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The Servant of India

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NOTICE.

Owing to the celebration of the Anniversary of the Servants of India Society which falls this week there will as usual be no issue of this paper next week.

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Topics of the Week.

The S. I. S. Anniversary Celebration.

THE 29th celebration of the foundation of the Servants of India Society commenced at its headquarters in Poona on the 12th inst. as usual. The celebration was opened by Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, the Vice-President, with a speech on the political situation, which will be found summarised elsewhere in this issue. The session was attended by most of the members, the notable absentees being the President who is busy in Travancore State with the co-operative inquiry there and Mr. Venkatasubbaiya who is assisting him, Mr. Sastri who was unable to attend owing to the illness of his wife and Mr. Sahu whose continued illness has again prevented him this year from coming to Poona. The 'At Home' to the Society's friends in the evening of Tuesday was largely attended, the Vice-President addressing the assembled guests on the aims and objects of the Society and some of its more important activities. Messrs. Thakkar, Limaye and Vaze were re-elected members of the Society's Council. The financial position of the Society which has been a source of anxiety for some time past and questions relating to its internal administration will receive the earnest consideration of the members assembled for the session.

Exoneration of Sir Samuel Hoare.

TO Mr. Churchill the report of the Committee of Privileges will be in the nature of a severe slap in the face. He had raised this hare-hunt in the hope that its results would considerably strengthen him in his crusade against the White Paper. But this hope has been cruelly dashed to the ground by the Committee unanimously absolving both Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Derby from any blame on the ground of breach of privilege. That both these gentlemen did try to influence the Manchester Chamber of Commerce to revise its original memorandum to the Joint Select Committee hardly admits of any doubt. But the Committee holds that the influence exerted by them to this end cannot in any sense be regarded as undue pressure or coercion. Nor can their efforts in this direction be said to have met with any measure of success with the Chamber, though the question of success or failure is quite immaterial to the decision of the principal point whether a breach of privilege had been committed. It in fact appears from the cabled summary of the Committee's report that at one stage the Chamber had definitely set its face against any alteration in the statement of its views on the White Paper originally submitted by it to the Joint Select Committee. But decisive influence in this direction was exerted by urgent messages from the Chamber's delegation in India which pressed upon it the desirability of supplementing the Chamber's original evidence by a further "strong and cordial" memorandum. It is interesting to recall in this connection that, in the debate on the motion for the appointment of the Privileges Committee on April 16, Mr. Hammersley, who was himself a member of the delegation, categorically denied the delegation having been responsible for inducing the Chamber to modify its evidence. It is open to doubt whether the Committee would have taken such a lenient view of the part played by these two members of the Joint Select Committee in the whole affair if its view were that the Joint Select Committee was a judicial tribunal. This however is not how it regards the Joint Select Committee and largely accounts for its disinclination to hold either Sir Samuel Hoare or Lord Derby guilty of any misconduct. But the matter was to be discussed in Parliament yesterday and the Committee's report cannot be regarded as the last word on the subject.

Acceptance or Rejection ?

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD has now supplied, in the speech that he made at the annual general meeting of the Western India National Liberal Association, the omission that we noticed last week in the statement that he made the other day jointly with Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. This statement had maintained silence on the advisability or otherwise, from

the Liberal point of view, of the policy of rejection advocated by the Congress Parliamentarians or Swarajists. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad now expresses his own individual view of that policy. If rejection means a declaration, in the most categorical form possible, of the unacceptability of the White Paper proposals and does not involve boycott of the constitution as a necessary consequence, he is all in favour of it, and indeed he feels that there can be no question about it in any progressive group. The question at issue, however, is not quite so simple as this. Condemnation of the reform proposals as unsatisfactory and inadequate is one thing, and recording a vote in the Assembly to the effect that the constitution is unacceptable quite another thing. On the former unanimity is easily attainable; not so on the latter. For it is believed in some quarters that the effect of passing an adverse resolution in the Assembly will be the dropping of the reform proposals by Government and it is by no means agreed even among all progressive groups that this would be desirable. While some think that the White Paper Scheme is on the whole a retrograde measure and that every effort must be made to put a stop to it, there are others who think that the proposed constitution, however defective and meagre, is still preferable to the continuance for an indefinite time of the existing constitution. The policy of rejection, which has in it the possibility of the work of all the Round Table Conferences being brought ignominiously to naught, cannot find favour with those who are of the opinion that, balancing good features of the scheme with bad, it makes an advance on the present position. Where exactly, it may be asked, does Sir Chimanlal stand?

Acceptance or Obstruction ?

ALTHOUGH no direct answer to this question is found in Sir Chimanlal's speech, there is no doubt to our mind, judging from the speech as a whole, that he will advise such Liberals as will find their way into the Assembly to vote in favour of a resolution condemnatory of the White Paper even if it should result in the abandonment of the whole scheme for an indefinite length of time. For he goes on to say that while the Liberals will be willing to work the new constitution, even if unimproved, the manner in which it will be worked will depend upon what form it will eventually take. If the "minimum demands" which, according to him, are embodied in the Joint Memorandum are conceded and the White Paper proposals correspondingly improved, the constitution will be worked contentedly, "which will result in the country settling down to a period of peace and prosperity." But if no improvements are introduced into the proposals, the constitution will no doubt still be worked, but it will be worked "in such a way as to demonstrate how unworkable and insufficient it is and, by creating deadlocks and obstruction, to force the pace and secure further devolution of power." "I have no doubt," he says, "that, if the White Paper proposals are not substantially improved, the second mode of working the constitution will inevitably be adopted, and that will not be for the benefit of either India or England." Here he does not expressly say that the Liberal Party members themselves will create deadlocks and practise obstruction. What he says is capable of being interpreted to mean that other parties will play that part, while the Liberal members, realising that this policy will not enure to the benefit of India, will try to exert, though without effect, a restraining influence on the other parties. But a prominent leader in the position of Sir Chimanlal is not likely to make such a statement unless he feels that it is the duty of the Liberal Party to help in passing a resolution in

the Assembly condemnatory of the Government's proposals, unconcerned about the possible withdrawal of the proposals as a result of such action. We have never disguised from ourselves the grave consequences, for good or evil, that will flow from the policy either of acceptance or rejection, and we would earnestly entreat the general public to consider the question from all sides and arrive at a deliberate judgment thereupon. Sir Chimanlal has in this speech issued a warning to Government which it would be folly for them to ignore.

Status Quo Preferred.

WHATEVER conclusions Indian politicians as a whole may arrive at, whether in favour of acceptance or rejection of the White Paper constitution, we hope that no one will lightheartedly make up his mind to rejection in the belief that even a formal rejection of the White Paper scheme by the Assembly will not lead to the withdrawal or the destruction of the scheme. There is of course a possibility that Government will be so callous as to put the scheme into force, whatever opinion the Assembly may express thereupon. If Anglo-Indian papers, found only too often to be in the know of Government's intentions, are any guide, there is a strong likelihood of Government not proceeding with their proposals in the event of the Assembly carrying a rejection motion. The *Times of India* and the *Statesman* have said in categorical terms that they will feel compelled to drop their proposals in these circumstances. The *Pioneer* now says the same thing. In its issue of the 8th inst., it says :

"The stage having been cleared (by the removal of the existing ban on Congress organisations), it remains for the Congress leaders to make up their mind what they are going to do about the reforms. If they find, as they undoubtedly will find, that they can get nothing more out of Parliament, do they propose to try to destroy them directly or by obstruction, or to work them as they stand? In the former case, they will play straight into the hands of the die-hards and will incidentally let the Conservatives out of a very awkward predicament. They need not, therefore, be surprised if the British Government take them at their word and the whole scheme is shelved indefinitely."

