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Topics of the Week.

Overseas Indian Reciprocity Bill.

THE sanction of the Governor-General to the introduction of Mr. Govind Ballabh Pant's Bill in the Legislative Assembly has been just notified. The Bill is based on the generally accepted principle of reciprocity and authorises the Government to subject the nationals of a country which in any way discriminates against Indians to similar disabilities in India. If, e. g., Indians are debarred from holding public appointments, acquiring land, or freely engaging in trade or commerce in any country or a ban is placed on their entry into it, the imposition of like disabilities on the nationals of that country in India will be permitted when this enactment is placed on the statute book. It will thus be seen that under Mr. Pant's scheme India will never be in a position to take the initiative in the matter of discriminatory treatment in the case of any foreign nationals living in India; her doing so can only follow the enforcement of such unjust and iniquitous measures elsewhere. The principle underlying the Bill is thus unexceptionable and will, we hope, receive acceptance at the hands of the Legislative Assembly in due course.

THE rationale of the measure must be patent to every observer of contemporary affairs. In several parts of the British Empire Indians are subjected to the most humiliating disabilities and are treated as political and social outcasts. Should not India possess some means of expressing its resentment at such treatment other than the traditional ones of passing resolutions and making representations which more often than not are treated as no better

than waste paper? It may be that even by the enforcement of the reciprocity principle India will not be in a position in some cases to inflict any considerable amount of injury on the offending country. Even so the value of a gesture of anger on her part cannot be negligible in the eyes of the rest of the world.

A Harijan Home.

WE wish to draw the attention of the reader to the appeal for Rs. 100,000 issued by Munshi Iswar Saran, President of the Allahabad branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The amount will be spent on building a Harijan Home and its maintenance. The Home is intended to train men and women who will devote themselves to the work of social reform among touchables not less than among untouchables. The lines of their activity are thus indicated in the appeal: "They will try to convince the former that they must change their heart and make amends for their sins of the past; and the latter they will exhort to give up their inferiority complex and to strive to improve themselves in every way possible." Nay, more. The Home will provide "the environment in which through discipline and training both children and adults may have the opportunity of realising the best in them."

WE are pleased to find that the public response to this appeal so far is very encouraging. About twenty acres of land have been placed at the disposal of the organisers by the U. P. Government for a nominal rent. The plot is situated in a beautiful locality near Allahabad and will admirably serve the purpose for which it is intended. To the Home will be attached a dispensary to be developed into a hospital in course of time. For this Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has promised a handsome donation of Rs. 7,000 and another of Rs. 2,000 for the electrification of the Home. Other contributions so far received are stated to amount to about Rs. 10,000. It need hardly be added that the cause is deserving of the unstinted and cordial support of all philanthropically-minded people.

Anti-Indian Prejudice in Ceylon.

ANTI-INDIAN prejudice in Ceylon has expressed itself in a demand for restricting Indian immigration and the repatriation of Indian labourers. A resolution was recently moved in the Ceylon State Council which emphasised the need of legislation for the repatriation of the non-Ceylonese, which virtually means Indians. The justification for this strange demand was stated to be the increasing unemployment among Ceylonese. In the city of Colombo alone the number of the unemployed is stated to be about half a lakh. It was pointed out that non-Ceylonese,

by securing employment which Ceylonese are capable of undertaking, help to reduce the number of openings for the latter. If true, this would surely be matter for regret and some means to prevent this unfairness to the sons of the soil on the part of outsiders would have to be seriously thought of.

BUT we find from the *Times of Ceylon* that the description does not accord with facts. The point is not whether there is or is not unemployment among Ceylonese, but to what extent non-Ceylonese can be held accountable for its existence. If they had been undercutting local labour by accepting lower wages, the blame for helping to swell the ranks of the Ceylonese unemployed could be visited on them. But this is apparently not the case. As a matter of fact, according to this paper, an Indian domestic servant demands higher wages than his Ceylonese counterpart. If in spite of this he is preferred by the private employer, it is obviously because of his greater efficiency or the absence of a sufficient number of Ceylonese domestics.

