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Topics of the Week.

Lesson of Loyabad Fire.

It may be recalled that on the 30th January last there was a disastrous fire in the Loyabad colliery which at the time attracted the attention even of the Indian legislature. The number of people killed as a result of the fire was 35 and of those who received more or less serious injuries 23. Besides these, five dead bodies were brought out of the mine, death being due to gas poisoning. A Court of Enquiry was subsequently appointed to inquire into the causes of and the circumstances attending the accident. The inquiry was conducted by the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur with the aid of the Inspector of Mines and two non-official assessors connected with the coal-mining industry. The report of this inquiry has been now published.

THE first point for consideration naturally was whether adequate steps for checking the fire were taken. The Court expresses the view that the measures to this end "appear to have been suitable and the natural ones in the circumstances." It was brought out in evidence that no inducements were offered to labourers for going underground. The Court holds that the rescue measures were "as efficient as possible with the equipment available." This qualification gives rise to the question whether, given better equipment, rescue measures would not have been more efficient.

AND it is really that question that is of real practical use, if avoidable loss of life is to be

prevented in future. We are pleased to observe from a press summary of the Court's report that the matter did engage its attention. In this connection the Court stresses the advisability of fitting hose connections at convenient intervals with lengths of hose pipes kept in readiness. It is also suggested that supplies of sand be kept in various parts of the mine. Water and sand are the methods so commonly used in putting out fires that it is a matter of very great surprise to us that their provision in adequate quantities in coal mines where the occurrence of fires due to natural causes is notoriously frequent should not have been insisted upon before this. If the Loyabad disaster leads Government to enforce the provision of these most elementary anti-fire precautions in respect of all mines, it may be said to have taught a needed lesson.

Hyderabad State People's Demand.

A SCHEME of what may be compendiously termed provincial autonomy for Hyderabad State has been framed by Mr. V. R. Paithankar, a subject of the Nizam and will, we doubt not, command the general approval of the people of the State. The scheme proposes the splitting of the State into three provinces on a cultural and linguistic basis: Mahratta, Andhra and Karnatak. Under the scheme, the provinces are to enjoy complete autonomy in respect of the provincial administration and to have at their head Governors appointed by His Exalted Highness. As in British India, every Governor's province will be endowed with a legislative council and a ministry.

THE Central Government with His Exalted Highness the Nizam at its head will merely act as a supervising agency in respect of provincial administrations. This Government will consist of the ruler, his constitutional advisers and the legislature. It is provided in this scheme that elections to the legislatures, both Central and Provincial, should be direct, the strength of the legislatures in the provinces being in proportion to their population strength.

MR. PAITHANKAR'S proposal is not very elaborately worked out but presents his constitutional ideas in outline. It does not, therefore, state which subjects will be assigned to the provinces and which to the Centre, but it contemplates a clear demarcation of the spheres of action of the provincial and central governments. It is contemplated that the legislatures should enjoy real power of the purse and means have been provided for popular wishes as expressed in the legislatures being made effective. In short, the scheme envisages the establishment of full responsible government in the provinces, which was promised by His Exalted Highness years ago.

THERE will be a high court in each of the proposed provinces with a supreme court of judicature on top. Every province will similarly have a linguistic university, the Osmania University being turned into a cosmopolitan university whose jurisdiction would be limited only to Hyderabad City. The proposed constitution will guarantee the enjoyment of fundamental civil rights to the people and will explicitly provide that recruitment to the State services will be on the basis of merit and not on communal considerations, as is apparently the case at present. The enjoyment of religious freedom will also be secured to the people under the scheme.

IN respect of finance the scheme seems to make a departure from the generally accepted notions of provincial autonomy, which is obviously justified by the special circumstances of the State. It does not allocate well-defined sources of revenue to the provinces, but makes the provinces dependent on the charity of the Central Government for their finance. The present revenue of the State amounts to about Rs. 8½ crores, out of which the provincial administrations should, it is proposed, be financed. How the Central Government is to be kept in funds is not clearly stated in the scheme. But perhaps it is expected that the residue left after meeting provincial needs will be sufficient for the purposes of the Central Government. Though opinions may differ as to the details of the scheme, there can be little doubt that the subjects of the Nizam deserve the immediate grant of some political advance on the lines embodied in it. And we cannot think of a more appropriate occasion than the forthcoming silver jubilee celebration of the Nizam's reign for the announcement of such a boon.

Mr. Rajah's Bill.

RAO BAHADUR M. C. RAJAH'S bill aiming at the removal of untouchability has been published for the purpose of eliciting public opinion on it. The bill was recently introduced in the Assembly when, in view of the far-reaching importance of the issues involved, it was decided to give the Indian public an opportunity to express itself on it. The problem of the removal of untouchability has attracted so much public attention during recent years that we are not sure that the public discussions on Mr. Rajah's bill would throw up any new point of view—any argument for or against the removal of this blot on Hinduism which has not been already put forward. But the Assembly in its wisdom has decided upon its publication, and that is all that there is to it.

THE problem of untouchability has two aspects: religious and non-religious. Mr. Rajah's bill keeps clear of the former which has, as is a matter of common knowledge, taken the form of a demand for the admission of untouchables to Hindu temples. The author probably holds the view that an improvement in the social and economic status of the Harijans would automatically lead to the doors of the temples being thrown open to them. Be that as it may, his bill does not concern itself with the question of the entry of the depressed classes into temples.

MR. RAJAH seeks by his bill to remove any existing bar on the ground of law, custom or usage to the appointment of Harijans to any public office. The use of public conveyances, watering or resting places and public roads is oftentimes denied to them on no other ground than that they are born in what are known as untouchable classes. This will be a thing of the

past when the bill successfully passes the gauntlet of the Indian legislature.

CURIOSLY enough, however, Mr. Rajah refrains from prescribing any penalties for offences against this law. He cannot obviously be so simple as to think that there would be no violations of its provisions. The omission is apparently due to inadvertence and will, we hope, be remedied when the measure comes to be considered by the select committee. In the absence of such penal provisions the bill, we are afraid, will amount to nothing more than an enunciation of the pious principle of social equality among all classes in India.

Indians in Durban.

ACCORDING to the 1936 census, the total population of Durban has grown by nearly a lakh, from about 1½ lakh to about 2½ lakhs, during the last fifteen years. Of this, 94,000 are Europeans, 84,000 Indians, 69,000 natives and 7,000 coloured persons. The increase in the European population during the same period has been from 59,000 to about 95,000 a rise of 61 per cent., while the native population has risen by 80 per cent.

SO far as our countrymen are concerned, their population in 1921 was 51,000; it now exceeds 84,000. Of these 44,000 are men and about 40,000 women. Conditions of life of thousands of Indians have been characterised as "most unsatisfactory" by the enumerators, instances of as many as 20 Indians living in one tin shanty being by no means too rare.

THE problem of congestion in Indian localities is also not less serious. Some idea of its seriousness may be formed from the fact prominently mentioned in the report, that "one enumerator actually registered 6,600 of them in the Clairwood district in twelve days." The information collected by the census authorities of Durban fully supports the statement that hundreds of our countrymen are living in the most unhealthy places in Durban. Unless something is done to remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs, the labour and money expended on the taking of the census must be said to be a waste of public funds.