The paper goes on :

"There are many Liberals among them, who profess to believe that that would be the best solution, counting, no doubt, on obtaining better terms from a Labour Government in due course. But those who so glibly argue in this fashion would do well to consider the present dissensions and divisions in the Labour Party. Unless these are resolved more speedily than seems probable it will be a very long time before a Labour Government comes into power with a majority sufficient to carry through a scheme on more liberal lines. The alternative is to continue indefinitely under the present system with perhaps an attempt, foredoomed, to our mind, to failure, to force the hand of the Government by direct action."

Here the *Pioneer* refers obviously to Dr. Paranjpye and Mr. Chintamani. We wish to assure our contemporaries that these leaders do not build their hopes at all upon the coming into power at an early date of the Labour Party in England. They are sincerely prepared to face with perfect equanimity the prospect, which appears so appalling to the *Pioneer*, of continuing indefinitely under the present system. The present "reforms," they think, are only an impediment in the way of future reforms and they would much rather like to be just where they are. This is their honest conviction, however difficult it may be for the *Pioneer* to give credence to it.

" Full-Fledged Democracy. "

SIR SAMUEL HOARE ought to be congratulated upon the success he has attained in getting a number of recently retired members of the I. O. S. to be the advocates of his White Paper scheme. Perhaps the most active among these is Sir John Thompson who, on May 25, indulged in a hot defence of the scheme at Bristol. This defence perhaps makes a deep impression upon the Britishers, but in India it can only have the effect of giving one more argument to the Swarajists who are bent upon destroying the scheme. For his defence only amounts to saying that the power proposed to be conceded to Indians is only nominal, or, to use the expressive phraseology of Mr. Rajgopalachari, " skimmed milk. " Sir John says :

" And what is the extent of the responsibility which the White Paper proposes to transfer at the centre ? The die-hards will tell you that everything is being handed over, that is their copyright phrase ; by a stroke of the pen the Government will establish full-fledged democracy. What do you think of this for full-fledged democracy ? The Ministers will have the spending of 20 to 25 per cent. of the central revenues. They will not control defence and foreign affairs, which will be under the Governor-General. They will not without the Governor-General's permission be able to touch those thorny subjects of currency and exchange. They will not have the control of payments on account of loans, the pay of the principal services or their pensions, and they will not have the administration of the railways. They will not be able to amend the constitution, and if they menace the interests which are to be specially committed to the Governor-General's charge they will find that he has ample resources of persuasion and of power to protect them. Can you wonder that while the die-hards talk of complete surrender their Congress allies in India should exclaim that the concessions made by the White Paper are not worth having ? "

It is interesting to observe, in connexion with the impossibility, alleged by the *Pioneer*, of the Labour Party in England offering a better measure of reforms when it comes into office, the remark made by Sir John Thompson to the effect that there is reason to believe that this will happen. He says to the British die-hards :

" And consider another set of probable consequences, another morass in which we may find ourselves landed if the die-hards have their way and the bill that is to be produced is rejected. It is quite on the cards that that would mean that the next India Bill would be a Labour bill, and the Labour party, if they find this India question still unsettled, are bound by their declarations to go a good deal beyond the White Paper. What are you going to do about it ? Astute Indian politicians are beginning to build on the prospect and to pray for the success of the die-hards, simply because they believe, and believe with reason, that with the White Paper out of the way they stand to get better terms from the Labour Party in a few years' time. That is what I mean when I say that the die-hards are the allies of the Congress. "

Bikaner and Federal Citizenship.

A WRITER in the *Madras Mail* says:—

The Bill *inter alia* provides that any foreigner may be ordered to remove himself forthwith from the precincts of the State and empowers the Government to apprehend and detain a foreigner who refuses to remove himself. As British Indian citizens are foreigners in Bikaner State, it is clear that the contemplated legislation will impose very serious disabilities on them, and they cannot even travel in that State without a pass from the State authorities, much less settle down to do business without being exposed to serious risks of deportation. It is not known whether it is realised that the subjects of Indian States

have settled down in large numbers in British India and are carrying on lucrative trades, and that the Marwaris, the moneylenders throughout India, mostly come from the Indian States. If British Indian citizens are subjected to treatment such as that suggested in the Bill, British Indian authorities will not look on with unconcern, and will think of awarding the same treatment to the subjects of the Indian States residing in British India. It is amazing that the Bikaner Durbar should have thought of initiating this legislation at a time when a federal constitution for the whole of India is being actively discussed. If there is to be a federal India including the Indian States, can the federal units be permitted to impose disabilities such as those suggested by the Bikaner Durbar ? Federal citizenship will be at an end if such legislation is permitted.

Sultanpur Firing.

THE findings of the Committee appointed to inquire into the firing incident at Sultanpur in Kapurthala State on April 25 last justify the worst fears of the public. In the first place it is clear from the Committee's report that the route followed by the Muslim procession on that day in connection with the Mohurram festival was not officially banned under section 144 Cr. P. C. It follows therefore that the unarmed crowd that sought to make use of it could not be regarded as in any sense an unlawful assembly. In these circumstances the firing that was resorted to for the purpose of dispersing the mob cannot be said to have any justification to support it. But if there was no prohibition previously issued against the use of the disputed road by the procession, even on the spur of the moment it does not seem to have been made unmistakably clear to the crowd that its progress along that road could in no case be allowed. In fact the delaying tactics that were resorted to by those responsible for the maintenance of peace created quite the contrary effect on the people participating in the procession. What is more, timely notice of the firing was also lacking and such notice as was forthcoming was given in such a manner and at such a time that it could not have been heard by the processionists. As if this series of mistakes arguing a callous disregard of human life on the part of the guardians of peace in the State was not enough, the officer in charge of the troops made no attempt to regulate the firing so as to limit it strictly to the needs of the situation, but ordered 16 men to order two rounds each. The conclusion is inescapable that the amount of firing actually used was excessive and uncontrolled. This is in fact the unambiguously expressed verdict of the Committee, and it holds those responsible for the firing as being guilty of a disastrous lack of judgment. We do not think that, in view of the disclosures made in its report, anybody would blame the Committee for the use of what might seemingly be strong language.

By way of reparation it recommends the dismissal of the head of the police and of the military officer who commanded the firing party. The grant of suitable allowances to the dependents of the victims of the firing who number 25 and to those of such of the wounded ones numbering 35 as have been incapacitated from earning their livelihood is also suggested by the Committee. This is nothing more than is demanded by humane feelings and it is to be hoped that the amounts of such financial help will be fixed in as large-hearted a manner as possible. The Committee's report is very damaging to the administration of the State ; but its exclusively official personnel should protect it from any charge of undue partiality to popular interests.

Sound Sense.

