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Topics of the Week.

Regulation III of 1818.

THE public complaint about the diversion of this obsolete measure from its original purpose when used in the case of Indian public workers received support from unexpected quarters in the course of last week's debate in the Assembly on it, viz. from the Foreign Secretary himself. Not that he made a frank admission to that effect. But his remarks, read between the lines, amount in effect to such an admission. He stated that the Regulation was designed for use not so much in cases of internal commotion as for the purpose of controlling the movements of refugees from foreign lands beyond India's frontier. Latterly, however, as everybody knows, it is freely resorted to in order to restrain the liberty of inconvenient politicians, which is thus manifestly inconsistent with the intentions of its framers. The press summary of the Foreign Secretary's speech gives no indication as to whether this abuse of its provisions was at all sought to be defended by him and if so, on what grounds. Whatever that be, public opinion would highly value his testimony to the misuse of the Regulation when set in motion against people in India's public life.

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BUT if the Foreign Secretary thus weakened an already weak case for the continuance of the Ordinance, the Home Member did try to bolster up support for his demand for its retention. This he did by an appeal to the existence of terrorism and

communism, which were to him public enemies. While public opinion can have nothing to object to in his description of the two evils, it cannot see eye to eye with him as to the efficacy of the remedy. For dealing with the former, the executive has been in recent years armed with exceptionally stringent powers and the Government drive against communism has recently started by its being declared as an unlawful organisation. In neither case however has a resort to the Regulation been found to be necessary. Whatever justification there may have been for its possible use in controlling terrorists has been altogether removed by the anti-terrorist draconian legislation which the Government has succeeded in inducing the present unrepresentative Councils to pass. The debate on the Regulation is still unfinished; but nobody need be in doubt as to its result. It is too much to expect the Assembly as at present constituted to record its vote in favour of its rescission.

* * *

"Federation an Insuperable Obstacle."

MR. K. M. MUNSHI, one of the most prominent of the younger Congress leaders in Bombay, appears to be an uncompromising opponent of federation. He blames even Mahatma Gandhi for agreeing to set about drafting a constitution in the Round Table Conference on the federal basis. In a contributed article to the press, he says :

"Indians—gullible Round Table Knights—gave up the cherished ambition of responsible government for British India only and accepted a federation with the Princes. By a formal political structure, they hoped to attain national solidarity for the whole country. Even Gandhiji, the inveterate optimist that he is, made it a corner-stone of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. But these hopes soon vanished into nothingness.

Once federation was conceded, centrifugal forces were liberated and national strength undermined in the proposed scheme. It was seen to that no Motilal Nehru could dominate the Federal Assembly or effectively voice national aspirations in them in future. Responsibility was made conditional on federation; and now, the responsibility is to be shared and controlled by the autocratic Indian chiefs, acting under the inspiration of the Paramount Power. Responsibility is to be given only if it is no responsibility at all."

* * *

NOT only is the White Paper scheme devoid of an element of responsibility, but it will ever remain so; and this seems to Mr. Munshi to be its worst feature. It is not a step towards the goal, but it involves blotting out the goal itself. Mr. Munshi says :

The scheme, again, is a cast-iron scheme. It can never grow wide enough to satisfy Indian aspirations. A petty princeling can hold up a change in the constitution for ever

even if every popular representative wanted it. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru once thought that unless he accepted federation he would never be able to secure the transfer of the army to popular control. Now that he has secured a federation, he can never get the army till every prince agrees to it and no prince will ever agree unless the Secretary of State commands. The federation, accepted as a means to an end, has become an insuperable obstacle to its realization.

* * *

Why not accept ?

THE Vice-President of the All-India Muslim League, Khan Saheb Hajf Rashid Ahmed, in his statement to the Press regarding the Congress Working Committee's decision on the communal award says :

"The Congress has now reached the margin of co-operation. Only one step more and Mussalmans will join it in offering united opposition to the White Paper proposals. Mussalmans would be willing to join hands with the Congress in fighting the White Paper, if the latter made it clear in unmistakable terms that it accepted the communal award till a communal solution was agreed upon by all the parties concerned... It is meaningless to say that the Congress neither rejects nor accepts the communal award. Mussalmans are not going to be entrapped by such vague expressions and will stick to the Award and the White Paper proposals till a better scheme is suggested."

This is a brutally frank expression of opinion on the part of a responsible official of the leading Muslim organization in the country, and it ought to disabuse Congressmen of the idea, if it be entertained by any, that the facing-both-ways policy of the Congress would secure the support of the Muslim community in the country's fight against the White Paper. The support of the community cannot be obtained unless the Congress ceases to sit on the fence, and comes down boldly on the side of acceptance of the communal award.

* * *

IT is not really too heavy a price for the Congress to pay in purchasing Muslim co-operation in its rejection policy. For the neither-accept-nor-reject policy amounts in practice to nothing less than acceptance; and the Congress apologists have indirectly to admit as much. "The Congress is a national body", they say, "and has therefore to lay aside its own opinion about communal electorates because it is not acceptable to one entire community. For this reason the Congress cannot oppose communal electorates." It is but one short step from this position to the position which the Muslim League now invites the Congress to take up. It has only to say: "The communal electorates are of course unacceptable to us on principle, but since we represent all communities and since one community insists upon them, we shall accept them for the present, reserving to ourselves the freedom to convert this community to our view and abolish the communal electorates at a later date." The Congress gives up nothing substantial in assuming this attitude; in fact this is its real attitude at present, and nothing is lost by its saying expressly what it now says impliedly.

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To do so will secure at least some tangible gain. We are not certain that Muslims will decline to accept the White Paper scheme even if the Congress accepts the communal award, but the Congress will at any rate be in a position to put the Muslim community on its trial. However, its present not-this-not-

that attitude only serves to alienate the Hindus without conciliating the Mahomedans. If reversal of the communal award is to take place by the consent of all communities, Muslims will not mind the Congress accepting the communal award for the present and then trying to have it set aside. If even with this concession on the part of the Congress, they do not oppose the White Paper constitution to the point of refusing to accept it, they will at least be found out. Why should not the Congress accept the communal award in terms and either get the Muslims to support its policy in regard to the White Paper or expose the hollowness of their pretence? Its neutral attitude only serves to estrange all communities.

* * *

Sir P. C. Sethna on Situation.

IN his article in the latest issue of the *Hindustan Review*, Sir Phiroze Sethna gives evidence of greater realism than most others who have taken a hand in constitution-making. He has no illusions that the White Paper even if left intact would provide a satisfactory or permanent solution for India's political ills. Of the White Paper leaving the Joint Select Committee's hands without considerably reactionary modifications, there appears, humanly speaking, to be no chance. On the contrary, there are unmistakable indications that it will be very much whittled down in some important respects. Sir Phiroze Sethna is positive that to look forward to the incorporation in the Committee's report of any important improvements sponsored by the Indian delegation in its Joint Memorandum is to expect the impossible. The hope of an agreed settlement between India and England being thus ruled out, Sir Phiroze Sethna does not foresee an early termination of the present political turmoil in India.