THE lack of men for employment when unemployment is so rampant might sound paradoxical. The paradox is however thus explained by the paper :

This Island is producing a nation of misfits. It is an old story to which new chapters are being constantly added. The story began with the days when Ceylonese labour refused to engage themselves for work on the estates. This work would today absorb half a million Ceylonese if only they had the aptitude and the strength of purpose and character for it. But they will not take to it. They refused to do so even when they were driven to it by hunger in the worst days of the depression. There is no householder in Ceylon who would not employ a Ceylonese domestic servant in preference to a non-Ceylonese, if he were capable and willing. But Ceylonese despise such lowly occupations. With the little knowledge they have gained in schools they aspire to other forms of employment for which they are unfit. The work they can do they will not take and they hanker after what they cannot do. Therein lies the secret of much of the prevailing unemployment.

We hope the Government of India are being kept closely in touch with these unpleasant developments in Ceylon so as to enable them to take such action as may be demanded by the needs of the situation.

Labour for Assam.

THE Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act which superseded earlier legislation on the subject of labour for the tea plantations in Assam was passed in 1932 and came into force next year. Thus the report on its working during the year ending September 1934, published recently, is the first one of its kind. From this it appears that the recruitment in that year was in excess of that for the preceding year by nearly 9,000, the bulk of it taking place in Bihar and Orissa. During the year 72 licences were issued to local forwarding agents for recruitment in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Bombay, the C. P., Madras and U. P., no such applications being refused.

UNDER the Act such licences are granted only on the application of the employers and no such applications are entertained unless the Controller of Emigrant Labour is satisfied that the employer applying for the licence has made proper provision for "the forwarding, accommodation and feeding of assisted emigrants on their journey to the tea estates" where they are to work. The journeys themselves are so arranged that emigrating labourers are detained once every twenty-four hours to have a cooked meal outside the train and once in every

forty-eight hours for a rest of at least nine hours. This naturally serves to relieve the tedium of long journeys, especially in the case of children. Arrangements for medical relief are also made available at intervals in the course of these journeys.

IT is seen from the report that the supply of labour outran the demand and more labour was available than could be provided for. The report mentions many cases of deception practised on local forwarding agents by intending emigrants with a view to securing their passage to Assam. In one case, we are told, two lads dressed up as a married couple but were detected by the local forwarding agent and sent home. In another case two men who had been repatriated as undesirables got themselves recruited to another garden under false names. Their prosecution resulted in their being sentenced to a fine of Rs. 15 each. In this connection we can only sound the caution that before launching such prosecutions every possible care should be taken to make sure that the labourers were not seduced to the plantations on false pretences by interested parties. The caution is rendered doubly needful by the fact that there were during the year 64 cases of illegal and fraudulent recruitment. We are curious as to the manner in which such cases of misconduct were dealt with. Was this misconduct considered serious enough to deserve at least cancellation of licence?

Extension of Moratorium in Zanzibar.

THE moratorium in respect of debt payments by Arabs and natives in Zanzibar has been once more given a fresh lease of life. It may be recalled that when the obnoxious anti-Indian clove legislation was enacted in June 1934, a moratorium of a year's duration was declared. The Zanzibar Government hoped to produce its scheme for the permanent relief of agricultural indebtedness in the Colony before the year was out. That hope however was not realised and two further extensions, each of six months' duration, had to be secured from the Legislative Council. Thus, though two years have passed by during which what is essentially an emergency measure has been in force in Zanzibar, it is not yet certain when permanent measures for removing the indebtedness of the cultivator would become operative!

THE Zanzibar Government were thus once more under the necessity of coming before the Zanzibar legislature with a request for a further extension. This, as already stated, was granted by the Legislative Council. The new measure prolongs the life of the moratorium for a further period of half a year, but authorises the Government to bring it to an end sooner, if it should be possible to put the Government's scheme for permanent relief into operation before the stipulated period is over. It is apparently expected that the Colonial Secretary's sanction to its enforcement would be available much before the six-monthly period is over. We trust the expectation will now at least prove true.

