

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

An Explanation.

BY an unfortunate mischance we did not receive our weekly packet of Hansard containing the report of the India Bill debates in the House of Commons in Committee last week. We have therefore to give a summary of the debates for two weeks in the "Sparks from the Commons' Anvil" columns this week. We beg to apologise to the reader for having taken up too much space with this matter and to throw ourselves on his indulgence. Even so we have not been able to deal with all important matters, for instance, the provision for excluded areas. Our regret is all the keener because we have yet to receive Hansard for 8th May, when the debate on the Second Schedule—a most important Schedule setting out provisions of the Bill which should be capable of amendment without altering from the point of view of the States the constitutional machinery to which they are invited to accede—was finished. We propose to deal with this Schedule next week, by which time we hope to get a complete record of the discussion on this subject.

The Breakdown Clause.

COMMENTING on our article on this subject in the last issue of our paper, the *Indian Express* of Madras writes as follows :—

The SERVANT OF INDIA points out the meaninglessness of Sir Samuel Hoare's amendment to meet the States' objections to Clause 45 dealing with the steps to be taken in the event of a breakdown. The amendment limits the period of deadlock to three years. Our contemporary pertinently asks how this limitation can help. If there is a real deadlock, reversion to the original state will not

be possible even after the period. If Parliament decides to revise the Constitution, Schedule II will enable any State to block the revision.

We do not think Sir Samuel is unaware of this dilemma. Perhaps, he thinks it is an incurable one and when such a situation occurs, the paramountcy powers will enable the British Government to silence opposition from the States. We might also add that when the Federation breaks down the political situation will become so uncertain that the States will be only too anxious for any settlement as otherwise their separate existence will be endangered. Bolting the doors and windows will not save a building from earthquake.

It is natural for the SERVANT OF INDIA to be anxious for easy methods of constitutional amendment. They are desirable when the constitution is generally satisfactory and amendments may be required only in minor details here and there. The India Bill constitution is so preposterous that it has to be changed altogether out of recognition before it can become the instrument of India's progress. The want of elasticity may turn out to be a help rather than a hindrance.

* * *

WE are glad to see our contemporary, the *Indian Express*, noticing our article, for it is almost the only journal which has commented on the question of future constitutional amendment, a question which is of crucial importance but woefully neglected in current discussions of the India Bill. We do not think that the *Express* is right if it holds that the British Government will be in a position, by using paramountcy powers, to compel the States to consent to such a revision of the constitution as it desires when a protracted deadlock has taken place. Apart from the fact that some of the States may have genuine objections to the proposed changes, some others may by that time have become so discontented with the working of the federal government in one particular or another that it is quite possible that they will withhold consent and make the amendment of the constitution a ground for leaving the federation. In any case there is no question of a State being in danger of the loss of its separate existence, unless it is assumed that revolution breaks out. On the contrary it may feel that by going out of the federation its separate existence will be fully restored to it. Thus if secession is to be avoided, the proposed revision will have to be given up, which means that the deadlock will remain unbroken.

* * *

THE need for a machinery which will enable the constitution to be amended without too much

difficulty will be felt all the more keenly because the constitution is so uniformly unsatisfactory. Want of elasticity can be regarded as help instead of a hindrance only by those who have given up hope of reaching the political goal by constitutional means and have made up their mind to use extra-constitutional means for the realisation of their destiny. If the amendment procedure is made as difficult as in the Bill, one cannot but come to the conclusion that even those who swear by constitutional agitation will be driven by the force of circumstances to travel outside the confines of constitutionalism. That is why we feel more concerned about this particular defect than some others do. To those who are eager to try out the method of revolution, even if it be peaceful revolution, the graver the defects of the constitution and the less open it is to amendment the better.

* * *

Indo-Burma Financial Settlement.

THE report of the tribunal appointed to make or rather recommend a financial settlement between India and Burma has been published. Ever since the first R. T. C. it was generally understood that the task would be entrusted to an impartial body. Indeed a recommendation to this effect was made by the Burma sub-committee of the first R. T. C. and was cordially endorsed by the Joint Select Committee. Actually the tribunal consisted of persons who because of their political and imperialist prepossessions could not, humanly speaking, be expected to deal even-handed justice between India and Burma. The work of even such a tribunal, seriously unsatisfactory though its personnel was, would have inspired greater public confidence if means had been found to associate popular representatives with it. This too was explicitly suggested by the Burma sub-committee and would doubtless have been acted upon by a Secretary of State with a little less contempt for Indian opinion than Sir Samuel Hoare. The findings of a body so circumstanced cannot be expected to give satisfaction to the parties concerned and have in fact been greeted with widespread and strong disapproval. The status of the tribunal being advisory, its recommendations are not of a mandatory nature and have yet to receive acceptance at the hands of the Secretary of State. If the existing commitments of Government on the subject are to be taken account of, this should not be forthcoming until the legislature is allowed an opportunity to have its say about the report. This formality—for it is nothing more—may either be gone through or dispensed with, as may suit Sir Samuel Hoare's convenience; but in either case it would hardly seem to make much difference to the ultimate decision of the points at issue by the Secretary of State.

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TO revert to the tribunal's recommendations. By the usual process followed in such cases of assessing the value of the assets and liabilities, the tribunal seems to have arrived at the total liabilities to be apportioned between the two countries. It then decided that this was to be determined by "a general consideration of their relative financial and economic situation." On such consideration it came to the conclusion that Burma should shoulder 7.5 per cent. of the liabilities. For clearing off this debt the tribunal allows a period of 45 years to Burma, which is to pay an annuity of Rs. 2,35,46,000 to India on a basis of 3½ per cent. interest. Both the amount of debt and the period allowed for its liquidation are naturally bound to be

subjects of keen controversy in the two countries. The only point which seems to be common ground between the Indian and Burmese Governments is that for giving practical and detailed effect to the arrangement that may be finally decided upon, a committee consisting of three members—one official representative each of the two Governments with a chairman appointed by the Secretary of State to act as umpire in cases of disagreements between the two other members—should be appointed. We trust that every effort will be made to secure the services of a really impartial person with judicial training to work in this capacity.

* * *

Village Panchayats in C. P.

