

The Servant of India

Editor : S. G. VAZE.

Office : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA.

VOL. XVII, No. 38. } POONA—THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1934. { INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15s.

CONTENTS.

	Page
TOPICS OF THE WEEK	... 445
ARTICLES —	
A Cruel Caricature. By the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. 447
An Unfounded Accusation. 447
The Congress and the States' People. By A. V. Patvardhan. 448
The Dead Hand. By Observer. 450
OUR LONDON LETTER 452
REVIEWS :—	
Survey of Vedio Religion. By P. S. Deshmukh. 453
Sugar Industry. By C. J. Robertson. 453
SHORT NOTICES 455
MISCELLANEOUS :—	
The Congress Socialist Party's Statement. 455

Topics of the Week.

Mr. Nariman at Shivaji Mandir.

AS the Assembly election is drawing near, it is but natural that rival candidates should attack each other's opinions and try to make out how very superior they are to the rest in the field. Mr. Nariman, though a Congress candidate, feels his position to be a bit shaky between Sir Cowasjee Jehangir on the one hand and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta on the other, and a little exuberance in his utterances may well be condoned. But on occasions he overpasses this limit and makes himself utterly ridiculous.

* * *

IN his speech at the Shivaji Mandir in Poona on Monday last he said that there were only two major parties in the country in fundamental opposition to each other : one was the Congress party which stood for the country's freedom and the other was the Liberal Party which stood for bondage. How did Mr. Nariman make this out? The Congress has made Complete Independence the goal of its political ambition, and Complete Independence means, according to him, severance of the British connexion in every shape or form. But Liberal leaders like Sir Cowasji Jehangir only want Dominion Status, and Mr. Nariman is clear that whoever would not desire instantly to go out of the British Empire hankers after slavery.

* * *

Mahatma, Prince among Slaves.

IT is of course too much to expect a busy politician like Mr. Nariman to go to the pains of finding out just what Dominion Status means and what significance the Congress has attached to Independence. He is, as he is fond of saying, but a Congress soldier and he conceives his business to be just to attack. But time has now come even for Mr. Nariman to know, before our knight-errant again tilts at the wind-mill, that the Congress, though it uses the word "Independence", and "Complete Independence" for that matter, has not decided, even as its final goal, to sever the British connexion; it only wants power, not immediately but in fulness of time, to sever the connexion *if at that time it so chooses*. Mr. Nariman must now inform himself further that Dominion Status does give this power. And if a mere desire to have the power of severance without making up one's mind to bring about the actual severance implies a desire to continue in bondage, then pride of place in the roll of bond slaves goes not to poor Sir Cowasji Jehangir but to Mr. Nariman's idol, Mahatma Gandhi.

* * *

Rejection Impossible?

ANOTHER statement that Mr. Nariman made at the Poona meeting was a revelation to us. He said he had no hope of the Congress, even with the help of Nationalists, capturing a majority of seats in the Assembly and carrying a motion for the rejection of the White Paper. Nor had he any hope, assuming that the White Paper was unexpectedly rejected by the Assembly, that Government would drop the White Paper proposals. A candid statement this.

What then do Congressmen propose to do in the Assembly? Mr. Nariman posed this question to himself and answered it by saying that he and other Congressmen sought entry into the Assembly only to express their disapproval of the White Paper—and then to set up a constituent assembly for the drafting of a constitution as the people would like it. Well, mere disapproval of the White Paper was a humdrum affair, not worthy of the sound and fury which Mr. Nariman expends on it.

But, however innocent he may be of the deeper subtleties of Congress strategy, Mr. Nariman should know that a constituent assembly cannot be brought into existence unless the White Paper proposals are first put out of the way. If the Congress is to be shown as being serious about the constituent assem-

bly, at any rate a pretence must be kept up that rejection is not only possible, but certain. Mr. Nariman may in this matter take a leaf out of Mr. Satyamurti's book. He can never catch Mr. Satyamurti owning that rejection is at all in doubt; for he knows that to do so is to admit that a constituent assembly is—a complete bust.

* * *

A Politician among Educationalists.

MR. K. F. NARIMAN occupies to-day a high position as a responsible public leader, being the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the coming session of the Indian National Congress. This week, at the Fergusson College, on the occasion of its Annual Social Gathering, he had an opportunity to address, as the honoured guest of the day, a large audience, consisting of the students of the College, past and present, and distinguished citizens in different walks of public life invited as guests. It was naturally expected that he would, in his appeal to the audience, honour those high traditions of public life which require a leader of his position, at such a social function and in the pure atmosphere of an educational institution, to rise above the turmoil, the passions and jealousies of current politics and inspire the feeling of all-round good-will and the spirit of high endeavour for the common good. But Mr. Nariman, with the golden opportunity he had, failed to make a worthy use of it. Indeed, even as a 'political animal' (to use his own description of himself), he need not have chosen to play the role of the animal that barks and bites and madly runs at every one.

* * *

MR. NARIMAN exhorted his young audience to make the service of the motherland and sacrifice for it the mission of their lives, and in this every one can heartily join with him. He referred to the fact that the founders of the Fergusson College had made self-sacrificing service to the nation the guiding principle of their work. But he declared that education under the existing system was incapable of inspiring this noble ideal. Having thus charged with futility the labours of the workers of the College, he spoke, in rhetorical strains, of foreign domination and the 'slave mentality' that it had produced, as the root-causes that vitiated the whole system of education. He wanted young men to emulate the example of the British students who in days of the world-war obeyed the call of their nation and readily sacrificed their all for it.

* * *

NOW Mr. Nariman knows only too well that neither he nor anybody else can for the time being or in the near future dislodge the 'foreigner' from his dominant position and that it is unjust to deny all worthy motives even to the 'foreigner', when it is his nobility and sense of justice on which he and his 'non-violent' friends rely in their 'peaceful' efforts for restoration to liberty. All impassioned talk about 'foreign domination' at a social function is sheer waste of breath, and it is out of place

in an educational institution which is imparting the benefits of modern knowledge to thousands of young people by working in honest and self-respecting co-operation with Government, 'foreign' as it may be.

* * *

AS to the ideal of service and sacrifice for the motherland, there are ways and ways in which it may be preached and practised. Does Mr. Nariman know how the Fergusson College, for instance, has by its patient and self-denying labours, during the past fifty years, succeeded in implanting it in the minds of its alumni? If not, let him go to any district or taluka town in the Deccan, and he will find its 'old boys' there working for spread of knowledge in the spirit of self-sacrificing service to their motherland. It is to the labours of these and others from similar institutions in the Deccan that the country owes to no small extent its present intellectual development which makes it possible for Mr. Nariman to address huge gatherings of educated people.

* * *

THERE is the other method of preaching and practising the ideal—the hot-house method. That was tried by Mr. Nariman and others who had the guidance of the Congress in their hands during the past few years. They called out young men—even children—from their studies in schools and colleges, working on their unsophisticated sentiments, for no better work to do than to swell the ranks of the civil resisters and gaoi-goers, and left them in the lurch to shift for themselves. Bright careers have been ruined, homes broken and even precious lives lost—all in a wild-goose chase after a promised swaraj-in-a-year.