* * *

IF the prospect is gloomy, want of advice as to its improvement is the last thing that can be pleaded by anybody. The Congress has done its bit in improving the political situation by abandoning civil disobedience and encouraging parliamentary activity. Sir Phiroze Sethna thinks, and rightly too, that the improvement would have been accelerated if Government had seen their way to release Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. In view of the unquestionably friendly quarter from which the suggestion derives support, it is to be hoped that Government will lose no time in acting upon it. Sir Phiroze Sethna's further suggestion aimed at bringing about political pacification is that the Government should make a declaration that when the Ordinance Acts expire their renewal would not be asked for. He would also like them to devote their attention to the economic problem with a view to taking action specially to tackle the unemployment problem which is at the root of the Indian political problem. "A well thought-out five or ten years' plan for improving the condition of the agriculturists, for relieving their indebtedness, for promoting indigenous industries, for reconstructing our system of education so as to make it more practical and scientific, for providing against unemployment, for lowering the burden of taxation and making its burden more equitable"—this is no doubt a comprehensive and also an attractive programme; but it is open to doubt whether any part of it will be vigorously prosecuted by Government.

* * *

Mr. Kalinath Ray and Congress Policy.

THE Congress attitude towards the White Paper and its decision (or indecision?) on the Communal

Award are subjected to much thoughtful criticism by Babu Kalinath Ray in his article in the August number of the *Hindustan Review* on the subject. It is obvious, as pointed out by the Congress Working Committee, that the only satisfactory alternative to the White Paper is a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly. But, an unsatisfactory constitution, says Mr. Ray, cannot be less unsatisfactory merely because it emanates from a Constituent Assembly. It will be satisfactory only if its provisions are sufficiently liberal and progressive. Would a constitution fashioned by the kind of Constituent Assembly which the Congress has in mind satisfy this test? Mr. Ray has grave doubts on the point. According to the Congress plan, the Assembly is to contain representatives of "important minorities" elected by separate communal electorates besides those representing national interests and elected on the basis of adult suffrage or something closely approximating to it. It will indeed be a miracle if a body so constituted produces a political document very much more advanced than the White Paper. In this case, there is little reason to suppose that the result of its labours will command greater public support than the White Paper only because a Constituent Assembly has given birth to it. Mr. Ray also entertains the fear that a body so undemocratically composed will end by perpetuating the system of separate electorates, for which he has deep-seated abhorrence.

THE neutral attitude of the Congress towards the Communal Award is sought to be justified by the resistance offered to the Award by different communities. In Mr. Ray's opinion, this is an unsound position for the Congress to adopt. If it chooses to look at all questions that come before it from this angle of vision Mr. Ray is right in saying that it will have very little to do. In the nature of circumstances the Award is sure to encounter strong opposition from some communities. And if the Congress wants to make up its mind on the Award only after such opposition has died down, Mr. Ray says, and rightly too, that it may have to wait till the Greek Kalends. According to the Working Committee's resolution on the Award, the Congress would accept any solution, though not national, acceptable to all parties and reject one not agreed to by any of them. The pronounced opposition to the Award of the Hindus and Sikhs seems to Mr. Ray to constitute a sufficient ground for its rejection by the national body, and not for the adoption of an indecisive attitude towards it. These are some of the considerations which lead Mr. Ray to regard the Congress decision on the Award as being "essentially faulty" and to press for its modification "without any avoidable delay."

Mr. Kidwai's Dissatisfaction with Congress.

MR. RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI, a prominent U. P. Congress worker, is strongly incensed against the Congress Working Committee for its threat of disciplinary action against Congressmen who dare oppose the Congress programme. So angry is he with that body that he has thrown out an open challenge to it to proceed against him. Mr. Kidwai is by no means opposed to the council-entry programme *per se*. Indeed he has always believed in the capture of legislatures by the Congress and was himself a member of the Assembly when it was dominated by the Swaraj Party. But he strongly objects to the whole scheme of the Congress Parliamentary Board. Its personnel is thoroughly disagreeable to him because it consists of nominees of Dr. Ansari and Pandit Malaviya and because many of its mem-

bers are either non-Congressmen or opponents of the activities arising out of the programme chalked out by the Lahore Congress. The idea of investing such a body with supreme control over electoral matters is unbearable to him. Then, again, the Board's election manifesto strikes him as too mild for the Congress. Nor is the Working Committee's decision on the communal award less obnoxious to him. This he characterises as "camouflage." Says he on the point:

"It (the resolution on the Award) tells the Muslims, 'we are not rejecting the communal award, and in return we invite you to join us in rejecting the White Paper.' It tells the Hindus: 'It is true we are not rejecting the communal award. But by declaring that 'the White Paper lapsing, the communal award must automatically lapse' we are ensuring its ultimate rejection.' If you really want to reject the communal award you should not make any fuss about it. Let all of us—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs—combine and reject the White Paper, which, according to our formula, will also mean the rejection of the communal award."

Recovery of Municipal Dues.

ATTENTION is drawn in the Bombay Government's resolution reviewing reports on municipal taxation and expenditure for 1932-33 to the increasing growth in the arrears of municipal taxation. This indeed is a hardy annual but creates little impression on those for whom the strictures are meant. The resolution as usual strongly animadverts upon the chronic unwillingness of municipalities to resort to all their powers for the recovery of their dues and the view is expressed that things would show a material improvement if resort is freely had to the coercive processes provided by law. While it will be generally admitted that in the present hard times the ratepayer deserves every consideration that can possibly be shown to him, it is also true that a more frequent use of such powers or even the threat to use them will go a considerable way in the arrears of municipal dues being cleared off.

But the really serious public scandal consists in members of municipalities themselves remaining in arrears. The resolution makes it clear that this is by no means a rare phenomenon. The failure on the part of municipal members to pay up their dues in time deserves strong condemnation for more reasons than one. For one thing by such conduct they set a bad example to the general body of ratepayers, and, for another, they are, consciously or unconsciously, guilty of an abuse of their privileged position as members of these bodies for the satisfaction of their personal ends. As custodians of the ratepayers' interests, however, they must really be above the slightest suspicion as to their bona fides. But experience shows that no amount of mere sermonising is going to effect an improvement in this state of affairs.

The practice of publishing as part of the resolution the names of such defaulting members for the information of the world, which was followed for some years, seems now to be given up as being of no practical use. More stringent steps are apparently needed to make the defaulters reform their conduct and Government would do well to consider the promotion of legislation which will seek to disqualify for municipal membership, at least for a period of years, those municipal councillors that after due notice fail to pay up their arrears. Action on these lines is contemplated in C. P. and its results will be watched with interest elsewhere.

Articles.

STEEL PROTECTION BILL.

GOVERNMENT, in framing the amendments to the Iron and Steel Protection Bill, have accepted in its entirety the scheme of protection as recommended by the Tariff Board. This has meant making an addition to the number of excise duties already existing in our taxation system. The levy of excise on some of the products of the Tatas is rendered necessary by the reduction of the duty on galvanised sheets and the removal of the duty on imported billets. The removal of the duty on imported billets is due to the fact that re-rolling mills have come into existence in India during the last few years and that these, especially when situated in parts of India distant from Jamshedpur, are able to compete with the Tatas in finished steel products. Now, if these mills were to depend for their supply of billets on the Tatas exclusively, that monopolistic concern could easily make their position impossible. As a fact the Tariff Board found that in a number of ways the Tata Co. had been taking during recent years an unfair advantage of its sheltered and unique position. The Board, therefore, took the view that an alternative source of supply of billets should be open to the re-rolling mills and that in the absence of another iron and steel producing company in India such an alternative source could only be imported billets. Hence, the need for allowing the import of billets into India even without a revenue duty. The Board point out that even so, the price of Indian billets will give a fair profit to the Tata Iron and Steel Co. We find ourselves in this entirely in agreement with the view taken by the Tariff Board. If a country at a considerable burden to the body of consumers builds up an industry or concern, that concern must behave with a proper sense of responsibility; and in case it is found that the customers of that industry are exploited because of its privileged position, the scheme of protection must be so modified as to make such exploitation impossible. There seems little opposition to the principle involved in this procedure. The consequence, however, is loss of revenue, which in its turn has led to the excise.