JUDGING from the report on the working of village panchayats in C. P. whose number went up by 65 to 861 during the year ending 31st March 1934, the tendency among these bodies to prefer judicial to administrative work for fear of incurring public odium associated with the imposition of taxation does not seem to have become less marked than last year. Roughly speaking, only about a fifth of the existing panchayats may be said to care for their administrative duties and even in these cases their enthusiasm for such functions was found hardly ever to outlast the initial Government grant. While it is true that taxation is never welcome, that in villages has the great redeeming feature of the proceeds being spent on the comfort of the villagers themselves and that too by people in close association with them. We hope as good use is made of this important difference between taxation for provincial or all India purposes and that imposed by village panchayats as possible, for the purpose of making new taxation less odious to the people. The need for raising funds locally for village improvement is self-evident in view of the insufficiency of Government grant for the purpose. The further consideration has also to be borne in mind that if the expenditure of funds received from Government is not to be wasted the work of improvement has to be continued out of the proceeds of local taxation. If panchayats show a persistent disregard of their municipal functions, the suggestion which seems to be widely canvassed in C. P., viz. that the successful performance for a period of years of administrative duties be made a condition precedent to the grant of judicial powers to panchayats, may have to be seriously thought of.

* * *

IF there was a general unwillingness to impose taxation, in a few cases funds raised by taxation amongst the villagers were not used and allowed to accumulate, though there was ample scope for useful expenditure. Need it be said that unnecessary taxation is as strongly to be deprecated as failure to impose necessary taxation? The report does well in impressing on all concerned the fact that it is well thought-out programmes of village improvement that alone can justify any addition to the economic burdens of the people. Instances of how this really unwanted money was sometimes misused are given in the report. In one or two cases it was used for giving loans to the panchas themselves and in another case 10 out of the 12 panchas had kept it with themselves presumably for their personal use. Such misuse has been facilitated, be it noted, by the failure on the part of district councils to insist upon a regular and timely audit of the panchayat accounts. These reprehensible acts by responsible office-bearers of these rural bodies must be strongly condemned, as they cannot but prejudicially affect the growth of the panchayat movement

not only in the province with which we are immediately concerned but also elsewhere.

Protection of Poor Debtors.

AMONG the problems considered by the Royal Commission on Labour was the one relating to the indebtedness of the industrial worker. The inquiries made by the Commission went to show that the fearful increase of indebtedness among industrial workers was due in great measure to the easy credit enjoyed by them. This was, in its opinion, a curse rather than a blessing to the industrial worker; and the Commission had little difficulty in recommending that by far the most effective means of fighting the evil was by reducing this credit so that the worker would cease to be an attraction for the money-lender. To this end the Commission recommended that the salaries of workers receiving Rs. 300 and less a month be exempted entirely from the possibility of attachment. The line at present drawn at Rs. 40 a month the Commission wanted to be extended to Rs. 300 a month and that too only for the benefit of industrial workmen.

SINCE any modification of the status quo necessitated a change in the existing law, the Government took the opportunity to examine the position with a view to finding out if the benefit could not be extended to other classes of workers with equally modest incomes. The inquiries set afoot by them satisfied them, as pointed out by the Home Member to the Government of India, who introduced the amending legislation in the Assembly, that "there is just as much indebtedness among workers of any other type, for example clerical employees, as there is among industrial workers; and also that there is a very large amount of indebtedness among the poorer employees of Government." There was therefore no reason to confine the new legislation only to industrial workers. And as a matter of fact it is designed to embrace "all classes of workers."

IN one important respect the legislation marks a departure—shall we say retrogression?—from the recommendation of the Whitley Commission. Whereas the Commission wanted all salaries less than Rs. 300 to be immune from attachment, the Bill proposes Rs. 100 as the limit. But this is a matter of detail and attempts would, we hope, be made by non-official members of the Select Committee to make it approximate as nearly as possible to the figure suggested by the Commission. As explained by Sir Henry Craik, the proposed figure is a compromise between the existing limit of Rs. 40 which is very low and that of Rs. 300, recommended by the Commission. But it is not merely employees drawing Rs. 100 and less that would be thus protected. Those drawing higher salaries too would, under the new scheme, receive some, though not equal, protection. In their case, the immunity for attachment would extend only to one-half of the excess over Rs. 100. Another safeguard proposed is that the period of attachment should never exceed 24 months at any one time, a fresh attachment being enforced only after the lapse of a 12 months' interval and only in respect of a fresh decree by the court. We have no doubt the measure will be generally welcomed as an attempt in the right direction.

Gond Seva Mandal.

THE report for last year of the Gond Seva Mandal, which under the leadership of Father Elwin

is doing yeoman's service to the cause of the uplift of Gonds, is just published. It is seen from it that the number of primary schools, conducted by the Mandal went up to nine, their strength being 260, 50 of whom were girls. In the Central Ashram there are 15 boarders, most of whom are Gond boys. It is a matter for satisfaction that the dispensary of the Mandal is proving itself useful to the people for whose benefit it is intended, for we read in the report that it attracts Gonds from a radius of forty miles. The Leper Refuge was rebuilt last November in a well-segregated spot and has 15 inmates. The work of village improvement too claimed the attention of the Mandal with the result that Karanja, where the Mandal has its head-quarters, very soon promises to become a model village. As part of the Mandal's anti-Malaria campaign, the distribution of quinine and mosquito nets was undertaken in a few selected villages; but it was soon realised that to bring about lasting improvement, what was even more necessary was the destruction of the breeding places of mosquitoes. This, we hope, is now engaging the Mandal's attention. The maintenance of all these activities at their present level is no light responsibility; but not content with the mere maintenance of the status quo the Mandal has planned a further development of its work for which funds are badly needed. Its immediate needs are: (1) a sum of Rs. 500 for buildings and equipment and Rs. 100 a month, for maintenance of a middle school and boys' hostel, (2) Rs. 100 initially and Rs. 20 a month in connection with two new primary schools and (3) Rs. 65 for erecting a dharmashala for patients and visitors and Rs. 15 a month for its maintenance. It is to be hoped that adequate funds to satisfy these needs will be forthcoming before long.

"Marriage Hygiene."

THE need for creating a sane public opinion on matters relating to marriage and sex life generally is perhaps greater in India than anywhere else in the world, faced as we are with an enormous but still growing population, poor, illiterate, insufficiently nourished, having a very high death-rate and following curious marriage customs which make our country almost a sociological museum. We are therefore grateful that a quarterly journal of the highest standard, with the name *Marriage Hygiene*, has been started in Bombay by a group of eminent medical men and students of sociology, with the object of 'securing for the science of conjugal hygiene a proper place in preventive medicine' and 'binding its readers together into a band of clean thinkers and bold fighters against prejudice, evasion and meaningless taboos.' The journal is to be congratulated on having secured the active co-operation of some of the most eminent British and American writers on the subject. Drs. Havelock Ellis and Norman E. Himes have written in all the three numbers which have appeared so far, while Dr. Marie Stopes has written in two of them. In one of her articles Dr. Stopes has dealt with contraception for Indian women and suggested a method which the poorest and the most ignorant woman in the village or the slums may follow. The articles are all scientific and scholarly, yet quite intelligible to the educated layman. It is believed to be the only journal of the kind in the British Empire. Its subscription of Rs. 10 is not too high for its quality. It will be found invaluable alike to the medical practitioner and the social worker. We wish it a long and useful career.

