Governor is bound to follow their advice without question. When the White Paper constitution, however, comes into effect, the Ministers' resignation or dismissal will, it is to be supposed, be followed by the resumption of the control of the administrative machinery by the Governor. We are prepared to give full credit to the Governors for their anxiety not to precipitate such deadlocks. But if the steps here described are a fair reflection of constitutional intentions, it is really a question whether the new constitution can be said to be an advance on the present one. Whereas the present constitution provides for the eventual assertion of the popular will, though in the limited field marked off for popular control, the proposed one makes no such provision and in fact so arranges matters that where the special responsibilities of the Governor come into clash with the will of the people, the former shall always prevail and the

latter go to the wall. Is that progress towards responsible government?

* * *

Support of Public Opinion.

SIR CHARLES INNES and Sir John Thompson who begged the Joint Select Committee to sanction the White Paper scheme in preference to the alternative scheme put forward by Sir Michael O'Dwyer on the ground that the latter would not be accepted by the country were asked whether the White Paper itself would attract enough support of public opinion. And these witnesses gave the confident answer that it would. Will not there be an agitation for modifying the scheme as soon as it was passed? was a question that was asked of Sir C. Innes, and the latter's reply was:

"I think that probably now, when the thing is being considered, naturally they will ask for as much as they think they can get; but once the whole scheme has been carefully examined and passed by Parliament, my own belief is that you will find most of the Indians will sit together and try to work it honestly and well."

Will the scheme be acceptable to the Congress? was another question asked, and Sir Charles's answer was:—

"I think that you have got to give it time to work itself out. I think when you start the White Paper scheme, and when you begin to work provincial autonomy in the Provinces, and, when they get interested in what they are doing you will get more and more people coming in."

The British Government need to be disabused in time of the notion on which they are apparently proceeding that the White Paper scheme will be acceptable to the country when the fact is that it will hardly be any more so than the O'Dwyer scheme. The public at large will have nothing to choose between the two, and of course it is now out of the question for the Congress to take a hand in its working.

* * *

Governor's Intervention.

ONE of the questions raised before the Joint Select Committee is: How is the Governor to exercise the special powers reserved to him under the White Paper scheme? How can he be kept in constant touch with the course of administration so that he might be able to intervene in time? Should the Governor have a secretariat of his own apart from the secretariat under the control of the Ministers? Sir Samuel Hoare apparently wants to endow the Governor with an independent staff. There are others who think that the same object can be served by a less drastic and in outward appearance a less harsh method.

Sir Charles Innes, for instance, suggests that since the Governor has the power of making rules governing the conduct of business, he can ensure that all important papers come to him before the Ministers take a final decision. That itself would be a sufficient safeguard, but in addition to this Secretaries to the various departments should continue to have the right of access to the Governor which they have at present. Only Sir Charles Innes would not mind the Governor making it a practice to see the Secretaries along with the Ministers, so that the Ministers would know the grounds on which their Secretaries based their suggestion for the exercise of the Governor's reserve powers.

Should heads of departments be given the right of access in addition to Secretaries? Sir Charles thinks that it is unnecessary, for without such a formal power the Governor can ask a departmental

head to see him or that the departmental head should be able to see him whenever necessary. He said:

"I do not think I would make any particular rule about the head of a department having a right of access, but, at the same time, I should always be perfectly confident of keeping in touch with my heads of departments."

Q. "Would you make any rule as regards the Inspector-General of Police?" A.—"No, I would not, myself. If I wanted my Inspector-General of Police, I should play golf with him, or get at him in some way like that; I should always keep in touch with him."

Q.—"But would he feel that he would like to play golf with you on his own initiative, if he had something to say to you?" A.—"I would have an understanding with him on that point."

Sir John Thompson said much the same thing. It need not be laid down in the Constitution Act that it was the duty of a Secretary to the Government to bring to the notice of the Governor any matter which might affect his special responsibility. The same thing could be managed without a specific provision to this effect. Sir John said:

"That is a suggestion which I should like to keep out of the White Paper, assuming that people were satisfied that the power to make rules would give sufficient power. I think there is a good deal of anxiety expressed on that point and it is an anxiety which has got to be set at rest; but, personally, I feel that the White Paper does provide for it."

* * *

Late Sir M. B. Chaulal.

SIR MAHADEO CHAUBAL whose death in Poona last week is deeply to be mourned came into prominence on his appointment as the first Indian executive councillor of the Bombay Government presided over by the late Lord Sydenham. But he acquired even greater prominence owing to his work in connection with the Public Services Commission, otherwise known as the Islington Commission. To his association with the late Mr. Gokhale on the Commission must be attributed his taste for public affairs which till then had not much fascination for Sir Mahadeo. His being thrown in Mr. Gokhale's company in the work of the Commission also enabled him to appreciate the work and worth of Mr. Gokhale—a fact which Sir Mahadeo was in the habit of acknowledging ungrudgingly in later life. Since his retirement he had settled in Poona and used to take keen interest in the working of local educational institutions with which he was connected in various capacities. His passing away recalls to mind the valuable assistance the late Prof. Bijapurkar received from him in resuscitating his Smartha Vidyalaya, an institution designed to impart what was known as "national" education in the days of the agitation against the partition of Bengal. The school had to be closed down owing to its being declared an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act during the troublous days of 1907-08. And it is not too much to say that but for Sir Mahadeo's help the institution which had incurred the displeasure of Government owing to the national bias of its instruction would never have been allowed to restart its activities.

* * *

Kenya.

NOTWITHSTANDING the denial of the Colonial Secretary in the House of Commons recently, there can be no doubt that important developments are in train in Kenya calculated to add very largely to the power, already great and disproportionate, of the white settlers over the destinies of the Colony. Seeking Swaraj ourselves in India, we should be the last

to stand in the way of any other people getting self-government. But in Kenya self-government means, as it has meant in all the British Dominions which contain peoples other than and in addition to the whites, the exploitation of millions of non-Europeans by a handful of whites. Self-government for the whites in Kenya would be most disastrous to the non-Europeans.

As Mr. Sastri pointed out in his speech at the National Liberal Federation, the whites in Kenya exhibited shrewd political sense in withdrawing their demand for self-government when they found the Labour Government in office in England, and preferred to bide their time. It will be recalled that it was when the Conservatives were in power that the Kenya whites first brought to a head their passionate demand for responsible government in the full confidence that they had friends in the jury. The Conservative Government appointed the Hilton-Young Commission. But unluckily for them, the Commission found devastatingly against the whites in Kenya and solemnly warned the British Government against conceding their impossible demands and throwing the non-European lambs to the European wolves. Nothing has happened since to soften the indictment, except that the Conservatives are again in power. From the point of view of the Kenya whites circumstances can never be more propitious for the realisation of their ambitions. No recent British Government was so overwhelmingly Tory as the present one and no British Government in the near future will be more inclined to meet their wishes. They have, therefore, renewed their agitation. But even the present Tory Government will find it hard to ignore the warnings of the Hilton-Young Commission. They may however resort to some subterfuge as the one suggested by the Kenya whites that they should be given more power over the public purse. In the circumstances, the Government and the people of India, not to speak of the Indians and other non-Europeans in Kenya and their friends in England, cannot be too vigilant.