The loss of revenue due to the abolition of the revenue duty on billets is negligible; it is chiefly the reduction of the duty on galvanised sheets that makes it necessary to look for compensating sources of revenue. This question raises the whole problem of high revenue or protective duties and their direct and indirect consequences, with which we have often dealt in these columns. It was as a part of a scheme of protection that the duties on galvanised sheets were raised high. As, however, the home production is small in comparison with the home demand, imports continued high in spite of the high duty and, therefore, these brought in a considerable income. And now, when it is recognised that protective duties need not be so high, revenue considerations make it difficult for them to be lowered. Or if they are lowered,

it will only be because the burden is transferred by means of an excise-cum-import duty on to the shoulders of the consumers of some other steel products, so that taxation remains as broad-based as before.

The problem raised by the position of the re-rolling mills and particularly by that of galvanised sheets imports relates closely to the problem of the extent of the Indian market of the Tatas which we discussed a fortnight ago. The galvanised sheets production was always one which should more properly have been dealt with by a direct subsidy than by a general protective tariff. This would have allowed the revenue aspect of the duty to be considered entirely by itself. As it is we have three elements—protective, preferential and revenue all mixed up in the galvanised sheets duties. The duty on British sheets is quite unnecessarily low and that on continental sheets unduly high. If both these are made uniform at a rate, somewhat lower than the proposed continental rate, the duty is bound to yield substantially higher returns. But then galvanised sheets preference is supposed to give us a substantial benefit in the way of free entry for our pig-iron in U. K. in return. And the new Finance Member even hinted at the awful political consequences that might result if it were withdrawn! In all this we are surprised that nobody talks of the preferences in other directions such as structurals, bars, plates, etc. that we continue to provide for in our new scheme and for which we get nothing in return. At Ottawa it was said that as these preferences already existed, as part of our protective scheme, they could not be counted in the bargain. But if we have now an opportunity of revising our scheme, why should it be necessary for us to throw in the additional preference to galvanised sheets for obtaining the single concession of free-entry in U. K. for our pig-iron? For, even the Tariff Board did not in 1926 think it necessary that the galvanised sheets duty be framed on the preferential model.

To excise duties as such, we remain in principle opposed. They are the type of taxation on productive activity which is very generally condemned, and rightly, though it is only fair to admit that some of the strongest objections to excise lose much of their force when the productive activity is carried on by a single concern whose profits are all derived from the protective duties levied. It is obvious that to-day the Finance Member can ill afford to lose a substantial source of revenue; and once the principle of excise is accepted there is no reason why the loss in this case be not met by this particular method. Our objection, however, (as indicated when we wrote on the Tariff Board's report), to the proposed scheme is more fundamental than a mere objection to excise. We feel that on the Tariff Board's findings, an elaborate long-period scheme of protection is not justified, that the monopoly of the whole Indian market should not be presumed for the Tatas and that the preferential element in the scheme is being unjustifiably and unprofitably increased.

AN EASTERN LOCARNO PACT.

THE proposal for a pact of mutual guarantee between countries of Eastern Europe which France and Russia have promoted may not materialise on account of the opposition of Germany, which now seems certain, but it will still be useful to follow the attempts that are made in this direction, for they are attempts that certainly are on right lines and must be encouraged by all men of good-will. The pact in contemplation is one between Russia, the Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland—Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany and will be modelled, if it comes about, upon the analogy of the Locarno Treaty. When the project was outlined by Sir John Simon in the House of Commons on 13th July, it met with the cordial support of all the political parties in Great Britain—Conservative, Liberal and Labour—because the pact is not to be, as Sir John explained, in the nature of a selective alliance of the old kind, "building up one combination as against another", but is to be "in the truest and most complete sense reciprocal." The proposed pact, like the Pact of Locarno guaranteeing the western frontier of Germany is "purely defensive in character, framed in the spirit of the Covenant, working in close harmony with the League and under its guidance." It is intended to be part of the system of collective security.

The Labour Party's view of the Eastern pact may be given here in order to show how completely unanimous British opinion is on the subject. A document recently published by the Party says:—

"The Labour Party is convinced that, in the absence of a world scheme of pooled security, the policy of reducing national armed forces in return for international guarantees of security backed by international armed forces may be promoted by States within the League concluding regional agreements under Article 21 of the Covenant and in conformity with the Covenant. It, therefore, warmly welcomes the proposals made by the French Government for an Eastern Locarno Pact of non-aggression and mutual assistance, open to signature by all the States in the region concerned on the same terms. It considers that these proposals would strengthen the collective system of the League of Nations, and believes that their acceptance would lead to the entry of Russia into the League at the Assembly in September next. The Labour Party urgently hopes that His Majesty's Government will give their cordial approval to these proposals, will co-operate in pressing Germany and Poland to participate in the Eastern Pact, and will agree to Russia becoming a guarantor of Locarno Pacts of 1925. It trusts that His Majesty's Government will forthwith declare their readiness to vote for the admission of Russia to the League of Nations, and for the grant of a permanent seat on the Council of the League to Russia."

The Government have expressed their whole-hearted approval of the policy enunciated in this statement. It has agreed to lend its moral support to the pact and to the admission of Soviet Russia into the League of Nations. Only one condition it has laid down. Great Britain in the original Locarno Treaty undertook to maintain the territorial integrity of Germany, France and Belgium by employing, if necessary, all its armed forces against the aggressor, but she is not willing to incur any obligation in respect of the

Eastern Pact. Italy's position is just the same. She was the guarantor with Great Britain of the western frontier of Germany; now she too refuses to play that part. Both Italy and Great Britain will be only well-wishers of the Eastern Pact, but not its executors.

It may be asked why there should be need for a separate regional security pact when the League Covenant throws upon all its members the obligation to guarantee the peace of the world by maintaining intact the frontiers as drawn by the Peace Treaty. The answer is that this obligation is of too general a character to be effective. The Covenant in itself does not make it incumbent upon any State to send its army to a country against which the League may declare that there has been aggression. Such an obligation has to be separately undertaken; and each country will be prepared to undertake such an obligation only in respect of those frontiers in which it is immediately interested. To enforce such an obligation on every country in respect of all frontiers would be the surest way of leaving undischarged the responsibilities incurred. As Sir Austen Chamberlain observed in this debate, "If you try to give some guarantee for every frontier and every land, you will have to whittle your guarantee down until it is of no value. We serve the interests of peace much more by concentrating our main efforts where we can really make them effective and where we can bring a powerful contribution in support, of them." Great Britain and Italy are not interested in guaranteeing the eastern frontier of Germany so much as the western and they do not consider it to be their immediate concern to pledge all their resources to the maintenance of the former as they did of the latter. The underlying principle of collective security was well described by Sir John Simon by using a homely simile. He said:

"I conceive the difference (between the new method of reciprocal engagements and the old method of selective alliances) very much as though one were to say that in the post-war architecture of the world, the wise architect is the man who is trying to construct a building in which there will indeed be stresses and strains between its various parts, but in which the combination of the various parts takes up the stresses and the strains of the whole and keeps it, therefore, safe and secure. The whole conception of this collective system in the post-war world is the conception that mankind will be best sheltered and most secure if we live in a building which, by means of a suitable combination of the parts, will cancel out strains and dangers because every part is making a suitable contribution to protect the whole."