“ IT WILL BE WORKED. ”

“THE new constitution will be worked ; there is no fear of non-co-operation now.” In these words most British publicists try to reassure British public opinion. We are sorry to see Sir Stanley Reed, who is so friendly to India, also speaking in this sense to the East India Association on the 21st inst. The great need of the moment is not to induce a spirit of self-complacency among British statesmen, or to lead them to believe that, however bitterly Indians may resent the imposition of a constitution which they hate, they will work it contentedly when once it becomes the law of the land and it is set going, but to give them a warning that popular discontent in India will be aggravated rather than allayed by the passing of the Bill now before Parliament and that if Indians work the constitution they will work it not in a constructive spirit, but in a wholly destructive spirit, with the avowed object of bringing it to an end at the shortest possible time.

Sir Stanley Reed says of the Congress that “it has tried non-co-operation twice ; it has found that it is a very barren field.” If by non-co-operation he means staying away from the legislatures that will be set up, he is probably right, though no one can yet predict with confidence. It is not altogether impossible even now for the left wing of the Congress to gather sufficient strength in the country to carry its own programme of leaving the legislatures alone. But the question is : if the non-co-operation field was found to be barren by the Congress, will not the co-operation field be found equally barren by all parties under the new Act ? When the non-co-operation movement was afoot, there were people in the land who could point out, and who did point out, the considerable scope there was under the existing constitution for doing constructive good to the country. Who can play that rôle now, and who is willing to do so ? Not certainly the Liberals, who exerted themselves the most in this direction last time. And the reason for this is to be found, not in their unwillingness to incur unpopularity as they did before, nor in a decline in their influence, but in their sheer inability to convince themselves, and much less others, that the constitution is capable of yielding tolerably good results. If non-co-operation in the sense in which Sir Stanley Reed uses the word is not resumed, it will only be because the country believes that there are better and more effective ways of doing away with the constitution than that of orthodox non-co-operation tried in old days.

It is very true, as Sir Stanley Reed says, that “people are weary of political strife,” but the British Government is doing the utmost in its power to force strife upon the people, and weary as they are, they will be compelled to take up the challenge. The new constitution will be utterly faulty in itself, and there will be no constitutional means open to the people to alter it. Here are the seeds sown of a revolutionary movement which even those who detest revolutions will be impotent to check. We had so far only to look to the British

Parliament for the amendment of the constitution. The power of Parliament in this respect is maintained intact ; not a jot or tittle of it is given to the people in India. But in future even Parliament will be unable to give effect to any amendment in the forward direction that it may be willing to introduce. It must take the consent of each individual federating State to the proposed amendment. If any single State withholds its consent and if the amendment is still carried into effect, that State will acquire the right to go out of the federation, and since such a contingency is to be avoided at all costs it means that no amendment can be made which has not the support of all the States. Obviously this is a position to which, apart from the other grave defects in the constitution, Indians cannot submit without putting their last ounce of energy into a fight against the constitution.

It has become the fashion to cover up and glose over fundamental defects in the constitution by saying that it is *sui generis* and is bound to be so. Minor adaptations of the normal type of a democratic constitution Indians will always be prepared to consider, but when they are presented with a constitution which is initially bad and can never be bettered in future, it is impossible for any sane person to advise them to go on working with good-will within the four corners of the constitution, without looking beyond. Let there be no mistake about this in any quarter, that if the constitution is worked, it will be worked not so much with a view to the immediate advantage that it is possible to reap from it, but with a view to its future amendment. As we have said before, this is an iron-clad constitution so far as human ingenuity can make it, and His Majesty's Government is taking every possible precaution to see that constitutional means will not avail to bring about a change in it. But the people's energies will be concentrated all the same on changing the constitution, and if constitutional means will not suffice, it is in the nature of things that other means will be resorted to. They may succeed or they may fail, but increased strife on a plane to which we are not yet accustomed will be the inevitable result of forcing the proposed scheme of constitutional reforms upon the country.

Sir Stanley Reed has paid a glowing compliment to the Liberal Party in India. “The Liberals,” he says, “represent that great volume of sane and patriotic thought which sways political expression in the long run. No constitution which does not substantially carry this element with it can survive as a permanent governing institution.” If it is so, we would beg to tell him, and through him all other British statesmen, that the Liberals will be unable, as Mr. Sastri said at the Liberal Federation in December last, to give even an atom of support to the new constitution. And one finds it rather amusing for Sir Stanley Reed to quote Sir Chimanlal Setalvad as advising the Indian people to work the constitution with good-will and in a spirit of contentment. Sir Chimanlal never speaks, since the publication

of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report, but to warn the Britishers with all his earnestness that, if the constitution is imposed upon the people by force, it will create such an amount of ill-feeling and animosity as to lead the people deliberately to boycott British goods and create constitutional deadlocks at every step. Sir Stanley Reed must go outside the Liberal fold to find a popular leader who would advise the country to work the reforms in a spirit of contentment. If the Liberals are consulted, they will only implore the Britishers even at this late stage to accept Lord Hugh Cecil's advice and drop the Bill. The Liberals do so out of their concern to avoid revolutionary movements which they feel are sure to follow in the wake of the new constitution.

ADULT FRANCHISE IN CITIES.

THE Labour Party proposed several amendments in the House of Commons Committee the cumulative effect of which would be the establishment of adult franchise, for men and women, in urban areas—big cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Allahabad and Cawnpore and "the more urbanised areas such as the coalfields." Under these proposals there would be no other qualification than the residence qualification. It was not proposed to increase the number of representatives in proportion to the number of voters. All the constituencies would retain the seats allotted to them; only in certain constituencies there would be a wider franchise and a larger number of voters. Nor was the extension of the franchise intended to disturb the communal electorates. They would remain as at present; Mahomedan electors would vote only for Mahomedan candidates; only the number of electors of each community would be increased in the urban areas.

Major Attlee admitted that adult suffrage all over India would not be immediately possible on account of administrative difficulties, but he contended that such difficulties could be easily surmounted in cities. "I think," he said, "you would have quite enough people to man the booths in these areas like Calcutta and the adjoining suburban constituencies; and that there would be no difficulties about giving the chance for representation to the masses of the people." In this way he pleaded for a start being made in universal franchise. Major Attlee recognised that if adult franchise was introduced in cities, the method proposed to secure the representation of labour would have to be reconsidered. But he was prepared for the necessary adjustments.