THE delay in the receipt of the Secretary of State's sanction was officially stated to have been due to the necessity of his being required to give the most careful consideration to the representations made by the Government of India. While the assurance that the India Government's representations will receive their due weight at the hands of the Colonial Secretary is doubtless welcome, it is making too heavy a demand on Indian credulity to expect it to believe that the delay is to be ascribed, even largely, to that factor. But we suppose we need not take a

gloomy view of the matter, specially in view of the expectation that the introduction of the Zanzibar Government's proposals for relieving agricultural indebtedness is a near contingency.

* * *

Kenya Highlands: No Colour Bar.

INDIAN opinion both in Kenya and in this country will doubtless heave a sigh of relief that the threatened danger of the introduction of a legal colour bar in respect of European highlands in Kenya is happily past. It is not as if non-Europeans can even now acquire land in the areas reserved for Europeans. They cannot. But the prohibition is a matter of administrative practice and has no statutory sanction. In theory at least the Government is still at liberty to transfer land in the highlands to Indians and other non-coloured people, if it is so minded. That the practice is very different from the theory of the matter is a fact to which, however unpleasant, our countrymen there had no other alternative than to reconcile themselves.

* * *

BUT an administrative bar failed to satisfy the Kenya whites who agitated for its being given statutory recognition. Their agitation cannot indeed be said to have been altogether fruitless. For the Carter Commission which examined the problem in great detail recommended not only an extension of the area of the white highlands but its reservation for Europeans by law. This, it was suggested, should be done by the issue of an Order in Council.

* * *

IT is a matter for deep thankfulness that the Order in Council presented to Parliament last week does not impose any fresh legal disabilities on our countrymen, or on any other coloured persons for that matter. It only provides for the continuance of the existing administrative practice of excluding non-Europeans from the highlands. The Colonial Secretary, Major Ormsby-Gore, made it clear in the debate on the Order that there would be no legal colour bar in respect of the occupation of any portion of the highlands by persons other than of European descent. He deserves India's thanks his firmness in the face of strong European agitation.

THE STATES' PEOPLE'S PROBLEM.

DR. PATTABHISITARAMAYYA, the eminent Congress leader, who presided over the fifth session of the Indian States' People's Conference held at Karachi during the last week-end, showed in his speech a truer appreciation of the States' problem than any other Congressman, to our knowledge, and many others belonging to other parties have done so far. It is the fashion of most British Indian politicians, particularly of the Congress persuasion, to emit fire and brimstone against the British Government, because it is foreign, in their speeches, but to coo like doves before the Princes, for the reason, given by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai in his notorious speech in Mysore, that the States' people "are not burdened with foreign domination." They give little thought to the question whether the "native" domination of the Princes is not far more onerous than the foreign domination of the British Government. Dr. Pattabhi is under no such illusion. He does not consider it an integral part of patriotism to gloze over the atrocities perpetrated in the States, or to minimise the fatal defects in the federal constitution due to the inclusion in it of the Princes with all their autocracy left completely intact. On both these points his present utterance presents a refreshing contrast to the utterances of other Congress politicians, and we congratulate the States' People's Conference on electing him to the presidential chair this year. British Indians in general stand in great need of education on the subject of the States, but no political party needs a more intensive course of education than the Congress, and we hope that Dr. Pattabhi, now in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility in the Congress organisation, will go a long way in bringing light and reason in quarters where in general only darkness and blindness prevail.

Dr. Pattabhi sees no justification whatever for the rejection by this year's Lucknow Congress of an amendment moved in the interests of the States' people to the resolution which declared that "the