Indians in Malaya.

DR. LANKA SUNDARAM recently spent more than ten weeks in the Federated Malay States, Siam and Indo-China, studying the condition of our countrymen settled there, and the results of his close personal observation cannot but be full of interest to the Indian public. Roughly speaking, about eight lakhs of Indians are found to be residing in those lands and in all of them their condition is on the whole deplorable. In fact, according to Dr. Sundaram, they are looked upon more or less as slaves everywhere. In Malaya they are called 'Klings' which means handcuffed prisoners, in Indo-China 'Chayas,' meaning black dogs and in Siam 'Khets' meaning black foreigners. This by no means helps to enhance India's prestige abroad. But, what is worse, she and her civilisation are judged in those countries by the kind of people that are helped by the Government of India to emigrate to them. These, as is well known, are generally uneducated and uncivilised coolies and are looked upon as a representative type of the people of this country. There can of course be no greater travesty of the truth, which must be put a stop to as soon as possible. To this end Dr. Sundaram proposes that "that kind of legalised export of labourers" must be discontinued, and says that this need not be delayed unnecessarily, for no constitutional or other difficulties bar the way of the Government if they are themselves inclined to the proposed course of action. Indeed, he goes further and asks: If the Government found itself able to stop the system of indentured labour in South Africa when it was much less liberalised, why can it not

stop emigration to Malaya? In his opinion, the disproportion between the sexes among emigrating Indians is vast and contributes to the degeneration noticeable among them. It is true the Emigration Act prescribes a definite sex ratio which has to be maintained among Indian emigrants; but the Government has very obligingly refused to enforce that provision in the case of Malaya with consequences on the general moral level of the Indian community which can be easily imagined. Another cause contributing to the lowering of the morale amongst Indians in Malaya is the recent reduction in wages which, Dr. Sundaram observes, had led to a lowering of their standard of life which was never very high. He also pleads for the establishment of greater liaison between these Indians and the mother country by enabling educated and cultured Indians to pay occasional visits to those countries. Dr. Sundaram has hopes that if under the reformed regime a department of external affairs controlled by an elected Indian is brought into being it would conduce to an improvement in the condition of Indians settled overseas.

Articles.

UNWISE.

TO ask to be let out when in jail and to be put back when out—this seems to sum up the typical Congress mentality. In bloodless no less than in bloody war the means usurp the place of the end, and the fighter puts his honour alongside the country's welfare. Change of tactics, though necessitated by events, is stigmatised as an owning of defeat. The high command may cry aloud to be shifted to other hands but personal loyalty and hero-worship forbid it. The recent Poona Conference has proved that Congress, if it means to live long and win freedom for the people, must regard civil disobedience not as an immutable article of religious belief but as a mere mode of strategy to be adopted or discarded as circumstances may require. To the Mahatma it is a law of life, a right and a duty which a human being cannot abdicate or neglect. In his view it is not a worldly but a religious matter. Like the pursuit of dharma it must be unflinching and recognise no failure or defeat. On the contrary, a reverse is but a test to which God subjects you, and you please him by not bending under it.

A whole people cannot afford in the pursuit of secular ends to be governed by such high idealism. A political organisation must learn the lesson of each campaign and apply it in the next. We cannot help thinking that in asking Congress to continue its present tactics Mr. Gandhi failed to provide for a possibility of error on his part and Congress in adhering without deviation to its present course has shown itself incapable of adaptation to circumstances or of fresh lines of activity. Indeed, while there is much to commend in the discipline of its ranks and the disposition to obey the word of command in the field of action, the continuance of the dictatorship of Mr. Gandhi cannot be regarded as a healthy sign inasmuch as it indicates that fertility of counsel and independence of thought have been stifled.

He contends, naturally enough, that if the losses and gains of his movement both in the material and the moral spheres be reckoned up together, the gains would far outweigh the losses. But is that the estimate formed by the bulk of Congressmen in the country? There is reason to think that it is not so. The repressive measures of Government have succeeded only too well. Organisations have been broken; their personnel has been dispersed and their finance crippled. And ignorant and informed circles alike realise that Government has put forth only a small fraction of its strength and resources. It is true that by such means the political problem has by no means been got rid of and the discontent has only been driven underground.

Unfortunately, the statesmanship and generosity of Government are by no means equal to its strength. Simla has once more shown its narrowness of vision and its inability to rise above petty official convention. It prefers its false prestige to genuine peace. It is content to prove its power where it ought to secure the elements of stability. It knows well but pretends to forget that in his romantic preference of the immaterial to the material the Mahatma shows great flexibility and accommodation as a negotiator provided only his high motive and the honour of the country are recognised. His wish for peace is real and constant, and if the Viceroy did but care he would find in Mr. Gandhi one who was not slow to grasp the realities of the situation and who was willing to make every allowance for the responsibilities and difficulties of the Government. Between the obstinacy of Congress and the small-mindedness of Government a great opportunity has been lost and the country doomed to a further period of turmoil.

Some sanguine spirits had looked forward to a consolidation of the nationalist forces in the country, stronger and more permanent than that caused by the appointment of the Simon Commission. The failure of the present political agitation on the constitutional side is complete. The White Paper scheme, even if enacted entire, would be a mockery of the expectations entertained in India and to some extent countenanced by authority at the beginning of the Round Table Conference. To speak the sober truth, no progressive Indian politician is interested in the combat between Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Churchill. We scarcely mind which way it goes. If from this discomfiture some benefit is to accrue to the people of India it can only be by Congress allying itself with the other progressive elements in the country and withstanding the forces of reaction and sectionalism which will be arrayed in the new constitution against the interests of the future nation. These interests would be left undefended by the leaders of Congress consenting to be put out of action indefinitely. When our children come into a diminished heritage they cannot applaud the wisdom of those who vacated the seats of power and authority and left them to be occupied by men of parochial views and circumscribed loyalties.

SERVICES' "ACCRUING RIGHTS."

