

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### "An Honourable Settlement"

IN our leader on "India and Sanctions" we have referred to the sweeping concessions that the British and French Governments have offered to make to Italy. The latest version of these concessions that is available is as follows: "Italy will get the whole of the Tigre province with the exception of the city of Aksum, also Ogaden and Danakil country with sufficient land to support a million and a half colonists." Abyssinia would receive Assab if Italy be willing, or else Zeila. She would retain the Amharic provinces subject to international control through foreign counsellors, among whom would be included, of course, Italians.

MUSSOLINI has declared his immovable opposition to the cession either of Assab by Italy or of Zeila by Great Britain. He cannot stand Abyssinia, which is a landlocked country being given an outlet to the sea by any power. As for Haile Selassie, while he has shown willingness to cede Ogaden, has said that he would resist might and main any proposal which involves the giving up of even an inch of territory in the Tigre. We very much hope that he will find it possible to adhere to his former declaration and refuse this peace offer with the contempt it deserves.

"PERTINAX" has remarked what indeed is obvious to anyone who is familiar with the recent course of events, that these "Franco-British proposals greatly exceed what Sir Samuel Hoare was prepared to concede when he came to Paris" and thinks that

"there will be a stormy session at Geneva, for the Member States exposed to aggression will doubtless protest against the prize given to Italy despite Article 10 of the League Covenant." The States that will enter a protest against this raw deal will be the real champions of the League, and not Great Britain and France who, with all their show of strength in imposing sanctions upon Italy, are playing the latter's part and indirectly abetting aggression by trying to bring about a settlement which is not peaceful, and certainly not honourable.

### Harijan Satyagraha.

THE two sections of Harijans who want to renounce Hinduism and who want to retain it have between them placed caste Hindus in a dilemma. Dr. Ambedkar and his followers have for the last five or six years been asserting the right of Harijans to take part in the chariot procession to the Kalaram temple in Nasik. They have been offering satyagraha, but without success. Stung by disappointment, they ultimately resolved to secede from the Hindu religion altogether, with the result that they are being denounced all over the country.

THERE is another section, however, which thinks that Dr. Ambedkar's was a rash decision, which still has faith that the caste Hindus will admit Harijans into the temples and which therefore wishes to carry on, on thoroughly non-violent lines, the satyagraha campaign which Dr. Ambedkar in sheer disgust had bring to a close. Every time the campaign was started and conducted with any vigour, the Government, fearing disorder, prohibited the chariot procession. The prohibition order last issued expired on the 10th inst, and the question is whether caste Hindus will now allow those Harijans who wish to remain within the Hindu fold to join the procession without let or hindrance.

THIS section of Harijans is prepared to organise a satyagraha campaign if it becomes necessary, but their preparations have not advanced far enough for them to start the campaign immediately. The temple authorities seem to be anxious to take advantage of the unreadiness of these Harijans and to arrange for the procession within a few days of the expiry of the prohibition order. If this tactic succeeds then there will be no question of satyagraha. But if the procession is delayed, it will be a testing time for caste Hindus.

THEY get angry with those Harijans who, despairing of getting justice, will go out of the Hindu fold. Then surely it becomes their duty not to drive into desperate courses those who still have some amount of faith in the sense of justice of caste Hindus. The dyed-in-the-wool orthodox will not mind the secession of Dr. Ambedkar and those who

follow him. Nor will they relent in their opposition to the attempts made by the other section to get their right to temple entry acknowledged. They would not mind if all the Harijans quit Hinduism, provided they leave caste Hindus in the undisturbed exercise of religion as they understand it. But to others who would like Harijans to remain Hindus the proposed satyagraha campaign of the Rajbhoj section of Harijans is a challenge. If they oppose this attempt to secure for the Harijan community an equality of rights with other Hindu communities they have no right to cavil at Dr. Ambedkar.

THE Government has again prohibited the satyagraha campaign that Harijan leaders were planning and has relieved the orthodox from a situation which to them would otherwise have been extraordinarily embarrassing.

#### Better Remuneration for Anglo-Indians !

SIR HENRY GIDNEY, the champion of Anglo-Indians (new style), has apparently some critics to reckon with in India. They evidently do not quite relish his doings in England. He has therefore issued a statement to silence their criticism, in which he boasts not only of having secured amendments in Clause 242 of the Government of India Act which guarantees to his community the number and the class of posts they have held in the Postal and Telegraph services and in the Railway services, and their rates of salary, but also of having obtained more posts and better rates of salary than before. He fears that the Government of India is going back on these pledges in certain respects and he is preparing in London to provide evidence of this to those who can bring the Government of India to book. But his service to the community consists at present chiefly in obtaining an improvement in their emoluments.

THE outcome of his mission to England is thus described by Sir Henry himself: "His community had been given actually a greater number of appointments than before in the Posts and Telegraphs Department, and that on the Railways they held their original jobs while there was a prospect of more advantageous terms of remuneration for new entrants." The last point is very significant in view of the Secretary of State's declaration that the provisions of the Clause "cannot be held in any way to be a promise that special rates of pay will be provided at any time for particular communities." Evidently, the Secretary of State does not now think it wrong to differentiate in favour of Anglo-Indians on the ground apparently that what is an adequate wage for other communities is only a starvation wage for the heaven-born—or at any rate British-born from the father's side—Anglo-Indian community. And Sir Henry Gidney exclaims with much glee: "The (Government of India) Act is immediately operative in those respects. The Indian Assembly has no power to override them. Clause 242 (3) of the India Act is not merely of 'declaratory' value, as was so loosely described by the Secretary of State for India. It is more or less statutory and mandatory and both the Railway Board and the Governor-General *must* carry out the wishes of Parliament regarding the special and specific employment of Anglo-Indians in these three services."

SIR HENRY has no doubt done great service to his community, and his critics must be prejudiced not to see it. But may we say that he is a little mistaken in thinking that he has wrung these conces-

sions from an unwilling Government? The British Government would in any case have forced such concessions upon the community, partly as a tribute to the parentage of the community, but chiefly because it gives them a plausible excuse to put more restraints upon Indians. The British Government have as it were inserted a permanent announcement in the press: "Come all who can; ask for special privileges; they are yours for the asking."

#### Lahore Riots.

THE orgy of murder and madness that hung over the city of Lahore in the last week has now happily subsided and citizens have apparently resumed their normal duties. Lahore has been on the verge of a communal conflagration for the last many months and sporadic cases of murderous assaults often formed a deplorable feature of news from Lahore. The stray assaults and the economic boycott organised by the Moslems could not but culminate in a widespread outburst of rioting as ugly and shameful as was ever before witnessed by the unfortunate city. The huge procession of Sikhs and Hindus in connection with Guru Tej Bahadur's martyrdom day and its obstruction by the Moslems was the immediate cause of the trouble, but it was only the last straw on the camel's back. It is no use making fine distinctions regarding the proportion of blame to be placed at the doors of any particular community. Suffice it to say that these communal squabbles, far from being beneficial in any way to any community, are inimical in the highest degree to the national welfare. The Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims have after all to get along together. We congratulate the leaders of the warring communities upon their success in forming a joint committee of conciliation. We hope that through the efforts of this committee better counsels will prevail with the overzealous exponents of the so-called religious rights of all communities.