THERE is a tendency in certain quarters to treat political detenus and suspected terrorists as outlaws and to regard any concessions shown to them while under detention as misplaced kindness and deplorable weakness. In strongly rebutting this view, the *Statesman* says:

"A prisoner is man (woman) in prison, and it is habitual to infer that he (she) deserves to be there. It is therefore necessary at times to make an effort to remember that in India, especially in Bengal, there are prisoners under detention, not necessarily deservedly by the canons of ordinary judicial administration. They have not been pronounced guilty of crime after open trial and technically they are to be regarded as innocent men under restraint as a measure of protection for society. In these words there is no implication that they are detained lightly and without good reason, nor do we believe that their cases have been considered otherwise than carefully and competently; yet since circumstances are such that ordinary open trial is not always possible, it is right to remember what is due to them and they ought in fairness to be given facilities for living their ordinary life so far as may be compatible with the restraint that Government decide to be necessary. Even if all youths in Bengal's jails and detention camps were there as convicted offenders it would still be enlightened practice, not weakness, to let them as far as possible use their days in improving their capacities. Prison for the young anyhow, should be a time for reformation and progress as well as a boring captivity, and the principle is generally accepted that young prisoners should be helped and encouraged to activities and contemplation that may make them better citizens when again at liberty. We jail only because we do not know how else to deal with the defective in behaviour. Perfect wisdom in penology is yet to be found."

Local Boards in Bombay.

THE working of district boards in the Bombay presidency during 1932-33 reveals a sad tale of the curtailment of public utility services, never very well developed in rural parts, due to the necessity for retrenchment. Thus there appears to have been no division in which primary schools were not closed, but the Central Division enjoyed the unenviable distinction of having the largest number of its schools, more than 100, abolished. It is needless to add that this closing process was precipitated by the reduction in the Government's educational grants to these boards. While the reduced grants may have been unavoidable, it is to be devoutly wished that they will be restored to their former level at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Panchayat movement does not yet seem to have taken root in this presidency. It is noteworthy that there are no panchayats in Sind, and even in the other parts of the presidency their number is by no means impressive. Nor is the working of the few panchayats that exist satisfactory. As a matter of

fact the condition of most of these bodies in the Poona district is described by the Collector himself as "scandalous". In one case at least no recovery of dues was made, the arrears being 100 per cent. In three cases they were over 90 per cent. and in five they ranged from 52 to 81. It is regrettable that some of the so-called progressive towns were the worst offenders in this respect. Conditions in other divisions may not be equally bad but cannot be said to be very much better. But why waste any breath on a state of things which has become obsolete by the passage of the new Panchayat law? It is difficult to forecast whether the new law will be a greater or lesser success than its predecessor. Anyhow it ensures the trial of the panchayat experiment in more favourable conditions.

Government orders for the erection of notice boards near wells, dispensaries and dharmashalas maintained out of local board funds declaring them to be open to all people without distinction of caste were issued too late for their effect to be reflected in the report on the working of these bodies for 1932-33. Still it is a source of satisfaction to know that several boards have either put up such notices or had decided to do so. Three local boards gave substantial grants to hostels for depressed class students, while one of them conducts a boarding house for the benefit of students of the forest tribes. This is however not to say that public prejudice against the untouchables is non-existent in rural areas. It will diminish in proportion as the education of the public progresses and we stress the hope expressed in the Government resolution that local boards will continue unabated their efforts to educate the public to regard untouchability as a canker that must be removed from Hindu society as soon as practicable.

The Lokashikshan.

WE welcome the attempts that are being made for the resuscitation of the Marathi monthly magazine, *Lokashikshan*. Its conduct for five years under Mr. Jambhekar's editorship was marked by conspicuous ability. This is however not to say that the venture was a commercial success. Far from it. The public support to it was very inadequate and its financial responsibility was too onerous for an individual of the moderate means of Mr. Jambhekar. He had therefore no alternative but to suspend its publication in the firm hope that its revival on a more sound footing could be arranged for without much difficulty. That this was not a vain hope is clear from the public response which the idea of the formation of a joint stock concern to take over the whole burden of running the magazine has so far received and promises to receive. The news will be joyfully received by the Marathi-reading public; for the number of really good Marathi magazines is very small. And the disappearance of the *Lokashikshan*, which happily need no longer be contemplated, would have been a serious loss to Marathi readers.

THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION.**PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU'S SPEECH.**

In the absence of Mr. Devadhar, President of the Servants of India Society, owing to his pre-occupation with the report of the Travancore Co-operative Enquiry Committee of which he is President, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, Vice-President of the Society, presided over its 29th Anniversary which was celebrated on the 12th inst. Following is a summary of the speech he delivered in opening the session.

AFTER welcoming the members, Associates and well-wishers of the Society who were present Mr. Kunzru expressed regret at the absence of Mr. Sastri owing to Mrs. Sastri's illness. He then

referred briefly to the work of the Society, which had expanded in several directions, especially in the domain of village reconstruction and to the difficulties it had to face. Its financial position showed no

improvement. The year 1933-34 had closed with a deficit of about Rs. 8,500 and the current year was expected to end likewise.

Reviewing the political situation, Mr. Kunzru wished it was possible to say that the joint efforts of the British Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee had succeeded in brightening the outlook for the future but it was regrettable that notwithstanding their devoted labours it appeared darker than before.

The constitutional problem had been under discussion for close upon seven years and nearly four years have passed since the first session of the Round Table Conference, but India, hungering for self-realisation, had not yet advanced one step on the road to national freedom. And in regard to the transfer of control at the centre, without which political reform will be a snare and a delusion and Indians will not be able to attain to the full height of their stature, it was not even possible to guess when it would begin.

The inordinate delay that had taken place in the consideration of constitutional reforms was not compensated by any advance over the position reached during the first Round Table Conference. A perusal of the despatch of the Government of India on the report of the Simon Commission and the proceedings of the First Round Table Conference will convince anyone that the intervening discussions had not induced His Majesty's Government to abandon a single restriction in the sphere of finance and commerce proposed in the Government of India despatch or to accept any suggestion for the liberalisation of the scheme outlined by the Round Table Conference. The subsequent discussions led not to progress but to retrogression, and as time went on the hopes of peaceful development and fruitful co-operation between England and India grew increasingly dim. The White Paper and the evidence of Sir Samuel Hoare before the Joint Select Committee furnish abundant proof of the changed spirit in which the British authorities approached the problem of adjusting the divergent interests of Indians and Britishers. To illustrate this, one need only refer to the declaration of 1929 about Dominion Status. It was this declaration which, by expressly enunciating the aim of British policy, promised to open a new chapter in the history of Indo-British relationship and made it possible to look forward to an era of racial reconciliation. Yet there was a disposition on the part of important members of the Round Table Conference to regard it as an expression of generous sentiments rather than as a solemn obligation which England must unhesitatingly try to redeem. Sir Samuel Hoare almost deprecated any reference to it. Even Lord Irwin, through whom it was made, seemed to shrink from it. One feels that if it could be recalled the authorities would lose no time in doing so.

It has been apparent for a long time that there is no chance of progressive modifications being made in the White Paper although, as evidenced by the memorandum of the British Indian Delegation,

they have been unanimously urged by Indians, including the representatives of the minorities whom British politicians have taken under their special protection. It was, however, believed in well-informed circles both in India and England that it might be made more objectionable to Nationalist India in order to placate British die-hards. It was feared that notwithstanding the opposition of the British Indian delegates and the recommendation of the Government of India and the Lothian Committee indirect election through provincial Councils might take the place of direct election for the Legislative Assembly. So complete a reversal of the policy which has been in force for fourteen years would be justifiably regarded as an attempt to break the power of the Assembly and to destroy its moral prestige as the representative of the people of India. It would not be a postponement but a destruction of our hopes for the future. It would complete the partition of India among the vested interests.