THE evidence tendered before the Joint Select Committee on behalf of the Indian Civil Service is too important to be passed over without comment. Its value lies in that it serves to show how taking advantage of the constitutional revision now in progress the Service is not merely trying to consolidate its present position but to secure additional advantages for its members. Nobody can legitimately quarrel with its natural anxiety to ensure for its members throughout their service in this country the career in life to which they looked forward when joining it. Indeed responsible Indian opinion has gone out of its way to reassure the Service on this point. But apparently it is something more than the continuance unimpaired of its position it seems to have set its heart upon. On no other supposition is it possible to account for some of its demands submitted to the Committee. To take an instance or two. Emphasising the need of the Governor being in touch with the services, the Indian Civil Service Association makes the suggestion that "in the case of the Indian Civil Service this result would be best ensured if proposals relating to postings, transfers, promotions and similar matters, were placed before the Governor by an officer of the rank of Chief Secretary." It is also urged that when in future a Minister decides to comply with a public demand for an inquiry into the conduct of a Civil Servant, "he should obtain the personal concurrence of the Governor to the personnel of the Committee." As can be easily seen, these demands constitute an important departure from the existing state of affairs in relation to the Service and betoken a desire to secure for the Service advantages which it does not possess at the present day.

An even more convincing proof of this mental attitude is furnished by the demands made on behalf of the Service in the name of the protection of what are known as its "accruing rights." These the Service seemingly wants to be defined with greater precision. As a matter of fact, however, what is desired is not merely a more precise definition of these rights but a definition which is calculated to widen their scope still further. An admission to this effect was made by the representatives of the Service when Sir Hari Singh Gour summed up the situation thus: "It then comes to this: You want that a new provision should be inserted in the new Constitution Act which would enlarge your rights beyond what is interpreted to be your existing and accruing rights in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown." The question of these "accruing rights" is not one of academic interest but assumes practical importance in view of the fact that the abolition of the posts of Commissioners generally considered to be superfluous is resisted by the Service on the ground that such action would involve an invasion on such rights. In passing it may be mentioned in fairness to the Service that they claim no such rights in relation to Governorships, for as stated by Sir John Kerr in reply to the Marquess of Zetland, the Service does not look upon Governorships as posts in any way reserved for the I. C. S. It may be added

that the Government's right to abolish certain posts is not challenged by the Services. Only it is contended that this action cannot be taken in respect of certain selection appointments without compensating the Service for their loss.

But the present position with regard to these rights may here be briefly stated. Section 96 B (2) of the Montagu Act affords protection to Civil Servants who were in service at the time of the introduction of the 1919 reforms in respect of their "existing and accruing rights" and promises them "such compensation for the loss of any of them as the Secretary of State in Council may consider just and equitable." Now the question is: Does the abolition of posts reserved for the Indian Civil Service like the Commissionerships make any sort of infringement on those rights? The point was raised so far back as 1923 when Lord Peel was the Secretary of State; and was referred by him to the Law Officers of the Crown for opinion. This was to the effect that "accruing rights" in no way come in the way of the abolition of the Divisional Commissionerships. The matter was, however, not allowed to rest there. Lord Peel took occasion to place it before the Lee Commission for its verdict. But the Commission found itself unable to lay down a hard and fast rule as to how much compensation, if any, should be paid to the aggrieved members of the Service in the event of the abolition of any of the existing posts or class of posts. Nevertheless it recommended that such claims for compensation should be submitted to the Public Service Commission, "which, being the expert authority in India on all Service questions, will be well qualified to form a just opinion." The Indian members of the Commission however differed from the non-Indian in thinking that such references should be limited "to cases other than those necessitated by retrenchment or curtailment of work." In such cases their view was that "there would be no ground for compensation except for the incumbent of the post abolished." It is not known whether the advice of the Commission was acted upon, and if so, with what results.

It would appear from the Service's memorandum submitted to the Committee that the compensation that may be demanded by them in the event of the abolition of the Commissionerships numbering about 30 in the whole country would not be a lump sum of money to be paid to every single serving member of the Service but would take the form of the creation of an equal number of new post carrying the same salary as is paid to the Commissioners. The point may perhaps be better stated in the witness' own words:—

"At present there are in the province twenty posts of Deputy Commissioners on the time scale, rising from 500 or 600 rupees through twenty-five years to a maximum of 3,500. I think that is a fair statement of the case for most Provinces. Then, in addition to that, you have five superior posts on 3,000 a month, the post of Commissioner of the division, which are now being referred to. We say that if you abolish some of those posts of Commissioners, the virtual effect is that nobody in the Service will ever get more than 2,500 rupees a month. ... We say: "Create special selection grade posts on 3,000 corresponding to the number of Commissionerships that

have been abolished and put into those posts by selection the men who would have been chosen as fit to be Commissioners if such posts had existed."

How long are such posts to be continued? The question has been anticipated in the memorandum: "These selection posts should be continued in existence so long as any officers recruited before the commencement of the Constitution Act and affected by the abolition remain in the Service." Which means that if the Indian Civil Service is to be allowed to have its way, the abolition of Commissionerships cannot be looked forward to for another 35 or 40 years. It may be that during this interval the Commissionerships may have been converted into so many sinecures; but work or no work, the continuance of the posts must be guaranteed to the Service till so long as the youngest recruit to the Service at the time of the promulgation of the Hoare-Willington reforms is pensioned off. The abolition of these 30 posts at Rs. 3,000 each a month is expected to result in financial relief to Indian coffers to the tune of nearly Rs. 12 lakhs every year, not counting the saving that may be effected by the disbandment of their establishments. Nor can it be doubted that the relief would be cordially welcomed by the Indian people especially in times like the present. But what is that to the Service? It is bent upon insisting upon its pound of flesh, as the following question and answer will show:

Mr. Zafrulla Khan: So that during the next 35 years, according to you, even though there may be less work for a certain class of officer, if the post has been preserved for the Indian Civil Service officers, there can be no financial relief to the provincial or central Ex-chequer as a result of the reduction of the post?

Witness: Yes, that is so.

With the grant of enlarged political rights to India, public opinion in this country is increasingly insistent that the control of the Service should vest in the Governor-General rather than in the Secretary of State as at present. The Indian Civil Service has adopted a strongly hostile attitude in relation to this demand and chooses to remain unamenable to Indian opinion. In answer to a query whether the Service would be satisfied if the powers of the Secretary of State as set forth in the White Paper were transferred to the Viceroy at his discretion or to the Governor-General as head of the suggested Indian Government, the Committee was blandly informed by the representatives of the Service that the Service would not accept a position of that kind. "The view they take is that they have been recruited by the Secretary of State under arrangements that have the sanction or the knowledge of Parliament and they would not like to be placed under any lower authority." The safeguards for their protection which are proposed in the White Paper are universally looked upon as so utterly inconsistent with the promised grant of responsible government to this country that they alone would form an adequate ground, in the eyes even of some moderate politicians, for the rejection of the White Paper constitution. But the Service would not only retain all of them, but would like them to be "added to in some particulars."