* * *

BUT these hot-house methods along with the impracticable vows and resolves which they imposed have, as Mr. Nariman must admit, led to incalculable harm in other directions. They have made hypocrisy the common passport to leadership and ruined the honourable traditions and gracious etiquette of public life. Mr. Nariman, although himself a sincere and honest patriot, gave a sad exhibition of the extent to which even he could succumb to these degenerating influences. He thought nothing wrong in using the occasion of a college students' social gathering to level accusations against those who belong to other political persuasions than his own. But his crowning act of gracelessness was his conversion of the college platform into the lowest type of an electioneering stage, by the unkind and unmerited terms of censure in which he referred to a rival candidate. Does he really think that he has thus imparted an edifying lesson to the younger generation?

* * *

THE younger generation, however, is no longer going to be a prey to impassioned appeals of each and every politician, and it has learnt to take discourteous and unmerited attacks on men and opinions at their true worth. This must have been clear enough to Mr. Nariman, when Dr. Mahajani, the Principal of the College, in his closing remarks, boldly justified the policy and ideals for which the College has all along stood and contradicted some of Mr. Nariman's statements, then and there. The vast audience of his students listened to him with appreciation even after Mr. Nariman's oratorical effort and thus Dr. Mahajani scored a great victory not only for the younger generation but also for those qualities of head and heart which have given him a unique hold on their minds.

* * *

A CRUEL CARICATURE.

BY V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.

I WAS congratulating myself that I was no longer under the necessity of making election speeches and getting involved in election controversy. As if to disturb my peace of mind, a friend sent me yesterday a seemingly verbatim report in the *Free Press Journal* of a speech made by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai at Khar Road on the 17th inst. References are made in the speech to my master Gokhale and to me, which it is impossible to ignore. Mr. Desai refers at some length to a conversation between us which took place some weeks ago at Coimbatore. We discussed the word "constitutional" and dwelt on the evolution of its meaning under the stress of changing circumstances. In reporting parts of this conversation to his audience, Mr. Desai puts into my mouth a certain definition of the word of which I have no recollection whatever. In fact it sounds as if it had been taken out of a wag's dictionary. The quotation is long, but I must give it lest I should do injustice to the speaker:

Their (the Liberals') idea of the word 'constitutional' was every form of agitation in which they ran the smallest risk of incurring the displeasure of the authorities or of receiving any penalty for the breaking of the supposed law under which they lived. That was their idea of the constitutional method. In other words, the idea is that if you can, consistently with the safety of your home, with the safety of your personal freedom, with no sacrifice of personal freedom, with no sacrifice of property or comfort and with no sacrifice of the patronage and the patrimonious regard of the English representatives who are governing you say "we protest", then that is "constitutional agitation" according to the great Liberal leaders of the past.

How a politician can represent his own party in this unflattering light to a prominent leader of another party is inexplicable to me. Mr. Desai must have heard me, not with his ears, but with his ardent mind.

It is at this point that he drags in Mr. Gokhale. It would appear from Mr. Desai's version of modern Indian history that, on Mr. Gokhale's return from his South African tour in 1911, he was met by a police officer armed with a warrant of arrest on account of seditious speeches which he had made in support of Mr. Gandhi's passive resistance movement. Let me now give Mr. Desai's own words:

The answer that Mr. Gokhale gave was, 'I regret very much for all that I have done, but will you please pocket the warrant?' I need hardly say that I have very great respect for Mr. Gokhale, but as I have said already that was typical of the Liberals, and that was what they understood to be the 'constitutional' method of agitation.

It would be interesting to know the source of Mr. Desai's facts. He makes his own facts and bases on them a charge of cowardice and weakness against one for whom he professes great respect. Gokhale has been dead these nineteen years, the Mahatma constantly calls him his political *guru*, and all parties unite in honouring his memory. Is it proper or even necessary for election purposes to hold that great name up to contempt? It is not truthful and non-violent nor even legitimate and peaceful.

Mr. Desai doubles back on me after this and pays me a compliment of such a nature that I find it hard to thank him for it. The doings and sufferings of Congressmen during the last decade and more have produced a revolution in the political thought of to-day, and I have not been utterly impervious to the new influence. The word "constitutional" has acquired a wider significance. And Mr. Desai was agreeably surprised and immensely satisfied when he heard me define "constitutional agitation and struggle to mean any struggle by which the constituted authorities of the State can be made to come to an understanding with the people of the State in order that the future constitution of the country may be framed in consultation with them." In the opinion of Mr. Desai I am so like a clod that, if even I could appreciate the wholesome change, then he "must congratulate the country on even the passive effect that it has succeeded in producing."

The reader must pardon me if I make another long quotation. This time my source will be Mr. Gokhale's own speeches. As early as 1907, within a month of my joining the Servants of India Society, Mr. Gokhale had formulated with his usual clearness his idea of "constitutional agitation."

Constitutional agitation was agitation by methods which they were entitled to adopt to bring about the changes they desired through the action of constituted authorities. Thus defined, the field of constitutional agitation was a very wide one. . . . The first idea suggested on a consideration of the question was that physical force was excluded. Rebellion, aiding or abetting a foreign invasion and resort to crime—roughly speaking, barring these three things, all else was constitutional. No doubt everything that was constitutional was not necessarily wise or expedient; but that was a different matter. Prayers and appeals to justice lay at one end; passive resistance, including even its extreme form of non-payment of taxes till redress was obtained, lay at the other end. . . . As regards the second condition, viz. that redress must be obtained through constituted authorities, it was clear that that implied constant pressure being brought to bear on the authorities and the idea that they should have nothing to do with the authorities was one not to be entertained. . . . The idea that they should leave the authorities severely alone and seek to attain their goal independently of them was inadmissible and absurd.

I know not whether these words seem too cautious and halting to Mr. Desai. But they are graven on the minds of the members of the Servants of India Society and, I believe, also on the minds of hundreds of men and women who have read Gokhale's speeches with reverence. To these the idea that till quite recently Liberal leaders including Gokhale equated constitutional agitation with avoidance of penalties and the safety of their homes would be a cruel caricature.

AN UNFOUNDED ACCUSATION.

MR. K. F. NARIMAN, speaking the other day at the Shivaji Mandir in Poona, stated that, according to an entry in the published Diary of Mr. Montagu, he actually offered full autonomy to the

Bombay Presidency, but that the leading Moderates of the day were not prepared to accept it on the ground that the people were not quite equal to that big step. The entry referred to is of date the 26th December, 1917. The names of the Moderate leaders were Sir Dinshaw E. Wacha, Mr. N. M. Samarth and Sir Hormusji A. Wadya. The expression actually used in the Diary is not full autonomy nor full responsibility, but responsibility. The inference that Mr. Nariman drew was that, when the authorities were prepared to give a great deal, the Moderates threw away the opportunity and were guilty of betraying the country's cause. If a young man without knowledge of the events of that period looked up the passage in question in the Diary, he might feel that Mr. Nariman's reading of it was just. But if the context be made clear to him, it can be shown to bear a totally different meaning and the leaders of the Moderate Party will be absolved. We feel almost sure that Mr. Nariman was not aware of the relevant facts or lost sight of them at the moment.