struggle for liberty within the States has, in the very nature of things, to be carried on by the people of the States themselves." The amendment only sought to modify the declaration to this extent that, while the main burden of the struggle must necessarily fall on the States' people, the Congress as a body should not disencumber itself from all responsibility for participating in such struggle. Dr. Pattabhi did well to disabuse the minds of Congressmen of the notion that "the States' people wanted or would want the Congress to fight their battles." The States' people, through the Working Committee of their Conference, have made it clear that they want nothing more than "recognition by the Congress of its duty to give active help ... in their struggle for political freedom as the resources available to the Congress would permit of such help being given." Their demand "leaves to the Congress unfettered judgment as to the particular struggle in which it may give active support to the States' people, but only asks for an unambiguous enunciation of the principle that, the British Indian people and the States' people being common members of the Congress, it shall not discriminate between the two, giving active help to the former and reserving only moral sympathy for the latter." Dr. Pattabhi gives a history of the Congress relationship with the States' people. When the Congress was reorganised in 1920, the States' people were for the first time admitted into it as of right and not on sufferance, subject, however, to the proviso that their admission did not imply readiness of the Congress for interference in the internal affairs of the States. This proviso was taken out in 1928, and by its removal the Congress as it were served notice on the Princes that their rule would receive its attention just as much as British rule. But, as Dr. Pattabhi remarks, "political announcements of policy which are gushing and generous are, as the time comes for their realisation, apt to be circumscribed and halting." Now the Congress boggles even when it is a question of admitting a

moral duty to be performed solely at its own discretion and to the extent to which in its own judgment it deems it desirable! The Working Committee of the States' People's Conference well says: "By the resolution adopted at the last session on this subject the Congress in effect reverts to its former policy of non-intervention in States' affairs, in order to undo which the Congress altered its constitution in 1928 at Calcutta and admitted the States' people in its fold. Unless this policy of non-intervention is reversed, the Congress will again become a British Indian Congress," drawing away from the hem of the States' people's raiment so as not to be contaminated.

Omission of a reference to another demand preferred by the States' people to the Congress is to be noted in Dr. Pattabhi's speech, a demand, namely, for "a promise to include in the constituent assembly, if and when one is convoked, the representatives of the States' people on a footing of equality with the representatives of British India." A proposal to this effect was moved in the Subjects Committee of the last Congress, but was heavily defeated. This demand too is very simple. It does not ask that a constituent assembly shall be called for the purpose of formulating a constitution for an all-India federation. The Congress itself is again to determine the circumstances in which such an assembly should be convened; it would even be free to decide, if it considers it advisable, that the assembly should not be called at all. All that the Congress would be bound to do, if it accepts the States' people's demand, is to give the same rights to the States' people as it would do to British Indians on the constituent assembly if it comes to be called for the purpose of framing a federal constitution. The only thing that the Congress will not be able to do is to discuss the question of federation with British Indians elected on an adult suffrage on the one hand and with the Princes on the other and then present the constitution that would emerge from this discussion to the country as a constitution which it should accept. We have no doubt that Dr. Pattabhi considers this demand to be eminently reasonable. The only reason we can conceive of why in his speech he does not support it is that probably he has no faith in the constituent assembly. If so, he is not the only person even in the Congress ranks who thinks that the constituent assembly is a will-o'-the-wisp, to run after which is madness. His disbelief in this part of the Congress programme is revealed by his statement that "the Government of India Act has been rejected by the Congress, and let us hope that the Congress will be as good as its word." He seems to have grave doubts (and we sympathise with him) about the Congress in fact implementing rejection. Anyway there is no reason why the Congress, believing in the advisability and feasibility of a constituent assembly, should not declare here and now that the right of framing a constitution belongs in the case of the States to the people of the States and not their rulers as it has declared that the right in the case of British India belongs to the people of British India and not its rulers.

Dr. Pattabhi, while free with criticism of the

Congress, tries to make out that Mahatma Gandhi is thoroughly impeccable in this matter. The truth, however, is that he is the *fons et origo* of all mischief in connection with the States. It is he that is responsible for making the Congress adopt an uncompromising policy towards the British Government and a pusillanimous policy towards the States. Mr. Bhulabhai Desai only puts crudely what the Mahatma puts with subtle ingenuity. It is the Mahatma that restrains the Congress from insisting upon popular representation of the States in the federal legislature. Dr. Pattabhi picks out what appear on their face to be favourable passages from his speeches at the Round Table Conference in 1931 and prints them in black type in his own presidential address. But he leaves out the passages which have been the rock of offence to the States' people. What precisely was the Mahatma's position in regard to election of the States' representatives in the federal legislature? Did he insist upon it as a matter of right? Did he make it an essential condition of federation? No, he only pleaded with the Princes for an introduction of "elements" of representation of their subjects, but was prepared to leave the final decision in the matter to the Princes. As so much is being said about this subject either in ignorance or with a deliberate desire to exonerate the Mahatma, we might be allowed once again to go into the history of the question at some length. Dr. Ambedkar, the doughty fighter on behalf of democracy, had spoken before the Mahatma did on the question of the States' representation. He had said:

With all respect to the Princes, I am afraid I cannot agree with them (in their demand for being permitted to nominate their representatives in the federal legislature), and I must insist that their representation shall be by election. . . . We are framing a constitution for establishing a system of responsible government for India. It follows from this that no concession can be made, no scheme can be adopted, if ultimately it is found that that concession or that scheme is going to compromise the system of responsibility or is going to whittle down the system of responsibility at which we are all aiming. Applying that test, it follows that you cannot consent to the claim of the Princes for nomination of their representatives in either House.

Sir Sultan Ahmed and Mr. Gavin Jones followed Dr. Ambedkar and they dissented from this opinion. Sir Sultan said: "This Committee can do no better than to leave this matter (of nomination or election of the States' representatives) entirely in the hands of the Princes." Mr. Jones used almost the same words. He said: "As to the method of their appointment (viz. the appointment of the States' representatives) I think we must leave that entirely to the Indian States." Between these two sets of views which might a champion of the States' people and an "unadulterated democrat" as Gandhiji called himself be expected to support—to insist as an indispensable condition of federation upon the election of the States' representatives or to leave it "entirely" to the decision of the Princes? Gandhiji lent his weighty support to the latter and repudiated the former.

The words that Mahatma Gandhi used on this occasion we print here in small type, but they are worth printing in ten times thicker type than Dr. Pattabhi has used for other passages in his speech

which he has selected for quotation. The Mahatma said :

That being so (we being an ill-assorted group at the Round Table Conference), I could not but endorse the opinion given by Sir Sultan Ahmed, which was perhaps emphasised by Mr. Gavin Jones, that the utmost that we can do is to plead with the States, and show them our own difficulties. At the same time I feel that we have to recognise their special difficulties also. Therefore I can only venture a suggestion or two to the great Princes for their sympathetic consideration; and I would urge this, being a man of the people, from the people, and endeavouring to represent the lowest classes of society—I would urge upon them the advisability of finding a place for these also in any scheme that they may evolve and present for the acceptance of this Committee. I feel, and I know, that they have the interests of their ryots at heart. . . . The Princes, be it said to their credit, when they declared themselves frankly and courageously in favour of federation, claimed also to be of the same blood with us—claimed to be our own kith and kin. How could they do otherwise? There is no difference between them and us except that we are common people and they are—God has made them—noblemen, Princes. I wish them well; I wish them all prosperity; and I also pray that their prosperity and their welfare may be utilised for the advancement of their own dear people, their own subjects. Beyond this I will not go. I cannot go. I can only make an appeal to them.

Mahatma Gandhi can seldom hold any but minatory language to British rulers; but the utmost that he could be persuaded to do to the native rulers is to be exhortatory to them. The difference in this behaviour is solely to be explained by the fact that the first are foreign and the second are Indian, for even he will be unable to deny that his "great" Princes are far more tyrannical than the British Government. If Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's statement which he made about the Liberal Party, that their self-government consists merely in the replacement of white-skinned by black-skinned administrators, is true of any one politician in India it is true of the Mahatma. He is much more of a nationalist than anything else—either a democrat or even a Mahatma. (In the case of safeguarding the elementary rights of citizenship of the Indian States' people also, he could only plead with the Princes, meaning thereby that he would not make it an essential condition of federation.) In order to exalt Mahatma Gandhi's performance at the Round Table Conference, Dr. Pattabhi says that "Mahatmaji gave assurances at the time, based upon the promises of Bikaner and Bhopal, that the States' people would get adequate representation direct in the federal legislature without its being provided for in the Act." How exiguous the basis of this assurance is on the part of the Mahatma will be realised when it is seen just what Bikaner's and Bhopal's promise was. H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner said: "I have no doubt that we shall have some method by which the Bikaner Legislative Assembly will have a voice in the selection of our representative in the Lower House. But I am giving my personal view; I want to make that clear. His Highness of Bhopal wishes me to say that he shares exactly my sentiments in regard to his State, where he also has a Legislative Council." Sardar Ujjal Singh was carried away by enthusiasm of the moment and thought that the Princes of two States at any rate "were prepared to let their Assemblies select members for the Lower