Salaries and pensions payable to the superior services or to their dependents will continue to be

non-votable even under the proposed constitutional arrangements. This should satisfy all reasonable minds as to the security of their dues from the Indian Government. But the Indian Civil Service chooses to think that the provision does not go far enough. What it wants is "a clear and unambiguous provision" "which will enable the Governor-General or the Governor to secure not merely budgetary provision, but the actual funds which he regards as necessary for the discharge of any of his special responsibilities." In regard to Family Pension Funds and provident funds payable to the Service, the demand is put forward that "the Federal Government should be required to establish and maintain trust funds for meeting the obligations in question." In other words, as orally explained, this means that huge sums must be invested in sterling in England if the Service are to have the necessary sense of security in regard to payments due to them. One can understand their equanimity being somewhat disturbed by certain irresponsible talk about repudiation of obligations recently indulged in Ireland and India. But the strength of opinion behind such a move in the country at present or in the proposed Federal Assembly, can easily be overestimated. So far as the future Assembly goes, Mr. Jayakar had little difficulty in showing that the National Congress stands hardly any chance of capturing the Federal Legislature or being in a position to carry through it any of its wild cat schemes, as out of the 250 seats in the Assembly to be filled by election, not more than 105 will be general seats and therefore open to invasion by the Congress. It would be nothing short of a miracle if the Congress can manage to get even all of these filled by its own adherents. But apart from this, there would be the Princes' block which may be relied upon to checkmate any movement of a radical kind and furiously to oppose any proposal for the repudiation of obligations already incurred. The fear of the Congress which is used as a justification for the extravagant demands of the Service appears to us to be too far-fetched. It is not as if they do not understand all this; but they are out to exploit to their advantage a situation so favourable to them.

THE ETHICS OF ABORTION.

MR. B. V. JADHAV, in keeping with the world movement for Sex Reform, is trying to introduce in the Legislative Assembly a Bill further to amend the Indian Penal Code, 1860, for a certain purpose.

"WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Indian Penal Code for the purpose hereafter appearing; it is hereby enacted as follows :-

1. This Act may be called the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 1933.

2. In Section 312 of the Indian Penal Code

(a) the words 'if such miscarriage be not caused in good faith for the purpose of saving the life of the woman' shall be omitted;

(b) at the end of the section the following shall be inserted, namely :-

"Exception.—Miscarriage caused by a qualified medical practitioner at the request of a woman desiring it on account of physical, social or economic reasons is not punishable under this section."

Considering that similar bills are being discussed and introduced in several countries, it will not be out of place here to go into the merits of the case for abortion. It may be mentioned that the most advanced law in this matter is the present Russian law, which has legalised abortion within the first three months of pregnancy and this is done at State expense in approved cases. This law meets with the approval of sex reformers and has served as a guide to other legislators, e. g., in Turkey and Czechoslovakia. It will be interesting therefore to examine the provisions of the Russian law. Any woman who wishes her pregnancy to be terminated at State expense in State hospitals has to send an application to a committee appointed for the purpose, stating her reasons. If these reasons are approved, she has only to go to the hospital indicated and get it done. If not approved, she can still get it done at her own expense by a qualified doctor, provided it is done within the first three months. This law has resulted in an enormous saving of the lives of mothers who used to die when abortion was performed by quacks.

The same result can be achieved in every country by legalising abortion. The law against abortion, like everything else, has to be judged by its results. It is supposed to be a deterrent law, but it deters nobody. Whether a woman desires abortion for economic reasons or to save her reputation, the motive is so powerful that the most terrible threats will not prevent her from attempting it by all possible means, ranging from "swallowing all sorts of poisons up to gunpowder," says Madame Berty Albrecht, "which often kills both woman and child; penetrating the uterus with every kind of root, bark, bone, vegetable, pin, hook, needle and what not." A French working woman explained her method: "I just insert a hatpin inside and I prick, and prick and prick until the blood comes out." Mme. Albrecht knew a midwife who committed three abortions a day, apart from her normal work; and a girl of 16 who died at a midwife's place, and the scandal was hushed up because her father was a prominent man. She makes a sharp distinction between *legal* abortions done in clinics by skilled specialists, giving a very small percentage of deaths and practically no complications, and *illegal* abortions, done by just anybody, a quack, a dirty old woman, a neighbour, or by the woman herself. It is the *illegal* abortion that she rightly condemns, and it is the present law that makes it *illegal*. It not only misses its point, which is to preserve the lives of future children, but kills thousands of mothers every year. "Women are not asking for the *right* to abortion, because they have already taken it without permission, but they want the right to those standards of hygiene which are the pride of the 20th century."

The same story is repeated in all countries. Dr. Norman Haire cites the case of a woman in England who took all sorts of drugs, threw herself down the stairs, jumped off a table, lifted heavy furniture and at last went to a professional abortionist at 4½ months and died owing to his efforts. One of his own consins went to a medical abortionist, who was crippled and unable to walk. "He sat in a wheeled chair, took a syringe out of his pocket, filled it with ether, and as she stood in front of him, he lifted up her clothes with one hand and manipulated the syringe with the other. There was absolutely no attempt at surgical cleanliness." This went on every day for three weeks, when she had a septic abortion and was ill ever afterwards. Dr. Haire points out that the law affects poor people only, as rich women can always find a doctor to do it properly, or get it done on the Continent, where more doctors are willing to do it though the law is the same.

Mrs. Dora Russell recently pointed out that the death-rate for illegitimate babies ranges from 3 to 9 times the rate for legitimate babies. "If this is not murder, I should like to know what is. And where is the logic or humanity in letting these babes come to full term, cost their mothers the agony of birth, only to die in misery before they are a year old?"

Dr. Robinson, the well-known sexologist, has enumerated and described 24 quack medicines which were sold as abortifacient drugs to women in America and which enriched the proprietors without helping the women. A well-known birth-control advocate in England, who is against legalising abortion, admitted that in one fortnight she received 14 applications for contraceptive help and 85 entreaties to procure abortion. Miss Stella Browne, perhaps the most daring of English sex reformers, insists that the legalisation should not be limited to cases of disease, mental defect or rape. "*Any solution short of complete freedom of choice for the woman in the early months, comes up against immense practical difficulties.*" For instance, limitation to proved cases of rape or assault would (a) encourage false accusations, (b) automatically rule out cases of pregnancy in legal marriage and (c) be frequently nullified by the "law's delays" until the child was born! For a great many people, all pleasure in life, or at least sex pleasure, is spoilt by the constant dread of conception, and Miss Browne insists that sex is not a thing to be ashamed of and everybody has a right to derive pleasure from it. If it was known that a remedy would be available if contraceptives fail, this would relieve great suffering.

Victor Margueritte, the famous French author, takes the view that the foetus is an integral part of the body of the mother and says: "To punish abortion as a crime is not only the result of monstrous hypocrisy, but an attack on individual liberty. The political reason in this case goes against the real interest of everybody." The French law does not punish an attempt at suicide in the case of a pregnant woman, but does it not necessarily include attempted abortion? The only reasonable course according

to him is for the law to exercise sanitary control over what it can never prevent.