What were the facts? In some ways the years 1916 and 1917 were remarkable in our political history. After much bitter controversy the Congress constitution adopted in 1908 had been widened so as to readmit the extremist section that had broken away at Surat. This reconciliation had for its purpose the enabling of the progressive politicians of India to put forth a united demand for political reform. This was soon followed by a *rapprochement* between the National Congress and the Muslim League which shines like a bright star in an otherwise dark firmament. Private negotiations that did honour to the men concerned brought about a concurrent action by both bodies and, incredible as the words may sound to the ears of the present generation, the leaders of the Mahomedan community actually recorded the following resolution:—

That the All-India Muslim League, while adopting the scheme of reforms prepared by the Reform Committee of the League and approved by the Council, submits it in conjunction with the Indian National Congress to the Government for its introduction after the war as the first necessary step towards the establishment of complete self-government in India.

The Joint Scheme became famous as the Congress-League Scheme. Public bodies, Mahomedan as well as non-Mahomedan, all over the country, adopted the scheme and recommended it to Government, with slight modifications if any. One principal feature of the scheme, germane to the present discussion, is that, while it sought to make the legislatures in India predominantly elective and clothe them with substantial political power, it did not make provision for introducing responsibility in

the constitutional sense of the word. In other words it left the executive irremovable by the vote of the legislature. When Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, with the delegation from England, travelled through the country ascertaining the views and wishes of representative people, they found nearly all these, including such men as Messrs. Tilak and Horniman and Jinnah committed to this feature and combating the introduction of dyarchy and partial responsibility which they favoured. The views prevalent among our leaders are set forth in the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri's pamphlet entitled *The Congress-League Scheme: An Exposition*, and the curious reader will discover that the partiality for a fixed executive was based, not on a desire to keep the Indian nation backward or on an unduly low estimate of their political capacity, but on a genuine feeling that the conditions of India required a system more like the American or Swiss system than the British. Mr. Montagu was favourably impressed with the general advance that he perceived in the Bombay Presidency and persuaded himself somehow that its leading men would eagerly embrace his plan of conferring responsibility upon the people, partial though it be. Sir Dinshaw Wacha, Sir Hormusji Wadya and Mr. Samarth did not jump to the bait but maintained the greater suitability to Indian circumstances of the Congress-League plan. Naturally Mr. Montagu was keenly disappointed and recorded the disappointment in his Diary. Bearing these facts in mind, who would venture to say that, but for the timidity or culpable backwardness of the Bombay Moderates, the Western Presidency might have obtained a far greater measure of self-government many years in advance of the rest of India?

In passing judgment on the previous generation of our leaders it is also necessary to remember the sequel. In point of fact the general consensus of Indian opinion in favour of the Congress-League scheme did not prevail. The now-famous Montagu-Chelmsford report devotes a whole chapter to the refutation of its principles, and the final recommendations included the introduction of partial responsibility into the provincial governments in accordance with the counsel of Mr. Lionel Curtis, to whom the paternity of the dyarchic scheme is generally ascribed. When in 1919 Indian witnesses appeared before the Joint Select Committee as representatives of the various political bodies, all parties, having accepted the logic of facts, abandoned the Congress-League Scheme and either actively applauded, or quietly acquiesced in, the introduction of the system of ins and outs.

CONGRESS AND THE STATES' PEOPLE.

I AGREE entirely with the urgent plea made by *United India and Indian States*, in its issue of 15th September, for a clear definition of the place which the States' people are intended to hold in the Congress constitution. At present they are allowed to join the Congress and its subordinate organs as much as the people in British India. From this one would gather

that the States' people are accorded, on Congress bodies the same rights and privileges which British Indians enjoy; that is to say, that they can form District Congress Committees in the States and vote at meetings of the Provincial Congress Committees the same as British Indians. This would be quite a legitimate inference, but it does not happen to accord with facts

—in all provinces. In Gujerat, for instance, the Congress members drawn from the neighbouring States are denied the rights to which British Indian members of the Congress are entitled. The people in Kathiawad States can join the Congress and take active part in the Congress movement, which at present is confined to British India, but cannot exercise the right of voting at the Gujerat Provincial Congress Committee, where it is possible that they may even be in a numerical majority. In fact the States' people in Cutch and Kathiawad complain bitterly about the very anomalous position which they occupy in the Congress. For they are called upon to bear the burden of battle in British India without being given their proper share in the determination of the Congress policy. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel fights them as heroically in Ahmedabad as he fought the forces of imperialism at Bardoli. The Congress must therefore either exclude the States' people from its entire organisation or, continuing to admit them, give them all the rights that British Indians are given. Either course would be logical, but its present policy is utterly illogical and must be changed.

This, however, is a purely domestic problem affecting only the internal organisation of the Congress. But there is a question of wider significance which awaits solution, and that is whether the Congress is to concern itself exclusively with British Indian politics or whether it is to take cognisance of events happening in the Indian States also. This is a major issue of policy, on which sharp differences of opinion exist, and it has become urgently necessary that the question should be seriously considered by the Congress and decided finally one way or the other. *Purna Swaraj* is the objective of the Congress, but no one can say definitely now whether it has reference only to British India or to the whole of India including the States. As a matter of fact, the Congress has so far addressed itself to problems touching British Indians alone; the woes of the States' people it has studiously left alone, except that now and then it has indulged in a pious expression of opinion that the States' people should some time or other come into their own. This it has done in such a distant way that its very resolutions on the subject were a sort of warning to the people from the States that they must not expect any active assistance in bringing about the desired reforms in the States. There should be left no doubt on the point whether the Congress regards the States as outside its immediate concern or whether the whole of India, including the States, is to be its field of activity. If it decides in favour of restricting its activities to British India, it must declare either that it will keep out the States' people altogether or admit them in the same way as it admits foreigners who, with altruistic motives, may join the Congress and render help to it, but who have no right to expect similar help from the Congress in return. If such a declaration is forthcoming, then the States' people will know what is in store for them as members of the Congress and it will not be the fault of the Congress if many of them allow their names to be maintained on its register thereafter.

If, however, it is decided that the Congress must embrace within its sphere of activity the States as well as British India, it will further have to be decided whether it is to work in the States through its members drawn from the States alone. Mahatma Gandhi has, in his reply to Mr. N. C. Kelkar, given some measure of support to the theory of non-interference on the part of the Congress in the States' affairs. This theory may mean one of two things: it may mean either that the Congress is a purely British Indian Congress and must on that account desist from taking active part in the concerns of the States; or it may mean that it is an Indian National Congress in the full sense of the term devoting itself to States' affairs as much as to British Indian affairs, but with this reservation, viz. that it works in one part of India through its people and in the other through its. We have already considered the former hypothesis. On the basis of the latter hypothesis the principle of non-interference can only mean that while the Congress will have members both in British India and in the States, it will work for political reform in British India only through the agency of its British Indian members and in the States only through the agency of its States' members. If Mahatma Gandhi wishes such compartmentalism to be introduced into the Congress activities, then it should be remembered, first of all, that the States' people must not be allowed to mix themselves up with British Indian agitation, as they are constantly doing at present. Does Mahatma Gandhi desire, or is he even prepared for, their withdrawal from his satyagraha campaigns, all of them inaugurated in British India and for British Indians? Such withdrawal is imperatively necessary if the principle of non-interference is to be carried out in its entirety. If the States are foreign territory to British India, British India is equally foreign territory to the States' people; and if British Indians must pursue a hands off policy towards the States, the States' people too must pursue a hands off policy towards British India. Whatever the Congress may decide, it is of the first importance now, when the Congress constitution is going to be overhauled, that a final decision should be taken on this subject in clear terms and announced to all concerned.