House." The Maharaja corrected him at once. They were prepared, he said, only "to have a voice in the selection." If on this slender foundation the Mahatma gave any assurance to the States' people, he did something which clearly he had no right to do. Dr. Pattabhi goes even further. "The Princes indicated," he said, "that, if the Congress could wrest its scheme from the British, they would not be backward in granting direct representation to the States' people in the federal legislature." His object is to show that, mainly owing to the Mahatma's exertions, the "great" Princes came within an ace of accepting all the States' people's demands. The truth is that the Princes were completely satisfied, on (we have good reason to believe) private assurances given by the Mahatma, that, however much he might harry the British Government, he would not make upon them demands which they would feel embarrassing in any way. The Mahatma did nothing to protect, but everything to betray, the States' people's interests. Mahatmaji is a great man, and his betrayal too was correspondingly great. If one wants to test this matter, one might make a suggestion. We are told that the Mahatma persuaded the Princes to agree to the election of the States' representatives in the federal legislature "if the Congress could wrest its scheme from the British." The Congress has not succeeded in wresting its scheme from the British, but need the Princes substitute nomination for election because the British Government has failed in its duty? If the Mahatma has the Princes in his pocket, as Dr. Pattabhi would make us believe, why should he not use his powers of persuasion with them and retain the promised election of their "dear" people even though his plans with the British Government have gone away? We should have liked the Indian States' People's Conference to pass a resolution to the following effect on this subject :

This Conference notes with satisfaction the undertaking obtained by Mahatma Gandhi from the rulers of Indian States that, provided he obtained satisfaction of his demands from the British Government, they would concede direct representation to the people of the States in the federal legislature, and makes an urgent appeal to the Mahatma, who has a tremendous influence with the Princes, to persuade them to waive this condition and to declare their willingness to appoint to the federal legislature as their own representatives such men as are elected by their subjects, although the British Government has refused to comply with his demands in so far as British India is concerned.

The federal legislature is going to remain in existence for some time. It will not be broken as soon as Mr. Satyamurti enters it and accepts office. Let the Mahatma therefore try to cure federation while it exists at any rate of one of its most serious defects.

Barring this one matter, however, viz. his weakness for the Mahatma, Dr. Pattabhi's address is wholly satisfactory. Some criticisms on the part of Congressmen he has answered very effectively. "The question has been tauntingly put" to the States' people, he says, "whether the bulk of their activities have not for their places outside the States, and why the States' People's Conference itself does not hold its sessions in the States themselves. May we not respectfully ask in turn why the Indian National Congress

which has declared that it 'stands for the same political, democratic and civil liberties for every part of India' has not held even one of its sessions in a State?" His advice to the States' people not to neglect even the "methods of petition, prayer and protest," derided

by Congressmen, will, we hope, have a salutary effect upon Congress-minded workers in the cause of the States' people. Theirs is an up-hill task, and in attempting it, no means, however humble they may be, are to be dismissed as of no consequence.

THE PALESTINE TROUBLES.