I have always been adverse (he said) to segregating labour in special constituencies. I would much rather that the wage-earners should be in a position to influence the views and actions of the candidates of all communities and all classes; that is to say, that the candidate should have to come before electors who would include all classes of the community so that they would have to give some consideration to their views instead of segregating them into special classes with special electorates and with special candidates.

He would like, he declared, "to get the wage-earners put on a common electoral roll", or at least on "a common economic roll," because he knew that in the present circumstances such a roll would be subject to the provision for communal constituencies.

The Government, however, was opposed even to this modest beginning recommended in the minority report of the Franchise Committee. The main objection was, as the Under-Secretary put it, that "the effect of asking the administration to poll every one—which is what it would come to—by one immediate change in a big city like Bombay, for example, would be a very great jump to take at the present moment." But this objection was reinforced by several others. One of them of course was that it "would impose very great burdens on the administrative machine." "I agree," he said, "that it is possible to develop too much the administrative argument. But you must remember that the people who have to work this scheme are the local Governments. If we press them beyond what they can manage and risk the grave danger of an administrative breakdown, the possible effects on the inauguration of the new constitution would be very bad indeed." Another argument he advanced against the proposals was that "by giving the urban electorate a greater measure of advance at the present time we should be acting unfairly to the rural electorate." He argued that in the Bill the Government proposed to "give the countryside a much greater proportion of the electorate", and said, "We attach the utmost importance to preserving the proper ratio between town and country. . . . If we accept the hon. Member's (Major Attlee's) suggestion we shall at once topple over the balance in favour of the country again." The fallacy lurking in this objection was pointed out immediately by Major Attlee, who said: "I understand that it might make a difference if it were proposed to increase the number of members which the town has against the country. But how is the balance affected if 100,000 people have the vote in a town and elect one member and say 20,000 people in the country elect one member? How is the balance toppled over?"

Miss Rathbone in her speech answered Mr. Butler's objections in a conclusive manner. She said:

He objects to the Amendment on two grounds: first, that it is impracticable; and, secondly, that it is unfair. I realise that it would offer administrative difficulties because it would mean very great enlargement of the electorate. May I make two suggestions which would very greatly modify that difficulty, although they were ignored in the Franchise Committee's discussions when that Committee rejected the proposal. One suggestion is that it is not necessary to assume that elections are all carried out on the same day, or should last only one day. A very few years ago in this country we were accustomed to elections which were spread over several weeks. If you got away from the necessity of polling all the constituencies in the Provinces on the same day, you would very much increase the possibility of dealing with an extended electorate. Obviously, you can move your polling officers and so forth from one constituency to another. That is one way in which the difficulty might be lessened.

There is a second way. The Government have shown themselves fond of the method of requiring a voter to apply for his vote, in the case of women. On a later Amendment, I shall object strongly to that method being applied specially to women. Suppose that it were applied as a method of reducing the difficulty of a very much enlarged electorate all over India, I suggest that there might be a good deal to be said for it. I have never been able to see why what has proved possible and workable in Ceylon, with adult suffrage coupled with the necessity that the voter shall apply for his or her vote, should be impossible in India. The proposal here is more limited than that. It is that what would be practically adult suffrage should be confined to the urban areas. If it be confined to the urban areas where polling arrangements are much less difficult than in the rural areas, and if it were coupled with the requirement of application, is it not likely that it might prove as practicable as in the case of Ceylon? I have never seen those points fully dealt with by those who oppose adult franchise.

The second point was as to fairness. It is a curiously fallacious argument that this proposal involves any upset of the balance between urban and rural districts. I should be the first to be against it if I thought it did. Is it really maintained that an injustice is being done to a voter in a rural district because the number of the voters in an urban constituency is increased? I should have thought that, if anything, you were doing an injustice to the residents in the urban district. It is better to be one voter among 50,000 than one voter among 100,000. A rural voter belonging to a smaller constituency has a slightly greater degree of power than the urban voter who belongs to a larger constituency. It seems a wholly different and fallacious use of the idea of balance between urban and rural areas, which depends surely upon the number of members which the rural and urban districts respectively can elect, and not upon the number of voters behind each member. As for the argument of the Under-Secretary about the greater experience of the urban voter: that, I assume, is why the proposal is to be limited to the urban voter. There are greater administrative difficulties where there are inexperienced voters. The experiment of adult suffrage can be more reasonably begun in towns where the means of political education by wireless, Press and public meeting are very much greater, and where it is more possible to educate a larger electorate. The two arguments used against the Amendment are not, I suggest, nearly as convincing as those which the Under-Secretary employed against the previous Amendment.

Mr. Isaac Foot on this matter, as on many others, proved a doubting Thomas. He had the candour to admit that "the case which has been put forward by the Under-Secretary has been very largely met by the contentions of the Opposition", but he was not sure that the administrative difficulties would not be too great. He said, "I find it extremely difficult to cast a vote against adult suffrage if it be feasible... On general grounds I must support the Amendment unless the Under-Secretary can be stronger on the point of administrative difficulty." He asked Mr. Butler to tell the Committee point blank whether the Government regarded the proposal as wholly impracticable. For he said, "I do not want to be a party to such a headlong advance as would break down the machine." Mr. Butler thereupon addressed himself to Mr. Foot's inquiry and replied that all the local Governments in India had counselled against the adoption of urban adult franchise, because they were of the opinion that it would place "an impossible burden" upon the administration. Mr. Foot consequently voted against the Amendment. But Major Milner challenged Mr. Butler's statement. "The Franchise Committee," he remarked, "do not say anywhere in clearly expressed terms that it is administratively impracticable, nor do the local Governments or the Under-Secretary." He pointed out further that Messrs. Tambe, Chintamani and Bakhale as members of the Indian Franchise Committee recommended the adoption of adult franchise in cities with a population of 100,000 or more (of which there are some 30 in India), and that the U. P. Franchise Committee, of which Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru was a member, recommended that the proposal should be introduced in all cities with a population of 50,000 or more. Compared to these proposals, the Amendment of Major Attlee was a very modest one, and he said, "A commencement in the larger capital cities can be carried out without undue difficulties." The amendment, as might be expected, was defeated.

SPARKS FROM THE COMMONS' ANVIL.

3rd May to 15th May.

WIVES AND WIDOWS.