The Congress decision may be any of the following:—

(i) That it concerns itself only with British India and that, therefore, no State subject can have a place in it, except perhaps as an outside sympathiser;

(ii) that it concerns itself equally with British India and the Indian States, and that, therefore, people in both parts can become its members,

(a) but that British Indian members must keep aloof from States' politics and Indian States members from British Indian politics,

(b) and that British Indian members can take part indifferently in British Indian and States' politics and States members can take part indifferently in States' and British Indian politics.

Only these three conclusions are possible; it is for the Congress to choose any one of them.

The present practice of the Congress is inconsistent with any of the theories on which the above conclusions are based; it is thus self-contradictory. The inconsistency is very well pointed out by *United India* in the following extract from its article:—

The Congress is a political body whose objective is politically confined to British India; but when it enlists members in the States, it puts no ban on their activities and a large number of subjects from Indian States went to prison during the days of civil disobedience. Such members too are allowed to vote during all discussions of the Congress, political or otherwise—discussions which concern only British India. We cannot imagine any convincing reasons for giving representation to States' subjects in the constitution of the Congress; and we respectfully invite responsible Congress leaders to advance a satisfactory argument in support of the present practice of the Congress constitution which ignores fundamental constitutional barriers with no compensatory results. A little reflection will show that the present representation is a monstrosity which will not survive any logical test. There is no political goal which the National Congress has prescribed for the States; there is no method of civil disobedience or entry into the legislatures of the States which the Congress is applying to the States. Why then should not the Congress take its hands off the States once and for all? There are other ways in which British India can help the people in the States. Our only point is that it is unconstitutional as well indecent of the Con-

gress to continue the present constitution of the Congress and recruit Congressmen from the States. As we have said, it prejudices the State authorities; it does not help the States; and the Congress itself creates enemies by creating trouble in areas in which by its own professions it has no *locus standi* and has emphatically disclaimed any political jurisdiction.

United India assumes here that the political objective of the Congress has reference merely to British India; if so, it follows, as the paper argues very cogently, that the States' people have no right to be in the Congress and must at any rate abstain from British Indian politics. But if the Congress objective is more comprehensive and is to be achieved by a joint effort on the part of British Indians and the Indian States' people, then British Indians will have no excuse for not giving active assistance to the States' people in achieving responsible government in the States; they cannot invoke the principle of non-interference which Mahatma Gandhi has suddenly remembered after giving full rein to the States' people to meddle in British India.

Which of these positions will the Congress take up? It cannot leave things indeterminate as at present.

A. V. PATVARDHAN.

THE DEAD HAND.

UNQUESTIONABLY the worst defect in the federal scheme outlined in the White Paper is the absence therefrom of a reasonably flexible procedure for future constitutional amendment. The White Paper constitution is wholly inflexible since no modification in it of an all-India character is at all possible unless every State unit of the federation gives its individual consent to it. Any single State—and they will be there by hundreds—will thus have the power of vetoing every such amendment. A federation of such rigidity is unknown to the world, but this fact does not deter our politicians, for they seem to think that this requirement of a unanimous consent of all the acceding States may appear to be a formidable impediment in the way of suitable constitutional revision in the future, if we consider the question from a purely theoretical standpoint, but from the practical point of view it will not be a serious obstacle at all. If you ask them how, they just answer: "Depend upon it, the States will readily give their consent to all the amendments that one may desire. The difficulty is not about the future; it is about the present. Let the States come into the federation, even with the veto power. You will then find that everything will pan out quite nicely and that the States will in fact smile sweetly on every amendment that you may propose. And if they do not, we shall make them agree. You need have no fear on that score at all. What is required is a little sense of realism in our critics who are apt to be doctrinaire."

Why our politicians look narrowly and even suspiciously into every provision concerning British India and why they assume an overflowing amount of good-will and generosity on the part of the Princes

in considering provisions affecting the Indian States it is difficult to understand. See for instance how distressed they are at the omission of the words "Dominion Status" from the preamble to the Constitution Act to be passed by the British Parliament. Even if the preamble consisted of nothing but Dominion Status repeated a hundred times over, it will have no legal force whatever. The old declarations about Dominion Status have not been cancelled; on the contrary they have been reaffirmed. But the mere absence of those words in the preamble of the new Act is proof positive to our politicians that the British Government does not want to and will not confer Dominion Status upon India at any time in future. On the other hand, the States say, "You shan't impose upon us any constitutional amendment even if you pass it by a nine-tenths majority in the federal legislature. We shall be free to treat every such amendment as null and void, if we please." But even then our politicians explain: "The Princes are accustomed to draw the long bow; don't take literally what they say. They will in practice accept every amendment which you may press upon them. We must indulge these rulers a bit." Why our political weather-prophets always presage "fair weather" in the Indian States and "thunder" in British India it is not at all possible for me to divine. I don't know if there is anything in Indian human nature which makes even autocratic Indians behave like democrats. But if it is not so, and if history is to be any guide, the veto power given to each one of the Princes under the White Paper scheme will render our constitution wholly unamendable like the law of Medes and Persians.

In Canada there are only nine provinces, and it is supposed that no change in her organic law is possible unless all the nine provinces agree to the change. There is no constitutional provision to this effect, but only a sort of informal understanding. Even so, the position has become thoroughly intolerable in Canada; she finds herself utterly powerless to bring about a change in the distribution of powers of the provincial and Dominion Governments, which is vitally necessary in order to cope with the present economic depression. In India unanimous consent will be required—not of nine States but of two or three hundred—and such consent will be required not only for redistribution of powers, which is a comparatively simple affair, but for substitution of democracy for autocracy; and yet our hot-gospellers of federation say blithely: Don't bother; everything will come right in the end.

The difficulties that are experienced in Canada on account of her being saddled with a rigid constitutional system are graphically described in the following excerpts from an article in the *Canadian Forum* by Mr. Norman McL. Rogers, Associate Professor of Political Science at Queen's University, who took a prominent part in the Nova Scotia Economic Inquiry:—

"The growing demand for constitutional revision in Canada has proceeded *pari passu* with the awakening of a new social philosophy. That new social philosophy is in large part the product of industrialism. It originates in dissatisfaction with the social instability inherent in the modern organization of industry and commerce. Its objective is a larger measure of security for wage-earners to be obtained by the intervention of the State in the economic life of the community. In the pre-war period this new social philosophy had made little progress in Canada. The conditions favourable to its growth did not exist in this country. In our outlook and organization we were still an agrarian community. The industrial sector was relatively unimportant in our economic life until the turn of the century. Even in the first decade of the new century the true frontiers of expansion were on the western prairies. We were still in essentials an agrarian country although the industrial sector was expanding rapidly under the stimulus of western settlement and improved transportation. Under such conditions the defects of the Federal Constitution were not readily apparent. A rigid constitutional system will not necessarily produce friction while the economic life of the community is permitted to function for the most part in a regime of private enterprise and freedom of contract. The real difficulty arises when the economic system fails to function adequately under private enterprise and the need is recognized for a larger degree of social control. Then it becomes apparent that rigidities in the constitutional system must be relaxed in order to permit the degree of centralized control necessary to guide the economic system towards pre-determined social objectives.