We have been asked to rally round the White Paper and warned that unless we are prepared to say that it will satisfy the reasonable section of the people the cause of constitutional progress may receive a setback. We cannot be so untrue to ourselves as to allow ourselves to be influenced by such appeals or threats. The White Paper has created profound dissatisfaction in the country and shattered the hopes of progressive India. Whenever we are called upon to express our opinions we are bound to say that it will find no friends in any nationalist quarter.

Our friends in England whose sincerity of purpose we must recognise even in the hour of our disappointment are doing what they can to stem the tide of reaction. Important sections of Englishmen view with alarm the growing estrangement between Indians and Englishmen. Influential groups in all walks of life—public life, the churches, the Universities—inspired by high principles, would like to see justice done to India, but the decline of idealism all over the world has weakened their hands, and their best efforts have, unfortunately, proved ineffective. We are grateful, however, to our friends for their efforts and hope, for the good of mankind, that their numbers will increase and their efforts will bear fruit.

While there is much to cause us anxiety, it is a matter for gratification that the withdrawal of civil disobedience and the freedom given to Congressmen to enter the legislatures will considerably strengthen the nationalist element in these bodies. All those who are acquainted with the record of the Assembly and the Councils during the last four years will welcome the resumption of normal political life which will enable them to function with a new vigour and to give expression once more to the determination of India to control her own destiny. Given concerted action among the progressives, the popular representatives should be able to offer solid opposition to the forces of bureaucracy.

Joint action in connection with the legislatures can bear full fruit only when it is a reflection of the

larger unity which should prevail in the country. To whatever causes disunity may be due, it is evident that it is being exploited to keep us all in subjection. Appeals to magnanimity will not by themselves heal our differences, but we must realise the humiliation of the present situation before a remedy can be applied to them. When, to use the words of Mr. Gokhale, love of country so fills the heart that all else appears as of little moment by its side, unity will not long elude our grasp.

THE BAN LIFTED.

THE ban on the Congress Committees has been lifted. This was only to be expected. Government had declared on a number of occasions that the restrictions placed on the activities of the Congress were necessitated by the defiance of law on which it had embarked and that as soon as this ceased the restrictions would be removed. The civil disobedience programme of the Congress has been practically given up, and Government were morally bound to carry out their undertaking. We are glad that they have done so, for there must be many pedants among the officials who would argue that civil disobedience is still the official policy of the Congress, though it is to be carried into effect by one individual, and that so long as this policy is not formally renounced, Government are under no obligation, nor would it be expedient, to revoke the defensive measures taken by them. In fact we find that, when the Government of India consulted provincial Governments, some of these took up this position. It is therefore creditable to the Government of India that they took a broad view of the situation, and have allowed the Congress Committees, which will have no concern hereafter with civil disobedience, to function in the normal way. After the ban that Mahatma Gandhi has put upon them against the practice of civil disobedience, it would have been both unnecessary and wrong to continue the official ban against their ordinary political activities. The Congress can therefore now pull itself together and carry on the campaign, for instance, for the capture of the legislatures, and we have no doubt that all parties gladly welcome the re-entry of Congressmen into the Parliamentary arena, however adversely this may affect their own fortunes at the polls.

Congress leaders are, however, not satisfied with the action which Government have promised to take. They are particularly chagrined at the fact that repressive measures passed by the legislatures are not to be immediately swept away. We all expect—and probably Congressmen too expect—that the measures, though they will remain on the statute book, will actually fall into desuetude, there being no occasion to put them into force. But, Congress leaders ask, why should these measures be held even in reserve, when no Congressman excepting one is free to offer civil resistance in order to win Swaraj? Surely, all this armoury of special legislation is unnecessary to punish the one individual who is free. The *Pioneer* goes so far as to say that Mahatma Gandhi should not be deprived of his personal liberty when and if he

launches upon civil disobedience. There will be no danger to the public peace so long as he and he alone follows this path. If imprisonment even under the operation of ordinary law is unnecessary, much more so is the continued existence of special laws on the statute book.

This is how Congressmen argue. But we must confess that the leading exponents of the Congress view themselves go far to deprive this argument of its cogency. For instance, look at what Mr. Rajagopalachari says. He may be said to have been second-in-command to Mahatma Gandhi when the civil resistance movement was in full swing. At a public meeting held last week in Delhi for the purpose of explaining the true inwardness of Patna decisions, he emphasised the fact that civil disobedience was only temporarily suspended to be brought back into action in more favourable circumstances. He said: "Men with families and domestic burdens cannot fight for all time. People therefore wanted rest. If Gandhiji has given us privilege leave for some time, he has also asked us to make good use of this leave. You must not imagine that the fight is over because it was decided at Patna to suspend civil disobedience. The fight cannot be over unless India rules herself."

Surely Mr. Rajagopalachari and those who interpret the Patna decisions in like manner have no reason to be surprised if Government take due note of Congress intentions and prefer to keep coercive legislation alive with a view to giving it full effect as soon as their privilege leave expires. Probably Congressmen will be as harmless hereafter as they are now, immediately after the discontinuance of civil disobedience, and there will be no need to call this legislation to aid. But one must not expect to have the luxury of such high falutin talk without paying some price for it. There is another side to this question. It would be more glorious for the Swarajists to secure repeal of repressive legislation (and in this they would obtain the hearty co-operation of all other progressive groups) by self-help than as a gift from Government. What the *Sun* says in this connexion is entirely true, however ungracious it may appear: "Today the Congress is again free, but not rescued by the nation. It is nothing for the nation to be proud about or happy over. The initiative is Government's." We hope that we shall be able to put the repeal of repressive legislation to the credit of constitutional action on the part of the Congress and other parties. That will go a long way to make constitutional action popular in the Congress.

The question of the release of political prisoners has been left over for consideration in each individual case by the provincial Governments. We do hope that these Governments will not be niggardly in releasing civil disobedience prisoners and that no occasion will arise for the Congress to make a legitimate complaint about it. In this connexion we see no reason for discriminating against those who were detained as State prisoners or those who were proceeded against, in the civil disobedience period, under the

sedition law. Leaders like Mr. Vallabhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will labour under an unnecessary disadvantage if such discrimination is made. It would be sheerly pedantic if, on account of such technical considerations, these leaders remained under detention. The Congress policy will not be finally settled until these leaders, and particularly Pandit Nehru, whose ideas on social and economic questions are so radically different from those of other Congressmen, are restored to liberty. The Congress may decide upon a course of action, but the Pandit may be able, on his release, to upset the whole decision and give a different turn to Congress activities. Now that the Congress is thinking out these questions, let it have a full opportunity to arrive at what may be regarded, humanly speaking, as a final decision. We wish particularly to emphasise this aspect because we have noticed that some Congress leaders, antipathetic to socialism which Pandit Nehru favours, carefully avoid including him among those whose release they require. But this is a deplorably short-sighted view. The social and economic policy of the Congress, and even its return to Parliamentary methods, cannot be regarded as secure so long as these have not been decided upon with Pandit Jawaharlal's concurrence. We earnestly hope that Government will take a broad and statesmanlike view of the question and release all those who lost their freedom on account of their participation in civil disobedience or other similar forms of non-violent agitation.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)
(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, June 1.

CONGRESS POLICY.