Let not people imagine that abortions are less prevalent in India than in Europe or America. The cases of child murder so frequently reported in the papers are sufficient proof to the contrary. I personally get at least 500 demands a year from perfectly respectable people who want to know how to procure an abortion. Of course I am obliged to disappoint them, because I do not knowingly break laws, in spite of my conviction for obscenity by a narrow-minded magistrate, under a so-called law, which is not a law, but an atrocity.

The most important point in the amendment proposed by Mr. Jadhav is that it is entirely consistent with the spirit of the existing law, which, however, fails to enforce the principle which it accepts, viz. that the life of the woman is more valuable than that of the unborn babe. Since women are even prepared to risk suicide to save their reputation, and her relatives will often help her to do it, no punishment can stop attempts at abortion. If the child is born, it will in all probability be murdered or die of neglect. The effects of the existing law are monstrous. It neither saves the woman, nor the child. If the proposed change is made, abortions will be done by doctors instead of by quacks, an enormous number of lives will be saved, and the principle of the law will be enforced. Nothing could be more reasonable, and those who accept this humanitarian principle have no reason whatever to oppose the change. As for religious fanatics, no arguments can reach their befogged brains, but in this enlightened age, they should no longer be allowed to tyrannise over sensible people, but should be kept in their place. It is the duty of all persons with a particle of humanity in them to give their whole-hearted support to the amendment in question.

R. D. KARVE.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, July 8.

THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

SO much dissatisfaction has been caused by the slow progress made by the Joint Select Committee and by the manner of its procedure that two very important changes have been made that may have very considerable influence upon later stages of the political developments relating to India. The whole of the earlier part of the evidence-taking stage was, with the exception of Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, occupied by the hearing of British, and almost exclusively service and ex-service witnesses. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage. It was an advantage in so far as it enabled Indian delegates, some of whom cannot be expected to remain here indefinitely, to cross-examine the witnesses with considerable effectiveness. It was a double disadvantage in that it built up in the minds of some of the Conservative delegates already somewhat prone to that viewpoint strong doubts as to the wisdom or desirability

likely of proceeding with Indian constitutional reform to the extent or along the lines contemplated in the White Paper. Secondly, it had the effect of postponing the hearing of Indian evidence to a later date, which might have resulted in obliging Indian witnesses who have come here at much inconvenience to themselves and no little expense, to remain over until October to tender their evidence, when some of their countrymen, who might be expected to help them in eliciting the facts that they wished to bring out, might no longer be available in London.

On the other hand, the interposition of highly controversial evidence, most of which is cancelled out by conflicting statements on either side, has had the effect of postponing unduly discussion between the Indian delegates and the British members for the purpose of elucidating the respective points of view so as to enable British Indian delegates at least, or some of the more progressive among them, to determine upon their future course of action, namely, to reach a decision whether they can serve any useful purpose or not by remaining here. And in considering this the delegates would have to judge whether the best service that they could render to India was to attempt the almost impossible task of expanding and liberalising the White Paper proposals to the extent that would generally satisfy moderate Indian opinion or to lend support to the defence even of the White Paper proposals against the formidable attack made upon them in very influential circles, both within and outside the Committee.

In order to satisfy the two obvious requirements that were bringing the affairs of the Committee to a condition of crisis, it has been decided to bring the main evidence to a temporary conclusion about Thursday of next week, after the Secretary of State and his advisers have given evidence, as also the representatives of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India, who began their evidence yesterday. It is understood that on Tuesday next, to which date the Committee now stands adjourned, the Secretary of State for India and Sir Malcolm Hailey, who is the author of the Finance Memorandum, to which I shall refer later, will appear as witnesses. Evidence relating to what are relatively matters of detail or minor affairs is to be taken by sub-committees to be appointed by the Select Committee on Tuesday by the authority given to it by both Houses of Parliament, by resolutions passed at Thursday's sittings, upon the motion respectively of the Secretary of State and the Lord Chairman of the Select Committee. In this connection I understand that there is already some disturbance in the minds of the Indian women's deputation that has come here to give evidence on the question of women's franchise. There is, I am informed, a strong disinclination among them to being relegated to a small sub-committee. It is only natural that, having come so far in order to express their convictions in a matter on which they feel so strongly, they should object to appearing before anything less than the Select Committee as a whole. On the other hand, important as the women's franchise question undoubtedly is, the view is legitimate that it is rather a matter of detail than of fundamental structure, though here the women will disagree. Moreover, if an exception is made in the case of the Indian women's representatives, there is no doubt that this could be regarded as a precedent by the Punjab Hindu representatives, Bhai Paramanand and Pundit Nank Chand, and by the representatives of every other sectional interest desiring to be heard before the Select Committee, and who would inevitably lodge a protest against being treated upon what they would regard, properly from their point of view, though unnecessarily so in the larger interests of the country, as a position of infe-

riority. It is a matter concerning which the Committee will have to go pretty warily and in which a good deal of diplomatic persuasion will have to be exercised.

As regards the question of discussions, it is very certain that the time for these is overdue. I have reason to know that a good deal of the irritation, amounting almost to bitterness, has been created in the minds of the British Indian delegation, almost without exception, not only by reason of the character of the evidence tendered by some of the official and ex-official witnesses regarding the character and complexion of Indians to govern themselves and each other, but also by the obviously reactionary tendencies of the questions put to these witnesses by a section of the Conservative members of the Committee, as is clear from the published reports, and also by the aloofness of the members of the Committee from their Indian colleagues as a whole, exception being made of certain individual friendships and private contacts. It has been felt for some time that there was very grave danger of estrangement on the part of certain very prominent members of the British Indian delegation, who have found the absence of closer association and consultation with their British colleagues alike irksome and portentous. It is all to the good, therefore, that from about the 15th July and until about the 28th, the Indian delegation and the Select Committee will be brought into closer relations during the discussions that will then be proceeding between them, when it is believed that an energetic attempt will be made to discover the general direction to be taken by the Committee.

THE EVIDENCE.

During the last week or so, there has been very distinct change in the character of the evidence given before the Committee. Until comparatively recently it has been reactionary, crudely selfish, or at the best self-centred, almost without exception. Its psychological effect upon many members of the Committee was, to judge from the published reports, serious and dangerous. It was, if not wholly, at least very largely, directed to show that Indians were incompetent, corrupt, undependable, and untrustworthy. I have reason to know that one distinguished member of the Cabinet at least has privately commiserated with some of the British-Indian leaders at their misfortune in having had to sit day after day listening to a poisonous diatribe of abuse and vilification of themselves and their countrymen and their institutions. What was equally discouraging was having to sit and listen to attempt after attempt made to persuade the Committee to jettison the entire White Paper framework of Federation with modified central responsibility in favour of a nebulous scheme based upon something substantially less than the Statutory Commission's recommendations. This latter scheme, it was confidentially alleged, was all that India was fit for and all that it deserved. And it was affirmed, with every degree of assurance, that such a scheme would work. It was significant, however, that those who sponsored it were, in the main, men who had had little, if any, experience of India under the reforms.