"Even the failure of the British North America Act to provide a flexible procedure for its own amendment would not have made us acutely conscious of our handicaps if the courts in their interpretation of the Constitution had given a broad construction of the powers assigned to the national authority. But the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was too firmly entrenched in its position as the self-appointed guardian of provincial rights to give a direction to the Constitution which might

have enabled the national authority to apply industrial controls as the necessity arose. Almost every attempt on the part of the Dominion Parliament to establish a jurisdiction over industrial conditions has foundered on the judicial interpretation of 'property and civil rights' as originally assigned to the provinces. The impotence of the Dominion was revealed strikingly in the case of *Snider vs. Toronto Electric Commissioners* in which the Privy Council denied the validity of Dominion legislation providing for the compulsory investigation of labour disputes in public utilities, and again when it was discovered that the Dominion did not possess the power to implement the signature of its representatives to the international convention for the eight-hour day. During the war period the constitutional infirmities of the Dominion Parliament were concealed temporarily by the wide powers it assumed under the War Measures Act. With the resumption of peace these extraordinary controls were removed. But our eyes were again blinded to the inherent weakness of the Federal Constitution by the fevered prosperity which marked the final debauch of the old industrial order in the four years which preceded the major economic crisis of 1930.

"It has been emphasized that the movement for constitutional amendment in Canada has been given its major impetus by the recent trend towards state intervention in economic life. As that trend has become more clearly defined it has directed attention to the inability of the national government in Canada to carry out any large measure of ameliorative legislation without exceeding its constitutional jurisdiction. A question may be raised as to the persistence of this movement towards state intervention. Is it a short-term or a long-term phase of social development? Perhaps it is too soon to give a final answer, but the balance of opinion appears to incline steadily towards the long-term theory. The words of Professor Edwin Gay of Harvard are worth repeating. 'Are we dealing now with what looks like a new era, a new period of history, a desire for increased social stability? Or are we faced with a comparatively short-term movement which has been greatly emphasized and stimulated by the experiences of the recent crisis? On this latter point I express my own personal view as a student of economic history, that a comparatively short period of expansion—of *laissez faire*—relatively to a longer preceding period animated by a desire for economic organization, is now being followed by the beginning of a new period; that we are going, at first still apparently haphazardly, into a new period of economic and social organization which is likely to last for a considerable period.' It may still be urged, however, that so recent a change in social philosophy is a tenuous justification for the revision or reconstruction of a constitution which has stood almost inviolate for sixty-seven years. It is true that social philosophies and political theories are impalpable, but do they not also form the foundation of our laws and institutions? And is it not true that changes in these theories are of the very essence of social progress? If we are to move steadily forward a just reverence for inherited traditions must be matched by a willingness to fashion these institutions for the attainment of new ideals. We must cleave to that which is good but reject as readily that which is archaic and useless. Otherwise we place ourselves under the dictatorship of our ancestors who were neither more wise nor more far-seeing than ourselves. The truth is that the work we want the British North America Act to permit us to do to-day is far different from that which was in the minds of those who framed it. And this living generation of the Dominion is entitled to contrive an

instrument of government which will assist in the realization of its own purposes. The philosophy in which the British North America Act was conceived has been gradually superseded by the doctrine of state intervention for social reform. This changing view of the functions and responsibilities of the national government must be given scope for expression through our political institutions.

"In our approach to the problem of constitutional revision it will be necessary to distinguish between the present need for specific amendments and the larger question of devising a flexible procedure of amendment which shall be incorporated in the British North America Act and provide us with the effective means of securing further revision when necessary. It is possible that the consent of all the provinces might be obtained for certain specific amendments of the constitution at the present juncture. But this success will not meet the fundamental problem of finding a reasonably flexible mechanism for future amendments. When the issue is faced it must be faced as a whole. A piecemeal settlement may be worse than no solution at all if it gives support to the constitutional rigidity implied in the doctrine of unanimous provincial consent to every amendment of the British North America Act. Political expediency may counsel postponement of the larger issue. In the long view it is necessary to combine the question of immediate revision with the formulation of a permanent procedure for future revision. It would seem that the time is now opportune to grapple with this vital problem of constitutional reconstruction. The experience of the past four years has enabled us to see more clearly than before the handicaps which prevent us from applying legislative remedies to some of the grave abuses of the present economic and social order. The chaotic financial inter-relationships of the Dominion and the provinces have been brought into strong relief during the post-war period. The financial difficulties of the federal system are bound up with the distribution of powers and the division of fields of taxation. The complexity of this aspect of the problem requires that the work of revision shall be preceded by careful study. These preliminary investigations will determine the success of the final outcome. The difficulty of the task must not be underestimated. We must recognize that the foundations of the British North America Act have been weakened by a process of slow subsidence. Its superstructure has been weatherbeaten by the storm and stress of the past four years. In design and content there is need for repair and renovation. The work of constitutional reconstruction presents a challenge to Canadian statesmanship."

It should be remembered that Mr. Rogers, in urging the desirability of laying unholy hands on the Canadian constitution, suggests not merely that the constitution be amended so as to make it a good instrument for attacking the immediate problems before the country, but so as to provide a permanent machinery for introducing suitable amendments in future whenever necessary.

OBSERVER.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)
 (From Our Correspondent.)
 LONDON, 14th September.
 THE REFORMS PROPOSALS.

NOW that we are reaching the end of the holiday season and politicians are coming back to their duties, and with the Report of the Joint Select

Committee looming ahead, the political journalists are beginning to sit up once more and take notice. So there are observable once more occasional paragraphs dealing with the Indian situation and purporting to forecast some at least of the probable proposals to be contained in the Report. From a closer examination of these paragraphs, they appear to emanate from one or two well-known but not very authoritative sources and are apparently being circulated in anticipation of the Tory conference to be held next month, whilst the Joint Select Committee, which suspended its sessions on August 1st, having, it is believed, completed its consideration of amendments to the draft Report presented by the Chairman, will have then resumed its sittings for a revision of the Report itself, which, in substance though not in form, will be a majority Report. It is believed in certain circles that it will be accompanied by three sets of dissentient minutes.

The *Morning Post* publishes a dispatch from its Calcutta correspondent expressing the fears alleged to be held in European circles in India at the report that appears to be circulated there that the Joint Select Committee has found itself unable, for reasons of practicability, to separate the Special Branch from the rest of the Police portfolio in the Provinces. Hence, it is stated, it is intended to recommend the complete transfer of the Police. How far this rumour is well-based, it is at present impossible to discover, but the paper's political correspondent falls over himself in his indignation at the disregard of the recommendations of the European Association. On the other hand, in conversation with a well-known former Bengal Police officer of high rank, he agreed with me that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to separate the Special Branch from the Police portfolio as a whole.

It is saliently remarked in the *Daily Express* that the Report will be even less welcome to the Indian extremists than the White Paper itself. Whether the writer knew that it is not the extremists alone who are likely to be still more disappointed with the Report than with the White Paper is not clear. Perhaps, however, he was hoping by his statement to mollify Mr. Churchill and his dis-hards. It is, however, very unlikely that Mr. Churchill at any rate, will throw up the sponge so readily. He has other reasons for wishing the downfall of the Government, as Mr. Amery shrewdly reminded the House a few weeks ago.