#### The Mission to Lepers.

THE report of the sixty-first year's work of the Mission to Lepers gives a fair idea about the excellent work carried on by the Mission's Indian Auxiliary. It contains statistics of Leper Homes for 1934 and particulars of contributions received by the Indian Auxiliary from 1st September, 1934, until 31st August, 1935. The Mission maintains thirty-seven stations all over India with over seven thousand lepers in them. The report also reveals the alarming fact that the number of lepers in India shows an increase of nearly 50 per cent. during the last ten years. The total number of persons suffering from leprosy in India is calculated to be nearly a million of whom probably at least 200,000, being infectious, are spreading the trouble to the next generation. How is this problem to be solved? The answer suggested by the Honorary Medical Adviser of the Indian Auxiliary is indeed very instructive. During the last year 842 leprosy cases were "arrested without deformity." If these could be trained in the "technique of isolation" and induced to work as missionaries when they return to their villages leprosy can be effectively checked; for it is very easy to prevent it. About eight lakhs of rupees had to be spent last year for the maintenance of the Mission's work in India. More than three lakhs and a half came from Government and Local Boards' grants, the rest being contributed by the public in India as well as from abroad. The Mission certainly deserves every help in their great enterprise of hope and faith and love.

## Articles.

### THE CONGRESS JUBILEE CELEBRATION.

#### A TRIBUTE.

AT Surat in the year 1907, the Congress session was broken up by a section of recalcitrant Congress delegates in the name of swadeshi, swaraj, national education and boycott, with the presidential election as the butt of their fierce attack and opposition. In the Convention that immediately followed the fracas, the late Surendra Nath Bannerji, in almost the first words that he uttered, wished well to the Congress organisation, exclaiming "Congress is dead, long live the Congress". One is reminded of this utterance of that veteran leader of Bengal, when one thinks of the Congress organisation to-day and the vicissitudes of fortune it has passed through between the years 1930 and 1932, and of its present plight of ineptitude in the matter of giving a right lead to the country. And yet, echoing the sentiment of Surendra Nath Bannerji, one wishes well by the Congress on the occasion of its jubilee celebration: Congress is dead, long live the Congress.

As a popular assembly and speaking for the largest number of people in India, the Congress to-day deserves as much recognition as it claimed in 1907. Even though one may differ from the Congress to-day more than in 1907, on the question of its policy and programme, the truth cannot be gainsaid that it is the only organisation in the country that has behind it the solid support of public opinion, as the voice of the nation that stands for political freedom and national unity. And when one reviews dispassionately the work that it has accomplished during fifty years of its existence, and recalls the galaxy of high talent and noble endeavour associated with it in that task, one cannot help blessing the institution and being proud of it, though one may not belong to the fold for the time being.

All differences must be forgotten, and all controversy hushed, while we think on this occasion of its services in the past. Fifty years of continued work and dedication for an individual or an institution is, in itself, no mean achievement. And when we recall that these have all been years of stress and storm, of scorn, indifference, misrepresentation succeeded by acquiescence, recognition, and well-won prestige and influence, with many a mile-stone on the way marking wise direction, clear advance, and sure awakening among the people, the matter becomes not one of mere rejoicing and applause, but of heart-felt gratitude to the Power that shapes the destiny of nations and guides our ends, rough-hew them as we will. We may forgive such an institution much that we may dislike or think as misguided activity. In the sum total of achievement to its credit, a temporary lapse or eclipse of good sense may well be ignored. And one must admit that, on the whole, the Congress has stood by the nation and the nation swears by the Congress as it does by no other political organisation

in the country. Let us only remember the names that have made the Congress great, and we shall be convinced that the Congress anchor holds even to-day as it did in the maelstrom following the Partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon. Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Mehta, Telang, Tyabji, G. Subramanya Aiyar, Gokhale, Bannerji, Bose, Tilak, Gandhi, Hume, Wedderburn and Cotton—these will ever remain names to conjure with, in the history of the Congress institution in India from 1885 to 1935. And of each and every one of them, without exception, it may be truly said that they have been patriots and publicists *sans peur et sans reproche*. And there have been lesser luminaries than these shining in the political firmament of India and owing allegiance to the Congress, who have worked for the political emancipation of India with equal zeal and loyalty with the great stalwarts we have mentioned. No other political institution can count so many of India's wisest and noblest sons in its ranks. Therefore, though the Congress stock may seem to-day to have fallen low, and the men at the helm may not know how to steer the ship that it may run into a safe haven, every patriotic and politically-minded Indian must needs pay his tribute to the Congress for work well done during the fifty years that it will soon put behind it.

Fortunately for us all, however, we can do so to-day with a clear conscience, inasmuch the Congress has definitely foresworn its policy of non-co-operation and stands by what its leader has called the parliamentary mentality which, he avers, has come to stay. This will mean, if the Congressmen of to-day will fully bear in mind the implications of "the new deal," that it will work along constitutional lines and the work will no longer be like ploughing the sands. The one condition of its success will be unity, co-operation and harmony between all political sections in the country for a common end. It was this trinity that Congress worshipped and served in its early years, at the very start of its political career in India. It worked for India and for Indians as a whole; it set up a united platform for agitation and awakening in the country; and it adopted a programme of work that would rally as many people under its banner as had the sincere good of the country at heart. It made much more of agreement than of differences; and it showed to the world that, in spite of differences, India could unite and speak with one voice on a common goal and adopt a common line of action. The Jubilee celebration should be utilised by the present leaders of the Congress to revive this old tradition and to make it possible for all to offer a united front to the accomplished legislation of the new reforms. Let the Congressmen of to-day remember and recall on this occasion the memorable words of Gokhale, that "we should not do our work in a narrow, exclusive, intolerant spirit which says—*whoever is not with us is against us*. Let us do it in the broader, more comprehensive, more catholic spirit which says—*whoever is not against us is with us*. Harmony, co-operation, union—by these alone we can achieve any real success in our present state." For then

alone, and not till then, can we hope to reach the goal, to enter the promised land, the vision of which inspired one of India's greatest patriots and wisest men to work and spend himself in the service of his country "with a buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirked duty, and with a love that overleapt all bounds." Men who started the Congress on its noble and fruitful career were, indeed, happy, for "they saw the promised land in distant vision"; those of them who lived long enough "to be permitted to work and clear the way on to it" were happier. Let those who come after them in direct lineage do nothing, by thought, word or deed, that will postpone the goal and prolong unnecessarily the happiest day in India's destiny, "when she treads upon the holy soil once more renovated, purified and

perfected, and with liberated manhood" to work for her in all fields of public life.

It is because the Congress has been a symbol to the whole of India of this vision and this hope, that her golden jubilee should be regarded as an occasion of universal rejoicing throughout the country. What Ranade foresaw and prophesied, what Gokhale worked for, let no other Indian either denounce or defile. For even though we fall, "we fall to use"; even though baffled, "we are baffled to fight better"; and even though we sleep, "we sleep to wake." Let us, therefore, be united; let us "strive and thrive"; and cry: "speed,—fight on and fare ever, there as here."