MAJOR ATTLEE moved an amendment which sought to give the vote to the wife of a qualified elector or to the widow of a man who at the time of his death was possessed of qualifications which would have entitled him to be included in the electoral roll. He said, in moving it, "We want to see a wide extension of the franchise. We have been beaten on over endeavours to extend it (for men), and we return to the fight on the subject of women. Mr. Butler's objections were again the same. "It is a proposal," he said, "to add at one blow the largest number of women as suggested in these debates (in the case of Madras this would add 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 women to the roll), and in view of what I have already said about the strain on the administrative

machinery, it will be quite impossible to add such large numbers." Mr. Foot put forward another difficulty. The result of carrying out the proposal would be, he said, "that we should be enfranchising widows and wives, but the unmarried would have no vote unless she came in under one of the Clauses applying to the rest of the electorate."

Miss Rathbone then moved an amendment the object of which was "to include among the women who are to vote in respect of the husband's qualification not only those who are qualified in respect of husband's property but also the wives of those who are enfranchised by the educational qualification." "We want as far as possible," she said, "not to lay stress upon the possession of property, but, if you are to have any consideration of quality as against

quantity, it is a good thing to enfranchise the wives of men who have some education. The wife of a literate man is likely to have some sort of education." Another amendment sought to enfranchise women who were the wives of men occupying houses of which the rental value was Rs. 10 instead of Rs. 60 as proposed in the Bill. The Under-Secretary opposed these amendments on the same grounds, but he also argued that there was no reason in logic to enfranchise wives of men who are qualified to vote by their literary qualification as there would be in respect of those who are qualified by the possession of property, an argument which was very hotly contested by women members and members of the Labour Party.

THE APPLICATION CONDITION.

MR. COOKS then moved for the removal of the necessity for application in the case of women in the provinces of Madras, Bombay, the rural districts of the U. P., the Punjab, Assam and Sind, where it is retained in the Bill. Under the Government's proposal the total number of women qualified to vote would be a little over 6,000,000, but of course there will be a certain amount of wastage due to the application requirement. Mr. Butler airily declared: "We do not envisage that the total will be very much reduced by wastage on application." When pressed on this point he had to change his position somewhat, and he had no answer to the difficulties pointed out by Miss Rathbone on the subject. "It is not at all unlikely," she said, "that the 4,000,000 women voters (who will be qualified by wifehood) will be cut down by half by the application condition. I have asked people of experience as to what is likely to be the effect. One said that not one woman in five would apply, another that it would be a minority who would apply. This application provision is bound to cut down the proportion of women electors enormously. If the difficulties of removing this condition are insuperable, why did the Under-Secretary resist every previous effort to increase the number? If the Government are obliged to retain this condition, surely it would be the fairer thing to bulk out the number in some other way." As for the possibility of removing the condition in future it is provided in the Bill that, even before the ten year limit, which governs franchise conditions in general, the provincial legislatures may pass a resolution in favour of removing the requirement and submit the resolution to His Majesty's Government. It is also possible for His Majesty's Government under the Bill to make this change by Order-in-Council on its own initiative. But, as Miss Rathbone pointed out, there is no certainty that the change will be effected.

The Government in this matter left the question to be decided by the Provincial Governments, and the Provincial Governments arrived at different conclusions without reference to any uniform policy. The Government seems to have accepted these conclusions because it thought that, in provinces where the test is required, other steps have been taken to increase the woman's vote. In Madras and Bombay

the literacy test has been accepted for women and the Government argues that in these two provinces a very substantial proportion of women electors has been obtained under the educational qualification. But where the literacy test was not accepted the application test is dispensed with. For instance, Mr. Butler said, "In Bengal we managed to get the application provision dispensed with, but we did not there get quite so many concessions in the case of the educational qualification, so that in one province we gained something on the roundabouts and we lose it elsewhere on the swings. The Government's contention is that it is impossible to secure both the literacy concession and the concession of the removal of the condition as regards application for registration; it would impose too heavy a burden on the Provincial Governments to put women on the role and then poll them. At any rate no action could be taken in this matter against the wishes of the Provincial Governments." But Mr. Butler was prepared to concede that the application, where it is required, need not be made in person, but can be sent by post and that it can be made by the husband on behalf of his wife. But beyond this the Government was not prepared to go. Sir Stafford Cripps showed how inconsistent the Government's position was. He said,

The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Butler) cannot have it both ways. He cannot say that his express objective is to get 6,000,000 women to vote but that his real objective is to get only 3,000,000 women to vote. If his express objective is 6,000,000, he must not put fences in his own way, making it difficult to arrive at the end of the course and possibly involving the risk of a fall. I am sure that if the hon. Gentleman thinks over the matter again, he must say—as I know he will say—that his desire is that everyone of these 6,000,000 women should vote on the first possible occasion. If that be his desire, then he must logically add that he does not propose willingly to put any obstacle in the way of achieving that end.

The case made out for the removal of the application provision was so strong that even Mr. Isaac Foot found it difficult to support the Government. He said: of the 6,000,000 women who could be enfranchised:

it seems very clear, from what has been said by the Under-Secretary, that there cannot be anything like 6,000,000 women voting. If the social difficulties with regard to registration are so strong, 6,000,000 is not merely an outside figure but an impossible figure in the conditions which the hon. Gentleman has explained, and the very arguments he has used to show how serious it would be to force these conditions upon the Punjab and elsewhere indicate what a substantial deduction we must make from the figure of 6,000,000. I am bound to say I regard with apprehension starting upon this immense experiment if we have not an adequate representation of women in the working out of these schemes. I think it will depend very largely upon the interest of the Provincial Governments that will have to bring home to the electors in India the rights of the women. If you have a Provincial Government that is reactionary, and does not take the steps essential to bring home to the electors their rights, what this House has done in securing even this measure of votes for women may be reduced to a dead letter. You may have districts where very few women will be voting at all, because there is no one to acquaint them with their rights, and bring home the advantages to which they are entitled. I hope that it may

yet be possible on the Report stage to enlarge in some direction or other the 6,000,000 votes we have already in contemplation, because I am sure that there will have to be a very much bigger effort than some of us think.

COMPOSITION OF UPPER CHAMBERS.

MR. DAVID GRENFELL moved an amendment that ten seats each be allotted in the Council of State for women, the scheduled castes and labour. In supporting this amendment Mr. Cocks pointed out that, as a result of the proposed change from direct to indirect election to the Legislative Assembly and the consequent decision to set up the Council of State to be elected by the Upper Chambers in the provinces, the three classes mentioned in the amendment had been "put under a great grievance." Under the old proposals, he pointed out that the scheduled or depressed classes would have had at least eight members in the Council of State, and if labour had thrown in its votes with these classes the eight seats would have been brought up to thirteen, and if women had combined their votes with labour and the depressed classes the three classes together would have obtained between them about fifteen seats. But under the changed proposal they would have hardly any chance of getting any seat. Only in Bengal they could possibly get one seat. This arrangement, Mr. Cocks said, was very unjust to the three classes mentioned and that it was necessary not only to restore to them the fifteen seats which they would have won under the old proposals but to reserve for them thirty as was proposed in the amendment.