AS I have already written, the decision of Congress leaders to support the Swarajists in their programme of Council-entry has been watched here generally with sympathetic eyes. The fears of British diehards that this decision may mean the imperilling of a new constitution by the capture of Legislatures by the Congress left-wing are balanced by the views held in most other quarters that it is a distinct advantage to constitutional stability that Congress has been convinced that extra-constitutional efforts have failed to secure the ends which Congress set itself to achieve. It is also held to be very doubtful whether, under any constitution such as may be granted to India, it would be possible at all for Congress to exercise so overwhelming an influence in the Legislatures, having regard to their composition.

Another source of weakness in the Congress position is observed even by friendly critics here. It lies in the fact that not only is Congress not synonymous with the Indian national movement as a whole, but that it is not even homogeneous within itself. One criticism that I have heard is that it will be difficult for it to formulate a policy, at the same time practical and effective, that would carry the enthusiastic support, not only of its own right and left wings, but of other progressive political parties, without whose adhesion or collaboration in some

form or other it could not hope to exert an effective influence in the Legislatures. If indeed that be so, to hold the Swaraj Party, confined as its membership seems to be to Congressmen in general, and to those, in particular, who have suffered imprisonment, either voluntarily or willynilly does not appear likely in practice to have any element of reality in it.

The most recent suggestion, that a Constituent Assembly for India should be convened, has not attracted much enthusiasm here, even in quarters ordinarily friendly to Congress aspirations. In my letter last week I summarised the rather cautious observations on the subject of Sir Stafford Cripps, the Chairman of the Socialist League. This week's *New Statesman* is singularly caustic on the whole question, and I quote below the substance of its remarks in the current issue:

"It is doubtful, however, whether the Swarajists will realise their maximum unity, for while the extreme left of Congress resents this return to legal tactics, the right including both the more orthodox Hindus and the more Nationalist Muslims, are absorbed in the sterile controversy over the Communal Award. The next step is that it is now contemplating the calling of what it described as a 'Constituent Assembly', to work out an alternative of its own to the White Paper Constitution. ... What Congress means by this Assembly is apparently only a body elected from its own membership. Large though this may be, it could not represent the main body of Muslim or even of Sikh opinion, and would include only one of the two main tendencies among the untouchables. All that it could do would be to provide the Swarajist party with a more detailed and coherent set of proposals than Mr. Gandhi brought with him to the Second Session of the Round Table Conference. An alternative Constitution, to have any success, ought, one would have supposed, to rest upon an agreement between Congress and the other Indian groups and parties."

Most discerning friends of India here would accept this analysis of the position as realistic and sufficiently suggestive for due consideration in circles both within and outside the Congress.

THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES.

An unexplained delay seems to have occurred in the proceedings of the Committee of Privileges that is now dealing with Mr. Churchill's complaint against Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Derby. It was expected earlier in the week that at Wednesday's meeting the consideration of the Committee's draft report would have been completed, and that the report would have been presented to Parliament next Monday, so that the debate might have been expected on Wednesday or Thursday of next week. Contrary to expectations, however, after a three hours' session, the Committee adjourned until next Wednesday afternoon. It is understood that in the meantime the final report will be prepared and circulated to members of the Committee, and it is now hoped that it will be possible for the Committee to complete their work in time for the report to be presented to Parliament on Monday, the 11th June, when the Government will present a motion asking the House to approve the Committee's findings. If this programme be carried out the debate should take place either on the 13th or 14th June. The cause of the unexpected delay is obscure and of course has given rise to all kinds of lobby rumours, to which very little importance need be attached. They naturally vary according to the political predilections of those interested in circulating them.

It does not appear, however, that Sir Samuel Hoare himself is unduly anxious about the result to judge from the vigour with which yesterday he declared at a meeting of the Women's Branch of the

Chelsea Conservative Association, his own constituency, that the surest way to smash the Empire, the one solid basis of stability in the world, and to injure irrevocably the trade and industry of this country was to adopt an extreme or reactionary policy, and by extreme or reactionary policy he made clear that he meant either the antiquated or impracticable negotiations of Mr. Churchill and Lord Lloyd, or the fantastic and dangerous quack remedies of irresponsible revolutionaries like Sir Stafford Cripps and Sir Oswald Mosley. In the same speech the Secretary of State for India took occasion to elaborate upon the necessity for goodwill in India if the present improved trade relations between the two countries were to be maintained and developed.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND INDIA.

There is more than a strong suspicion that all is not well within the Government, and the Prime Minister's position is evidently not so secure as it was some time ago. Mr. Neville Chamberlain's antipathy towards him appears to have become more marked, and Mr. Baldwin does not seem to have been able to prevent his own followers from siding with the Chancellor of the Exchequer rather than with the Prime Minister, with the result that, whereas a year ago Mr. Baldwin told the House of Commons that it was part of the "gentleman's agreement" that Lord Snowden's Land Taxes should remain, this year Mr. Chamberlain has been able to secure the withdrawal of these Taxes. The National Labour Members of the Cabinet have evidently not been altogether happy about the Government's disarmament policy, which, among other factors, appears to have led to a position of stalemate in the Disarmament Conference at Geneva, from which now very little is evidently to be expected for the present, if indeed the Conference is not doomed to break up with complete failure. It is not without significance that the *News-Letter* the National Labour Party's organ, has lately criticised severely the Government's attitude on both these questions. It is now alleged that the Prime Minister, both directly and through Mr. Thomas, gave a promise to Lord Rothermere that reconstruction of the Cabinet would take place in the autumn. Exactly why or in what circumstances such a promise should have been made by the Prime Minister to Lord Rothermere of all people it is a little difficult to understand, as I should not have supposed that two such dissimilar personalities had any point of contact. Moreover the allegation appears to overlook the fact that Mr. Baldwin would be a necessary party to any such promise.

The mere fact that these rumours of internal dissension, and the prospect of a reconstitution of the Cabinet in the autumn, are now being circulated, must inevitably weaken the authority of the Government, as they did some months ago when similar rumours were afloat, involving the substitution of at least three Cabinet Ministers, including Sir John Simon. Certainly an unstable political situation of this kind would encourage diehard faction, and would stimulate whatever tendency there is in Tory circles towards the elimination of the National factor in the present Government and its replacement by a purely Tory Government. Strength may be added to this movement by the activity of Mr. Churchill and Lord Lloyd, who have never ceased their efforts to smash the Government's India policy, and who have their own private reasons for seeking to drive Mr. Baldwin and his saner friends out of public life. Whilst Sir John Thompson's satirical criticism of the latter's toleration of the Black Shirt idea in order to save India, not to speak of British vested interests from the supposed consequence of the White Paper policy, will appeal to reasonable-minded men throughout the

country, it will not in any way affect or influence the misrepresentations circulated with calculation within the Tory Party by the bigots and the reactionaries, who are now mourning the loss of that great lawyer and otherwise very gifted man, but an irreconcilable opponent of Indian reform, Lord Sumner.

Supposing that a General Election, which is highly improbable, were to take place in the autumn, all of these highly contentious factors would come immediately into operation, and in order to preserve the Tory Party from being riven asunder by internal differences on the Indian question, the Government might easily be compelled to jettison their non-Tory members, and in order to go to the country as a united Party, to effect a compromise of a very far-reaching character on the India question. Whilst it is quite true that in the industrial constituencies the electoral position of 1929 would to a very large extent have been stabilised, the Labour Party would not necessarily go to the polls with effective strength in the absence of good leadership and a practical and attractive programme; whilst Sir Stafford Cripps' recent speeches, particularly the latest in which he forecasts a state of civil war on the advent of the Socialist Party to power, are bound to have cost Labour many thousands of votes throughout the country.