Unfortunate.

AMONG the subjects discussed at the last session of the International Labour Conference held at Geneva was one relating to the recruitment of labour in one country for service in another. The subject is of absorbing interest to this country in view of the fact that tens of thousands of its sons are encouraged, under the auspices of its Government, to migrate to foreign lands as coolies and labourers. Though some of these settle down permanently in the other country and have adopted that country as their second motherland, they are in most cases treated as political outcasts and are not allowed even to acquire property!

WHEN the draft convention concerning the regulation of certain special systems of recruiting workers came up for the consideration of the Conference, an amendment was sought to be moved by the Indian (substitute) delegate, which was designed to put a stop to such scandals at any rate in the future. The amendment wanted permission for recruitment being withheld—

unless adequate facilities in the matter of (a) provision of rights in property (movable and immovable); (b) provision for equal legal status such as trial before a court

of law; (c) provision for acquisition of franchise to local and other bodies in the area of employment; (d) provision against discriminatory legislation by the Government in the area of employment are guaranteed to the recruited workers.

It is a great pity that discussion on the amendment was shut out by the chairman ruling it out of order. One fails to comprehend the reasons which led him to come to this unfortunate decision, for, as pointed out by the mover, an identical amendment was not only allowed to be moved in the corresponding committee last year, but even voted upon. What was found to be in order last year is branded as out of order this year without, so far as can be seen, good and sufficient reason. Let this, however, not discourage the Indian delegation. Let it continue the fight undismayed until the battle is won and equal status secured for Indians migrating to other countries in the matter of political, social and civic rights.

Articles.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

THE Orders in Council concerning the establishment of so-called provincial autonomy have been promulgated. When they were discussed in the House of Commons on 12th June, the precarious financial position of the country under the new reforms came under searching criticism. No member of course could speak of the prospects opening before the provinces under the new constitution with exuberant enthusiasm, but some tried to speak with temperate confidence. The utmost that the Under-Secretary could say was that, although fierce protests have been made by the Provincial Governments against the financial arrangements recommended in the Niemeyer Report and adopted by Government, still "no Province says that provincial autonomy should be delayed for financial reasons." The Government of India cannot bring itself to speak with greater warmth of these arrangements than this: "Recognising that the (Niemeyer) Report is in the nature of a quasi-arbitral award, the Government of India content themselves with saying that they hope and have fair reason to believe that Sir Otto's programme is feasible." As Sir R. Craddock expressed it, "that certainly is very faint approval or satisfaction." Sir Otto Niemeyer himself is not more confident. Referring to his Report, Mr. Churchill well said: "It is a document rich in dark and cryptic phrases. The balancing, the guarding, of every statement, the total lack of the slightest spark of enthusiasm or hearty confidence at any point, the almost extorted admission that on the whole there is no reason to pull up—these are characteristics of the Niemeyer Report. Indeed, it is a very bleak outlook which he presents to the Government of India, and an even bleaker response which is made by that Government to his report." The Government of India is of course not to blame. Mr. Churchill says, with his inimitable satire: "I think that it is a great thing not to be carried away by enthusiasm. The Government are quite right in keeping a strong hold on the

enthusiasm which may be welling in their bosom and not allowing themselves to be put in a position in which they can be afterwards reproached for being too sanguine about the success of the scheme."

The Government has left no opening for such reproaches. It never has adopted an optimistic view of the financial position. In justification Mr. Butler said: "It is probably more healthy and sensible, and nearer the facts of the case, if the Indian Ministers, whether they wish for social reform or otherwise, have to grapple with the facts as they are." Only it would have been more honest to add that the financial difficulties of Ministers bent upon developing social services are very nearly insurmountable. The only line one can take in painting anything like a roseate picture is the one that was taken by Mr. Amery, who always rises in debate after Mr. Churchill to knock down, as he imagines, his opponent's arguments. He said, in arguing that there is a reasonable prospect of provincial government being successfully carried on: "I do not think any of us like to give our boys too large an allowance at school in their first term, and it may be as well for the development of provincial government in India that it should begin within apparently narrow financial limits." Sir Samuel Hoare, who as First Lord of the Treasury was sitting on the Treasury Bench, observed: "I never disguised from the Committee or the House the fact that there was not going to be much to spare either for the Centre or for the Provinces, that it would be hard to balance the Central budget and the Provincial budgets; that there would be no opportunity for extravagant expenditure, but that there was just enough money to go round and make it possible to embark upon the experiment" of the new constitution. This means, if anything, that social services cannot be extended to any appreciable degree.

The question of the need for the extension of social services was very forcibly raised by Mr. Morgan Jones. Referring to the Niemeyer statement that "the question of immediately pressing concern was to devise measures to increase or maintain the revenue and to reduce expenditure," he said: "The justification for the experiment will in large measure be determined by the amount of attention that these new Governments will give to the crucial problem, in India, of how to tackle poverty and its evils. . . . The ordinary people in India will expect the Provincial Governments to deliver the goods, and they can only deliver the goods if they can spend some money. If, in the first few years, there is no money to spend upon social problems, the disappointment in India will be most profound and the reaction upon this experiment will be rather bigger than I care to contemplate, because at the beginning of this self-government it is imperative, in my judgment, that disappointment should not be generated through circumstances of this kind." When the Under-Secretary told the House that all sections in India were awaiting the new constitution and making plans, Mr. Lennox-Boyd took an opportunity of reminding him of the declaration of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as Congress President that the primary object of the Congress was to

create deadlocks in the Provinces and through them to kill federation. But, even if the Congress did not deliberately set about to prevent the constitution from functioning, the financial difficulties would probably achieve the result. Mr. Churchill brought out how keen the disappointment of even the most genuine workers of the new constitution would be. "There will be," he said, "an orgy of promises in all the elections which will take place for the Provincial Governments. . . . I foresee that there may be a most disillusioning moment when they arrive with hopes of hospitals and universities and improvements of every kind in the social services, and they find that the revenues of the Provinces show no expansion and that the succour which may be administered to them from the Centre has already been given in the fullest measure, and that beyond a peradventure it is no use coming back like *Oliver Twist* to ask for more. . . . After all, apart from political rights, most people when they throw themselves very heartily into a political programme expect to get something out of it in the way of material well-being. . . . But no such hope presents itself to the would-be legislators of the Indian Provincial Assemblies. For them a course of severe economy is prescribed, a course of stern restraint and frugal moderation."

The fact is, as the *Statesman* put it, "There is not money enough to meet the demand, and so no formula for dividing up what is available will give general satisfaction," unless power is given to Ministers, which is not, to reduce expenditure where it is excessive on the so-called security services. For

this reason some members, e. g., Mr. Lennox-Boyd suggested that the Government should "hold up the institution of provincial autonomy until the financial situation of India has considerably improved." If it be forced upon India, it will only bring additional grist to the mill of obstructionists in India. Mr. Raikes remarked: "When there is acute agricultural depression and taxation is so high that it is admitted that further taxation is impossible, one must feel some anxiety as to whether the start of the new constitution is to be coincident with additional pressure upon the peasantry who represent the backbone of India. If that is the case there will be a danger of those in India who do not like the new constitution and who wish to destroy the British Government telling the people, when additional taxation comes, 'It is simply a new trick of the British Government under their measures of so-called self-government.' This is what we are afraid of on the provincial side." Mr. Churchill disclaimed any desire to obstruct the inauguration of provincial autonomy, but said that he was glad not to be responsible in any way for this course, and affirmed that "the responsibility must rest with those who have had their way" in spite of his urgent warnings. But he hoped that at any rate the provincial scheme would be separated from the federal scheme and that "we should see very clearly where we are in the Provinces before we hurry on to the further step of a federal constitution." Every one in India excepting the Princes will echo this sentiment.