V. N. NAIK.

## INDIA AND SANCTIONS.

THE Government of India have brought the economic sanctions into force by an executive decree, but an announcement has now appeared that in the next session of the Central Legislature they will seek legislative sanction for the continuance of the measures they have already taken. An opportunity will thus be afforded to our legislators to voice popular opinion, though nothing will turn upon the views they will express, the Government having the power to set aside the legislature if it should vote against their measures. But what are the views that our legislators will express? They will be in a position of tremendous difficulty in voting upon the application of sanctions against Italy, for, as we have explained before, while they will sympathise deeply with the present lot of Abyssinia and bitterly resent Mussolini's attack on her, they will also feel at the same time that the leading countries to whose initiative the enforcement of sanctions is due are in fact trying to secure for Italy a peaceful settlement which, if it can be pulled off, would amount to Abyssinia's annexation *sans phrase*. We pointed out that it would be wrong to support sanctions without realising the grave danger in which even the attitude of the pro-sanctions League countries are placing Abyssinia.

We are glad to receive corroboration of our warning from a highly respected source. In the current number of the *New Republic* the paper says, in answer to those who urge the United States to give up its neutrality policy and to line up with Great Britain and France in imposing sanctions against the aggressor nation:

Let us suppose that Mr. Roosevelt, in the present Ethiopian crisis, were able to act as former Secretary of State Stimson and other advocates of collective action would like to have him act. Suppose he were able to move step by step with the League, and impose financial and economic sanctions upon Italy alone. Suppose furthermore, that when Mussolini surrendered under the weight of the League's and America's sanctions, the United States were invited to participate in the subsequent peace negotiations. The terms that would be imposed on Italy are presumably those contained in the report, two months ago, of the League's Committee of Five. They provided for the appointment of foreign advisers to Haile Selassie and the granting of large concessions. To many

observers they appeared to provide for a veiled mandate over Ethiopia, for the benefit chiefly of Italy and England. Although Haile Selassie accepted the Committee of Five's report, there is good reason to believe that he did so only to save his empire from conquest by Italy. The question that advocates of collective action must answer is whether, at a future peace conference, American representatives would be listened to if they objected to such terms. Would they not be told—as Mr. Wilson was told by Clemenceau—that America is a long way off, and that England, France and Italy must settle their clashing ambitions as seems best to them? In such a case, it is safe to predict that many Americans would wonder whether we had been supporting the Good Samaritan or the brigands. Justifiably, they would also wonder whether we had not largely failed in reducing the danger of a future general European war.

We cannot approve of the United States' neutrality. Not to stand by Ethiopians in this crisis is really for it to play the part of the Pharisee of the parable who looked the other way and passed by. She is in a position to play the part of the Good Samaritan. She can expose the inner motives of Great Britain and other imperialist countries in this affair and prevent an unjust settlement being forced upon Abyssinia. Russia is at present the only great Power which has protested against the Committee of Five's recommendations. If U. S. S. R. receives the whole-hearted support of U. S. A. at the peace conference when one will be held, it is impossible to believe that the rightly called "dirty deal" will go through.

But if even the United States feels impotent to make Great Britain and France change their policy, what can India do—India, which in this matter even more than in others is a vassal of Great Britain? Will she be at all invited to take part in the peace negotiations? If invited, will she be allowed to voice her own feelings? If allowed, will her voice count for anything? None of these questions it is possible to answer in the affirmative. If she supported the sanctions, she will have every reason to feel, though not the United States, that she was in fact supporting, not the Good Samaritan, but the brigands. We earnestly hope that our legislators will bear this aspect of the question in mind. On a superficial view of the matter it appears our plain and incapable

duty to join with others who are seemingly engaged in catching the burglar and meting out condign punishment to him. But when you have grounds to suspect that those who pose as constables are only entreating the offender not to break the house within the sight of the world but to enter the house by a secret passage which they know and point out to him that he may safely purloin all the goods, we are not sure that you will be too eager to join them.

There is one passage in the *New Republic's* article quoted above to which we would draw particular attention. A great point is made by British statesmen that the settlement which they are attempting to bring about will be effective only if it receives Ethiopian consent. Sir John Simon, speaking on behalf of the Foreign Secretary, observed in the House of Commons on the Adjournment motion on 24th October:

In a certain quarter this morning there were some very amazing statements published which alleged that His Majesty's Government had abandoned overnight their policy of whole-hearted co-operation with the League, and that we were already negotiating behind the back of the League with France and Italy a settlement of this Italo-Abyssinian dispute, which the League would then be asked to accept, and to which Ethiopia or Abyssinia—I do not know which may be the more correct expression—would be compelled to agree. That is to say, there appeared this morning, after the statements which were made in the House of Commons, the plain suggestion in certain quarters that there is some intrigue afoot between London, Rome and Paris to present the League with what is called a *fait accompli* which would be detrimental to the interests of one of the parties and inconsistent with the principles of the League itself.

I speak with the authority of the whole Government when I say that there is no truth in this wild exaggeration at all. From the very beginning of the dispute, as I know very well, from December of last year, the policy of His Majesty's Government has been directed, among other things, towards promoting, if they could, a settlement which would not only lie within the Covenant, but which would be acceptable to the two disputing parties. I trust that it is a perfectly right thing for us to try to do as the friends of peace endeavouring to promote international good will. The Franco-British suggestions, for example, which were made in Paris last August, were based upon that principle, and so was the plan which was submitted at Geneva to both parties by the Council Committee of Five. And to that policy His Majesty's Government adhere. We are neither going behind the back of the League, nor have we ever for one moment contemplated doing so, and equally, as I think the House and the country thoroughly understand, we have no intention of wavering in giving effect, as a member of a collective system, to our obligations under the Covenant. Who does not hope that there may be a speedy and satisfactory conclusion? The conclusion must be one within the framework of the League and accepted by the three parties involved—Italy, Abyssinia and the League itself.

The answer to this is given by the *New Republic*. If the Emperor of Abyssinia is faced with the loss of his whole territory he may agree to surrender part of it in order to retain the rest. If the only alternative to economic domination by Italy be political subjection, he may agree to the former as the lesser evil. But this consent will be given under duress and must not be accepted by the League. The League's present business is to stop aggression—or to try to stop aggression—without reference to the future settlement, and

having produced the conditions in which the Ethiopian Emperor can give a free consent, try to hammer out a just solution. It is wrong to suppose that Haile Selassie has in fact agreed to the report of the League's Committee of Five. He has agreed only to let it be the basis of discussion—which is quite a different thing, and he has possibly done even so much only to prove to the hilt Mussolini's unpardonable offence. But even if the Emperor did agree, the agreement is not one on which the League can proceed.