INDIAN STUDENTS IN ENGLAND.

The Education Department of the Office of the High Commissioner for India has this week issued a blue-book dealing with the education of Indians in this country during the academic year ended September 30, 1933. The report draws attention to the relatively large proportion this year of high distinctions gained by Indian students here in the fields of academic and professional studies, sport, and University domestic affairs. There is everything to be said for Indian students of high quality and some experience coming here for special qualifications and research study. The High Commissioner, however, emphasises once more, what has been only too obvious to most of those who have had long experience of the circumstances and needs of Indian students, that large numbers of them coming to this country are unfitted either temperamentally, academically or financially, by age, and otherwise, to take reasonable advantage of the opportunities and amenities of British life, and whose stay in this country is often marked by ill-health, lack of success, unhappiness, and embitterment, with sometimes, as in a few recent cases, moral ruin, and even suicide. Some of these phenomena are by no means of recent occurrence, but they have undoubtedly been emphasised by the serious economic depression at home, and in many cases domestic misfortune has left these unfortunate Indian students stranded in a foreign country without adequate means of subsistence or hope for the future. The Indian earthquake has in a number of cases added to these difficulties. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Sir B. N. Mitra views with equanimity the decrease in the number of Indian students, since, he adds, "it appears that any loss in quantity has been more than made good by improved quality". It is to be remembered in India that Indian students in the West are the ambassadors of Indian culture and the representatives of the high qualities upon which the Motherland prides herself, who are most familiar to Western peoples. If and when, therefore, they fail in their high mission their failure brings discredit upon India, all the greater because of the high expectations that are put upon the Indian students. It is all to the good, therefore, if every effort is made in India to select for studies in Western countries only the best. A National Government ought to be able to exercise the discrimination of the

Egyptian, Japanese, and other Governments of countries that send their students abroad, and this is one more reason why India is entitled to manage her own affairs.

OF INTEREST TO INDIA.

Their Highnesses the Nawab and Begum of Rampur arrived in London by air from Paris on Monday, and were accorded a hearty reception by representatives of the Indian population in London. The papers have been publishing long descriptions of the Nawab's predilection for amateur detective work.

Lord Dufferin, in addressing the members of Edinburgh University Unionist Association this week, made some vigorous comments upon the attack on the Government's India policy at present being made by a section of the London-controlled Press, and warned his hearers that they had always in the Conservative Party the danger of getting under the control of men like Lord North, who once lost to Britain a great Empire. Such people, he said, tried to set up a barrier of preconceived ideas against the irresistible tide of insurgent modern facts. The President-elect of the Association took the opportunity of reminding those present that one reason urged against Indian self-government was that Indians were not sufficiently educated, and he remarked that the greatness of this country had been founded by men who were no better educated than the people of India to-day. Magna Charta, he said, was sealed by each of the Lords, and not signed by them—because they could not write.

Both Mr. Edward Villiers and Sir John Thompson have been speaking this week effectively on behalf of the Government's India proposals. The latter's speech, in particular, deserves widespread publicity in India.

Mr. D. C. Allen, C. S. I., I. C. S. (ret'd.) will read a paper before the East India Association on June 14, on "The Proposed Indian Reforms: a Critical Examination", with Viscount Fitz Allen in the chair. On the same day the Association holds its Annual General Meeting.

Conservative Members of Parliament are soon to have at their India Committee Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Sir William Vincent on opposite sides in a debate against and for the White Paper. Each is to speak for fifteen minutes on the following points: Central Responsibility, the Franchise, Central and Provincial, and transfer of Law and Order. Each will have five minutes to reply followed by questions. At the end of it all, no doubt, the Tory members will be just where they were before. Meanwhile Sir John Hewett has issued "Some Reflections on the White Paper" in which, among other things, after seven years of preparation on the part of the Government, or rather a succession of Governments, he protests against "any idea of hurrying the Bill through Parliament as the Act of 1919 was hurried through to carry out Mr. Montagu's scheme". There does not seem to have been much hurry so far.

The Lord Mayor has issued a further appeal on behalf of the Indian Earthquake Fund, which has so far totalled about £52,000, made up of 7,230 donations, besides those made direct to the various Indian funds.

The *Manchester Guardian* London Correspondent refers to a Memorial to Sadhu Sundar Singh now being established in the Simla hills. Mr. C. F. Andrews just before leaving for South Africa saw through the press the proofs of his new book dealing with the Sadhu's life and work.

Review.

INFLATION.

INFLATION? By IRVING FISHER, (Allen & Unwin.) 1933. 20cm. 104p. 3/6.

THIS is a remarkable attempt to describe the effects of inflation and deflation in monetary theory. The author has fixed his eye purely on American conditions and the instability of the dollar, hence his thesis may seem to be only of academic value to the Indian student. But the lessons he draws from the present chaotic condition of American monetary instability are in a certain measure applicable to the conditions prevailing in our country. The author makes an effective contrast between the post-war inflation in Germany, and Austria and the deflation current in U. S. A. in 1933: how in the former the creditors were cheated, the wage-earners penalised by a rising price-level unaccompanied by an equally rising wage-level; and how in the latter those who had borrowed money were squeezed to pay more the wage-earners had to accept cuts and the capitalists a scaling down of their profits. The author rightly compares extravagant and indiscriminating inflation to a thief and a reckless deflation to a gambler. The effects of inflation and deflation are too well-known to students of economics and as far as I can see, the author has nothing fresh to say on the subject except lading out the old matter in glittering spoons. The importance of the book lies in the fact that it is a plea for the theory that inflation by itself is not wrong. In the peculiar conditions of U. S. A. to-day some measure of reflation is necessary to restore the price-level and to scale down debts incurred in the pre-deflation period. Mr. Fisher suggests that the essential reflationary methods should deal with the volume of the circulating medium and also with its velocity, and that the devaluation of the dollar (a subject which the U. S. A. Government has already taken in hand) should be the first item in the schedule. He further wants the State to issue stamp scrip to subsidise employers to re-employ discharged labour. The fluctuating character of the price-level is pointed out as a curse of the U. S. A. financial structure and the author proposes that, as in Sweden, an attempt should be made to control the price-level. The experiment in Sweden has not lasted long enough for other countries to follow and it is doubtful whether in a huge country like the U. S. A., where the price-level is influenced by many factors, it will be possible effectively to control the price-level. The proposal to remove inequalities in debt-payment on the ground that most of the debts were incurred in the pre-deflation period is interesting. "On a rough calculation", says the author, "the average dollar debt now extant was contracted at a price-level about 85 to 95 per cent. of the 1926 level; that is, about 70 per cent above the level for March 1933. The price-level, therefore, so far as justice between debtor and creditor is concerned, should now be lifted to about 70 per cent. above the level of March 1933." Taking all points into consideration the ideal price level is probably about that of 1926. This level has to be reached either by reflation or reduction of every individual debt according to its respective degree of illicit growth. The author anticipates administrative difficulties with regard to the latter solution, but the N. R. A. Code is so all-pervasive in character today in U. S. A. that it will be interesting to see the U. S. A. Government take up the matter of scaling down every individual debt. President Roosevelt is deter-

mined at any cost to restore the price-level and this solution will not have serious administrative difficulties if the men entrusted with the administration of the National Recovery Code take it up seriously in hand as the only solvent for indebtedness. The book was published in 1933 just on the eve of the American embargo on gold; and much water has flown under the bridge since then and Mr. Fisher's thesis of reflation has found acceptance in the U. S. A. Government. To Indians, the book has a significant message. Unless some attempt at reflation is made, there is no likelihood of raising the Indian price-level, whatever Sir James Grigg may do in other spheres. In such a reflationary programme, the devaluation of the rupee must occupy a prominent place. The Hilton-Young mistake of fixing the value of the rupee $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ above the pre-war parity must be corrected, if there is to be any recovery at all. Credit reflation may not be possible in India at present owing to lack of organisation and co-ordination in our banking system. But devaluation is within the scope of the Indian Government's powers, and the economic experiments of President Roosevelt in the matter of devaluation should teach them the lesson that drastic situations require drastic remedies.