LAND FOR THE NATIVES.

THE House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa has given a third reading to the Native Trust and Land Bill, in spite of the savage opposition of a large portion of the European community, and the Bill bids fair to pass into law at an early date. It will take the place, when enacted, of the Natives' Land Act of 1913, which effects a territorial separation, so far as agricultural land is concerned, of the African and European races. The Act forbade Europeans to buy or lease land in areas which it set apart for the natives and the natives to buy or lease land in other areas. The Act was avowedly a temporary measure. It set up 10,422,935 morgen of land (a morgen is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ English acres) as native areas, and these areas included only the land then actually owned and occupied by natives. It was fully recognised at the time that the areas scheduled in the Act as native areas were wholly inadequate and took no account of the future needs of the native population, and that, as embodying a final demarcation, the law would be grossly unjust. Indeed, the Act was intended to remain in force only "until Parliament should make other provision." The need for adding immediately to these areas was so obvious that the Act itself provided for the appointment of a Commission to delimit further areas. The Commission was to be appointed "as soon as may be after the commencement" of the Act and was to report

within two years, submitting interim reports in the interval. Accordingly, a Commission was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir William Beaumont. The Commission's investigations were somewhat interrupted by the war, and it presented its report in March 1916. It recommended increases in the scheduled areas of 8,365,744 morgen. A bill embodying these additional native areas was introduced into Parliament in 1917 and was referred to a Select Committee, which came to the conclusion that the recommendations of the Commission could not be accepted as they stood and suggested that a committee be appointed in each Province to consider in detail the suitability of the Beaumont areas.

These local committees submitted their reports in 1918 in favour of adding 7,521,223 morgen (instead of 8,365,744 morgen proposed to be added by the Beaumont Commission) to the native areas scheduled in the Act. But the bill moved in the previous year was dropped later, and no further legislative effort was made to allot more land to the natives in rural areas till General Hertzog introduced the Natives Land (Amendment) Bill, along with three other Native Bills, in 1927. All these Bills were considered in a Select Committee in 1927 and 1928 and, in an altered form, re-introduced in 1929. The Land Bill was then not proceeded with, but was referred again, in 1931, to a Joint Select Com-

mittee of both Houses of the Union Parliament, which issued its report in May 1935. The present Bill is based on the recommendations contained in this report. The recommendations in regard to their main features were absolutely unanimous, though from the opposition the Bill is now encountering one would not think so. During the intervening period between the passing of the Natives' Land Act of 1913 and now, the Government afforded some relief from the prohibition imposed by the Act upon the purchase or lease of land by natives in non-native areas. The Act provides for such transactions to take place only with the special approval of the Governor-General, and the Governor-General does not ordinarily place difficulties in the way of natives buying or hiring land in the additional areas recommended by the local committees or in the areas included in the schedule to the Land Bill of 1929, though how much land was thus acquired by natives in the areas outside the schedule of the 1913 Act it has not been possible for us to find out.

The present Bill proposes to add 7,021,000 morgen of "released areas" to the areas scheduled under the Act of 1913. It is intended to give effect to this proposal by establishing a South African Native Trust to be administered by the Governor-General "for the settlement, support, benefit and material and moral welfare of the natives of the Union." At the disposal of this Trust is to be placed a fund derived from such rents and other revenues as may accrue from the land under the Trust's control and also such sums as will be appropriated by Parliament. The fund will be used, first, for acquiring land in the released areas for the settlement of landless natives; secondly, for a better development of their holdings by advancing loans to them; and, finally, for promoting the general well-being of the native people. The Minister of Native Affairs, the hon. P. G. W. Grobler, informed the House that the Government intended "without undue delay" to employ the Trust fund for the acquisition of land in the released areas till seven and a quarter million morgen are bought. How much money will be required for the purchase of this amount of land cannot be known at present, but the Government's estimate is that between £10,000,000 and £15,000,000 will be required "for the purchase and the development of land." And, in this connexion, the Prime Minister General Hertzog, made an important pronouncement in the Assembly on 30th April, when the Bill came on for a second reading. It was as follows:

I wish to state that (a) it is the intention of the Government that the purchase of the above-mentioned land be commenced as soon as possible; (b) that funds amounting to £10,000,000 be voted within the next five years in such annual amounts as may be considered necessary for purchase every year; (c) that any further sums which may at any time appear to be necessary for the purchase of the above-mentioned land during the course of the said period of five years, or thereafter, be immediately made available for that purpose.

It would thus appear that within the next five years natives could be settled on selected areas measuring 7,250,000 morgen to be released from land which is now owned by Europeans or other non-natives. The Government has of course given an assurance to the

European landowners that no undue interference will be caused to their vested interest and that they will be treated fairly and sympathetically. Ordinarily, the Europeans whose land is included in the released areas will fix by negotiation with the Trust or with individual natives the price at which it will be sold; but, in the last resort, the Bill under clause 13 gives power to the Trust to expropriate such land at a price fixed by arbitration. The Minister warned the House in advance that he would accept no amendment for reducing the extent of released areas. The Governor-General may, under the proposals of the Bill, take a piece of land out of a released area by proclamation, but only on the understanding that land of at least an equal value will be added to the released area instead of the land so taken away.

There is one word of caution which must be uttered. That so much land will be released within the next five or ten years for native occupation does not mean that natives will actually occupy it during this period. The land will be demarcated as a native area and will be bought by Government. But it is not proposed that Government will give it away to natives. When purchased by Government, the land will remain with them as Crown land, open, however, to natives, and to natives only, to buy or lease it from Government. In this case Government step in at an intermediate stage only in order that natives may not have to pay an exorbitant price or rent for it. If the land were left entirely to purchase by natives, it would never be acquired by them, and the whole object of the legislation would be defeated. Again, it should be remembered that this is to be a final delimitation. When a member asked whether a total of 17 or 18 million morgen was the maximum which it was intended that the native population would ever acquire, the Minister of Native Affairs replied in the affirmative. These would be the native reserves of the future, which could not be added to in any circumstances.

Would the land originally set aside for the natives as scheduled areas and now to be added to it as released areas be adequate? In spite of the frenzied protests of the Europeans that the total amount of land that would be made available to natives would be too large, it is clear that in fact it would be much too small. It would be about 17,500,000 morgen in all. The Beaumont Commission has stated in its report that the land actually occupied by the natives at that time, that is, in 1916 was 17,803,475 morgen. Thus the amount of scheduled and released areas together would be less than was in fact in native occupation 20 years ago and it is known that within this period there has been an increase of a little less than a million and a half in the native population. It appears that a great deal of the area to be now released for the use of natives is already in their use. At any rate one member of the Assembly, Mr. Van Coller, expressed this view in the debate. "As far as I can gather," he said, "a great proportion of the ground in this schedule (of released areas) is already occupied by natives. When I look through the areas in my own part of the country, I find that practically all or the greatest part of the ground mentioned in the schedule is already in the possession

of and occupied by natives." There is another thing to be remembered about the Beaumont Report. Sir William Beaumont intended the amount of land included in the schedule of the Report (8,365,744 morgen) to be only a first instalment, to which additions might be made in the future. He wrote:

In my opinion, neither the Natives' Land Act, nor the terms of its reference, requires the Commission to delimit the whole extent of the Union into European and native areas respectively . . . and I think it is quite competent for this Commission, where this cannot be conveniently done, to leave undefined areas which would be open alike to white and black for the acquisition of land. But this opinion is not shared by my fellow-Commissioners, who regard it as contrary to the intentions of the legislature and the terms of the Act.