The antidote to this pernicious and harmful gospel, organised by the Indian Empire Society and by the Defence of India League, from both of which it is significantly announced to-day that Mr. P. J. Hannan, Conservative M. P., has just resigned, preferring to hold himself free to consider on its merits the report to be ultimately presented to Parliament by the Select Committee, in whose personnel he has the completest confidence, rather than continue to associate himself with a raging tearing propaganda directed against the White Paper scheme, has been

given during the last few days by evidence of an entirely different kind given by Sir John P. Thompson, Sir Alfred Watson, and Mr. Edward Villiers on behalf of the Union of Britain and India, Sir Charles Innes, ex-Governor of Burma on his own behalf, but also in fact representing most of the higher officials with recent Indian experience, and by the representatives of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India.

The whole tendency of this evidence has been to show that those holding the views that almost uniquely held the stage at an earlier period were hardly entitled to be heard, because of their lack of knowledge and experience of modern Indian conditions upon what was right and necessary to meet the legitimate demands and aspirations of India to-day and in the period ahead. Sir Charles Innes in particular was very forthright in his condemnation and criticism of the scheme (if it can so be called) advocated by what for convenience may be termed the "O'Dwyer School". He plainly said that these advocates of reaction who had evidently made very effective appeal to their counterparts in the Committee, were neither up-to-date, consistent, nor logical, and all of this group of witnesses alike bore testimony to the fact that the risks contemplated under a constitution planned in effect upon the White Paper proposals would be infinitely less, and far less harmful, to Indo-British relations than those that would be certain to result from the adoption of the O'Dwyer scheme that would imply in the minds of responsible and representative Indians that Britain had gone back upon her pledges and that would involve an era of stark repression in India, at the end of which (and it could not obviously last for ever) the relations between the two countries would be infinitely worse than at present. In private conversation very generous tributes of appreciation have been paid by British Indian delegates to the spirit in which this evidence has been given, apart altogether from differences of opinion on particular proposals and detailed suggestions. The evidence now given has brought a breath of fresh air into the mephitic atmosphere of the Committee room at the House of Lords and has raised the level of the matters under consideration to the region of reality and actuality. Even had these witnesses been rather less spontaneous and plain-spoken than they have been in their condemnation of O'Dwyerian futility and Churchillian spleen, they would nevertheless have received warm thanks from the overburdened and disgruntled Indian delegates for having done something to stay the unchecked flow of vituperation and vilification that had been the real burden of the earlier evidence.

When the Secretary of State and Sir Malcolm Hailey give their evidence next week of the maximum importance, it will be possible for the British Indian delegates to put them a number of searching and critical questions, upon which and the answers thereto a very great deal is bound to depend.

In the meanwhile it is very significant that the financial memorandum submitted to the Select Committee and the Indian delegation under the authority of Sir Malcolm Hailey and the authority of the Secretary of State, has, together with a statement to the Committee by Sir Samuel Hoare on the subject of Federal Finance, been published yesterday as the first of the records to be issued to the public. The Memorandum and Sir Samuel Hoare's statement thereon will naturally receive widespread attention in India. It is, however, important to note that Sir Samuel has been at pains to show that most of the increased financial burden associated with Indian administration would have to be incurred, whether or not the new constitution comes into existence and

only a relatively small proportion of it could be fairly attributed to increased expense due to the proposed new constitution, whilst this whole question of finance may ultimately have the strongest possible bearing upon the question of when, and in what circumstances, the constitution if ultimately adopted by Parliament will come into operation in India.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

Having made their maximum effort at the Conservative meeting, on the 28th June, the rebel Tories, save for a little desultory snipping and the licking of wounds are comparatively quiet and the anti-White Paper campaign is lulled for the time being. We may therefore turn for a moment or two and contemplate the disastrous effects wrought upon the proceedings of the World Monetary and Economic Conference by President Roosevelt's almost savage refusal to contemplate even temporary and provisional monetary stabilisation during the tendency of the Conference. The consequence has been to rob the Conference of half of its title and much of its purpose as effectively as in the case of the death of one of the partners to a not immoderately happy marriage. The gold countries threatened at one time to withdraw altogether from the Conference. They may still do so, but perhaps not yet, and almost certainly not dramatically. The American delegation carries not the slightest weight in the proceedings of the Conference and is less incidental than at any time in international Conferences. The United States is engaged in an orgy of speculation resulting from a policy of progressive economic nationalism. Even if the results are, for the time being, spectacularly successful, it is considered probable by some economic experts that the ultimate consequences for America and other countries will be equally spectacularly disastrous. They may, of course, being economic experts, be wrong. No one to-day attaches any great importance to what any economic or financial expert says, as he may be contradicted to-morrow by another expert speaking with equal, if not greater, authority.

It is unlikely, notwithstanding first fears, that the Conference will break up altogether. There are many subsidiary matters of considerable importance, though not necessarily of major consequence that an international gathering such as this can profitably work upon, with a view to discover at least temporary solutions of the relevant problems, and it is likely that whilst the Conference will be kept in being at least in nucleus for the handling of the larger problems, if and when circumstances demand their further consideration, various sub-committees of the Conference will be set up to make recommendations to the Conference on the problems of less critical importance.

Reviews.

SOVIET SYSTEM AT WORK.

TWELVE STUDIES IN SOVIET RUSSIA.

Ed. by MARGARET I. COLE. (Victor Gollancz, London.) 1933. 20cm. 282p. 5/-

SOVIET Russia in spite of the fifteen years or more of its existence is still a land of mystery. It is still the most discussed country in the whole world. The economic foundations of the Soviet system are at once most admired and most detested while its political and legal systems have unique features, which make their study interesting. Political prejudices however die very hard and the Russian experiment is admired or criticized according as the writers have

socialist or capitalist sympathies. An impartial and unvarnished account of the actual state of affairs in Russia is hard to get.

The present book is the result of an attempt on the part of the New Fabian Research Bureau in Great Britain to present to the public an accurate and unprejudiced account of the Soviet system in its various aspects. The Bureau sent out twelve competent persons to investigate into the various phases of Russian life and the result of their researches are published in compendious book form.

It is a thing to note that all the writers in this volume are experts in the various subjects which they have undertaken to investigate and, what is more, each one of them is a sympathetic investigator and not a carping critic of the Soviet system. Mr. Hugh Dalton leads with his essay on "Soviet Economy", Mr. Pethwick Lawrence writes on "Finance," Mr. Haldane on "Power and Industrial Development," Mr. Mitchison on "the Russian Worker", Mr. John Morgan on "Agriculture," Mr. H. L. Beales on "the Political System", Mr. Pritt on "the Legal System," Mrs. Margaret I. Cole on "Women and Children," Mr. Geoffrey Ridley on "Agriculture and Town-Planning", Mr. Postgate on "Radio, Press and Publishing" Mrs. Mitchison on "Archaeology and the Intellectual Worker" and Mr. Rudolph Messel on the "Film in Russia."