A. D. MANI.

SHORT NOTICES.

MODERN KNOWLEDGE AND OLD BELIEF. BY VIVIAN PHELIPS. (Watts.) 1934. 20cm. 138p. 2/6.

MR. PHELIPS has produced another fine book as a sequel to his world famous "The Churches and Modern Thought." The churches are always trying to seize any opportunity of a reversal or modification of scientific theories in order to come forward and show to the world that it is they who are right and that science has to modify itself from day to day. The present volume shows conclusively how the recent discoveries and theories of atomic Physics give no support to the existence of a god or even of a factor that could even be remotely identified with what either Dean Inge or Bishop Barnes understands as the god of Christianity. Mr. Phelps examines the position of the modern Christian apologists and shows how untenable their position is. In fact they are now compelled to say in substance that faith (without the least support of facts) and possibly a mysterious religious experience form their only arguments for their being Christians—a position no rational being can accept as satisfactory.

The question of secularising education in countries where the church dominates all schools has also been treated in an eminently reasonable chapter. Here in India we are free from religious interference in school teaching in most cases, although schools and colleges conducted by missionary societies have, in certain cases, compulsory attendance at Bible classes. In my opinion, Dr. Paranjpye lost a golden opportunity when he allowed compulsion to continue even when these institutions were getting Government grants-in-aid. A rationalist should have been more firm; the fear of people, who think that the pupils of all secular institutions will become unmoral is unfounded. Even a sudden disappearance of all the churches, say in South Africa or England, would only be a blessing and no catastrophe would result, as none has resulted in the removal of the churches from the field of education in Russia. The sooner this opium of the people is destroyed, the better. Morality does not require the help of this institution to support it.

D. D. KARVE

THE EXTERNAL OBLIGATIONS OF INDIA. By NALINI RANJAN SIRKAR. (Book Co. Ltd. Calcutta). 1934.

THE problem of the external obligations of India is an important one, because, as the author of the pamphlet says, it has a great bearing upon the economic independence of India. Mr. Sirkar, the well-known Calcutta financier and banker, deals in this pamphlet with the problem of the external indebtedness of India from every point of view, and arrives at the conclusion that, considering some of the transactions carried on in this connection, "I am led seriously to doubt the financial probity of those who carried on the transactions on behalf of India." He estimates the total foreign obligations of India at about 1030 millions, though there might be differences of opinion about the figure. Besides the capital charges, India has to bear approximately about Rs. 100 crores annually for Home charges, Interest on debt etc., which means "a very grave state of affairs." "It is clear from our trade position that in the normal course of events, as they appear today, reduction of our foreign debt obligations seems almost impossible of achievement, unless a deliberate attempt is made either to increase our trade balance or reduce progressively our commitments abroad." But Mr. Sirkar says that the Government "has neither plan nor purpose," and resorts to deliberate manipulation of exchange, with the result that there is an eternal conflict between the interests of our export trade and the conveniences of Government finances. Regarding methods of reducing national debt, Mr. Sirkar suggests the establishment of a comprehensive and carefully devised National Debt Redemption Fund, which should comprise two branches, the Internal Debt Redemption Fund and the Foreign Debts Redemption Fund, and the claims of the latter should prevail over those of the former. He also suggests the handing over of the fund to a statutory body like the National Debt Commission.

Mr. Sirkar makes other useful recommendations which deserve careful consideration by the Government.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA. By A. S. ALTEKAR. (The Indian Bookshop, Benares City.) 1933. 20cm. 386p. Rs. 3.

IN this book 'an attempt is made to give an authentic, impartial and realistic picture of Education in ancient India, its theories and ideals, rituals and institutions, courses and curricula and merits and defects.' The reader will find in this book a fund of information about the whole educational system in ancient India. It is interesting to read about conditions in those days and to compare old practices with modern ones. The author has given a detailed account of the Educational Rituals, the Teacher and the Student, Students' Life, Curricula, Method of Teaching and Examinations, etc. Then he has proceeded to treat general topics such as Vocational Education, Primary Education and Female Education. An account of some educational centres and institutions of those times is also given which is followed by a discussion about the attitude of society and State towards education. Finally a survey of the aims and ideals of education in those days is made and the achievements and failures are stated. The author must be congratulated upon bringing out this concise volume which is sure to be very useful to the student of the history of education.

B. D. KARVE.

SOCIAL INSURANCE IN INDIA.

NEED FOR FEDERAL CONTROL.—II.

By C. W. JENKS of the Legal Service of the International Labour Office.

IN the preceding article (published last week, the case for concurrent legislative jurisdiction in respect of social insurance has been argued mainly on the ground of the desirability of equalising social charges throughout, in as large a part of the federation as possible. In support of this argument the experience of other federations has been adduced and the analogy of workmen's compensation jurisdiction under the White Paper proposals has been cited. In this article it is proposed to consider the matter from two further points of view, that of the Indian participation in international arrangements relating to social insurance and that of the importance of avoiding the creation within India, as a result of the development of unco-ordinated provincial schemes, of the type of problem which is now receiving international consideration.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS.

Social insurance is one of the subjects to which the International Labour Organisation has been giving particularly close attention, and the International Labour Conference has already adopted twelve Conventions relating to insurance and kindred subjects. A Convention relating to the employment of women before and after childbirth was adopted by the Conference at its First Session in 1919 and has been ratified by fourteen States. This Convention requires, *inter alia*, the payment either from public funds or under an insurance system of maternity benefit during the six weeks following childbirth and if the woman exercises the right secured for her by the Convention of leaving her work during the six weeks preceding childbirth, during that period also. The next step was taken in 1925 by the adoption of three Conventions relating to workmen's compensation. The Workmen's Compensation (Accidents) Convention requires the compensation of industrial accidents on terms equal to those for which it provides. It has been ratified by fourteen States. The Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention requires the payment of compensation for specified occupational diseases in accordance with the general principles of, and at a rate not less than that prescribed by, the legislation of the Member concerned relating to compensation for industrial accidents. India is among the twenty-five States which have ratified this Convention. The Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention requires on a reciprocity basis the grant to foreign workers without any condition as to residence of equality of treatment in respect of accident compensation. Thirty States, including India, are parties to this Convention. Two years later two Conventions were adopted relating to sickness insurance, the one applying to industrial and commercial workers and to domestic servants, the other to agricultural workers. These Conventions require the maintenance of compulsory sickness insurance schemes complying with defined minimum standards. They have been ratified by fifteen and ten States respectively.