In view of these facts, then, that the Beaumont Commission areas are already to a large extent in possession of the natives, that these areas were intended at least by the Chairman of the Commission to be added to as need arose, and that the Commission reported twenty years ago since when natives have largely multiplied, the conclusion cannot be avoided that if the released areas schedule in the Bill constitutes, as it does, a final demarcation of land for natives, then the solution offered is no solution at all and that, even as a temporary remedy, it will not be very effective. In any case the opinion expressed by Mr. M. Alexander of the Smuts Party does not seem to be unduly critical. Referring to the criticisms that too much land is proposed to be allocated to natives, he said:

The fact is that the land provided in this Bill is totally inadequate for the existing native population, and no provision is made for their natural increase. . . . Really, as far as the schedules in this Bill are concerned, they are putting the natives in the position they actually occupied in 1916. . . . The existing reserves are all too small, and, as far as those who are interested in native problems are concerned, as far as they can gauge the effect of this Bill, it is not going to lead to the natives getting very much more land, but is merely going to give them a little breathing space in the locations. It is estimated by a very careful thinker that on the basis of existing data there are 3,000,000 natives in the existing reserves, 400,000 in the released areas, and the remainder of the 6,000,000 in rural and urban areas. In other words the reserves are crowded, and it is impossible for the reserves to maintain those who are settled in them. . . . As far as I can see, the provision contemplated will be inadequate. . . . The natural corollary of allowing the natives under that (Representation of Natives) Act to develop their own land in their own way, is to give them the land and to make it available for them so that they can live and develop on their own lines. A Bill of this kind before the House is only an instalment. It does not adequately provide for that.

A comparative view of the landed property of white and black may here be taken. The Minister of Native Affairs himself attempted it, but it is rather partial to the Europeans. He said:

The total area of the Union is 143,121,954 morgen, of which 10,422,935 morgen have been included in the schedule of native areas, while the present Bill will permit of the acquisition of further land totalling to 7,250,000 morgen, by or on behalf of natives. The land which will ultimately be available for natives, if the Bill goes through, will thus comprise 17,672,935 morgen, or, as has been stated, 12 per cent. of the total area of the Union. But while the native areas fall mostly within what are termed "productive areas", large tracts of European land are situated in the

"non-productive areas", like the North-Western Cape where the natives could not subsist. It has been estimated by the agricultural and meteorological departments that these non-productive areas where the annual rainfall is less than 15 inches or exceeds 40 inches—where it is more than 40 inches it is on mountain peaks—comprise approximately 57 per cent. of the Union, and that the productive areas, in which the rainfall varies from 15 to 40 inches, cover the remaining 43 per cent. In the native and released areas apart from portions of Bechuanaland and Barkly West, the average rainfall is, according to the statistics for 1933, 24 inches—and this factor is a most important element that has been lost sight of in calculating the relative positions of the Europeans and the natives.

In this, however, the ratio of the European and native population is not taken into account. Another member, Mr. Van Coller, carried the examination further. Taking the productive land in the Union as 43 per cent. of the total land, he said it was about 61,00,000 morgen. Of this natives are to have 17,500,000 morgen. At least 2,500,000 morgen of this is not productive. Deducting this, they will have 15,000,000 morgen of productive land. The rest, 46,000,000, are in the possession of Europeans. But the question is, how many natives will occupy 15,000,000 morgen and how many Europeans thrice as much ground. The native (Bantu) population in 1935 is calculated at 5,842,700 and European at 1,944,200, or 6 and 2 million respectively. But we are concerned here only with the rural population of each race. Of 6,000,000 natives, it is estimated that somewhere about 600,000 to 800,000 are living in the towns. We might put it generously at 1,000,000. We might also deduct another 1,000,000 as consisting of labour tenants and others who live on European farms. This would leave 4,000,000 natives who earn their living on 15,000,000 morgen of productive land. What is the corresponding proportion of the Europeans? Of the 2,000,000 Europeans, it is estimated that at least 1,000,000 live in the towns, and only 1,000,000, at a generous estimate, live from the land. (In fact it is calculated that 63 per cent. of the total European population lives in towns; thus only 719,400 Europeans live in rural areas. But we take it, to err on the safe side, at 1,000,000.) Thus, while 15,000,000 morgen support 4,000,000 natives, 1,000,000 Europeans have 45,000,000 morgen to support them. That is to say, *the whites are given twelve times as much land as the blacks are proposed to be given by the Bill!* Therefore, it is too much to hope that the Bill will create a contented and prosperous native peasantry.

THE BRITISH GUIANA LABOUR DISPUTES COMMISSION.

THE Labour Disputes Commission to enquire into the recent strikes and labour troubles on certain sugar estates in British Guiana has finished taking evidence and is due to submit its report in the next few days. In appreciating the report it is best to remember the circumstances of its appointment, the character of its composition and the points of view presented to it.

There have been labour troubles on the sugar estates for three consecutive years. And they were

serious enough. Nevertheless, the Government was not disposed to go beyond restoring law and order. This caused disappointment, resentment and indignation in certain quarters. And pressure was brought to bear on the Government to institute a comprehensive enquiry. As a result of the agitation, Government ultimately gave way and agreed to appoint a commission of enquiry.

Happily the terms of reference were broad and comprehensive. The Government is entitled to thanks for having agreed to appoint a commission and giving it such wide terms of reference.

Over the composition of the Commission there was disagreement between the Government and the British Guiana East Indian Association and the British Guiana Labour Party. It should be mentioned here that the great bulk of labour on sugar estates is East Indian, and the British Guiana East Indian Association claims to represent all Indians in the Colony. The Labour Party, consisting mostly of Negroes and a sprinkling of Indians, claims to represent labour interests generally.

The Government proposed to appoint a judicial commission, while the Indian and Labour bodies insisted on their representatives being included on the Commission. They were willing to give to the sugar planters as such a place on the Commission. The Government declined to concede the point and ultimately appointed a Commission presided-over by the Attorney General, Mr. Hector Josephs, and consisting of the Attorney of the Demerara Bauxite Co., Mr. F. B. Henderson, and an ex-Immigration Agent General, Mr. A. H. Hill.

Whereupon the East Indian Association and the Labour Party declined to give evidence before the Commission.

The Commission got round the boycott by subpoenaing some of the leaders of both the organizations and attempted to extract evidence from these reluctant witnesses. They subpoenaed some others also.

An examination of the list of witnesses that appeared before the Commission, either voluntarily or otherwise, hardly does justice to the labour interests. Most of them, the overwhelming majority of them, were either planters or Government officials, with a sprinkling of others.