OF INTEREST TO INDIA.

The deposition of the Raja of Jhabua has been widely noted here in papers which formerly were entirely ignorant of the existence of this small principality. The *Star*, a Liberal paper, regards it as "one more instance of the quiet way in which British rule serves the people of India by saving them from themselves," and by showing "all the ruling princes of India that a certain standard of governing efficiency is demanded of them." The paragraphist might have remembered that it is not only a moral but a legal obligation that the Crown exercises in such cases of oppression as that complained of in the case of Jhabua, and that a widespread complaint among the Indian States' peoples is that the paramount power exercises its right and privilege too seldom and often too late.

There was a time when we associated our opponents with the unpleasant things of life and frightened our children to sleep with them, as, for example, in the case of Saladin, in the days of the Crusades, Napoleon, a century ago, and the Germans in more modern times. We have, however, learnt to do better with them now and to associate them in the minds of youth with some of the more succulent

objects of enjoyment, for instance, there are certain sweets known as black and white balls, composed of glucose and peppermint. In one place in Lancashire these tasty sweets are accompanied by the following rhyme:

"Boys and girls, you've heard of seas
And pale blue Indian skies,
But p'raps you've never tasted these,
Our old friend Gandhi's eyes."

As the *Manchester Guardian* paragraphist comments, "No serious disrespect to the great Indian was intended. And he can reflect that there are not many people in the world whose fame is wide enough to be applied to children's sweets."

Reviews.

SURVEY OF VEDIC RELIGION.

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT IN VEDIC LITERATURE By P. S. DESHMUKH. (Oxford Univ. Press.) 1933. 22cm. 378p. Rs. 15/-

IN this thesis submitted for the degree of D. Phil. at Oxford, Dr. Deshmukh undertakes a fresh survey of Vedic religion. He has viewed the growth of religion in Vedic times in India against a wide background, and one half of the book is taken up with a succinct summary of the results of modern research on the religion of the earliest Aryans, called Indo-Europeans by the author, and on its subsequent development in the Indo-Iranian period. The survey of Vedic religion itself is a very well-studied and up-to-date piece of work which takes full account of the results obtained by recent writers like Hillebrandt and Griswold. Dr. Deshmukh's knowledge of the leading authorities in his subject and of his texts is evident on every page, and he deserves to be congratulated on the high level of excellence attained by him in his difficult task.

At the outset the author discusses the definition of religion and points out that what is understood by religion has no exact equivalent in Sanskrit, though *dharma* is the nearest approach to it. Turning then to the origin of religion, he combats the view that religion grew out of magic, and finds the earliest exhibition of religious feeling in the Melanesian concept of *mana*, a mysterious power that is transferable and is capable of assuming an anthropomorphic character. The conclusions thus reached are then applied to the history of Indo-European religion, and the demonstration takes the line of establishing three propositions which, in spite of their negative character, are of considerable importance to a clear understanding of the course of development among the Indo-Europeans: (1) magic is not older than religion, (2) prayer is not derived from charms and (3) priests were not at first magicians. By Indo-Europeans is meant not so much a single specific race of pristine purity as a more or less mixed group of related peoples.

Progress and degeneration are question-begging terms, but we find it difficult to accept the author's view when he says: "In the form of giving undue importance to sacrifice, the mental degeneration of the Vedic Indians had already begun and gone a fair way even during that comparatively bright period of the Rig-Veda. To this was soon to be added magic and witchcraft and, lastly, priestcraft" (p. 62; see also pp. 156, 267-8 etc.). What is the place, in this view, of upanishadic thought, the conditions that led to its elaboration, and the significance of all that it stands for? We suggest that Dr. Deshmukh has dropped rather prematurely the distinction between religion and magic he set up so properly and

with such effort as necessary for a proper understanding of the history of the religious spirit among the Indo-European peoples, and that he reads too much of later history into the early phases of Vedic religion.

Professor Winternitz made a substantial advance in his classification of Vedic literature, and it is somewhat disappointing to find this classification rejected on very inadequate grounds (p. 188). It is equally unsatisfactory that there is no reference to Winternitz or his views in the section on Vedic chronology which just repeats the superstitions of English scholarship on the subject.

The rejection of Oldenberg's theory, supported by Griswold, that the Adityas go back to the Indo-Iranian period, if not to an earlier stage, seems to rest on very proper grounds (pp. 230-31). Dr. Deshmukh's explanation of the waning of Varuna and the rise of Indra to prominence as the result of the changed conditions of Aryan life in India (pp. 251-2) is interesting and sounds quite probable. Equally interesting, though not quite so convincing, is the view that is presented of Brihaspati as 'an Indraized sacrificial deity' (p. 293).

In his general discussion on Vedic gods (Ch. XIII) the author does well to show that the praise of any deity as supreme was only the result of an attempt to please to the utmost the god that the worshipper had in his mind at the moment, that it led to no comparisons between gods as in the later period of sectarian religion, and that it is inaccurate to describe this phenomenon as Henotheism (Max Muller) or to postulate the ousting of one deity by another. But we are not so sure that the phrase 'pantheistic polytheism', which the author adopts from Hopkins, describes the Vedic system more accurately; and the author's quarrel with Prof. Radhakrishnan's view that the later Vedic poets were inclined to monotheism is not easy to understand. He argues that "the very fact that he (Prajapati-Visvakarma-Hiranyagarbha) is regarded as the creator of other gods shows that he was only one of the gods" (p. 324). One may doubt the soundness of this argument. We believe with Radhakrishnan that there was a drift towards monotheism and monism; Ananda Kumaraswami has, in fact, proposed to equate the term 'deva' with 'angel' and this, we think, is correct. Dr. Deshmukh says: "If the religious thought of the Rigveda led to pantheistic polytheism, its philosophic thought led to monism as surely and as inevitably" (p. 331). It is possible that further reflection, he has been a busy man of affairs since he left his University, leads him to modify the first half of the statement.

On the whole, Dr. Deshmukh's work is a striking production in an important and difficult field of study and "will serve," as Prof. Keith says in his Foreword, "as a stimulating introduction to these topics to those who desire to have fuller knowledge."

K. A. NILKANTHA SASTRI.

SUGAR INDUSTRY.

WORLD SUGAR, PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION. By C. J. ROBERTSON. (John Bale.) 1934. 20cm. 142p. 5/-.

THE INDIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY. By M. P. GANDHI. (The Book Co., Calcutta.) 1934. 23cm. 286 + ixp. Rs. 5-8-0.

THE development of the sugar industry in this country has of recent years been a subject of active interest to the industrialist and the economist as well. It is, however, surprising to note that India, the

original home of sugarcane and its manufacture, has for generations in the past been mostly dependent on foreign imports even for this elementary need of life. It is only in post-war years that Indian sugar industry has received its due meed of recognition in the national economy of this country, and attempts are now being made to develop it on a wider scale under the aegis of protective tariffs. The appearance of the two monographs under review at such a moment would, we think, be considered as most welcome and opportune.