Mr. Butler met the Labour party half way by agreeing to reserve one seat each for women in the six provinces of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U. P., the Punjab and Behar. The method of electing the women's representatives would, he said, be something like this: "One seat should be reserved for them (in each province), the method of reservation being that if no woman was elected under proportional representation the woman candidate with the highest number of first preferences shall be declared elected, and the otherwise successful candidate of the same community with the lowest number of first preferences should be eliminated." This was hailed by women members as a "very real and substantial concession."

But with respect to the other two classes the Under-Secretary was uncompromising. He argued that the depressed classes were likely to get four seats by election in the Council of State, and this number might even go up to six if the Governors liberally used their power of nomination in favour of the depressed classes in the Upper Chambers of the provinces. In addition to this the Governor-General possessed the power of nominating members of the depressed classes to the Council of State, and he thought that the total number of the depressed class representatives that would come into the Council of State by the door of election and nomination would be a fair proportion of the total number of the representatives. As for the representation of labour he pointed out that it had been decided to give no representation to special interests in the Upper House, whether in the provinces or at the centre. The

representative of commerce in the Upper House would hereafter sit in the Lower instead of the Upper House. Similarly Labour would get whatever special representation it was entitled to in the Lower House. They were given nine seats in the House of Assembly and they would have their share of nominated seats. Since women would now be returned by election the pressure on the Governor-General's nominations would thereby be somewhat relieved and Labour would get a better chance of being represented in the nominations. He held that this was a fair way of allocating seats to these three classes in the Central Legislature. The argument that there being no seats given to special interests including Commerce, Industry and Manufacture, Labour could be given no representation was effectively answered by Labour members. Major Milner, for instance, said, "Quite obviously those special interests (industry and Commerce) will already be amply represented in the Upper Chambers both federally and provincially. Therefore I suggest to the Under-Secretary there is very little validity in that argument." Nor was Mr. Rhys Davies prepared to admit that no special representation of interests was allowed in the Council of State. Princes, he said, were being admitted into the Council of State and that was "a very substantial interest." The amendment was defeated by 257 votes to 50.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION.

COLONEL WEDGWOOD then moved that the principle of communal representation be not followed in elections to the Council of State. Under the proposals of the Bill members of the Upper Chambers in the provinces were to be elected on the basis of communal representation, Mahommedans casting their votes only for Mahommedans. Colonel Wedgwood observed that the principle of communal representation, vicious in itself, was wholly unnecessary in this particular case, and that to this limited extent at least the system of proportional representation could be introduced. "If we really do want," he said, "to break down these electoral barriers, we might allow the Upper Chambers of the provinces to constitute themselves a general electoral body who are electing a representative to the Council of State, rather than be compelled to divide themselves into their different castes and communities and to elect people on the strength of their communal view rather than as representatives of the provinces as a whole." Mr. Butler contended that this was not quite a formal motion as it was made out to be. The Government had agreed to the Muslim demand to secure one-third of the seats in the Federal Upper Chamber to the Mahommedans. And this promise could be carried out only by adopting communal representation. He remarked, "The pure and simple operation of proportional representation does not result in the Muslims securing one-third of the British India seats. It does very nearly, but it is in order to make it perfectly certain and to implement our promise made to the Muslims, that we have had to insert this complicated piece of mechanism, which:

refers to eight seats. The object is slightly to supplement the number of seats which the Moslems would get if they used their votes properly in proportional representation. They need eight extra seats in order to ensure them of one-third and it is to this extent that we have modified the pure operation of proportional representation, because without it the claims of the Moslems which we have always promised to meet would not be met." Colonel Wedgwood did not admit that the Moslems would not get their quota of representation by adopting proportional representation. "Under proportional representation" he said, "they will get exactly the same number of representatives as under this scheme, but under proportional representation, the people elected would be responsible to the whole of the Upper Chambers in the various provinces instead of being responsible to a narrow caste-selected body. Every instinct of an Englishman should urge us to bring about that form of representation, which secures the widest responsibility instead of narrow responsibility."

SPECIAL INTERESTS IN THE ASSEMBLY.

THE Bill provides for the representation of various communities as well as of special interests like commerce and industry, landholders and labour. Mr. Rhye Davies moved for the deletion of the provisions with regard to the representation of commerce and industry and landholders. Major Attlee pointed out that the Statutory Commission had agreed that there was no case for representation of landholders. They were perfectly certain to be fully represented in the Assembly in virtue of their immense wealth and the influence they could bring to bear on their tenants, and there was no justification therefore for any special provision being made in this regard. "There may be a case," Mr. Attlee said, "for commerce and industry. They are concerned with regard to the matters that are discussed at the Centre, but does any one believe that, as the matters at the Centre so largely deal with trade and finance, the big business interests of Bombay and Calcutta and the U. P. will not manage to get their members elected? Of course they will. They will have plenty of power to get representatives anywhere... Wealth, privilege and land in any assembly will always manage to get representation by the mere fact of its economic power and the people you have to protect here are people such as women, the depressed classes and the wage-earners. The wage-earners, while they get a certain representation in the towns, are very largely unrepresented altogether as regards rural labourers, and no one will deny that the Centre as proposed is going to be overwhelmed by the representatives of wealth and privilege."

INDIRECT ELECTION.

IT should be noted that Mr. Isaac Foot felt compelled to vote against the whole of the First Schedule which makes provision for the composition of the Federal Legislature, and his chief ground of objection was that the change from direct to indirect

election had reacted very unfavourably upon the representation of the weaker classes. He said:

A great deal of the criticism he (Mr. Herbert Williams) made today would never have been made if the Government had stood by its policy—the policy contained in the White Paper. If that had been done, this fantastic construction of the Council of State would never have been necessary. I quite agree that there are no words in our language that can describe the constituency we have set up for the constitution of the Council of State. The Council of State as at first intended was to have been at one remove representative of the people. They would have been at one remove in touch with the electorate of between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 in India. As a result of establishing indirect voting instead of direct voting we have had to construct something that frightens the mind to look at, and in setting up a Council of State that is elected by the Upper Chambers in the Provinces, themselves elected upon the most narrow franchise and themselves representatives of the most entrenched vested interests, a great disservice has been done to this Measure.