The planters who apparently were quite satisfied with the character of the Commission, engaged expert counsel to watch over their interests. The other party to the dispute, the labourers, had none.

Such are the facts that will hardly be disputed.

A judicial commission naturally makes an appeal to all justice-loving people, and the idea of having "friends in the jury" repels them. The Government's proposal to appoint a judicial commission is attractive at first sight. But a judicial trial presupposes that the two parties to the dispute are more or less on a par and are able to present their cases and defend them adequately. In the case of a dispute between the sugar planters and the labourers the inequality can hardly be greater. The former are rich, powerful, organized and able to command the services of the best legal and other talent to present

their case and defend it. The latter are poor, unorganized labourers, who depend wholly on the sugar estates for their living. To persuade any body of employees to give evidence which might be displeasing to their employers is difficult enough in all conscience; it is almost impossible as between the European sugar planters and the Indian employees. It should be remembered that Indian labour is not only unorganized, but it is resident on the sugar estates and in helpless dependance on their employers. Mr. Malcolm B. Laing, the District Commissioner, admitted, in reply to a question from the President, that the only difference between the indentured labourer of old and the free labourer of today was that the former could have been prosecuted if he failed to turn out for work. The latter however, he continued, was entirely dependent upon the estate for his house, his rice land and his cattle. The labourer has no other home to go to or other work to turn to.

Under these circumstances, the Commission itself has to provide what one of the parties was unable to supply. In the absence of adequate evidence from the labourers themselves, the elucidation of the truth must depend mainly on the cross-examination of the witnesses of the sugar planters. And for such effective cross-examination, some members of the Commission itself should have intimate knowledge of the economics of the sugar industry and knowledge of labour conditions, and at the same time inspire confidence in the labourers. It was knowledge of the industry that was wanted on the Commission, not the ignorance of it.

The next best alternative was for labour interests being represented by expert counsel to cross-examine the evidence for the sugar planters. In some types of judicial cases, when a defendant has no counsel, the Crown itself engages counsel to defend the undefended party.

It is a matter of opinion whether the British Guiana East Indian Association and the Labour Party should have at least arranged for a watching brief for labour interests, while refusing to volunteer to give evidence or whether they should have tendered evidence under protest and made the best of a bad bargain.

Or the Government of India might have been moved to depute an expert to assist in the preparation and presentation of the case of the Indian labourers as has often been done before in other colonies.

But whatever that might have been, there is no denying the fact that, notwithstanding the judicial character of the Commission, rather because of it, the proceedings savour largely of an *ex parte* trial, as it were.

The General Conference of Indians organized by the British Guiana East Indian Association on the 21st inst. made note of the fact that the case for labour was not adequately presented before the Labour Disputes Commission.

P. KODANDA RAO.

Georgetown,
British Guiana.

23rd May.

Reviews.

DEFENCE OF PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. STUDIES IN THE LAND ECONOMICS OF BENGAL. By SACHIN SEN. (The Book Co., Calcutta.) 1935. 22cm. 402p. Rs. 6.

THE title of the book is somewhat misleading. It may more appropriately be named "A Plea in Defence of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal." This system of land tenure has long been a target of much adverse criticism at the hands of both officials and unofficials and is regarded as being responsible for many of the ills, both administrative and financial, from which Bengal has been suffering. Controversy has raged round the subject for nearly a century and a half. In 1883, nearly a century after the first introduction of the system, Government finally refused to treat it as a model for adoption. And, fifty years later, the best organised and the most influential political party in this country has now resolved upon a thorough change of the land tenure and revenue systems including the Permanent Settlement and is on the way to adopting as a plank in its platform the expropriation of landlords and vested interests. The literature on this subject is vast and it is difficult to trace the historical background of the various stages of evolution of the present position.

In order that the public may have an opportunity to see the other side of the shield, Mr. Sen's book is a timely publication. It brings together, as a result of laborious selection, all the arguments that have been or can be useful in defence of the system and also furnishes much statistical information bearing on the subject. The author has done well to emphasise the fact, which does not appear to have received sufficient recognition, that at the time when the system was first introduced in 1793, it was one of the stiffest settlements on record; inasmuch as 90% of the assumed assets, and not merely ascertained assets, was fixed as revenue. Naturally, many a landlord found himself in difficulties in meeting his obligations and was sold up. The more enterprising, resourceful or fortunate survived and they deserved to enjoy the fruits of their enterprise, if they discharged their functions in a reasonable spirit. Owing to the growth of population and extension of cultivation, however, the assets rose to such an abnormal extent that the majority of landlords preferred to farm out their rights to inferior tenure holders, giving rise to the well-known evils of absenteeism, of management by unsympathetic agents, of unhappy relations between landlord and tenant, and of multiplication of term-holders. In the early stages, Government resisted the demand for farming out the landlords' rights for a period including ten years, but in 1812 it conceded the right to grant perpetual leases, thereby sowing the seeds of disintegration of the system. Mr. Sen's thesis is that it was the landlord who improved his estate on his own initiative, with the expenditure of much money, time, labour and skill; that he is more sinned against than sinning; that the rent of an occupancy tenant is very moderate; that the tenant has to thank himself and his extravagant habits for his present plight; and that any proposal for expropriating the landlord, even on compensation, is illegal, unjust, impolitic and immoral. He seeks to establish his thesis by means of quotations selected from the opinions expressed by high officials and influential non-officials, but takes scant notice of equally authoritative opinions on the other side.

In propagandist literature of this type, a certain amount of overstatement is to be expected, but the

author's line of approach to this important and difficult problem is altogether disappointing. It can be best illustrated by a few quotations taken at random from his book:

"In 1928-29, the incidence of all-India taxation per capita was Rs. 11-11 in Bombay, Rs. 5-3 in Bengal, Rs. 1-11 in Madras, and less than a rupee in each of the other provinces. Because of the comparative wealth of her ryots and middle classes, Bengal (and presumably Bombay) was in a position to pay more as customs duty (p. 71.)"

It is unnecessary to point out the fallacy involved.

"The imposition of cesses, such as the Roads, Public Works and Education cesses contravene the terms of the Permanent Settlement" (p. 140).

"The various Rent Acts specifying the grounds of enhancement of rent and deleting the provisions regarding the powers of distraint are encroachments on the rights of the landlord implicit in the Permanent Settlement" (pp. 140, 185).

"The tenants do not suffer in any way in regard to the quantum of rent or in the mode of payment." (p. 185).

"The Tenancy Act of 1885 was a subtle move for the obvious and indubitable purpose of obtaining additional revenue from land contrary to the terms of the Permanent Settlement." (p. 244).

"A ryot should under no circumstances have opportunities of becoming a rent-receiver." (p. 324).

"The unearned increment from land goes entirely to the ryot." (p. 358).

"Consolidation of holdings by legislation in a permanently settled province is open to objection as it affects the proprietary character of the Jamindars." (p. 389).