Fortunately for the purposes of this discussion, however, Sir Austen Chamberlain has for one moment thrown aside the diplomatic reserve and spoken out his mind on this question. On the 7th inst., in speaking on international affairs in the House of Commons, he "referred to the possibility of Abyssinia refusing a settlement which the League approved and urged that she should be informed that Britain would not continue her pressure on Italy indefinitely, but only until the League agreed that a satisfactory solution had been reached." It is true that Sir Austen is not in the Government, but nevertheless this opinion may be taken to reflect the mind of the Government. What then becomes of the repeated declaration of Sir Samuel Hoare that Great Britain will accept only a settlement that is acceptable to Italy, Abyssinia and the League? Sir Austen Chamberlain says plainly that if the consent of Italy and the League is forthcoming Abyssinia's consent will not be required. If what appears to Great Britain and to the League a satisfactory solution is not agreed to by Abyssinia, Great Britain will draw back from sanctions, collective security will vanish, and Abyssinia will be left to fight the aggressor by herself. Indeed, a settlement acceptable to the three parties mentioned by the Foreign Secretary is no more possible, as Major Attles remarked, than a settlement equally agreeable to the house-breaker, the house-holder and the Home Secretary. An arrangement acceptable to Italy and the League is easily possible, for Great Britain is the League at present, and Great Britain has already agreed to the carving up of Abyssinia, at least economically, but agreement of Abyssinia to such an arrangement must be forthcoming, and Sir Austen Chamberlain has said in plain terms that it is a formality that can easily be dispensed with.

Indeed, rumours are that Great Britain is offering far more sweeping concessions to Mussolini, and the *Times of India* warns the public against placing much hope in these negotiations only because it thinks Mussolini may not be placated by the concessions offered. Our Bombay contemporary has not a word of criticism to utter against the concessions themselves. Its only complaint is that they are not attractive enough to bribe the aggressor to be good in future. The Indian public ought to be thankful to Sir Austen Chamberlain for puncturing very effectively the elaborate pretence of British politicians that they are engaged in exploring all possible avenues of finding a mutually agreed solution. The people of India must have no truck with this sanctimonious humbug.

## AFTER INDIA, EGYPT.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE feels that he has laid the Indian political movement low. Now he has turned his attention to Egypt, and he seems intent upon pursuing towards Egypt the very same policy that he found so serviceable in the case of India. In his Guildhall speech on 9th November he said, referring to Egypt, "When we have been consulted we have advised against the re-enactment of the constitution of 1923," which he said was "unworkable."

To understand the significance of these words which have caused a flare-up in Egypt, we must go over the political history of the country for the last few months. The constitution of 1930 gives the Palace complete control of the government, and King Fuad has exercised a virtual dictatorship over Egyptian affairs ever since the constitution was inaugurated. It is the cherished ambition of all political parties in Egypt to get rid of this autocratic constitution and to return to the liberal constitution of 1923. Tewfik Nessim Pasha, although he is so opposed to the 1930 constitution that he felt impelled to give up the post of Chief of the Royal Cabinet that he had held before and has persistently refused several times to assume office under the constitution, accepted Premiership in November of last year on his own terms, hoping that thus he would be the better able to restore the constitution of 1923 on which all nationalist Egyptians have set their hearts. But he had to go slow. His immediate task was to clean the Augean stables and purify the administration. He had first to break the power of Ibrashi Pasha, Director of the Royal Estates, who not only so managed the estates as to make King Fuad, who was originally poor, a very rich man, but succeeded in getting important posts in the government filled by worthless and reactionary people. Nessim had to purge the administration of all this corruption, and there is no doubt that he has to a large extent overhauled the administrative system and introduced many reforms.

If Nessim consented to be Prime Minister under the hated constitution of 1930, he did so, as stated above, first to destroy that constitution and then to return to the earlier one of 1923. The destruction was compassed pretty quickly. He was appointed Premier on November 12, 1934, and only eighteen days afterwards, i. e. on November 30, he issued a decree abolishing the constitution of 1930 and dissolving Parliament. This measure was not resented at all by the people, but on the contrary heartily welcomed by them, because they took it as a forerunner of the restoration of the 1923 constitution. But for a whole year Nessim has been governing the country without a Parliament, and the people have grown restive. Everywhere the cry is raised: When are the elections going to be held and when is the 1923 constitution going to be put in force again? There is no question that Nessim himself desires this to take place as early as possible. If he were not genuinely keen on a return to constitutional government, it is inconceivable that Mustafa Nahas Pasha

and other leaders of the Wafd would have given him their support. Nessim is an Independent Liberal but of pro-Wafd sympathies, and everyone believes that he is keen not only on the restoration of the constitution of 1923 but on drafting a new one with a lower franchise. However, he is faced with opposition from the British Residency. The essence of Great Britain's declaration of 1922 consists in conferring powers of internal self-government on Egypt. The reservations mentioned in the declaration are, of course, highly distasteful to the Egyptians, and they will have to go sooner than British statesmen think it possible. But, properly interpreted, the declaration ought to leave the Government of Egypt free to carry on the administration without any interference from the British Government, but latterly the Residency is interfering in domestic affairs more and more actively. The British opposition to Egypt's adoption of the constitution of 1923 can easily be understood. If elections are held under it the Wafd, which it is calculated carries 90 per cent. of the population with it, is certain to sweep the board, and the British Government does not want to have to deal with a Wafd Ministry. "It is not unlikely," an American paper says, "that the Residency has been advised by the British Foreign office to 'keep Egypt quiet at all costs in view of international affairs,' which means, in British eyes, preventing the Wafd from assuming control, and the suspicion is strong that Nessim Pasha is delaying the reversion to constitutional government on account of the pressure exerted by the Residency. No one feels that he is the sort of man who will cling to office under conditions, however humiliating, but he has been biding his time for a great drive to be made for the restoration of the 1923 constitution against the bitter opposition of the British Government.

Sir Samuel Hoare chose a very unpropitious hour for throwing down the gage of battle to the Egyptian people. He made his unfortunate Guildhall speech on 9th November, and Egypt celebrates her National Day on 13th November, for it was on 13th November, 1918, that Saad Zaglul Pasha claimed independence for his country. It was inevitable that the British Foreign Secretary's denunciation of the constitution which is cherished by the Egyptian people as their immediate goal should lead to untoward incidents on the Independence Day. The strengthening of the British garrison in Egypt consequent upon the outbreak of the Abyssinian war had already made the Egyptian people conscious as never before of their complete dependence upon Britain and of the unreality of the national independence which they were supposed to enjoy. Even the internal self-government which they could have hoped for had been rendered nugatory by the increasing interference of the British Government in Egypt's domestic affairs. If, on top of this, Sir Samuel Hoare declares that the constitution of 1923 is unworkable and that it must not be brought into effect, the people of Egypt would naturally conclude that their independence

had been lost and that a return to constitutional government would be blocked. A riot broke out in Cairo, the students went out on strike, and the police had to fire on the mob. Even before the Independence Day arrived, the Wafd had met and decided to withdraw support from the Nessim Government and proclaimed non-co-operation with the British Government. Other parties are not behindhand in urging the immediate restoration of the constitution of 1923. Mohamed Mahamoud Pasha, a man to be reckoned with the most outside the Wafd, appears to be even more insistent than the leaders of other parties on this. The Egyptian people as a whole are chafing against the very serious limitations that the British Government have imposed upon their independence, and a very bitter political struggle seems likely within the next few months.