Almost every one of the studies is based upon personal knowledge, which invests their conclusions with special significance and importance. As Messrs. Cole and Atlee say in their Introduction, they had an absolutely open mind and though they went to Russia with a reasonably clear knowledge of the problems to which they were trying to find answers, most of them, as soon as they settled down to actual investigation in Russia itself, were compelled to re-frame many of the questions which they intended asking.

The book is a valuable one and can be recommended to every one wishing to have an insight into the actual working of the Russian experiment.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

RURAL LIFE IN BENGAL.

SOME BENGAL VILLAGES. Ed. by. N. C. BHATTACHARYYA and L. A. NATESAN. (University of Calcutta.) 1932. 25cm. 225p.

THIS book is the result of the efforts of the two Editors and their students, all of the Scottish Church College of Calcutta University. The editors prepared the questionnaire, which is included in the book, and explained it to their students, and the students made these surveys in their vacations. The individual surveys differ in their value but on the whole the attempt is a success. The students who strictly adhere to the questionnaire give some valuable economic data, but others give tales which they have heard in the village and coloured with a bit of their imagination. The suggestions for the improvement of villages given by some surveyors are impracticable. It must be admitted that these surveys do not come up to the surveys conducted by the Punjab Economic Board in point of accuracy but only prove the enthusiasm of the students for this kind of work.

The two Editors contribute one chapter each. Mr. Bhattacharya traces the history of the rural economic science, and emphatically pleads for greater study of that important branch of economic science. Mr. Natesan's chapter deals with the "problems of village life in Bengal." He says that Bengal with many branches of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra and its rich

alluvial soil is naturally the best favoured province in the country. But, he adds, the rural population of Bengal is no better than its counterpart in other provinces. Diseases like Kala Azar and hookworm sap the vitality of the people, and the inefficient agriculturists engage themselves in ineffective labour with very poor returns. They can take to no other employment, as there are no rural industries. Their method is the traditional one, and they know no scientific management. The villages have no satisfactory means of communication, and their marketing leaves much scope for improvement. There are too many middle men who leave very little for the primary producer. The progress of the five co-operative jute societies has shown that by cooperation the middle men might be eliminated to the advantage of the agriculturist.

N. S. S.

Miscellaneous.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1932-33.

INTRODUCTORY.

Perhaps it is as well occasionally to recall and re-state some of the special features of the Servants of India Society, which because of their somewhat novel and experimental character, gave the Founder and his first associates cause for some misgivings as to the future of the Society, but which have since justified themselves, if only by their survival now for twenty-eight years. The Society is a political body of life-workers. Politics are unlike religion which, with its more stable doctrines and appeal to the spiritual element in man, can and often does inspire and sustain the life-long dedication of its votaries. Change is as natural and common to politics as stability is to religion; and during the last twenty-five years Indian politics have undergone many striking changes. In spite of them, the members of the Society, with few exceptions, have been able to keep to their vow of life-long association in political work.

In politics the Society stands for national, as opposed to sectional, interests. It is a secular body, non-religious, non-sectarian and non-communal, open to all Indians and engaged in common work, but striving to do it in a "religious" spirit even as religious work is undertaken.

The Society has Branches in Bombay, Madras, Nagpur and Allahabad and smaller Centres at Dohad, Lahore, Lucknow, Cuttack, Mayanoor, Calicut, and Mangalore, while the headquarters are in Poona.

Another special feature of the Society is that the bulk of the work of the members is not done in its own name, but under the auspices of other organisations, which they helped to found or with which they are connected in one active capacity or other. They, however, lay no claim to exclusive credit for the work of such organisations, in the execution of which many others have collaborated. There are some kinds of work, such as the conduct of the Society's periodicals, for which members alone are responsible.

Because of this policy of the Society of working through other organisations, which has now become a strong tradition, it is not easy to give an exhaustive report of the work done by the members of the Society without going into the details of the work of the other organisations of which they most often happen to be the chief executive officers. It is also

noteworthy that several of the members are engaged in institutional work, which is more or less of routine character, and which does not lend itself to fresh annual description without repetition of old matter. The annual report of the Society must, therefore be read subject to this qualification.

PERSONNEL AND PERSONAL.

The number of members was increased by the admission on the 19th November last of Mr. K. S. Negi, and stands now at 27. Of these, 21 are Ordinary Members who have completed five years' service in the Society and the rest Members under Training.

The advancing age of the senior members—five of them are over sixty years in age—and the expanding work of the Society make it imperative to augment largely the strength of the Society; but financial considerations have put a stern limit to the adequate satisfaction of this need. Notwithstanding that the allowances of members had had to suffer "cuts", three Probationers were admitted last year; Messrs. R. S. Gupte of Nagpur, N. S. Sivasubramanyam of Trichinopoly, and V. R. Nayanar of Malabar. Every year a large number of applications for admission into the Society are received. The number this year is more than 30, but it will be possible to admit only one or two.

Ill-health handicapped several members in their work during the year. Messrs. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, N. M. Joshi, K. P. Kaul and L. N. Sahu kept poor health right through. Messrs. R. R. Bakhale, Sriram Bajpai, and D. V. Ambekar were out of action for fairly long periods on account of ill-health.

Mr. A. V. Patwardhan celebrated his sixty-first birthday on the 13th February last; and his many friends and admirers in Poona and other places celebrated the occasion by holding congratulatory meetings. Tributes were paid to him for his services to the Society and to the cause of the subjects of Indian States, to which he has of late devoted his best attention.

Mr. Sastri was presented with civic addresses in Coimbatore and Bezwada in appreciation of his services to the Motherland.

Mr. M. D. Sahane was awarded the Vincent Massey Scholarship tenable at the University of Toronto for one academic year. He left India in July last and travelled to Canada via Europe, visiting some places on the way. He is due to return next August by the Pacific route. The thanks of the Society are due to the authorities in India in charge of the Scholarship for awarding it to a member of the Society.

OFFICE-BEARERS.

Messrs. G. K. Devadhar and H. N. Kunzru continued to be the President and the Vice-President respectively during the year. Mr. N. M. Joshi was appointed the Senior Member of the Bombay Branch. Messrs. Venkatasubbaiya, Dravid and Kunzru continue to be Senior Members of the Madras, C. P. and Upper India Branches respectively. Mr. P. Kodanda Rao continued to be the Secretary, and during his occasional absence from headquarters Mr. S. G. Vase officiated for him.

POLITICAL SITUATION.

The political situation at the commencement of the year under report was very far from satisfactory. Civil disobedience had been revived, Mahatma Gandhi and the leaders of the Congress as well as many thousands of their political followers were in prison. Ordinances had displaced the ordinary law, and repression darkened the land. In May, 1933, soon after the Mahatma was released from prison

at the commencement of his fast for twenty-one days, he advised the Acting President of the Congress to suspend civil disobedience for six weeks and appealed to the Government to release political prisoners and offered to explore the prospects of peace and reconciliation. The only reply of the Government to this truly "Mahatmic" gesture for reconciliation was a reiteration that Congress should in so many words abandon civil disobedience and give guarantees of good behaviour.