In his anxiety to overstate the case of the landlords, Mr. Sen has involved himself in contradictory statements which, for lack of space, we refrain from going into. From an author of such mentality, it is futile to expect any constructive suggestions for the improvement of the lot of the peasantry. Chapter VI, dealing with the ryot, the only readable portion of the book, contains a summary of the recommendations made from time to time by various committees appointed by Government, but not a single suggestion has been vouchsafed by the author as to how the landlords can help in the rehabilitation of the tenantry. Statistics given at p. 298 reveal that in 1931-32, some of the richest estates, then under the Court of Wards, spent on schools, dispensaries and works of improvement no more than 1½% of their rental demand and about 3.5% of their rental collections, not counting the realisation from forests, fisheries and other sources. The recital of this fact alone is sufficient to demonstrate the anti-democratic character of the system of Permanent Settlement and to prove that it has outlived its usefulness. It is pertinent to repeat what has been stated by Steele in his Anatomy of Frustration: "Whatever the origin of the ideas and practices of ownership may be, ownership is now protected and enforced by the laws of society, and there is no reason whatever, except collective welfare, why any sort of ownership or any particular ownership should be enforced or permitted." It is incontrovertible that society is now moving towards a more equitable distribution of the available resources of the country. Unless the landlords set their houses in order and develop in time a better outlook in life and society, it is difficult to see how they can expect to be left in undisturbed possession of their vested interests.

B. DE.

RUSSIAN TRADE UNIONISM.

FROM PETER THE GREAT TO LENIN. By S. P. TURIN. (King.) 1935. 22cm. 216p. 9/-.

MR. S. P. TURIN deserves appreciation for this book as it will be a good introductory study to the Trade Union Movement of Russia. The author himself was a resident in Russia and took some part in the emancipation movement of that country and its workers. The book contains some translations from original documents, so that the conclusions of the author are based on authenticated facts.

The book describes in some detail the different stages of the workers' movement, which ultimately resulted in the establishment of a Soviet Republic after centuries of suffering at the hands of the Tsar, as well as the landlord, capitalist and other owning classes.

The author describes among others the causes of Pugachev insurrection of 1773-1775 which appealed to the workers of Russia because it gave an opportunity "to take revenge for all they have suffered and to rebel against a social order which has brought upon them nothing but suffering." The result was the Government of Russia issued a decree in 1779 for the improvement of the condition of workers employed in factories and for restriction of hours of work in factories and fields and for doubling the wages of unskilled workers.

The author refers to the different stages in the Russian Movement as follows:

Firstly, by way of combination, petition and delegation; secondly, by way of leaving factories en masse in protest against inhuman conditions; thirdly, starting of secret organisations of the workers for the recognition of their rights and, lastly, the regular organisation of the Trade Union Movement.

The author deals in great detail with the causes and results of different strikes in 1883, 1884, 1885 down to 1917.

As early as 1861 the emancipation of the serfs took place. The regular organisation of 'Emancipation of Labour Group' came into existence in 1883. Further, the Government was made to realise that the non-interference with the relations between labour and capital would not pay it and labour legislation was passed by the State. The first Russian Labour Code came into being by the Law of June 3rd 1886. In the year 1897, the first labour journal entitled 'Labour' was started and it was during this period that Labour Unions, Strike Committees, Labour Societies and Friendly Societies came into existence.

The author describes the formation of Gapon Society in 1904 by Father Gapon, but it ended in the 'Bloody Sunday Massacre' of 19th January 1905 which led to a further stage in the emancipation of workers. The outbreak of revolutionary spirit and permanency of strikes came to stay and 'Proletarians of the World Unite' became the ideal of the workers. The Soviet of workers' deputies was started and in twelve years' time, i. e., in 1917 this was replaced by the Soviet of workers, soliders and peasants' deputies. The writer describes at some length the February revolution of 1917 and how it started.

The author describes how the two groups, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks (right wing and left wing), came into existence and how it was prominently noticeable in the Conferences of the Russian workers in 1903 and 1907.

The revolution of 1917 brought the exploited and the oppressed—the ruled—to power. The Provisional Government did not last long. The Constituent Assembly called for was dispersed by Lenin and the cry 'All Power to the Soviets' was replaced by the party slogan, 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat'.

The book deserves to be commended to the reading public.

V. V. GIRI.

SHORT NOTICES.

THE MARCH OF MAN. Ed. by LAWRENCE H. DAWSON. (Encyclopaedia Britannica Co.) 29cm. £2-12-6.

THE book consists of three parts, purporting to present a history of the march of man through the centuries in a convenient summary form. The first part consists of maps which help the reader to see the political events in space. They are valuable in so far as such a large number of political maps are not available in a single book. The second part presents mostly the events of political history projected on a convenient time-scale, which enables the reader to correlate any number of events as to their contemporaneity and extent. The third part consists of pictures mostly of the kings, statesmen and other worthies who have figured prominently in some of the important events noticed in the second part.

In the pictures in vain does the reader seek for one of Buddha's statues or one of Darwin, Pasteur, Mendel or of the Physicists whose researches and discoveries have furnished some of the important characteristics of modern civilization and which, therefore, form important landmarks in the history of the march of man. In the second part there is lack of appreciation for the contributions of India, even the name of Kalidasa not occurring there. Reading through the book, one would not gather that some sections of humanity—and those too non-European—had created cities almost modern in their convenience so early as 3000 B. C. Altogether the authors have given their readers a summary mostly of the political events in the history of man, gleaned from the articles in the Encyclopaedia Britannica and misnamed the book, the title of which should rather have been 'The Political March of Man.' The history of the cultural march of man is still to be presented. It offers many difficulties for it to be presented in the form in which the political events can be narrated. It also raises some important points of procedure, the most important being whether or not the cultural traits of the backwaters of human civilization be described. From the point of view of tracing the onward march, these backwaters may seem to be insignificant, but from the point of view of the fruitfulness of the study of man's effort to rise superior to his surroundings and to create for himself a world of materials, beliefs and ideas wherein he can live harmoniously, they are very important, even though they may be failures.

G. S. GHURBYE.

THE INDIAN VILLAGE. (A TEN-YEAR PLAN.)

By K. S. VENKATARAMANI. (Svetaranya Ashram, Mylapore, Madras.) 1936. 9cm. 59p. As.8.

IF a poet's soul and a conjurer's wand can reconstruct the Indian village and solve the Indian problem, then this small booklet of Mr. Venkataramani has a useful purpose to serve. It is the vision of a poet perfectly portrayed. In the first chapter the author gives us a glorious picture of the Indian village as it was, but he thinks only of the villages on the banks of the Kaveri and not of those situated in the dry areas. In his appreciation of the deltaic villages he attributes to them what they had not, and in his enthusiasm for apparent calm and peace of village life, he forgets the waste, the autocracy, the injustice and the misery of the village life. He imputes to the slave-driving village order the appreciation of the communist prin-

...ciple of "to all according to their needs and from all according to their abilities." He says that the two measures of paddy doled out to the coolies is the soul-stirring cry and the world message of the Indian village to the world. Perhaps the author does not know that the two measures of paddy is the wages of the single male member of the family who has to feed many mouths, young and old. The two measures of paddy are the pittance doled out to the slave to keep his life and soul together and to work for his master, the master owning hundreds and thousands of velis of land, the master who might waste the produce or preserve it to rot. By no stretch of imagination can one

connect the higher ethical principle with the most unsocial tenure of land-holding. Even if the author attempts sheer poetry it cannot be so devoid of reality. In the next chapter the author descends to reality and lays bare the existing conditions and the defects of the Indian temperament. The chapter on Swaraj Constitution and the one on a Ten-year Plan are the product of loose thinking and contain nothing original. They can in no way help those faced with the rural problem. The author is reputed for his excellent presentation and the book provides interesting reading.