The resemblance to Indian conditions consists in Sir Samuel Hoare's suggestion that the Egyptian Government should "at the proper moment" enter on the task of drafting a constitution "acceptable to all elements in Egypt." He said it would perhaps be best to appoint a drafting committee "comprising the elements of all parties." He has had such a pleasant experience of the Indian Round Table Conference that he apparently thinks that in Egypt too, as was the case in India, one interest could be played off against another, that all kinds of stringent restrictions could be imposed upon Egyptians ostensibly to safeguard the interests of one section of the population or another, and that the resulting scheme, though it might be thoroughly unsatisfactory to everyone concerned, might be palmed off on the country as a mutually agreed solution. India has suffered terribly in the process. One can only wish that the Egyptians would be on their guard and defeat these tactics. India should serve to them as a warning and not as an example.

## Reviews.

### A PLAN FOR ECONOMIC PEACE.

**PLANNING FOR EMPLOYMENT: A PRELIMINARY STUDY.** By SOME MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. (Macmillan.) 20cm. 1935. 97p. 2/—

THIS brochure written by some fourteen supporters of the last National Government in England is extremely topical. Its best part consists in a plea for the closest co-operation between Government and industry for a common endeavour at a constant improvement of the standard of the people. Apart from the vagueness and impracticability of its objective such a proposal coming from the active back-benchers of the most dominant party in British politics is not without its significance. In two respects the booklet reveals the unmistakable impress of current political pressure. The provision of steady, adequate and remunerative employment to the workers is by far the most pressing economic and social problem of the day. Judging from the title of the book one would expect a serious attempt at finding a solution, but actually the book does no more than urge the need for a legislative measure enabling industry to bring about rationalisation under centralised control. For the rest the authors

confine themselves to an enumeration of the principal social, economic and political reforms that have been advocated by several, and sometimes mutually antagonistic, parties during recent years. In fact the general tone of the book is more in line with the spirit of compromise associated with Liberalism than with the cocksureness which characterises many of the active members of the Tory party.

This brings us to the second item of topical interest which the reader may meet with in this interesting book. Socialism having now finally assumed the role of a rival government in British party politics, the authors naturally, though not logically, exclude that path to a solution of the pressing problems of the nation. On the other hand, for reasons not so very clear, they declare themselves to be opposed to all forms of fascism. Those who have the insight and vision to see the constitutional implications of a National Government know full well that it is only the next door neighbour to fascism. Single party government with hardly any opposition in Parliament breeds those very conditions of intolerance and high-handedness which are the damning defects of dictatorship. Both in politics and economics there is reason to believe that the British Tory party is slowly yet certainly feeling its way to party dictatorship and corporate state organisation.

At any rate the younger element in the party has plans which are bound, if adopted, to lead at no distant date to the annihilation of the personal freedom of a large body of small scale workers. With the ostensible objective of better regulating supply to meet effective demand it is proposed in effect to syndicate industry at the instance of a majority of persons employed in that industry, or if need be at the initiative of the state itself. What would constitute a majority—numbers, capital or productive resources—is not stated, but there can be hardly any doubt that once the concentration of capitalistic interests under the patronage of the state has commenced all small scale and individualistic businesses will be at a discount. Co-operation between organised capitalism and single party government of the Right would be a most propitious combination for the rise of British fascism. British public opinion even of the Rightist parties would not at this stage tolerate such a prospect. But as with protectionism so with National Socialism a constant pressure exercised by the active sections and assisted by a plausible scheme of piecemeal reorganisation is not unlikely to succeed in its objective.

The book is refreshing in its recognition of the positive responsibilities of the state and of the limitations in the path of several extreme remedies. But a strong government freed from effective opposition in Parliament and working with the large scale organisations of business interests can hardly be held in check by an advisory Economic Parliament which has been suggested. The book is a first attempt by non-expert politicians to devise remedies for ending economic conflicts and maladjustments and deserves to be read by all who are interested in studying contemporary social and economic thought.

D. G. KARVE.

### ART AND MORALITY.

**ART AND MORALITY AND OTHER ESSAYS.** By FIROZE COWASJI DAVAR. (Taraporevala.) 1935. 20cm. 520p. Rs. 5.

YEARS ago I had the honour of attending the lectures of Mr. F. C. Davar, then acting Professor of English at the Deccan College, and I still remember the impression the learned lecturer made on us, the students of the College, with his deep and profound scholar-

ship. It was, therefore, with a reverent feeling that I turned to the volume of essays—"Art and Morality and Other Essays"; and I am glad to say that my impression of his learning and scholarship is redoubled by a perusal of the book. I also feel equally certain that any unprejudiced reader of the book too will carry the same impression. Let him turn, for instance, to almost any essay, say, Some Interesting Forms of Divination, or Literary Imposture, or the Episodes kindred to that of Rostum and Sohrab in Epic Literature. What a wealth of illustrations and comparative reading! How many of the College Professors teaching Sohrab and Rostum to their College classes master such a wealth of parallels? I was pleasantly surprised when the learned author remarked: "The slaughter of Sohrab is to the Persian what the fall of Abhimanyu in the battle of Kurukshetra is to the Hindu, the martyrdom of Imam Hussein at the battle of Karbala to the Muslim, and the sufferings and the crucifixion of Christ to the Christian, especially as represented in the Passion play at Oberammergau" (p. 407). This is no show of comparative learning, but the very appropriate parallels which one cannot help observing, in the hope of striking the correct chord of the reader, whatever his knowledge may be. Similarly, the essay, Methods and Materials of Ancient Literature, illustrates the accurate scholarship and patient labour in collecting details. By the way, on reading the essay, I feel that the title is a misnomer. The essay properly deals not with the methods and materials of Ancient Literature, but only with the methods and materials of writing in ancient times, or with the ancient modes of preserving literature; or, as the author writes on p. 75, with the evolution of the methods of writing. On the whole, one carries an unforgettable impression of the wide scholarship of the author; and Prof. A. R. Wadia is entirely in the right when he remarks that Mr. Davar's book is a fair answer to those who complain that the interests of the Indian graduates (and Professors) are circumscribed. Here, on the contrary, we have God's plenty. There is such a variety of topics—mostly, however, of academic interest in the best sense of the term—that few readers will be quite at home in reading all the essays. It would have been, from that point of view, better as a business proposition if the book were published in two volumes and had a more attractive title. Not that I complain about the present title or grudge the meed of praise to the title essay. It is certainly one of the most important in the book, and is characteristic in its own way. It examines exhaustively the doctrine of Art for Art's sake. The conclusion of the essay is also just and moderate: Art can be non-moral, but it cannot be immoral, without perversion; and the greatest art is that in which the artist becomes a devotee seeing nothing but the Whole, the True, the Beautiful, and perfectly conscious of their identity.

Perhaps one feels that in such an exhaustive treatment of the subject, some emphasis ought to have been laid on the reader and his mentality; for, in all such discussions of art and morality, the factor of the reader seems to be ignored. In this connection, let me quote a fine passage relevant to this important topic. "A work of art, whether painting or statue or novel, should be judged by artistically trained minds. Only such minds can determine the character of the work. Artistic discipline alone, as sculptors find it necessary to remind us, can teach us to distinguish the nude from the naked, the undraped from the undressed. Books are meant, observes Sir Walter Raleigh, to be read by those who can understand them; their possible effect on those who cannot is a matter of medical rather than of literary interest."