I have great sympathy with the Under-Secretary in having to pilot through this Bill, and also with the Secretary of State, who in this matter was overborne in the end by the strong claims of those who stood for the indirect vote. In giving way on that occasion they did an immense disservice to their own cause, and maimed their own Measure, and nothing has manifested that more than the discussion on this Schedule to-day. If this Schedule comes to the vote I shall not go to the Lobby in its support, because it contains the results of what, I think, was a disastrous decision. It was a decision against those who were best qualified to advise. I deplored it at the time and said so in the Joint Select Committee. I then said that it was a disaster, and we showed that we thought it was a disaster. What has been said from the other side of the Committee today upon some fantastic parts of Schedule No. 1 only reinforces the argument.

WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN THE PROVINCES.

MISS RATHBONE moved an amendment asking for an increase in the number of reserved seats allotted to women in the lower chambers of the provincial legislature from 5 to 7 in Bengal, from 1 to 3 in Assam and from nil to 2 in N. W. F. Province. The injustice done to Bengal in this matter is particularly glaring. Bengal is the largest province in India, and yet under the scheme of the Bill only 5 seats are proposed to be reserved for women in an assembly of 250, that is two per cent. In Bombay and in Madras larger percentages are granted. Bengal is not only the province in which there is no lack of competent women, but it is also a province where women's activities as legislators are particularly needed. Miss Rathbone said:

Students of social statistics in India will recognize that nearly every evil that not only affects the conditions of women in India but cuts at the vitality of the whole race, is to be found at its worst, or nearly so, in Bengal... If you study the statistics of child marriage, of purdah, maternal mortality, which is closely associated with child marriage and purdah, and of tuberculosis which claims among its victims five girls between the ages of fifteen and twenty for every one boy, according to the statistics of the Health Officer, you will find that in every one of those cases Bengal is at the head of the unhappy list, and in prostitution and the alleged corruption of the police in dealing with prostitution. When I was

in Bengal, in Calcutta, for a short visit three years ago, I was told by an experienced social worker that there were 10,000 prostitutes under the age of twenty-five in Calcutta alone. All these surely are reasons why women should be given better representation, so that they may tackle problems that so closely affect the lives of women. Yet for some reason which I have never been able to understand the Government of Bengal always seems more reluctant than almost any Government in any other province in India to do justice by women. It seems as though they could not help the women and they were not willing to allow the women to help themselves.

The proposed increase from one to three women representatives in the Assam Assembly consisting of 108 members was justified by Miss Rathbone on the ground that there is a large proportion of women workers in that province. "In the tea gardens alone," she said, "according to the report of an official committee, there are nearly 300,000 women workers, or nearly as many women as men. Where there are women workers, there women's problems arise, and it is very desirable that those problems should be dealt with specially by representatives of their own sex." Miss Rathbone took the precaution to suggest that the communal balance need not be upset by the increase in women's representation that she was urging. Of the two additional seats that she proposed for Bengal one was to be a general seat and one a Mahommedan seat. Mr. Butler, however, would not agree that the allocation of seats for Bengal should be increased. "I am afraid," he said, "that the opinion there (in Bengal) about women entering the legislatures is not universally friendly. I do not want to stress this aspect of affairs, but it is particularly so, I think, in the case of the Mahommedan community. They feel that to enlarge unduly the number of seats for women would be inadvisable at the present moment."

SEATS FOR THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

THE Poona Pact increased the number of seats allocated to the depressed classes in Bengal from 10 to 30. Mr. Lennox-Boyd moved an amendment of which the object was to restore to Bengal the 30 seats originally allotted to the depressed classes in that province. He, Sir Reginald Craddock, Sir Henry Page-croft and others who supported the amendment are people who, as Sir Reginald observed, always "stick up for the Moslems." Still the Poona Pact arrangement, they all thought, was unjust to the Hindus. If the seats in the Bengal Council were allotted in proportions approximating to the relative strength of the two communities in Bengal, Mr. Lennox-Boyd pointed out, the Hindus would have ten seats more and the Moslems ten seats less, and the injustice thus perpetrated would be very much aggravated. If out of the 78 seats assigned to the Hindus a minimum of 30 was assigned to the depressed classes. In order to appreciate the full extent of the wrong done in this matter Sir Reginald Craddock pointed to the fact that the so-called depressed classes in Bengal were very much more advanced than the ordinary run of the more lowly depressed, and that they had even under the present system secured territorial seats by

reason of their influence and of a majority they had within certain areas. The result of delivering such a serious blow against the Hindus in the "tempestuous" province of Bengal would only be, the die-hard Conservatives observed, to range against the Government an animosity which might be exceedingly dangerous and to give the anarchist and terrorist movement something under the shelter of which they might rally more men to their nefarious designs.

The Government's defence was that if the depressed classes were to be deprived of 20 seats which were assigned to them under the Poona Pact in Bengal they would have to be made up in some other provinces. But such an arrangement would have to be arrived at by the communities amongst themselves; it could not be forced upon them by the Government. This amendment was defeated by 163 to 30 votes.

WOMEN'S SEATS IN THE PROVINCES.

THE Bill does not reserve any seats for women in the Upper Houses of the Provincial Legislatures. Miss Rathbone proposed that 13 seats be earmarked for women out of 249 seats assigned to the Provincial Councils in the five provinces of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U. P. and Bihar. The Government having already agreed to reserve 6 seats for women in the Council of State she saw no reason why a similar concession should not be shown to them in the provinces. Places must be found for women, Miss Rathbone urged, by election and not by nomination. Nominated women were apt to act "simply as a tame official bloc." "That is not the kind of woman," Miss Rathbone said, "that we want on these councils, where the women will necessarily have an uphill row to hoe. They must have courage to stand out against opposition and prejudice, and . . . in India particularly there are grave reasons why we should have women dealing with women's problems and why the women who do so should be women of courage, of personality and of initiative, with the strength to stand out, even when they are fighting against political or religious prejudice to say their say and to press their case; and that is not the type of woman that is usually selected in India or elsewhere by the process of leaving it to the big people at the top to choose them." Mr. Butler wholly ignored the last argument and only showed how there was ample latitude under the Bill for an adequate number of women to be nominated in the provincial councils. The Government agreed, he said, to reserve 6 seats for women in the Council of State by election because the Governor-General has only six seats which he can nominate out of 260. But in the provinces there was more scope for nomination. In Madras, for instance, the Governor can nominate 10 seats out of 56. This being so, there "is every likelihood, and indeed a certainty, that the Governor will nominate women on the Council of provinces." The objection that Miss Rathbone took to nomination by the Governor was thus left unanswered and it need hardly be said that the amendment was defeated.