The most remarkable event in international politics of the present day is the complete transformation that has taken place in the policy of Soviet Russia towards other countries and of other countries towards Soviet Russia. Russia was so far an outcast among nations; few nations were till the other day prepared to give it official recognition and fewer still were prepared to admit it to the League. But since the rise of the Nazis in Germany, the capitalist countries have overcome their horror of the proletariat

State; they do not fear its predatory instincts any longer. But on the contrary they look upon Soviet Russia as their bulwark in the East against the growing strength of Germany under Hitler. They have France on the west to checkmate Germany, and if they can count upon Russia and Poland to play the same role in the East, they feel safe. Now they are all anxious that Russia should join the League. This is necessary because otherwise it cannot enter the pact on which they are keen, as the pact is to be under the League auspices. Russia too has dropped its hatred of the League which it used to look upon heretofore as a conspiracy on the part of imperialist countries against the Soviet system. It regarded Germany in the early years after the war, as its special friend, and looked with favour upon all countries which struggled to revise the European map as drawn at Versailles. But the Hitlerite Germany has cured it of these revisionist proclivities. For it now fears that Germany might possibly extend its frontiers and come into the Ukraine and set up, as the Rosenberg plan revealed, a so-called autonomous State in that fertile region. Thus Russia feels that it is now being encircled by enemies, Japan on the west and Germany on the east. It is therefore anxious to make friends with countries like France and the Little Entente which are intent on maintaining the Versailles *status quo*; and it is anxious to join the League as a member, for its non-membership even after entering the Locarno Pact, would prevent France from going to its aid if attacked by Germany. It has not overmuch confidence in the ability of the League to afford it protection, but by joining the League it would at any rate obtain official recognition from all League members and it would be once again an equal among nations. Russia's return to the concert of Europe is in fact an indication of the abandonment by it of international communism.

A new balance of power is thus being created in Europe, and the decisive factor in its creation is Germany. But no reasonable objection can be taken to the proposed pact of security to which it has given rise, because the pact is not aimed at Germany. It is a reciprocal pact between Germany and her Eastern neighbours, mutually guaranteeing the sanctity of their existing frontiers. Germany stands to obtain under it the same measure of security as the other parties to the pact, and has nothing to fear from it if she is prepared to give up her expansionist aims and re-armament plans. Sir Austen Chamberlain was therefore well justified in issuing a grave warning to her in the following words:

"I think the reception of this proposal (for a pact) in Germany will form the touchstone by which we shall discern what is Germany's purpose in demanding equality of armaments, whether she will be content with security or demands domination. I earnestly hope that her answer will be favourable, that she will take her place in the system now offered to her in the East, as she has taken her place in the system of mutual guarantee for the West and that she will come back to the League of Nations and occupy her rightful place, as Russia will come in to take her place for the first time. But if this proposal be brought to nought by the refusal of Germany, it is not for us, who are not prepared ourselves to take a greater

responsibility than we have already taken, to stand between those who, by that very refusal of Germany, have their fears justified and the peril confirmed and security in any form in which they can get it. If Germany refuses a reciprocal arrangement she cannot complain if those whose advances she has declined provide for their own security."

OPIMUM PROBLEM IN ASSAM.

IN spite of such restrictive measure as a reduction in the number of shops, increase in the price of the drug, etc., that the Government of Assam have taken during recent years the consumption of opium in the province remains at a fearfully high level. With a view to confining it to confirmed addicts a system of the registration of opium consumers has been in operation in Assam for more than twelve years so that none who is not on this register can get opium. It may be mentioned that of the two methods of opium consumption, viz. smoking and eating, the former is under a strict ban since 1927, having been declared illegal by a special law enacted for the purpose. But the evil of opium eating cannot yet, even after twelve years' enforcement of the registration system, be said to have been reduced to manageable proportions. This is not to suggest that the opium consumption is stationary or that it shows no tendency to decline. It is no doubt steadily decreasing, but even so it is very much in excess of the standard laid down by the League of Nations. The consumption in 1932-33 ranged between 94 and 22 seers per 10,000 inhabitants as against 175 and 72 seers respectively five years before; but the League scale is no more than 6 seers! But even if we leave the League standard aside as being too exacting and judge Assam by the Indian standard, we may have to come to the conclusion that a very large part of Assam consists of what are known as "Black Spots," i. e. areas whose opium consumption exceeds five times the scale laid down by the League. However disheartening the comparison, the reduction in consumption is doubtless considerable though it does not show as big a drop as one might have desired.

How was this result achieved? It must be ascribed very largely if not exclusively to the policy of an annual reduction of 10 per cent. in the opium ration allowed to registered consumers which was forced on the local Government in July 1927 by the Legislative Council. Prior to that date every consumer was restricted to a definite ration; that is to say, he was not allowed to have any opium in excess of the quantity sanctioned for him. Opium vendors were under an obligation to see that this condition was scrupulously observed, but the ration itself was constant and not subject to reduction. No doubt district authorities periodically inspected opium passes and tried their best to reduce the ration in cases where it was found to have been in excess of actual requirements. But, broadly speaking, the statement remains true, that the ration, when once fixed, was not reduced. This served to stop the spread of the evil but did little to promote a reduced consumption. To this end the Legislative Council in July 1927 carried a resolution which recommended a progressive annual reduction of 10 per cent. in the ration. The reduction was however to be enforced in the case of people of 50 years of age and under; those above that age-limit were excluded from the operation of the new policy for fear that a reduced ration might inflict almost unbearable hardship on them, if indeed it would not endanger their lives. The result of the uninterrupted pursuit of this policy is obvious. At the end of the decade not a single

addict under 50 would be found in the province. Older addicts would no doubt be there, but their number would be very small and, what is more, would become smaller and smaller with the efflux of time until the last addict dies out.

This would be an achievement of which any Government could be justly proud. But since the enforcement of the policy of a 10 per cent. cut in the ration, officialdom in Assam has been constantly assailed by doubts as to whether the new policy had after all been a success, and whether it had not brought in its train the evils of smuggling and short measure. A committee was therefore appointed last year with a view to examine the working of the new policy and to recommend future action. It is a matter for satisfaction that the Committee has recommended the continuance without break of the policy of a progressive reduction in the opium ration. It found the evil of short weight existent but not by any means to an extent which can be said to interfere with the success of the policy. The existence of this evil need not however cause surprise. The number of registered consumers is said to be in the neighbourhood of a lakh. But owing to defects in the census of opium-eaters and other causes it is open to doubt whether the number correctly represents the total number of people subject to the influence of the opium habit. It follows therefore that there must in all likelihood be at least a few who are compelled to gratify their craving by illegitimate means. The number of such unregistered addicts is difficult to estimate; but it has been variously put at 8000 to 9000. Fancy prices can naturally be charged for the doses required by these habitués and the temptations to vendors to swell their gains by giving short weights to the registered consumers and selling the opium savings to the illegitimate ones at exorbitant prices is almost unavoidable. This subjects the ration of the legitimate opium-eater to a double cut, once by Government in accordance with the policy of reduction and again by the vendor for the benefit of the unregistered consumers. But it is not as if the evil is irremediable. In fact the Committee suggests that the drug should be sold in the form of pills or tablets of a stated quantity, thus eliminating the risk of short measure altogether. This experiment, when tried on a small scale in 1929-30, is said to have been attended with satisfactory results but had to be discontinued in 1931 owing to financial stringency. The Committee recommends in favour of its revival, if not by the Central Government, by the Assam Government itself. To the same end it favours a smaller deposit with Government from opium sellers and the entertainment of sellers on a fixed salary instead of leasing out the shops on a fixed vend fee per seer by open competition. Its recommendation to allow some officials and non-officials like chairmen of local bodies to inspect opium shops and to

report on their conduct is also a step in the right direction.