The marks of scholarship are everywhere in evidence in the highly allusive style of the author. For

instance, on the very first page, we read: "But, sure enough, even then, some literary Jamshid, or Manu, some Noah or Dencalion-Pyrha will still survive to repopulate our bursting bookstalls with ever-growing volumes thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks in Vallombrosa"; or, for another instance, let us turn to p. vii: "What else can a teacher do but invest his fleeting thoughts in a more enduring form and give to airy nothings the local habitation and the name of a book?" This last sentence is his justification for publishing his book; but we feel that a book like this needs no apology; for its scholarship is its justification. Let us always respect the work of patient and disinterested scholarship and encourage it if ever it needs such encouragement. I strongly recommend the book to all lovers of literature and particularly to students of comparative literature, for they are its proper connoisseurs.

B. D. SATTIGIRI.

### REFORMS (?) IN HYDERABAD.

**A HISTORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN HYDERABAD STATE.** By M. FATHULLA KHAN. (New Hyderabad Press, Secunderabad.) 1935. 21cm. 160p. Rs. 3.

THIS narrative begins with Nizam-ul-Mulk, the founder of the Asaf Jahi dynasty. During his time there was internecine trouble, due to which there was not much of administrative reform in the State. Sir Salar Jung the First, who was at the helm from 1853 to 1883, was the first to introduce some reforms in Hyderabad. His lead was followed by Nawab Mahboob Ali Padshah the late Nizam. During his reign seeds of constitutional government were sown and a Cabinet Council for making laws established in 1899. The principle was admitted, although to a very small extent, that the subjects should have a hand in the administration of the State. The reforms associated with the name of the present Nizam naturally find exhaustive treatment in this book. It was during his regime that the present Executive Council was created; the foundation of the Osmania University laid; and the bifurcation of the judiciary from the executive brought about.

The Silver Jubilee of His Exalted Highness is to be celebrated this year and naturally a review of the reforms in the State during the last quarter of a century is opportune. The book however gives an incorrect idea about the administration of Hyderabad. Unfortunately it does not faithfully present all the facts relating to the administration. It is stated at page 110 that "in matters of administration a definite advance in keeping with the progressive growth of political thought and conception has been made." This is far from the truth. The Legislative Council Act was passed in 1900. According to it the Council consists of the President, Vice-President, 11 officials, 3 of whom are ex-officio members, 6 non-officials, two of whom are elected by the Jahagirdars, two by the members of the Bar and two nominated by the President from the Paigas and the general public. Two extraordinary members are also appointed from among persons whose special knowledge is likely to help the deliberations of the Council. Thus it would be seen that only four out of the 21 members of the Council are elected. The powers entrusted to this officialised body are very meagre. It is not allowed even to discuss, much less to vote upon, the budget and the members have no right of interpellation. It meets about twice a year and each session hardly lasts for an hour or so. Although more than thirty-five years have elapsed since the Council came into being, its constitution



has undergone no liberalisation in consonance with the spirit of the time.

How little respect is shown to the Council can be seen from the fact that circulars restricting the rights and liberties of the people are issued with the sanction of the Nizam and without the Council's knowledge. An instance can be cited of a circular issued by the Education Department forbidding the opening of a private school by any private individual or body without the previous sanction of the Department and the question of the necessity or otherwise of such a school at a particular place is left to the sweet will of the Department! The Police department has similarly issued a circular that no public meeting can be held at Hyderabad without the previous sanction of the Commissioner of Police or of a Collector in the districts. The Ecclesiastical Department also has issued circulars forbidding the taking out of processions on public roads without previous intimation to the officers concerned. In the case of new processions permission will not be granted, even if objected to by a single individual! Another circular of the said Department says that no music should be played in houses adjoining mosques during prayer hours and that no music should be played on the public road in front of a mosque irrespective of the fact whether any prayers are being offered therein or not. The Police Department by a recent circular has disallowed any gymnasium or akhada to be started without previous permission of the police officers and has made it obligatory upon the managers of akhadas to submit accounts of the same to the Police. It is also provided that police officers should have access to akhadas at all times. Although these are styled circulars, in practice they have the force of law and persons contravening any of their provisions are punished in criminal courts as if they had offended against the law.

Now let us turn to local self-government in the State. It would have been interesting if the author had shown why the Municipal Act took nearly thirty years to pass. Hyderabad is the fourth city in India from the point of view of population but the constitution of the Hyderabad Municipality is most illiberal. It consists of a president and 36 councillors including the vice-president who is elected from among them. The Political Member is nominated the president at present. Of the councillors, 18 are nominated by the Government, 6 are sent by the Sarf-i-Khas, Paigas, Salar Jung's Estate and Maharaja Bahadur's Estate, 2 are sent by Jagirdars, one each from the graduates and mercantile class, so that only 13 out of 36 are elected by the tax-payers. Whether the representation given to the tax-payers of this city, whose population is 4½ lakhs, is adequate or not can be decided by the reader for himself. No other city or town in the State has a municipality, the Act not being made applicable to places other than Hyderabad. Each district has a district board at the head-quarters and each Tahsil a Taluka Board, controlled by the Revenue Secretariat in the city of Hyderabad. The District Board consists of the president and 13 members, of whom 6 are officials and 7 non-official nominees. The Taluka Board consists of 8 members of whom 4 are officials and the rest State nominees. It will thus be seen that the principle of election has no place in the constitution of the district or the taluka boards. This is the kind of administration the people have, which is characterised by the author as the outcome of progressive growth of political thought! If the object of the book is simply to lavish praise on the administration of Hyderabad without any regard to facts, the writer can be said to have been fairly successful in his effort.

K. S. V.

## SHORT NOTICES.

### THE RG VEDA AS LAND-NA'MA-BOK.

By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. (Luzac.) 1935. 21cm. 39p. 3/6.

THIS essay derives its name from Icelandic land-nama, Taking of Land. The author has selected some significant terms in the Rg Veda like *arya*, *carsani*, *Pañcajana*, *Sarasvati*, *visah*, *yajña* and *yama*, and has tried to analyse their meanings and inter-connections. By this analysis Ananda Coomaraswami seeks to establish the thesis that the Rg Veda represents the type of processes 'in the beginning' and that it is not concerned with events in time. Thus he interprets the word *arya* as 'pioneer' in the American sense, i. e. first settler, and is rather inclined to minimise the ethnic significance of that term. He follows the same method with the other terms selected, and in the very interesting notes at the end he cites several instructive parallels from other lands and peoples. Thus the attempt is to show that the Rg Veda is more concerned with creation myths than with actual historical events. Even those who may hesitate to subscribe fully to this view of the whole collection of hymns will find much instruction in this stimulating essay.

K. A. N.

### MATERNITY SERVICES. By DAME JANET CAMPBELL. (Faber & Faber.) 1935. 18cm. 56p. 1/-.

IN India, where maternal mortality is appalling as compared with other nations, this small brochure may prove to be a good guide to Government Medical and Health Departments and private maternity hospitals. It will show how advance can be made in educating midwives and training ordinary doctors into specialists in midwifery, gynaecology, and infant welfare. In India where the Purdah system is still in vogue and where education in sex matters is taboo, Maternity Services should be entrusted to well qualified nurses and midwives to win confidence of the lay public. For that purpose a vast army of midwives and lady doctors will have to be trained in medical schools, colleges and private hospitals. The present arrangements fall far short of the actual needs of the country. In this respect the Seva Sadan has made a commendable beginning, and we hope the work will be pursued with redoubled effort by that and cognate institutions.