N. S. S.

RECONSTRUCTION OF INDIA.

MR. KUNZRU'S SPEECH.

THE RAJASAHAB OF SANGLI'S INTRODUCTION.

On the 1st inst. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, President, Servants of India Society, addressed a public meeting at Sangli on the above subject. In introducing him to the audience, the Rajasahab of Sangli, who presided on the occasion, said:

As you know, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Kunzru is a very senior member of the great Servants of India Society founded by the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale, than whom India knows no greater patriot. Mr. Kunzru belongs to that devoted and selfless band of workers, who have followed in the footsteps of Mr. Gokhale and toiled to awaken the national soul to a sense of its requirements and to reinforce its moral fibre. That Mr. Kunzru's colleagues of the Servants of India Society should have elected him as its President in succession to the late Mr. G. K. Devadhar is an eloquent testimony to the high estimation in which they hold his work. It would indeed be difficult for me to do adequate justice to the achievements of Mr. Kunzru in numerous spheres of public activity. Suffice it to say that whether as a member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces or as a member of the Imperial Legislative Assembly, whether in the sphere of the Benares University or of the requirements of Overseas Indians, and whether in India, England or in Africa, he has rendered to his motherland manifold service of a high order.

It is of great importance from the point of view of the progress and welfare of India as a whole that British Indian leaders of the eminence of our friend Mr. Kunzru and workers from Indian States should come together. Such visits are calculated to promote a comradeship between British India and the Indian States which is the great need of India at the present moment. If we have to overcome the many grave and difficult problems which we find facing us today, we have to be loyal to the bonds of comradeship and mutual help that unite us. In this connection there is deep down in my heart a conviction, which nothing can ever shake, namely, that if we look to the substance of things and not merely to the appearances of substance, there is essential unity between different parts of India, whether British or Indian. True co-operation between them is, therefore, bound to give renewed hope and renewed energy to encourage patriotic workers on either side to pursue the welfare of India as a whole with greater determination than ever before.

There is nothing that stands before us more clearly or poignantly than that there is need of giving the ordinary citizen, whether from British India or Indian States, direction and guidance which leaders of the country may so far as may be possible be in a position to offer for the hard and difficult problems which we have to solve. Among these none perhaps

is of more vital importance and more complicated or intricate than that of our future economic reconstruction. Less than ever can we isolate this problem. Activities in one part of India will react upon another more rapidly, more directly and more intimately than in any previous age. A change in the policy of the country will affect the fortunes of the remotest farm. India is a proverbially poor country, and there are many causes which have been at work to produce grave economic disturbances. We have, therefore, to see not only what the economic conditions of our country are but also what their mutual relations and reactions are. We have further to see what part each of the economic factors plays in the troubles of the time and along what lines we may seek some remedy or reform. We have in our friend Mr. Kunzru a close student of the affairs of the country. He has played an important part in our public life for over a quarter of a century. During that period he has participated in, or has been in intimate contact with, the attempts made to deal with our economic and financial problems, and he has further contributed in his own way to their solution. The example of other countries shows that with sufficient boldness and determination the road to reconstruction is not beyond finding and following. Their goal and their methods will not suit us, and we must therefore have our own goal and our own methods. In this connection I thought that we had in the visit of Mr. Kunzru a magnificent opportunity to be enlightened on the subject of the future reconstruction in India. I am sure a public speech of his is bound to be useful in leading men to dwell on the thoughts of service of their country and of help to one another.

SPEECH BY MR. KUNZRU.

Mr. Kunzru at the outset thanked His Highness for the very flattering terms in which he had spoken of the humble activities of the speaker and paid a tribute to His Highness for the enlightened sentiments to which he had given expression in his introductory remarks. The subject on which he had been asked to speak was too big to be adequately dealt with in all its details by any one man, but his task had been greatly lightened by the Rajasahab who had told them in a nutshell what their most important task in the immediate future would be and what should be the spirit that should animate British India and the States in trying to solve their common problems. He could do no better than make the excellent observations of the Rajasahab the text of his lecture.

Proceeding, Mr. Kunzru examined the constitutional structure to show how little it provided for the unity which the Rajasahab desired. In other countries federation was brought about by the need for united action on the part of separate states in matters of

common interest. In India, the unity that existed among the provinces had been deliberately broken in order to give the constitution a federal form. What the effect of such a step would be in our present economic condition on the development of such a subject as education, notwithstanding the revival of the Central Advisory Education Board, remained to be seen. He feared, however, that mass education would not for long be an accomplished fact if it continued to be regarded as the sole responsibility of the provinces.

Coming to the relations between British India and the Indian States, he said, want of unity was painfully clear. Further, the attitude of the Princes and the people of British India towards one another was one of suspicion and distrust. Notwithstanding the delicacy of the subject, he would speak frankly as he was certain that he would not be misunderstood by the Rajasahab. The Princes thought that the activities of British Indian politicians were directed to their elimination, and British India looked upon the Princes as an obstacle to Indian freedom. Indians were working not merely for self-government but for democracy. They wanted not to be ruled over by any class or classes but to rule over themselves. It was obvious then that their warmest sympathies would be with the people of the States in their struggle to obtain their constitutional rights. It was equally clear that the emancipation of the people of the States would be the surest guarantee of the progress of the country along the democratic path. It would also change the character of the federal constitution, which would become homogeneous and democratic in composition. Whatever extreme views a few Indian politicians may hold, no progressive party had asked for the abolition of the States, but every Indian was vitally interested in the success of the agitation for the constitutional rights carried on by the people of the States, and wished to help them to achieve their object. Indian Princes who clung to autocracy or tried to hoodwink the people by establishing legislative councils which were a farce were giving a bad name to the whole princely order. One must frankly admit that so long as such a state of things lasted the relations between the Princes and British India could not be harmonious. The atmosphere could be cleared only by a frank acceptance of the principles of constitutional government by the Princes.

Apart, however, from their sympathy with the people of the Indian States whose aspirations were similar to those of the people of British India, they were interested in the political education of the former as citizens of Greater India. The present constitution, which was unacceptable to them, must be radically altered before it would meet their needs and aspirations. Their ability to bring about the desired changes would depend entirely on the force of public opinion. As the constitution related to the whole country and not a part of it, in order to have the full force of public opinion behind them, they must place their views regarding the character and operation of the new Act not only before the people of British India but also before the people of the States. They had a moral right to do so. The federal constitution by implication imposed this duty on them. Mr. Kunzru had been criticised by some newspapers for saying this in his address at the Servants of India Society on the 12th June on the ground that it was a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of the States. The development of the political education of the people of the States in regard to federal matters is bound to enhance their consciousness of their rights as citizens of the States to which they belonged and to strengthen their demand for self-government. This could not, however, be a ground for objecting to their efforts to

rouse the political consciousness of the people of the States and to enlist their intelligent support on the side of national freedom. It only meant that India was one and indivisible, a fact the recognition of which made the Princes demand a share in the decision of certain all-India questions. To make the internal sovereignty of the Princes an excuse for the prevention of agitation in the States in favour of constitutional advance at the Centre would be a gross misuse of power and would only lead to unconstitutional developments. Mr. Kunzru was glad to find that His Highness welcomed the co-operation of the people of British India in all matters.