Mr. C. J. Robertson in his "World Sugar" gives a comprehensive survey of world's sugar production and consumption, both from cane and beet, and lays greater emphasis on the geographical and economic aspects than on the technical side of factory production. His appeal is more to students of economics than to technicians and as such, matters like labour supply, access to markets, utilization of natural facilities, effects of climate and density of population, modes of consumption and dietary, tariffs, and research, etc. are of supreme importance. "The world trade in sugar", he points out, "presents particularly an interesting feature of bringing into direct competition the agricultural production of tropical and temperate zones, an identical commodity being produced by two very dissimilar plants growing respectively under very different sets of geographical conditions". The problems which sugar thus raises are too numerous and varied in character and the author tries to expound each of them by necessary statistics of production and consumption, tariff arrangements and other controlling factors in each sugar-producing country separately. The book is thus sure to create a live interest in the subject of sugar by giving us a comprehensive survey of the world's situation at present. It cannot but leave the student of the Indian sugar industry to ponder even more thoughtfully when the author pointedly concludes :

"The main problem of Indian sugar production remains however the agricultural one, which is more difficult of solution than in other countries. Though factories may be able rapidly to increase their efficiency, agricultural efficiency will maintain costs of raw material at a relatively high level which means that the cost of protecting the white industry will remain a high one while the production of Indian industry, as a whole, is likely to remain in the near future at a level that, though in itself very high, is low in relation to the vast area under cane" (p. 41.)

It is here we believe that Mr. Gandhi's monograph on "Indian Sugar Industry" dealing with its past, present and future, would be extremely useful. The story of the development of sugar industry in India truly reads like a romance. The paucity of information, statistical or otherwise, except that which could be gleaned through the reports of the Sugar Committee (1920) and the Tariff Board Enquiry (1930) was an obvious impediment to a detailed study of this industry. Mr. Gandhi rightly deserves to be congratulated upon his most successful and illuminating study which gives us within a short compass all that is absolutely necessary. Great care has also been taken in compiling statistical tables which include even the estimates for the current year.

Since the passing of the Sugar Industry (Protection) Act, 1932, imports of foreign sugar have been subjected to a duty of Rs. 9-1-0 per cwt., of which Rs. 7-4-0 is the protective duty and Re. 1-13-0 constitutes a surcharge of 25% imposed for revenue purposes. The rapid development of this industry from 1933 to 1934 is a visible proof of what Indian enterprise can do, given certain facilities, even in a period of acute depression, and has more than justified the sacrifice which protection always imposes upon consumers. The number of factories, in a period of

three years, has increased from 31 to 135 involving an investment of about Rs. 20 crores and the employment of about 1500 graduates of chemistry and engineering and a hundred thousand workers in farms and factories. Factory production of cane-sugar in India shows an increase from 33% in 1931 to 142% in 1933. Mention must also be made of the most useful work done by the sugar technological branch of the Imperial Agricultural Research Council. Improved varieties of cane from the experimental farms at Coimbatore occupy more than half of the acreage at present. Further investigations point out the great possibilities of developing this industry in Bengal. As the home industry rapidly develops, the margin left for importation of foreign sugar is sure to be narrowed down and India may rightly expect to begin soon with exporting sugar to foreign markets. On the basis of the present capacity to produce, Mr. Srivastava, the Sugar Technologist of the Government of India, estimates an overproduction of 6000 tons in 1934-35.

This phenomenal development of the industry creates in Mr. Gandhi too great an optimism which we do not fully share. It cannot be ignored that this great achievement is all due to the artificial stimulus of protection granted at the cost of other interests of the community. Mr. Srivastava in reviewing the progress rightly sounds a note of warning which deserves special attention. "The rate at which sugar industry has been developing", he points out, "during the last two years has recently become too fast to be healthy. In view of the statistical position disclosed, considerable caution and restraint are necessary in connection with any further extension of the industry, if it is to be saved from the fate of jute, rubber and a number of other industries which are now suffering from the ill-effects of overproduction." Mr. Gandhi's hope in this respect is that with the lifting of depression, economic conditions would improve and *pari passu* consumption too may outbid production!

It must further be pointed out that with the rapid progress of industry, there is bound to be a cry for the reduction of protective duties (now promised for 15 years). Unless the advantages which accrue from it are equally well distributed, mere lowering of the price which is largely due to internal competition cannot be taken as a sure index of such equitisation of benefits. This industry in particular stands in very close relation with agricultural production of canes. And complaints are very often heard that prices paid for canes by the factories or their contractors are far lower than what they ought to be. The move taken by the U. P. Government to fix the minimum price of cane is, we think, a step in the right direction. The problem of minimum price fixation bristles with numerous difficulties no doubt, but they are not altogether insurmountable. If there is every reason for the protection of the manufacturer's interests from foreign competition, there is equally good reason for the protection of the interests of the agriculturists from their ruthless exploitation by requisite state intervention.

The development of the Indian sugar industry has to face several difficult problems. The proper utilisation of by-products plays an important part in determining the margin of profits in the industry and its future development. The precipitous fall in the price of molasses has created a new and difficult problem which patient research alone can solve. The recent establishment of the Sugar Technological Institute at Cawnpore will be hailed by all as a welcome measure on the part of the Government of India. Besides this, the problem of marketing is also still unexplored. Statistical information is lacking regarding interprovincial distribution of sugar;

co-operation is also needed of railway authorities as the freights charged are too high. Mr. Gandhi's suggestion for the establishment of a single Selling Agency like the one organised in Java deserves the serious attention of all those who are intimately interested in the future prospects of industry. Conferences held at Simla, Patna and only recently at Cawnpore are a clear indication of the growing co-operation of the Government and the public with the interests of the industrialists and we hope the next issue of this most delightful and brilliant monograph would also include the results of such deliberations. Wider publicity alone would strongly dispel some of the doubts that very often lurk in the minds of the ill-instructed public in respect of all protected industries. We heartily commend these two books to the careful attention of all who are interested in the development of Indian national industries.

S. G. PURANIK.

SHORT NOTICES.

FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD. By RICHARD ROBERTS. (Association Press, Calcutta.) 20cm. 94p. Rs. 1-8-0.

DR. ROBERTS is out to prove in this little book that Christianity has not been found wanting; but it has been found difficult and it has been not tried. In his first chapter he enunciates the necessity for an object in our search and says that we need a direction to our search. Jesus Christ desires the open-eyed deliberate surrender of the *whole* man. With that object he shows how we have failed to surrender either our bodies or our minds to our souls to him. But on the other hand God always has shown a love that will not let mankind go down to destruction.

He discusses what is wrong with human nature, and points out, that first it is unfulfilled and secondly that it is perverted. How then shall human nature get back to what was the purpose of God for it? He advises our concentration on a great personality and following his life to the utmost. Such a personality he says is Jesus. "Why Jesus" he discusses in another chapter. Finally he points out that Jesus is the disclosure of God. He is also the

anticipation of the human nature and on these two assumptions he builds up his arguments. It requires a thoughtful reader to find realities in these assumptions.

G. Y. MARTIN.

THE MESSAGE OF KRISHNA. By ARDASER SORABJI N. WADIA. (Dent.) 1933. 20cm. 146p. 3/6.

THE book under review is written by a non-Hindu brother as a contribution to the Message series which is attempting to put before the world the Messages of great prophets, so that the time should soon come when all men shall gratefully recognize and welcome all that every ennobling religion has to offer to our partial knowledge of Eternal Verities. The author must indeed be congratulated upon the impartiality of judgment that he has shown in presenting the doctrines of a faith to which he does not belong. In a way, the non-Hindu character of the author has done a service to the cause of the Gita, for it shows once more that, like a jewel, the Gita can shine by its own light.