Smuggled opium too can come to the help of the unlicensed addict. That the evil of the smuggling of opium has shown some increase during recent years is beyond doubt. But the real point is, to what extent it is directly attributable to the policy of reduced rations. In this connection capital is sought to be made of the comparatively larger number of cases of contraband opium that came to light soon after the commencement of the new policy. But as pointed out by the Committee itself, it would be wrong to connect that phenomenon with the new policy. The increased detection of such cases was, in its opinion, due to the strengthening of the preventive staff in 1927 and cannot be looked upon as an indication of increased smuggling as a result of the enforcement of the rationing policy. In any case there is no reason, according to the Committee, to suppose that the extent of the smuggling evil is so widespread as to jeopardise the chances of success of the new experiment. In this connection the Committee recommends the deportation of proved smugglers which, in addition to the strength of public feeling against such practices, may be expected to go a long way in checking the evil.

As has been already mentioned, the Committee was expected to recommend to Government its future course of action. In view of the existence of a considerable number of unregistered consumers in Assam, the Committee was naturally confronted with the question whether they should not be allowed an opportunity of openly coming on to the register rather than continuing as surreptitious consumers. If the register is again thrown open, there is no doubt the risk of the occasion being availed of by people other than addicts for the purpose of securing the concession for themselves. The opium habit would thus, instead of being restricted, have a chance to spread. Those who were opposed to the reopening of the registers had thus sound reason on their side. But on a balance of advantages with the disadvantages, the Committee favours the reopening of opium registers. Only it wants the period for which they are to be reopened to be very short and the age limit to be brought down to 45 instead of 50 as at present. This lowering of the age-limit is not a step which will commend itself to advocates of temperance. A change in the medical certificate as a condition precedent to registration is also indicated. This is designed to emphasise the absolute need of the drug for the maintenance of the health of the addicts, and not merely for the satisfaction of his habit, as is the case at present. It will be seen from a glimpse of the Committee's recommendations given above that difficult as was the task set to it, it has been discharged in a large measure to the public's satisfaction.

THE STATES AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

IF the people in the Indian States be included in the Constituent Assembly, the formation of which is under contemplation by the Congress, on the same terms with the people in British India, they would obtain at one bound a right to self-determination and there would be no further need for them to prefer to the Congress the smaller demands that they are now making. I therefore suggested that the leaders in the movement of the States' people ask for an assurance from the Congress that in the framing of the new constitution their voice shall count for as much as that of British Indians, and that if such an assurance was forthcoming,

they drop their present controversy with Mahatma Gandhi on such points as election and a declaration of rights. At the same time I ventured to express a doubt whether the Congress leaders had fully grasped the significance of their admitting (if they are willing to do so) the people of the States to a body which is to formulate a constitution for all India.

The election manifesto of the Congress Parliamentary Board only confirms me in these doubts. The authors of the manifesto had clearly British India alone in mind when they wrote the paragraph concerning the Constituent Assembly, and if they are asked whether they intended at all to give the States'

people a place on this body, they would be puzzled for an answer. The crucial question about the Constituent Assembly is how it is to get the power of making its decisions effective. To draw up a paper constitution is an easy enough affair. We drew up the Nehru constitution; it all came to naught. We are in no mood for that kind of intellectual exercise any more. The Parliamentary Party of the Congress too has no particular relish for constitution-mongering in the abstract. It says in the manifesto: "It is clear that the Congress must not frame any constitution only to be rejected by Government." The implication of this is that the Congress can enter upon the task of constitution-making in all seriousness only when it gets an antecedent assurance or when it feels confident that the constitution which it will produce shall come into force automatically thereafter, without any resistance on the part of the powers-that-be. This condition will be fulfilled, as the manifesto recognises, either if the powers-that-be are beaten into submission as the result of a successful revolution or are brought to agree as a reaction to the pressure of public opinion. The Congress rejects the former method and declares its faith in the latter.

The *modus operandi* of the Congress in securing Government's consent which is essential to the convocation of a constituent assembly is simple enough. Get a thumping majority at the next election of the Legislative Assembly. The Congress will obviously have to fight against heavy odds in this election; if in spite of the narrow franchise and unsatisfactory constitution of the Assembly, the Congress will be able to carry a motion expressing the country's emphatic disapproval of the White Paper proposals, Government will be convinced, the manifesto observes, of the imperative necessity to let the people themselves devise their own constitution. As to the feasibility of this simple-looking plan I do not wish to say a word on this occasion. I am concerned for the present only to point out that the Congress Parliamentary Party is only thinking of getting the Government of British India to concur in this project of the Constituent Assembly. But to be sure this is not enough when the Congress has for its object the drafting, not of a British Indian constitution, but of an all-India constitution.

The concurrence of the States' Governments will have to be taken as well as of the British Indian Government if the Constituent Assembly is to consist of the peoples in British and Indian India and to proceed to frame a constitution comprehending both. The election manifesto of the Congress Parliamentary Board does not as much as refer to this point. Does the Congress mean that the elected representatives of the British Indian people and the appointed agents of the Indian States' rulers will constitute the Constituent Assembly for the purpose of constitution-making? This aspect of the question, I am sure never occurred to the Congress leaders; sub-consciously they were thinking all the time as if they had no other Government to deal with than the British Indian Government. But they cannot proceed one step without obtaining the consent of the Governments of Indian States. And here they have to deal not with one but with several mutually independent entities. Each one of them must for itself and itself alone permit its subjects to elect their representatives on the Constituent Assembly "on the basis of adult suffrage or as near it as may be" if there is to be a parity in the mode of selection of the members of the two parts of the Constituent Assembly. I cannot believe that any reputable Congressman will be prepared to forswear the principle of democracy to such an extent as to agree to let the rulers of Indian States to appoint their own nominees to the Constituent Assembly, through which the right of self-

determination is to be won for the people!

If the States' part of the Constituent Assembly is to consist of the States' people as the British Indian part is to consist of the British Indian people, what is the method which the Congress Parliamentary Party is going to adopt in securing the consent of the States' Governments to the plan of the Constituent Assembly? Does it assume that this consent will be given for the mere asking, without a show of moral force such as it intends to bring into play in British India? If so, I need hardly say that this assumption is wholly unfounded. No governing power gives up its authority unless made to, whether it be native or foreign. And no man in his senses would suppose that the Indian States, in none of which is there even as much popular government as in British India, will all of a sudden, when they find the Congress sweeping the polls in adjacent territory, become so friendly to democracy as to declare that they too will allow their people to say what kind of constitution they would like to live under.

Some force will thus be needed in the Indian States too to bring Princes to comply with the Constituent Assembly plan. For British India the necessary force will be generated, in the opinion of the Congress, by the electoral campaign. This may or may not be effective, but the Congress at any rate has its own ideas on the subject. What does it propose to do in the States in order to create a similar force? Does it propose to do anything at all in this connexion? I am certain that at present the Congress leaders propose to do nothing, for they never thought of this. But will they do anything? Or will they also subscribe to the policy of non-interference enunciated by the Mahatma and say: "We ourselves are unable, from the constitutional point of view, to move in the matter. Let the States' people do in the States what we have done in British India, perhaps on different lines, and get their Governments to agree to the Constituent Assembly." And if the States' people confess their impotence in the matter or are in fact impotent? Will the Congress abandon the plan of the Constituent Assembly altogether? Or will it go on with it in the restricted sphere of British India alone? Then, obviously, it will have to drop the federal plan.