The question, continued Mr. Kunzru, should also be looked at from another angle. The establishment of the federation must enlarge their interests and widen their outlook. This was equally true of the people of the Indian States. The affairs of their own States would seem to them small in comparison with federal matters. It was a logical consequence of the new constitution that they should be freely given opportunities to be instructed equally with their compatriots in the various provinces in regard to federal developments. Their mental horizon having been deliberately broadened they could not be asked to content themselves with their old parochial affairs.

Mr. Kunzru then proceeded to discuss the urgent social and economic questions to which the Rajasahab had referred. He dwelt on the importance of education in the making of a new India and referred briefly to the efforts that were being made in other countries, including England, to improve education and make it an instrument for improving the mental and material condition of the people. He explained briefly the system followed in Mexico where the school was called the House of the People and was the centre of village life, educating and helping both grownup men and children. He then spoke about the needs of the villages and the agricultural and industrial problems which raised questions relating both to increase of production and a juster distribution of the national wealth.

Referring to the experiences of other countries, he said the policies followed by the Government of India had deepened the world-wide economic depression in this country and left them without resources. The currency policy of the Government had aggravated the misery of the people. He understood that the princes regarded it as a great grievance, yet he did not remember a single occasion when any prince supported the British Indian members of the R. T. C. in their demand for the same freedom to regulate their currency policy as was possessed by England. They submitted without protest to the restrictions imposed on the Federal Government in connection with currency policy and the Reserve Bank.

The burden imposed on the country by the present military policy of the Government was known to every one. The princes who were members of the Defence Sub-Committee of the first R. T. C. supported the other Indian members in their demands and made it clear that they did not hold the view that British troops must be maintained in India to protect their interests. Unfortunately this was the first and the last time when they took up so patriotic and enlightened an attitude. The progressive Indian members of the R. T. C. received no support from them on any other occasion. What was the explanation of their strange attitude on this and the currency question he did not know.

Mr. Kunzru wound up by saying that the difficulties in their way were great, but they would all be solved if they were prepared to subordinate their particular interests to the general

good. A great responsibility rested in this connection both on the princes and the propertied classes in India. Mr. Kunzru hoped that they would realise the wisdom of the observations

made by the Rajasaheb; but if they clung short sightedly to their powers and privileges they would increase the very dangers which they wanted to ward off.

S. I. SOCIETY'S REPORT FOR 1935-36. SOME PRESS OPINIONS.

THE Servants of India Society celebrated its 31st anniversary a fortnight ago. According to established custom it has issued an annual report. Of few organisations might it be said that an annual report is a superfluity, but the Servants of India Society may enjoy that privilege, as the judgment of the public upon its work. The addition of six members during the year to the small faithful band is a powerful testimony that, despite hard conditions of membership, the Society's ideals and programme inspire confidence in sincere youth who pledge devoted service to the country. It was wise to have outlined a varied programme for its members, for the call of the country is to men of widely different talents and aptitudes. Any of them can get the fellowship the Society offers. Its members are learned men, courageous fighters, and selfless workers. The Society has set up a greatly needed model for group service and for exemplary conduct under difficult conditions. Its foundations, once well and truly laid, continue to be strengthened from year to year. We wish more success to the Society in the future and more of inspiration for other men to build up similar organisations.—*The Guardian*.

UNDER the conviction that for further progress in the work of nation-building India required "the devoted labours of a specially trained agency applying itself to the task in a true missionary spirit", Mr. Gokhale, in June 1905, founded the Servants of India Society. The Society therefore celebrated its 31st anniversary last month. It has at present 29 members and 6 probationers. These members are whole-time, trained men who engage in political, social, economic and educational activities, with the ultimate view of helping to build up the Indian nation and attaining Dominion Status.

The political views of the Society may be described as Liberal and many of the members of the Society belong to the Liberal Party. Its immediate programme is to get all parties to unite in a common effort to have the Government of India Act speedily revised and secure the election of as many nationalist candidates as possible in the coming elections. Several of the members give much time to political propaganda, and the Report tells us that the Society's newspapers, the SERVANT OF INDIA, the *Hitavada* and the *Dnyan Prakash* "carried on unceasing propaganda against the new constitution." One member of the Society, Mr. N. M. Joshi, represents Labour in the Central Legislative Assembly; and another, Mr. Bakhale, represents the Labour interests in the Bombay Legislative Council. The Society also interests itself in the problems of Local Self-Government. Several of the members have specialized in Labour work, organizing the workers, becoming Secretaries of the Trade Unions, etc. Others have taken a very active part in the Co-operative Societies movement in different parts of the country, and in efforts at rural reconstruction. Many of the members give much service in connection with other independent organizations, such as the Seva Sadan, the Seva Samiti, the Social Service League, and societies ope-

rating for the uplift of the Depressed Classes. Work among the Criminal Tribes, temperance work, health propaganda and scouting are other activities in which the members of the Society take part. Attached to the Society is the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics which does research and teaching work under the direction of Mr. D. R. Gadgil. The Society meets its expenses partly from endowments and the profits of its printing presses at Poona, and partly from collections from the public. Mr. Kunzru has taken the place of the late lamented Mr. G. K. Devadhar as President of the Society while Mr. N. M. Joshi is Vice-President. We extend to the Society our cordial good wishes in the splendid work that it is doing to build the foundations of a strong, intelligent and progressive democracy in India.—*Dyanodaya*.

Correspondence.

DR. CHAMPAKRAMAN PILLAI.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes in his Autobiography as follows with regard to Dr. Champakraman Pillai:—

One of the exiles in Berlin whom I met, a prominent member of the old war-time group, was Mr. Champakraman Pillai. He was rather pompous, and young Indian students had given him an irreverent title. He could think in terms of nationalism only, and shrank away from the social or economic approach to a question. With the German nationalists, the steelhelmets, he was perfectly at home. He was one of the very few Indians in Germany who got on with the Nazis. A few months back, in gaol, I read of his death in Berlin.

I knew Dr. Pillai fairly well and met him both in 1921 and 1930, when I went to Berlin. Dr. Pillai was not pompous at all. He was the soul of courtesy and politeness and his gifts of erudition and eloquence were almost marvellous. Germans used to tell me that there were very few German speakers who could speak like Dr. Pillai. He was the representative of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Berlin and he rendered very good work for the cause of the Federation. His influence there was great, as several of our leading commercial people who visited Berlin at the time would testify. He disapproved of communism and socialism altogether, and hence Panditji's remark that "he shrank away from social or economic approach to a question". Panditji is doing him great injustice, when he says that "he was one of the very few Indians in Germany who got on with the Nazis." He was not on good terms at all with the Nazis, though he was with all the Governments which preceded the Hitler regime. When Herr Hitler made a remark at the time supporting British rule in this country, it was Dr. Pillai who strongly protested, and the former disagreement between him and Herr Hitler was intensified.

I hope you will kindly publish this letter in fairness to the memory of a great soul who is now dead.—Yours, etc.

ONE WHO KNEW DR. PILLAI

Bombay, July 3.