As the book is supposed to carry the message of Lord Krishna to the doors of all, the author rightly sets aside the metaphysical subtleties and emphasises the ethical teachings of the Divine Song. The creed of action with the special emphasis on the principle of non-attachment and detachment leading to self-realization is rightly placed in the forefront. The whole book has been written in a clear and fluent style.

We however miss a discussion of the Bhakti element in the Gita which has certainly influenced the devotional mystic of the whole of the India. The reader goes through the chapter on the Call of Flute with a hope to find a reference to it therein, but in vain. The author's interpretation of the Call of Flute may be refreshing but it certainly is not convincing. Nor is it consistent with Indian tradition. The Maharashtrian saints have offered a mystical interpretation, of which the author seems to have no knowledge. Leaving aside this aspect of the Gita teachings, we feel no hesitation in recommending this book to readers for their perusal.

S. V. DANDEKAR.

CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY'S STATEMENT.

The Executive Committee of the Bombay Congress Socialist Party has issued the following statement to the Press:—

MAHATMA GANDHI'S statement laying down terms for the continuation of his leadership is in the nature of a "Zinoviev Letter" which has drawn a red-herring across the trail of the Congress and which may divert attention from the real issue facing the country, which is how best to accelerate the country's progress towards National Independence.

It is by that test that we propose to judge the value of the proposals put forward by Gandhiji.

But before doing so, one thing needs to be said and that is that, by coupling his suggestions with the threat to retire from Congress leadership, Gandhiji has made a free and intelligent decision on the issues raised by him impossible.

Referring to the loyalty shown to him by the

intelligentsia in the Congress, Gandhiji says in his statement:

"For me any more to draw upon this loyalty and devotion is to put undue strain upon them."

And yet that is precisely what Gandhiji is doing, for who can doubt that at the Bombay session the real issue will be not whether the spinning franchise is desirable, or whether "truthfulness" should become part of the Congress creed, but whether the acceptance of these unwanted clauses in the Congress constitution is or is not too big a price to pay for the retention of Mahatma Gandhi's leadership.

We do not doubt the genuineness of Gandhiji's appeal to Congressmen to decide on the merits and "eliminate him from their consideration," but it is obvious that his statement has made such a decision impossible.

An attempt has been made in certain quarters to make out that Gandhiji's proposed retirement is in

view of a "Socialist menace." There is nothing in the statement to warrant such an interpretation. All that Gandhiji says is that if and when the Socialists gain ascendancy in the Congress he will be unable to remain in the organisation.

At the same time one cannot help feeling that it is unfair of Mahatma Gandhi first to have entrenched in power the moderates represented by the Congress Parliamentary Board and then to threaten to leave the Congress after a parting shot at the Socialists. His statement, in the circumstances in which it has been made, will have the effect of giving a handle to those who want to put the Congress Socialist movement in the wrong and cover their own retreat from the objective of Independence.

Turning now to Gandhiji's proposed amendments in the Congress constitution, the first and most important is the spinning franchise. It is also the most objectionable.

Our objection to it is based on more than one ground. The first is the utter irrelevance of a test such as spinning yarn for membership of a political organisation striving for national liberation. We are not concerned here with the economic value of khaddar, but only with making its production a condition of Congress membership.

The second objection to the spinning test is that it is undemocratic and is bound to make the Congress an organisation open only to those with the leisure to spin or the money to buy the requisite quantity of yarn.

Facing realities and judging by our experience of "the unashamed fraud in the observance of the khaddar clause" which Gandhiji himself has found intolerable, we refuse to treat the possibility of the spinning test being genuinely observed as practical politics. We know that far from lessening the corruption for which the khaddar clause is already responsible, the spinning franchise will provide yet another opportunity for hypocrisy and fraud.

In fact, the spinning franchise was tried after the Belgaum Congress and had to be abandoned within a few months because of the fall in Congress membership.

Gandhiji has sought to make out that what he proposes is a "Labour Franchise." Congress Socialists would be the first to welcome a genuine labour franchise. In fact the Party's programme includes a demand for adult suffrage on a functional basis in the future Indian State, thus basing a citizen's right to vote on his capacity to labour. But, according to Gandhiji, a man who has worked for ten hours in a factory for the benefit of the capitalist has not laboured enough to deserve a vote and must add another half hour's labour at the charkha for the benefit of the country. With such a conception of a "Labour Franchise" we cannot agree.

Gandhiji's second suggestion is for the stricter enforcement of the clause requiring habitual wearing of khaddar. That clause and the manner in which it has worked have already led to more dishonesty in Congress elections than any other single factor. If on the other hand it is honestly enforced, it will keep out of the Congress all those who cannot afford khaddar as their habitual dress and the Congress will become a purely middle class organisation.

The third amendment which Gandhiji proposes to move is to substitute the words "truthful and non-

violent means" for the words "legitimate and peaceful means" in the Congress creed.

Nobody will object to the desirability of adhering to certain ethical standards in the course of our struggle for freedom, but when one looks at the reasons advanced by Gandhiji for the change one is inclined to ask whether the Congress is drifting.

"I have entered political life in pursuit of the search (for truth)", says the Mahatma "I say that this search necessarily includes Complete Independence and that Truth, if it means anything at all in a political contest, must mean the freedom of our country and the liberation of the masses of our people from all exploitation."

Gandhiji's statement has in fact raised the fundamental question: What is the Indian National Congress? And for what is it striving?

Is it a mass organisation striving for the political liberation of this nation from alien rule, or is it a spiritual sect with a leader who says "Satya or Truth is my God" and following that leader in a search for Truth which he "cannot suspend for anything in this world or another."

If the Congress is not to renounce its leadership of the struggle for National Independence against British Imperialism, there can be only one answer to this question, and that is that the Congress will remain a political organisation and will refuse to be drawn into ethical or metaphysical abstractions.

The fourth amendment suggested by Gandhiji, that for restricting the number of delegates to the Congress session to 1,000, is merely one of constitutional machinery, and considered by itself there is something to be said for it. But taken in conjunction with the preceding amendments, it justifies the fear that, by depriving minorities of adequate representation, it may serve as an instrument for enthroning in the Congress a dictatorship of expert spinners and searchers after Truth.

Mahatma Gandhi claims to be a democrat. Members of the Congress Socialist movement feel, however, that there may be many other things which may be part of Truth.

Having said that, Gandhiji very rightly proceeds to observe:

"I have begun to doubt if all Congressmen understand the same thing by the expression Complete Independence."

In fact there is cause for more than a mere doubt. As with Complete Independence, so too with Truth. It is a relative term and means different things to different people. To us it seems that they are better democrats in that they are prepared to be in opposition in what they, like him, recognise to be "the most powerful and the most representative organisation in the country." And just as they accept the majority verdict and are prepared to await the conversion of the majority of Congressmen to their ideology, so too they would appeal to Gandhiji to accept the majority decision, whether or not it is palatable to him.

If, however, Gandhiji adheres to his ultimatum, the duty of all those who are out to get Independence is to reject Gandhiji's undemocratic demands at the risk of losing his valuable leadership for the time being. The Congress is greater than even Mahatma Gandhi.