I only wish to bring this matter to the attention of the Congress leaders because it appears to me that they have completely lost sight of it. In the meantime will they at least assure the States' people that the Constituent Assembly will proceed to frame a federal constitution only when it receives the co-operation of the States' people on the same footing as British Indians?

A. V. PATVARDHAN.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, July 27.

MURDER IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

THIS week's news from Vienna has raised in many people's minds the question whether in fact the Germanic countries are not reverting to mediæval barbarism. When a short time ago the events of recent occurrence in Germany became known here, with all their horrible and brutal details, when Herr Hitler declared in his own tame Reichstag that for twenty-four hours he had constituted himself solely and uniquely to be the supreme court of Germany, in other words claiming to slay at will,

and without trial, and remorselessly any or all who should stand in his way—the *Times* bluntly described the events as a reversion to mediæval barbarism. It has done the same to-day in respect of the brutal assassination, in circumstances of the most callous cruelty, by a group of Nazi rebels, of Chancellor Dollfuss. Disguised as members of the official semi-military forces, these gangsters burst into the Chancellery, shot down the Austrian Chancellor, without giving him time to defend himself, and left him to bleed to death without giving him, or allowing him to be given, medical or spiritual aid. He might have been that traditional German mythical animal of contempt the "pig-dog" instead of being the official head of the State, the beloved father of a family, and a most devout son of the Church, to whom spiritual comfort at the moment of death must always be of the utmost importance. That he was a Dictator and that he had participated in, and indeed authorised, the suppression of the Socialist Party last February is beyond all question true, and history will place upon him whatever responsibility he should properly bear, for that late-winter tragedy, which converted peaceful Vienna, or its working quarter, into a fortress under siege. None of those events, however, can justify the Chancellor's murder in the circumstances now known to us, not indeed by the injured Socialist still smarting under their injuries, but by Nazi *bravos* who could have nothing in common with the Socialists, as witness the latter's treatment in the neighbouring country by Herr Hitler's hordes, and whose particular ambition is to bring Austria within the actual political sphere of Nazidom, governed by Hitler, Goering, Goebbels trio (if it should still be in existence when this reaches you) from Berlin.

For a short time, having wreaked their vengeance upon their unfortunate victim, the assassins succeeded in creating, both at home and abroad, by their capture of the Radio station, the impression that their *putsch* had succeeded, the Government of Dollfuss had resigned, and the Nazi nominee Herr Rinterien, Ambassador at Rome, had become the new Chancellor. Soon, however, it became evident that the affair, grossly misconceived and clumsily carried out, had been a total failure, and, again as the *Times* points out, the Nazi claim that virtually the entire country was with them had been falsified. It is true that at the time of writing there is still a certain amount of sporadic fighting in certain provincial areas, but at the moment it does not look as though the Nazi claim could at any time have been justified.

At the same time that the gangsters murdered Dr. Dollfuss, they also captured two other Austrian Ministers, and were induced to surrender them only when they found themselves hopelessly outnumbered and, through the intervention of the German Minister they had received a promise of safe conduct, conditional as it now transpires upon no blood having been shed. The prompt reply of Germany was to repudiate and to recall its Minister, who is now to be temporarily replaced by Herr Von Papen, who himself seems to have had a narrow escape from assassination at the hands of his colleagues in the recent events in Berlin, to repudiate the compact with the rebels, to close the frontier in order to prevent armed bands of exiled Austrian Nazi, with weapons derived from the German Reich factories from entering Austria from the Bavarian border, and to denounce the Nazi activity in Austria which the German authorities have hitherto been encouraging by every means in their power. Indeed, Germany is doing all she can to make the world believe that she has neither direct nor indirect responsibility for this week's happenings in and around Vienna.

That it will be very difficult indeed to convince the world of this is clear from official and non-official statements made in all the countries concerned. Italy has been prompt to denounce Germany and Signor Mussolini has at once massed fifty thousand Italian troops upon the frontier as a sign that Italy will insist upon the preservation of Austrian independence, which is notoriously threatened only by Germany. France is appalled and horrified by what has occurred, and is prepared to condone, and indeed to support, anything that Italy may judge to be necessary in the circumstances that have taken place. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are watching events in Austria from other points of the border, and at one time it was made to appear as though nothing could prevent an almost immediate outbreak of war in one of the two or three great danger spots of Europe. Indeed, that was how the matter has been looked upon in America, where speculators are notoriously ill-informed of European conditions. It looks, however, as though the danger of a conflagration is being closely guarded against by all the parties immediately concerned, but it is a thousand pities that ignorant, brutal, and self-centred ruffians behaving with all the indifference to human welfare that has been characteristic throughout history of the Age of Barbarism, should have sought blindly to repeat the conditions making for chaos and the destruction of civilization just twenty years after similar acts of stupidity by similar unbalanced and anti-social enemies thrust Europe and the whole world into the Great War, from whose consequences we show no signs even yet of having emancipated ourselves. Apparently the liquidation of lunacy is a first call upon the sanity of mankind. We shall know better within the next few days exactly where Europe stands and it is to be hoped that advantage will be taken of the state of shock in which all civilized people find themselves at the moment to bring Germany, already faced with a disastrous winter, to a sense of responsibility towards her fellow-Europeans.

FASCISM AND OURSELVES.

Notwithstanding his lukewarm protests, Sir Oswald Mosley, who in Indian matters is an even worse reactionary than Mr. Churchill or Lord Rothermere, has found it difficult to persuade people that he and his movement are not anti-Jewish. It is significant that within a period of a few days, Sir Oswald Mosley, Fascism, and anti-Semitism have been roundly denounced by no less a person than Lord Rothermere, whose papers have been acting recruiting agents for the Mosley Party, and also by Lord Nuffield, (the head of Morris Motors), who was currently reputed to be a strong financial supporter of the movement.

In a letter to Sir Oswald Mosley, Lord Rothermere says:

As you know, I have never thought that a movement calling itself Fascist could be successful in this country, and I have also made it quite clear in my conversations with you that I never could support any movement with an anti-Semitic basis, any movement which had dictatorship as one of its objectives, or any movement which will substitute a 'Corporate State' for Parliamentary institutions in this country.

Writing to the *Jewish Chronicle* Lord Nuffield says:

During the last few months it has, from time to time, been brought to my notice that there are rumours in circulation to the effect that I have given financial support to the Fascist movement in this country, and that my tendencies are therefore anti-Jewish; and a somewhat unfortunate cartoon which was published in the *Evening Standard* on Friday, June 29, has, I am afraid,

done much to convince public opinion that such is the case. I feel that it is scarcely necessary for me to say that there is not an atom of truth in either of these allegations. I never subscribed to the Fascist movement nor supported it in any way, neither have I the least antipathy towards the Jewish race. It occurs to me that the best means of evidencing the foregoing statement may be for me to make a subscription to a Jewish charity, and I am therefore enclosing this company's cheque for £250, which I should be grateful if you would add to the fund which you are promoting—the Central British Fund for German Jewry."

Evidently the Mosley stock has fallen heavily, and it may well be, too, that the Jewish commercial influence in England has had its effect upon the advertising columns of the Rothermere Press.

OF INTEREST TO INDIA.