Review.

INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS.

PROBLEMS OF PEACE. 8TH SERIES.

By GILBERT MURRAY & Others (Allen & Unwin.) 1933. 20cm. 291p. 8/6.

THESE series of lectures have now established for themselves a well-deserved reputation of being judicious source-books of information on current international affairs not only for the layman but for the expert as well. The lectures are delivered by leading international thinkers and practical men of affairs and, although in some cases they sound like mere tall talks in the best League-of-Nations manner, they are largely presentations of serious thinking on some of the gravest problems of international significance.

I.

Professor Gilbert Murray opens the series with a very comprehensive "Survey of Recent World Affairs." He typifies the general feeling of disillusionment which has followed the failure of the World Monetary and Economic Conference, the still more ghastly failure of the Disarmament Conference and the general collapse of public faith in the League of Nations consequent upon the Manchurian imbroglio. Professor Murray believes in the "enormous value of a sound parliamentary tradition," which he finds lacking in some of the dictator-ridden countries, but with a declaration that the world's troubles in the past few years have been "mere failures of civilisation," he still emerges with a new faith in the capabilities of the League. Professor Rappard takes a similar bird's-eye-view of international events. In doing so, he has given us at least one brilliant passage which we cannot resist the temptation of quoting at some length:

Guarantees for the protection of the fundamental rights of man, the abolition of arrest without trial and of imprisonment for debt, the suppression of slavery, the extension of the suffrage to all and thereby the subordination of the Government to the will of the people, parliamentary control of the budget, the recognition of the freedom of thought, of speech, of assembly and of the Press... such are some of the ideals for which our fathers... fought, bled and died. Such are some of the conquests of human dignity over barbarism, of knowledge over ignorance, of right over might, which they triumphantly achieved and which they proudly bequeathed to us... And such are some of the ideals which we, their children of the twentieth century, ... are disavowing, renouncing, abandoning... The State itself, once held to be the protector and the servant of the people, is in several countries being turned into a weapon for oppressing its own citizens and threatening its neighbours according to the capricious will of one or of a few self-appointed individuals... These individuals, whether they style themselves chiefs, leaders, or dictators, are all what free men of all times have combated as tyrants. They are today acclaimed as heroes by hundreds of thousands of European youths, welcomed as saviours by millions of European bourgeois, and accepted as inevitable by tens of millions of European senile cowards of all ages.

II.

Then there are two excellent discussions on the disarmament problem, one of which, by M. Rolin, entitled "The Manufacture of Arms and the Arms Traffic," tells the disgusting story of how world wars have been instigated by armament firms and how disarmament itself has found its worst enemy in their octopus-like organisation spread throughout the

world for bribing government officials, disseminating false reports and corrupting the agencies of the Press everywhere.

Territorial disputes occupy two lucid chapters. The Irish Delegate to Geneva, Mr. Lester, deals with the Sino-Japanese dispute from the point of view of the smaller States, which it may be recalled evinced a more than academic interest in the League discussions. He puts the matter in a nutshell when he pointedly remarks that "The Covenant cannot be disregarded in China or South Africa and remain a guarantee for the small States of Europe." Professor Hudson, in his lecture on "Recent Territorial Disputes," discusses minor disputes like the Chaco controversy, mainly from the formal viewpoint of the League's machinery for settlement. Sir John Simpson, in another chapter, gives a vivid pen-picture of modern China and her political and economic problems.

III.

The six remaining chapters are devoted to international economics. Professor Bonn of Berlin reaffirms his faith in the Gold Standard, which he somewhat naively describes as "more fool-proof than others," and controverts the currently accepted doctrine of price stability, on the ground that such stability would still leave room for relative price instability, which, by the way, appears to be a chronic bogey of continental economists. In a closely reasoned chapter on American monetary policy, Professor Graham defends, on the whole successfully, the attitude of the United States towards world economic questions in the London Conference. He is magnificently right when he says: "An essential phase of the American programme is the raising of commodity prices. Lip service has been given to this objective in every country. Except in the United States, however, no effective action has been taken to realise it." Mr. Martin's paper on "The Role of Public Works in the World Crisis" is another brilliant performance. We have nothing but agreement to offer for his conclusion that "altogether, the public works field is not one in which the statesmanship of the world has so far shown to advantage."

B. P. ADARKAR.

SHORT NOTICE.

RACE AND ECONOMICS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

By W. G. BALLINGER. [Day to Day Pamphlets No. 21.] (Hogarth Press.) 1934. 20cm. 67p. 1/6.

THE author of this interesting pamphlet worked for some time in the British Trade Union and Labour movements. He went out to South Africa in 1928 at the invitation of the Native Trade Union. He has remained there ever since. He has had, therefore, a better opportunity than many others of understanding the Labour position in South Africa. He describes the South African dilemma against its historical and international background and reveals with authoritative insight its full significance.

South Africa, according to the 1931 census, has a population of 1,828,000 Europeans. Non-Europeans were not counted on grounds of economy but, according to the census of 1921, they numbered 4,697,513 Bantu, 165,731 Asiatics (the Asiatic population to-day is about 200,000) and 545,48 mixed or coloured. The European has begun to look askance at the native labourer, because his occupation of the field of unskilled labour at a wage level on which "life is impossible to the white man" has shut the door in the face of the unskilled white worker and has created a problem in European poverty and "possible racial deterioration through unemployment." The author says that the contention about native inferiority

is not really true. The outstanding example of this is the famous Colour Bar Act of 1926 which excludes natives from skilled and semi-skilled occupation in the mines. The policy of differentiation between black and white finds its fullest expression in the field of politics and administration. One of the least defensible features of South African life is the neglect and starvation of native education. It is estimated that at the present time 1,100,000 native children are receiving no education whatsoever. For the 300,000 who are being educated, the sum of £ 2-3-6 per capita is spent by the State as against a sum of £ 25-13-0 per capita for the 384,000 European children for whom education is provided. Yet from every native male of eighteen years and over, the State collects a direct tax of at least £1 per annum,

although all other races are exempt from direct taxation until the age of twenty.

"Education and the removal of artificial barriers", says the author, "to economic advancement must result in the general rise in the standard of living of the native which in its turn must react to the benefit of the European."

There are a number of thinking people in the world to-day who are trying to save South Africa from the curse of racialism and the author is one of them. One gets the impression from this very illuminating booklet that so long as South Africa refuses to recognise the rights of its Negro population, there cannot be any appreciable change in the status of Indian residents there.

S. A. WAIZ.

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