V. M. BHAT.

### METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL. (Birth Control League, 12 Budhwar, Poona, 2.) 1935. 12cm. 51p. As. 4.

THIS small booklet gives all the necessary practical information about Birth Control appliances and their use, including the latest cheap methods advocated by some well-known writers, such as 'Cotton Waste and Oil', or 'rubber sponge and water'. These are of course not so reliable as the 'Dutch Cap and Jelly' method, but are good for people willing to take chances. It also gives the necessary anatomical and physiological information required to understand the methods. As regards jellies, I may mention that I have myself imported a make called 'Sexus Paste' which is cheaper than the one mentioned in the book. The advice given about condoms is hardly practicable unless manufacturers agree to put the date of manufacture on the article and indicate the period during which the rubber will not perish. On the whole, an exceedingly useful and cheap book.

R. D. KARVE.

## GOPAL KRISHNA DEVADHAR.

### TRIBUTES TO HIS MEMORY.

*Numerous messages condoling and sympathising with the Servants of India Society in its grief are being received at its head-quarters in Poona. The following is a selection from them:—*

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, writing from the Golden Threshold, Hyderabad Deccan, to Mr. Devadhar's eldest son, says: May I intrude only a moment upon your sorrow to tell you how deep I and my family mourn for the death of Gopal Krishna Devadhar? ... The whole country has offered its tribute to the memory of one whose many-sided services have been matchless in their fashion...and I too elsewhere shall give expression to my admiration for his noble selfless work. But to you and your brother and sisters I want to convey a more personal note and tell you of the genuine affection in which we held him as a friend and how we loved his genial charm, his buoyant faith and courage, his inspiring energy and passion for work, and his large and warm humanity. These are veritably the gifts of God and add beauty and enduring worth to a man's work in the world. In every corner of India there are men and women in whose hearts your father's memory must find a perpetual shrine...He brought solace, succour, hope and healing to those who were in need of help, comfort and renewal of courage.*

*You and your brother and sisters should hold your heads very high and account yourselves blessed beyond measure to have had so rare a spirit to love, who loved you in his turn and loved all human creatures also...*

*I have been ill or I should have written sooner. I am glad to remember that your father has been a guest at the Golden Threshold and left such pleasant memories for us to cherish of his friendship.*

*Lord Lloyd: I have only to-day read with the deepest regret of the death of Mr. Devadhar, and I desire to express to you and to your great Society my deepest sympathy.*

*During the years I spent in India I was in constant close touch with the wonderful work carried on in Western India by your Society, and I had the highest regard not only for its work but for Mr. Devadhar, to whose inspiration and personal devotion the work of the Society of the Servants of India owes so much. His name will long be remembered by thousands of people with whom he worked.*

*I will be grateful if you will communicate this expression of my sincere sympathy to his relatives and also to your colleagues in the Society.*

*Rev. John McKenzie, Principal, Wilson College, on the occasion of the opening of the College Extension by H. E. the Governor, said: We are glad to have with us on this happy occasion so many past students and friends. There are some who would have been with us had circumstances permitted, and who have sent us the assurance of their good wishes. There is one who we hoped until a few weeks ago would be here this evening, but who within the last week has passed away. I refer to Mr. Gopal Krishna Devadhar. We regarded him as one of the most distinguished of our graduates. He was a man who gave himself with complete self-forgetfulness to the service of others. His name is honoured and will continue to be honoured throughout the whole of India, and he leaves behind him institutions, and, what is more important, men and women inspired by his spirit, to carry on his work.*

*We are glad that this College should have had a share—a share always gratefully acknowledged by him—in the forming of his character and ideals. Our sympathy goes out to the members of his family and to the Servants of India in their great loss, and our prayer is that men and women may arise in ever greater numbers to serve India in his spirit.*

*Mr. N. M. Joshi in the Times of 26th November: As one who was initiated into public life by the late Mr. G. K. Devadhar, and who was his colleague in the Servants of India Society for over 25 years, may I be permitted to add a few lines to the obituary notice published in the Times on November 18 regarding his life and work?*

*His intensely patriotic and humanitarian tendencies took a turn towards constructive effort for social betterment on account of two factors. The first was his early association with Christian missionaries as their teacher of the Marathi language, which work he had to do to maintain himself even when he was a student at the Bombay University. Secondly, soon after completing three years' headmastership of a high school in Bombay, he joined Mr. G. K. Gokhale in founding the Servants of India Society. Though Mr. Gokhale was one of the foremost politicians who worked for self-government for India, he never failed to impress upon his countrymen the necessity for raising the average level of the masses in the country and for affording equal opportunities to women and the Untouchables.*

*Mr. Devadhar's social work was directed into three channels. By founding the Seva Sadan at Poona, with about a dozen branches spread all over the country, he fought for making women self-reliant by training them as teachers, nurses, midwives, and doctors. He not only presided over co-operative conferences and committees, but himself organized scores of co-operative credit societies for cultivators and for the debt redemption of the most down-trodden class of the Untouchable sweepers in Bombay.*

*While doing regular work in these two directions he made himself available, whenever occasion arose, for relief work such as in time of famines, floods, and plagues. He bravely and tenaciously overcame popular prejudice against inoculation when bubonic plague raged in Poona continuously for some years.*

*In all his work there was not the slightest tinge of racial or religious prejudice or of bitterness. His robust and undaunted optimism was a source of inspiration to all those who worked with him. To him no problem was insoluble, no work too difficult to be undertaken, no person too depressed or too much fallen for redemption and help. In him we, his colleagues, have lost a safe and sure guide, the women of India a beneficent educator, the masses a sympathetic friend, and the country a social worker and patriot of eminent constructive genius.*

*Mr. Raghunath Row, I. L. O., Geneva: So, the President is gone. I saw the announcement as in a stupour. The older I grow the more I value not only Mr. Devadhar's profound humanity and charity, but also his insight which made him realise that in a country like India political progress which did not rest upon solid social advance was illusory. The whole of today, ever since I opened my Times this morning, the old familiar scenes of his life and ways have again and again come to my mind with an appeal hardly dimmed by all these years. To you,*

who are one of his own, I can only say, that to my contact with him and the Society, I owe so much.

The *Modern Review*: All India—and particularly the Bombay Presidency—mourns the loss of Gopal Krishna Dvadhar. He was a great organiser and worker with a great heart and an even temper. With him work was worship. His enthusiasm was a steadily burning fire which supplied energy for the various activities which kept him busy till he was struck down by a fatal illness. He was a widower for the last few years of his life. Few knew how he felt the loss of his partner in life. In all that he did he was above caste and creed and party.

Resolutions expressing grief have been forwarded by the Bombay Presidency Association; Poona Suburban Municipality; Maharashtra Sneh Samvardhak Samaj, Delhi; the Co-operative Taluk Bank, Nayattinara, Travancore; Sangli Stree Mandal; the Malabar District Co-operative Bank Ltd., Calicut; Shri Krishna Co-operative Credit Society Ltd., Kolhapur; Deccan Liberal Club, Poona; Municipal Committee, Mangalvedha, Sangli; Namdev Samajonati Parishad, Bombay; School Board, Bombay Suburban District; District Local Board, Surat; Bansi Central Co-operative Bank Ltd.; Provincial Co-operative Institute, Bombay; the Co-operative Credit Society, Khed Shivapur; Aikya Samvardhak Mandal, Poona; Surat Borough Municipality; Poona City Boy Scouts' Local Association; the Periyarkulam Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd.; Municipal Council, Calicut.