Sir Homi Mehta's long letter in to-day's *Times* and *Manchester Guardian* protesting against Mr. Churchill's attempt to sow discord between Lancashire and India is a well-meant and well-timed effort, coming as it does immediately after the failure of Mr. Churchill's followers to induce the Manchester Chamber to go back upon its evidence before the Joint Select Committee. At the worst the Chamber has committed itself to a vague aspiration that it may be found possible by further safeguards to guarantee Lancashire trade in India against extinction. Sir Homi has once more, and more than once, repeated that the only guarantee and safeguard for British trade in India is mutual goodwill, and he bluntly states that India, even in up-country villages, is awake and alert to her own interests and needs, and he asserts confidently that "if the White Paper proposals are whittled down, even to a small extent, the time will soon come when England will lose India just as she lost America and Ireland." Coming from him such a statement should carry very great weight.

Speaking at Farnham yesterday, Sir Maurice Hayward urged a bold advance along an extended front in India, which would gather strength as it proceeded from the general population and the Princes of India, resulting finally in the retention of a contented self-governing India within the British Empire. Earlier in the week, to the great discomfiture of the financial pundits upon whom the *Morning Post* relies for its theory that the proposed new constitution will bankrupt India, Sir Basil Blackett declared that so far as he could see the additional expense would not exceed two million pounds, which, he thought, with a comparatively slight rise in prices, India could quite easily bear.

Last night Mr. David S. Erulkar presided at the Annual Banquet of the Indian Social Club held at the Commodore Restaurant, the chief guest being Sir Abdul Qadir, the very popular new member of the India Council. His speech in reply to the toast of the guests was a model of friendliness and good-taste, and it is clear that he and Lady Qadir will be a great asset to the resident Indian community. The toast was proposed by the veteran Mr. J. M. Parikh in felicitous language. That of the Indian Social Club was proposed by Mr. Polak, and responded to by the President.

Reviews.

THE MEDIUM OF POETRY.

THE MEDIUM OF POETRY. By JAMES SUTHERLAND. (Hogarth Press.) 1934. 20cm. 168p. 3/6. ALMOST till the end of the 18th century English

literary criticism, and especially the criticism of poetry was dominated by tenets derived directly from the ancients—especially Aristotle and Horace—or indirectly from their mediaeval or modern interpreters like Boileau or Johnson. In an age which based its educational system on the almost exclusive study of the literature and history of Greek and Latin, and in which native vernacular literature had yet hardly established itself as the vehicle of great thought, this was a perfectly natural state of things. The great poets and dramatists and prose-writers, Ben Jonson, Milton, Addison, Gray, were classical scholars, and their critics were classical scholars too. A Shakespeare or a Burns was rather the exception than the rule. Criticism itself was a newly acquired art, and naturally it confined itself to an application of already known rules to new work, and it did this, as was to be expected, in a mechanical manner. But with the growth of a new and virile civilization had come new, living ideas, and they had to be expressed for a new class of readers, viz. the middle classes, to suit their tastes and their intelligence. Hence arose new types of literature like the novel, the ballad, the story-poem, the essay. As these new forms arose, they were naturally subjected to criticism according to the prevailing standards of taste and condemned, as was only to be expected. If the new literature was to be properly appreciated, the new artists, poets, novelists, essayists, must create the taste by which they were to live. Hence arose the new criticism of the 19th century. In the sphere of poetry, Wordsworth and Keats were the English pioneers of the new criticism. In Wordsworth the impress of the ideas and emotions which he had derived in his rustic Cumberland, was too indelible to be removed by the classical notions with which he came into contact at school and the University. For him the simple, unsophisticated feelings of the rustic were the only proper themes of poetry, and the equally rustic, unsophisticated language of the countryside was the only fit medium of expression. Keats, who never came under the influence of classical ideas formally and for whom the only ideas worth expressing were those he derived from his unaided intellect, did not approach criticism from the point of view of ideas. For him Wordsworth's theory was perhaps too bald to be practised with joy in the work; he, therefore, both preached and practised the dictum that every rift should be filled with ore.

To my mind, the contribution made by Wordsworth and Keats to the understanding of the nature of poetry is a very valuable, if not the most valuable, addition to critical thought made in the last two centuries. Mr. Sutherland's book will amply demonstrate the truth of that statement. His restatement of Wordsworth's theories of poetic subjects and poetic diction is the clearest that I have read so far. His examination of the fill-the-rift-with-ore theory is highly suggestive and can be usefully applied not only to the poetry of Keats, but to the study of all poetry. The more valuable part of Mr. Sutherland's book is devoted to the examination of these two theories. In the remaining chapters he has considered a few implications of the use of the poetic medium, viz. the restrictions imposed on the artist by the tune, the rhyme, the poetic style. I find it a very refreshing book to read, especially when so much that is written about poetry today is either crude or ill-digested, or unsubstantial, airy stuff.

G. H. KELKAR.

INDIAN PHILOSOPHY.

A NEW APPROACH TO THE VEDAS. By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. (Luzac.) 1933. 20cm. 116p. 5/—

THIS is a very interesting essay in translation and exegesis of Vedic texts. The ideology of the three texts translated and commented on here is discussed with the aid of parallel texts provided by Vedic and Christian scriptures. The author has aimed at demonstrating the inadequacy of purely linguistic research and the need for interpreting texts on a wider background in order to discover the true place of Vedic doctrines in the history of religions. Though this method of approach is not so entirely new as the author would have us suppose, it has never before been followed so methodically; and the results reached by the learned discussions of the creation texts studied here justify the hope that the comparative study of the world's scriptures will engage the attention of Vedic scholars to a greater extent than in recent years.

That Vedic thought was by no means 'primitive' but the product of a long antecedent evolution, was recognised by Max Muller and others; but some recent writers like Keith have shown a marked tendency to underrate the progress in thought attained by 'the wise singers of the Vedic hymns' and against this tendency our author protests in clear and emphatic terms. 'Surely', he says, 'our faith in uniformity forbids us to imagine, what is outside the range of our experience, viz., that any sound formula, any clear statement of principles could have been propounded by anyone who did not understand his own words' (p. 59), and in a note he cites Jung who says: 'Our western air of superiority in the presence of Indian understanding is a part of our essential barbarism.'

While we recognise the value of Coomaraswamy's method of approach, we must not fail to note that there seem to be clear and definite limits to its proper and useful application. Our author is surely right when he says that 'a knowledge of Sanskrit, however profound, is insufficient' (Introduction). But after all the Vedic texts are in Sanskrit and no interpretation that fails to satisfy the requirements of the language can be accepted merely because it is attractive or supported by parallel texts. The translation of the second line of the *Purusha-Sukta* into: "Encompassing (*vr̥va*) Earth (*bhūmim*) on every side, he rules (*vr̥va*) firmly-established (*atyatiṣṭhat*) in the heart (*daśāṅgulam*)" could not easily be defended, and it is by no means clear whence Coomaraswami derives the impression that (*daśāṅgulam*) is explained in tradition as 'heart' (p. 71). *Jayanta* for *ajayanta* (p. 1), *punya-pāpa* for *punya-pāpe* (p. 18), *amṛtasya* for *amṛtatvasya* (p. 69), *nivṛti* for *nivṛtti* (p. 95) are examples of insufficient attention to language. Somewhat superficial analogies are sometimes suggested as for instance in the parallel between Christ and Agni (pp. 43-4).

Mr. Coomaraswami translates the difficult word 'deva' into 'angel'. To persons dominated by the theogony of the *Paradise Lost* this may appear rather bold; but the translation becomes quite easy to follow if we remember two facts. First, the author's reference to *Summa Theologica* shows that he has in mind a much earlier phase of the Christian theory of angels. Secondly, the new rendering has great value as emphasising the drift towards monotheism that is as old as the Rig-Veda and as doing away with the ancient confusion between gods and God.