Against the futile and injurious policies of civil disobedience on the one hand and of repression on the other, the Society, through its political leaders like Messrs. Sastri, Kunzru and Joshi, and its periodicals, kept up an unflagging opposition and assiduously pleaded for greater realism on the part of the Congress and for far-sighted statesmanship on the part of the Government. It pleaded with the Congress that civil disobedience was undesirable, that the country was not prepared for an agitation large enough to achieve its purpose of ending or mending the present system of government; that unsuccessful challenges to authority only stiffened its back and rendered it less amenable to persuasion, and that constitutional agitation was not a hopeless failure. It pleaded with the Government that repression was no remedy for the political discontent of the people; that it could at best "produce a desert and call it peace," or that it would only drive discontent underground and stimulate revolutionary crime; and that rule by ordinances and the suspension of the fundamental rights of citizenship are the clearest proof that the Government was no longer based on the consent of the people and that the only permanent remedy to the discontent of the people was the honest implementing of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and conceding Dominion Status to India with safeguards conceived in the interest of India.

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

It will be recalled that at the end of the second session of the Round Table Conference in December 1931, a Consultative Committee was appointed to carry on the work of the R. T. C. in India. Mr. Joshi was a member of that Committee, and attended some of its meetings.

S. I. S. POLICY.

At the last annual session the Society reviewed the results of the second session of the R. T. C. and passed and published the following Resolutions:—

FEDERATION.

"(a) The nature of political authority exercised in India which divides it into two parts, British India and the Indian States, does not affect its real unity. The people living on either side of the boundary line are connected by ties of race, religion and language and have common cultural and economic interests. The same forces are at work among them and the larger problems relating to the welfare and security of the country are of equal concern to them. India is thus an organic entity. Its highest interest therefore requires the establishment of a federation, consisting of British India and the States, to facilitate its full constitutional development, to bring about greater solidarity and to secure unity of direction and administration in matters of common concern.

"(b) The federation will enable British India and the States to achieve freedom by substituting internal for external control and to bring about unity in diversity only if they trust one another sufficiently to feel that the constitution which will be of their own creation will be faithfully observed by each party. The object of establishing a federation will be frustrated if the units ask a third party to guarantee that the constitution which regulates their relations with one another shall not be violated. The

support of the demand for Dominion Status by the Princes at the Round Table Conference clearly implied that they wanted their own liberation and that of British India from outside control. It appeared that except in matters relating to paramountcy, which have for the present been excluded from the purview of the federal government, they wished to deal with an authority which they could call their own. The States should therefore rely on the federal government, of which they will form a very important part, for the continuance of their sovereignty and internal autonomy. The resolution unanimously passed by the Chamber of Princes in April 1932, asking the Crown to undertake the responsibility of safeguarding their position in relation to the new constitution, if adhered to, will block further progress and thus deprive federation of its chief value.

"(c) The recent meetings of the Princes and their Ministers in Delhi and Bombay have given rise to apprehensions regarding the attitude of the Princes towards federation in other respects also. The Federal Structure Committee recommended that 40 per cent. of the seats in the Upper House should be allotted to the States. The Princes now demand that 50 per cent. of the seats should be reserved for them. Not content with demanding this unjustifiably high price for supporting federation they proposed that at least 51 per cent. of the States which are members of the Chamber of Princes in their own right and which contain not less than 51 per cent. of the aggregate population in the States should agree to adhere to the federation before it is inaugurated. It has further been publicly stated by persons connected prominently with several States that the idea of a confederation of States is gaining ground and the policy that the States should join the federation collectively as a single unit was accepted in Delhi. It is true that any State that wishes to join the federation in its individual capacity would be at liberty to do so, but the proposals of the Princes give the impression that they may delay and even endanger the establishment of a federal government. As the participation of the States in the new constitution will be no less advantageous to the States than to British India, it is earnestly to be hoped that they will not insist on conditions which will make federation well-nigh impossible.

"(d) The Federal Structure Committee, referring to the method of selection of the States' representatives in the Federal Assembly, said, "it cannot be contended that it is of no concern to the federation as a whole," but it left this matter to the judgment of the States. In order that the federation may have a representative character, it is desirable that the seats assigned to the States in the Federal Assembly should be filled up by popular election. There should also be freedom of movement and residence within the federation. Subjects of Indian States and British Indians should be able freely to enter, reside, own property and carry on any business or profession in any Province or State.

ARMY.

"In view of the fact that Dominion Status implies full responsibility for self-defence, the policy of withdrawing British soldiers from India should be definitely accepted and adequate arrangements should be made for the training of Indians as King's Commissioned Officers, so that the Indian army may be officered by Indians at the end of the period of transition. The recommenda-

tions of the Chetwood Committee are extremely disappointing and have failed to give satisfaction in any quarter. Pressure ought to be brought to bear on the British Government both by the Princes and British Indians to widen the scheme so as to make it commensurate with the object in view.

FINANCIAL SAFEGUARDS.

"The financial safeguards suggested in the report of the Federal Structure Committee will leave no real power in the hands of the future Finance Minister. The establishment of an Advisory Financial Council pending the creation of a Reserve Bank, will ensure that the Federal Ministers will shape their policies after a full knowledge of the relevant circumstances, and the Governor-General's powers of veto would be sufficient to prevent measures that are considered imprudent from going through. It should further be borne in mind that more than half the public debt has been incurred in India and that the English investor has lent money to India, not because the sterling loans are guaranteed by the Secretary of State for India, but because of the financial solvency of the country. The Governor-General should not therefore be given special powers of intervention in regard to budgetary arrangements and borrowing.

COMMERCIAL DISCRIMINATION.

"While the legitimate interests of non-Indians should be protected, India should have the same freedom as the Dominions enjoy to formulate her commercial policy. She should have full power to foster the economic interests of her nationals. As Mr. Sastri said: 'It is the right of every people to protect national industries and national enterprises from being killed or weakened by undue competition from non-nationals. That right must be secured in any constitution.' The right of the Government of India to give preference to Indians in the development of key industries should not be restricted in any way."

(To be continued.)

BOOKS RECEIVED.

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- THE NEGRO'S CHURCH. By BENJAMIN ELIJAH MAYS and JOSEPH WILLIAM NICHOLSON. (Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York.) 1933. 20cm. 321p. \$2.00.
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- FOREIGN AFFAIRS BIBLIOGRAPHY. By WILLIAM L. LANGER and HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG. (Harper.) 1933. 551p. \$5.00.
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- THE LIVING UNIVERSE. By FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND. (Murray.) 1933. 252 p. 10/6.