1933 marked a further step forward, the Conference adopting in that year six Conventions relating to old-age, invalidity, and widows' and orphans' insurance. These Conventions define minimum standards with which insurance schemes are required to comply and include provisions relating to the liability of foreign workers to contributions and the

right of such workers to draw benefit. They are at present under consideration by the Members of the Organisations with a view to ratification. Important as the above Conventions are, they are far from having exhausted social insurance as a subject for international action, and the questions now under consideration by the International Labour Organisation include unemployment insurance, migrants' pension rights, ship-owners' liability towards sick and injured seamen, sickness insurance for seamen, and the compensation of further occupational diseases—especially silicosis.

INDIA'S POSITION UNDER THE WHITE PAPER.

It may well be that India will not for a considerable time be in a position to ratify any appreciable number of the international Conventions upon these subjects, but that is no reason why features of the new Constitution which are intended to endure for centuries should now be so framed as to make it constitutionally impracticable for her ever to accept such arrangements except in respect of workmen's compensation, even though it may become practicable and expedient for her to do so in respect of some of the other subjects mentioned. Yet this will be the position if the White Paper proposals upon this subject are not modified. The power of the federation to give effect to international obligations "subject to the concurrence of the units as regards non-federal subjects" will be valueless for the purpose of implementing such arrangements. For that all the units concerned will concur simultaneously is exceedingly improbable. India will only be in a position to participate in such arrangements when the time for her to do so is ripe if the federal authorities have concurrent legislative powers in respect of social insurance. It would seem a mistake to look upon her participation in such arrangements as something impossibly remote. Doubtless these Conventions require the institution of insurance schemes of a universality of application which is impracticable in India to-day, but they leave unregulated questions such as pension rates as to which conditions in India may be expected to differ most sensibly from those in Western countries. They represent the first approach to an international treatment of the problems with which they deal. Various of their provisions will no doubt be reviewed in the course of years, and if India were at the time of such revision constitutionally in a position to give effect to Conventions upon these subjects, any necessary adaptations of them to her condition could be given suitable consideration. It is unquestionable that as an emigration country India has everything to gain from participation in arrangements of this kind designed in part to secure proper protection, social protection, for workers employed in countries other than their own.

It is of even greater importance that some of the problems with which the International Labour Organisation is attempting to deal in the above and in other suggested Conventions—problems such as those arising in connection with the liability of foreign workers to insurance contributions, the conditions under which such workers are entitled to draw benefit in respect of their contributions and to draw benefit payable out of public funds, the extent to which it is permissible to condition the continued payment of pensions to them upon the continuance of residence in the jurisdictions in which the pension has been

acquired, and the arrangements which are possible to preserve to migrant workers the benefit of contributions paid to pension funds in the country from which they migrate—should not be created within India on a smaller scale. Unless there is at least federal co-ordination of all social insurance schemes, and proper co-ordination would be impossibly difficult in the absence of any federal legislative authority in respect of this subject, restricted residence conditions and unduly long qualifying periods are likely to be necessary to prevent abusive inter-provincial migration with a view to drawing benefits under the more favourable schemes. The degree of protection afforded by such schemes as are set up will thereby be reduced. Difficulties may also occur as to the payment outside the provinces in which they are payable, and there are certain to be difficulties as to pension rights in course of acquisition by persons who migrate from one province to another. This latter problem is of special importance in a country where the mobility of industrial labour is as great as it is in India, and where it is clearly desirable, for both economic and social reasons, that such mobility should not be adversely affected.

EXPERIENCE OF CANADA AND AUSTRALIA.

The importance of these problems may be illustrated by reference to the experience of the federal countries in which non-contributory schemes have been established upon a State basis. The "Standard Bill" providing for old-age pensions advocated in the United States by a group of private organisations since 1923 requires a fifteen years' residence qualification in the State for entitlement to an old age pension. This "Standard Bill" has had some influence on subsequent legislation and periods of ten or fifteen years' residence in the same State, or even in the same county, are frequently required, and must generally be fulfilled consecutively immediately before the claim is made. The effect is to exclude from pension rights a proportion of old people which varies with the size of the State or country, the length of the period and the degree to which it must be fulfilled without interruption immediately before a claim is presented, and the frequency of migration in the area and at the time concerned, but which is in many cases considerable, particularly since nothing has been achieved by way of reciprocity, despite the general similarity of legislation throughout the country. The hardship imposed by the existence of such residence conditions is, of course, more serious in the case of invalidity and survivors' pensions, designed as they are to meet sudden emergencies, than in that of old-age pensions which become payable at a date known in advance. The position is well illustrated by the position in respect of mothers' pensions in Australia, Canada and the United States, in all of which there is State or Provincial legislation upon the subject. The great majority of these laws make it a condition of the award of a pension that the mother shall have resided in the jurisdiction for a prescribed period, varying from six months to five years but generally two years, before losing the support of her husband. Except in the United States there is generally a further condition that the husband must have resided within the jurisdiction at the date when he ceased to support his family or even for the two or three years previous to that date as well. In only one case, that of Ontario and Saskatchewan, is a reciprocity agreement known to exist. Elsewhere persons not fulfilling these conditions simply fall outside the scope of the scheme.

Equal hardship may be caused by the existence of requirements as to residence within the jurisdiction as a condition for the continued payment of awarded pensions. In the United States, for instance, pensions are only payable within the State, or in some cases within the country, in which the pension was awarded. The position is the same in Canada in respect of mothers' pensions, but not in respect of old-age pensions, these being granted by certain provinces in co-operation with the Dominion Government and arrangements being made for their continued payment even though the pensioner moves from one province to another.

NEED FOR ALL-INDIA BASIS OF LEGISLATION.

The above difficulties have occurred in federal States which have non-contributory pension schemes on a State or provincial basis. But it is now recognised that non-contributory schemes are little but a first step towards the establishment of insurance, and in most industrial countries in which constitutional obstacles do not act as a drag upon progress contributory schemes are in operation. Assuming a federation in which there were State contributory schemes, co-ordination would be even more imperative, for there would be added to the problems already discussed questions as to liability to contributions, and as to the effect of crossing State boundaries upon rights in course of acquisition and upon pension rights which are not merely a public bounty but something to the cost of which the insured person has contributed over a number of years. The framers of the Indian constitution will bear a very heavy responsibility if in the year 1934 they make no adequate provision for the handling on an all-India basis of social questions of this importance. It is therefore most earnestly to be hoped that the whole question of legislative competence in respect of social insurance will be given very serious reconsideration. Certain branches of social insurance—maternity benefits, widows' and orphans' pensions, and unemployment insurance—are not expressly mentioned in the present assignments of heads of legislative jurisdiction. They should all be treated on the same footing and the federal legislature given concurrent jurisdiction under some head so drafted as not to place any arbitrary limitation upon its power and responsibility to watch over the future development of all the branches of social insurance throughout what is to-day British India.

Correspondence.

"THE MAHATMA AND THE PRINCES."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR—I do not desire to say anything more on this matter of "The Mahatma and the Princes", but I should like, if I may, to assure Mr. A. V. Patvardhan and those who think with him, that, in my opinion, the Congress should never accept an Indian Federation, unless, inter alia, the people of the Indian States are given representation by election in the Federal Legislature and are guaranteed certain essential and fundamental rights of citizenship. I have always pressed this view on the Congress and I will continue to do so.—Yours, etc.,

S. SATYAMURTI

Poona, June 8.