K. A. NILAKANTHA SASTRI.

AUSTRALIAN LIVING WAGE.

THE LIVING WAGE IN AUSTRALIA. By D. T. SAWKINS. (Melbourne Univ. Press.) 1933. 20cm. 64p. 2/6.

ESPECIALLY since the days of Industrial Revolution the problem of wages, in the broadest sense of the term, is confronting the economist and the politician. But during the last two decades it has become more complex and acute. The labourer, who retails his labour, is always at a disadvantage, when a modern *entrepreneur* who buys it wholesale, is concerned. In the nearest past the labourer was helpless and disunited; but in the modern world, he has slowly but surely gathered strength, by becoming articulate, organised and united. The Trade Union movement, created almost a new atmosphere in the labour world. Thus during the last few years the employer, who formerly had the power to dictate terms, has to face not only organised labour but also the Government, who, to a great degree, profess (and even intend) to support the claims of the weak against the powerful. No Government can, nowadays, overlook the rights and welfare of a mass of people, upon whose active support their very existence depends. It is also quite natural that of all other labour problems, the problem of wages should become very important; not only because the labourer claims a better standard of life (and that, too, not as a matter of grace but as a matter of right) but the problem has also come to involve, implicitly at least, the very fundamental question of distribution of wealth. It is more in consonance with modern ideas and spirit to raise the question as to what extent the labourer should share the profit of an industrial concern in which he works. Moreover, it is now the accepted idea in all enlightened and well-governed countries that every adult citizen in it has a right to work and proper wages. Consequently this problem of "living wages" is at present tackled by committees and commissions in almost all civilized countries; and the experiments and experience of any one of these are bound to be instructive to all the others.

The book under review gives a detailed but pointed and succinct history of wages in Australia, from the year 1907 to the present day. The year 1907 is an important landmark in the history of wages in Australia, as in that year the historic judgment of Mr. Justice Higgins, in the famous "Hawterson" case, set the ball rolling. The author has taken the survey objectively, piling up facts and figures; which, again, he has marshalled with clarity and precision. In his judgment, the learned Judge declared: "The natural price of labour depends on the price of food, necessaries and conveniences required for the support of the labourer and his family." In his judgment "the natural or subsistence price" is distinguished from "the market or supply-and-demand price." All the further attempts of the Government to determine the minimum living wages were based upon this principle; though it needs further interpretation, inasmuch as words like food, necessaries and family are too vague, and open to "connotative damage." The best example of this is the controversy, which very recently took place between the Ministry of Health and the British Medical Association in England. The question was the minimum food requirements of an adult labourer. The learned body of medical men asserted that an adult English labourer requires 3400 calories and 50 grammes of protein, while the Ministry of Health asserted that 3000 calories and 37 grammes of proteins are quite enough. To avoid such controversies it is necessary to do away with ambiguity in the statement. Again, the question of wages becomes still more complicated if the fluctuations in the pur-

chasing power of money are taken into consideration; thus the theory of real and money-wages comes into existence. Therefore, in Australia, broad principles are laid down. As they touch all important sides of the problems, they may be quoted here: "(1) . . . so arrange the business of the country that every labourer, however humble, shall receive enough to enable him to lead a human life, to marry and bring up family, in some small degree of comfort . . . (2) to find out the real price of labour . . . with the law of supply and demand carefully in view. (3) the degree of prosperity in the industry should also be noted." These principles are not only applicable to Australian labour but also to that of any other country. As such the detailed facts recorded in the book are bound to be of abiding interest to all persons interested in the labour movement. We consider it worth our while to commend this little book to all students of industrial economics, a particular phase of which the author presents in a very praiseworthy manner.

Y. G. NAIK.

Correspondence.

ZANZIBAR INDIAN IMPASSE.

MR. P. B. KHARE (Nasik), who contributed a letter to our issue of 26th July, takes exception in another letter dated 6th August to an article by "An Unbiased Observer" on the Zanzibar question printed in our last issue and mainly relies in support of his view on the speech delivered by Mr. Wiggins in the Legislative Council of Zanzibar. This speech has received wide publicity in the Indian press, and we do not think it necessary therefore to reproduce here the extensive passages which Mr. Khare quotes in his letter. But the succeeding portion of it, which contains his own arguments, we give below in full. He says:—

"In further elucidation of the critical circumstances which have arisen, I may add the following.

Though cloves are grown on a large scale in the Zanzibar Protectorate, the citizens of this Protectorate including the "sons of the soil" for whom your contributor feels so sorry (!), are legally prohibited from extracting clove oil within the limits of the Protectorate! What has your "Unbiased Observer" to say to this?

Again, there is an excise duty on cloves amounting in theory to twenty per cent., but its actual incidence often goes up much higher. It is the greatest factor in making cloves from Zanzibar too dear to compete with the Madagascar cloves. Will your "Unbiased Observer" take the trouble to teach the simple economic fact to the Colonial Government that such an excise duty on the staple produce exported from a country is extremely inimical to the best interests of that country as well as to the "sons of that soil"? And if he does take this trouble, will the Zanzibar Government or the Colonial Office accept his proposal with alacrity?

Your contributor also does not know that the administrative expenses of the Zanzibar Government have been top-heavy for a long time and that practically very little has been done by the Zanzibar Government to reduce these expenses in spite of the fact that the elected members of the Legislative Council

and the Press have been crying themselves hoarse in this respect. But all their cries have been only the proverbial cries in the wilderness! Zanzibarians will be extremely obliged to the "Unbiased Observer" if he brings about the miracle of inducing the Zanzibar Government to do what the popular representatives have been so long demanding! This will effect a great saving with which Government can help the agriculturists without unjustly hurting Indian interests!"

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- BUSINESS RATIONALISATION. By CHARLES S. MYERS. (Pitman.) 1932. 20cm. 76p. 3/6.
- CHANGES IN FAMILY LIFE. By WILLIAM BEVERIDGE & others. (Allen & Unwin.) 1932. 20cm. 160p. 3/6.
- THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF POWER PRODUCTION. By FRED HENDERSON. (Allen & Unwin.) 1933. 20cm. 220p. 6/-.
- THE NEXT TEN YEARS. By Various Authors. (The Spectator Booklets Series.) (Methuen.) 1934. 17cm. 58p. 1/-.
- WAGES AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE BOMBAY COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY. Report of the Labour Office, Bombay. (Chairman J. F. Gennings.) 1934. 24cm. 220p. Re. 1/3.
- AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS OF MIDDLE EUROPE. A Symposium. Ed. by O. S. MORGAN. (Macmillan, New York.) 1933. 24cm. 405p. \$5.00.
- LENIN ON BRITAIN. A Compilation, with an Introduction. By HARRY POLLITT. (International Publishers, New York.) 1934. 22cm. 316p. \$3.00.
- THE UNITED STATES IN WORLD AFFAIRS, 1933. By WILLIAM O. SCROGGS. (Council of Foreign Relations Series.) (Harper Bros., New York.) 1934. 22cm. 324p. \$3.00.
- NEW GUINEA RECOLLECTIONS. By C. A. W. MONKTON. (John Lane.) 1934. 22cm. 250p. 8/6.
- LABOR FACT BOOK II. (International Publishers, New York.) 1934. 20cm. 222p. \$2.000.
- PROBLEMS OF PEACE. 6th Series. By H. J. LASKI AND A. E. ZIMMERN. (Allen & Unwin.) 1932. 20cm. 301p. 8/6.

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