## MARITIME CONFERENCE.

### MR. JOSHI'S SPEECH.

*Following is the text of the speech which Mr. N. M. Joshi as a Seamen's Delegate made on 29th November at the Hours of Work and Planning Committee of the Preparatory Maritime Conference held by the International Labour Office at Geneva:*

MR. PRESIDENT, I am very grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to make a brief statement on behalf of the Indian seamen. Yesterday, Mr. Eruikar, the Indian Employers' Delegate, pleaded inability to take part in the discussion that took place yesterday on the ground of want of instructions. I do not suffer from that disability, and I shall therefore make a brief statement on behalf of the Indian seamen.

Indian seamen, like the seamen of other countries, have keenly felt disappointment that the International Labour Organisation has not been able to tackle successfully some of the important problems concerning their life and work, especially the question of hours of work. I am therefore glad that this question, with the allied question of manning, has again come up for discussion at this meeting. Indian seamen will watch the progress of the work of this meeting with keenness, interest, and expectation. The conditions under which Indian seamen live and work are much worse than those of European seamen. The greatest disparity between the living and working conditions of European and Indian seamen exists as regards wages, but that question is not before this meeting.

As regards the regulation of hours of work and manning, the Indian Merchant Shipping Act makes little provision to safeguard the interests and well-being of seamen; and there is only the general requirement, in the interests of safety, for maintaining some complement of officers in the case of British ships sailing from Indian ports, and of officers and seamen, in the case of ships carrying

Indian passengers and pilgrims. Nor do the articles of agreement signed on entering service on a ship contain any reference to hours of work. Moreover, Indian seamen have not yet been able to secure any collective agreements with the shipowners in this respect. In these circumstances, a proper Convention passed by the International Labour Organisation will be of great assistance to Indian seamen as an aid to bringing home to the Government and to shipowners the need for the regulation of hours of work and for avoiding the consequences of overwork. There is a further argument for the international regulation of hours of work and manning in the case of Indian seamen. Although the number of Indian seamen serving on ocean-going ships is large, the number of ships owned by people in India and registered in India is very small.

Therefore, out of the total number of Indian seamen only a small proportion work on ships registered in India. A large number of the men work on British ships, and there are also those who work on ships under other flags. The Indian Merchant Shipping Act applies fully only to ships registered in India, the number of which is very small. It is also applicable to some extent to British ships sailing from Indian ports; but it can hardly give any protection to Indian seamen working on ships which are neither registered in India nor in Great Britain. In these circumstances, international regulation of hours of work and manning is the only method by which Indian seamen can receive full protection as regards conditions of work.

I hope, therefore, that the present discussions will terminate in the formulation of a satisfactory Convention in 1936, and that it will in due course be ratified by the Government of India.

It is a matter of great regret to me and to the seamen of India that our Government has not yet ratified the Conventions concerning the minimum age of employment at sea, unemployment, indemnity against shipwreck, articles of agreement, and the repatriation of seamen. I feel there are no valid reasons for not ratifying these Conventions, and I hope that the Government of India will still see it way to ratify them at an early date.

## Correspondence.

### HOW PUBLIC WORKS CURE THE ECONOMIC DISORDER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Mr. Banavalikar in his article "How Public Works cure Economic Disorder" published in the *SERVANT OF INDIA* of Nov. 14 seems to hold that an agricultural country does not benefit much by a policy of public works. He says:

For an appreciable part of the funds spent on public works will flow back to agriculture, which is not at all in need of development in this fashion. The question therefore is whether it is worth our while to devise public works as a lever to force up agricultural prices. Our agriculturist is already underworked and such a rise in the prices of agricultural products cannot stimulate substantial employment among the agricultural labourers. The root cause of agricultural depression today is overproduction, accumulation of unsaleable stocks. Agricultural operations are mostly automatic. Ploughing, sowing and harvesting is like a cycle of events little or not responsive at all to market conditions; and that when restriction is the

watchword everywhere, and such being the circumstances, the argument in favour of a sound public works policy will have spent a great deal of its force when applied to agriculture."

The countries worst hit by the economic depression are the countries which produce the primary commodities—the agricultural countries—and any attempt to improve the other industries while neglecting this important one is doomed to failure. Some countries like ours are mainly agricultural, employing about seventy per cent. of its population in agriculture and mainly depending upon it for its national economy. If the majority of the population engaged in an industry like agriculture is to be neglected how can the lot of the rest be improved? Even taking it for granted that there are some countries worse off than India in the industrial aspect, should they not be helped to get out of the slough of economic depression? As the prime industry of a country, should not measures be taken for keeping it in happy prosperity?

India with seventy per cent. of her population engaged in agriculture can never afford to neglect the industry of agriculture. Agriculture is not an automatic routine as Mr. Banavalikar would have us suppose. Nor is it an industry which has reached the scientific and technical perfection which can allow us totally to neglect it. Science, machinery, and technique are fast invading in the region of agriculture and they will make agriculture as much controllable as the other industries. Such an improvement is possible only with rising prices and with a prosperous agriculture, which should be effected as early as possible. When the agriculturists have more money with them they invest it in ways which directly help the other industries of the country.

The agriculturists constitute the majority of the consumers and added purchasing power in their hands will as much help national economy as in others' hands. Mr. Banavalikar stops with taking the money to the hands of the agriculturists and does not trace its further progress. The added purchasing

power of the agriculturists will give the necessary fillip for trade and industry in the country. As a class they are heavily indebted and their new resources will straightaway go to their creditors, who will spend it on sound consumption goods and investments. The industries will thus get the impetus to produce more and the necessary new capital. Thus the new resources of the agriculturist will take leave of him as soon as he is in possession of them. Thirdly, the governments which in India depend on land revenue will not have to make concessions with consequent economies and cuts in the salaries of its employees. Thus the purchasing power of Government servants will be increased and it will in due course help the national economic position as it should. The governments with their added resources can also help the other industries of the country which need help. Lastly, when the agriculturists get more incomes they will know how to invest it in industries other than agriculture.

Agricultural industry itself is in need of fresh capital expenditure. It has to make the needed improvements in its machinery and technique which involve a good lot of expenditure. In the period of depression the agriculturists have put off even the small repairs and improvements which they should have effected. An improvement in the economic position of the agriculturists will drive them to effect all these improvements. This expenditure will certainly take away from their hands the new money finding its way into their hands.

Money will always be circulating and the days of hoarding coins in pits have gone for ever. It will stop with the agriculturist only as much as it does with the other industrialists. This unprecedented depression has taught the agriculturist a good lesson which he can never forget, and we need no more fear wastage of his wealth on trivialities. An agricultural India cannot be totally blind to the needs of industrialisation and the prosperity of the agriculturists will certainly lead to the prosperity of the industries.—Yours, etc.

N. S. S.

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