THE disturbances which broke out in Palestine on 19th April last bring to the fore once again the troubled situation that has always existed in the country between Arabs and Jews. These disorders were of a grave character and have done much damage. The origin of the present unrest was, as was explained by Col. Clifton Brown in the House of Commons on 19th June, "a mere robbery, in which three Jews were killed in a bus. Others in the bus wrecked a shop. Instead of waiting some time in order that the forces of law and order might arrest the murderers, some of those young students in Palestine went out one night, found two unfortunate Arabs sleeping in a tent and shot them. Before the Arabs died, the murderers were identified as Jews. There was then a blood feud—a life for a life, a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye." The Arabs called a political strike, which was joined in by all classes; the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, admitted that it had "the full sympathy of all too large a part of the Arab population." The Christian Arabs too took part in it. An attempt was made to paralyse all activity. Raids by armed men, attacks on railways and telegraphs, destruction of crops, cutting of trees, incendiarism, arson, snipings, bomb-throwings followed, and the Palestine Government adopted drastic measures for the restoration of order. A curfew law was clamped down, parades of infantry with armed tanks were staged, eight battalions of troops were drafted from Egypt, regulations were issued imposing the death penalty for using arms against the Forces even where no one was killed, collective fines were imposed, punitive police was levied, concentration camps were set up, sweeping powers of house search and confiscation of property were assumed. The situation has now been brought under control, but it only brings into relief the almost perpetual strife that exists in Palestine between the people who have lived in that country for about 1,500 years and those who are being imported into it for the last fifteen years under a mandate.

The Arab strike is nothing short of revolt; it is not the outcome of any particular grievances so much as of a desire to bring the mandate itself to an end. The British Government has announced its intention, after order is completely restored, to appoint a Royal Commission to go into all the grievances of the Arabs about land settlement and immigration of the Jews, etc., without however bringing into question the terms of the mandate itself. The Commission may be able to straighten out British policy in regard to the vexed question of the number of Jewish immigrants who may be admitted into Palestine and the amount of land which they may be allowed to purchase, for on these vital questions no fixed policy has yet been

adopted, in spite of previous investigations by commissions and committees. The new Royal Commission's findings, if far-reaching enough, may ameliorate the situation somewhat, but the essential antithesis between the aspirations of Arab nationalism and of political Zionism cannot be resolved, for these aspirations are irreconcilable. There can be no doubt that Jewish enterprise and initiative have developed the country in a marvellous way and that this development has brought about a considerable improvement in the economic position of the Arabs themselves. The Arab nationalists also would not deny this. Wages have increased by nearly 200 per cent., which has caused a large immigration of some 15,000 to 25,000 Arabs from Egypt, Transjordan, Syria and Iraq (the present strength of Arab Moslems being 750,000). Jewish capital from all over the world has been largely expanding agriculture and industry, and the Arabs are sharing in the resulting prosperity. The import surplus of Palestine has increased by 300 per cent. during the last five years (from 4 to 13 million Palestine pounds), showing the inflow of Jewish capital. Trade has undergone considerable increase, the exports from England having risen from £1 in 1922 to £4.5 millions in 1935, with the result that the Government has a surplus of over £6 millions, about two years' revenue. Large tracts of land which lay unused before have been brought under cultivation by the draining of swamps and terracing of hills, and modern methods of agriculture have increased the productivity of land. In 1922 1,250,000 orange cases were exported from Palestine; their number increased to 7,500,000 in 1935 and is expected to become 15,000,000 in 1937. Nor is it to be supposed that every acre of land that comes into the possession of Jews is one which is necessarily taken away from Arabs. For instance, the Government has announced plans for the drainage of 10,000 acres, nearly two-thirds of which will be given over to Jews and one-third to Arabs, but this will be new land made available for settlement. Thus, while in 1924 the orange lands in the hands of Arabs amounted to 22,000 metric kilometers, they amounted to 116,000 in 1934. The death-rate among Arabs has gone down, mainly on account of the sanitation introduced by Jews, from 31.4 in 1927 to 22.3 in 1934, and infantile mortality from 213 to 146. All these facts go to show that Arabs also have shared in the benefits which Jewish immigration has brought to the country, though in some respects adverse effects too have been experienced.

The present population of Palestine is less than a million; at one time it was about twice as much, and it is calculated that, with the introduction of intensive agriculture, the country will be able to sup-

port some three million people in decency and comfort. Thus there is room for both Jewish and Arab communities to live happily together if only they have the will to do so. But what makes this almost impossible is the extreme claim of Arab nationalism on the one hand and political Zionism on the other. And both factors are exceedingly strong. It is not as if Arabs alone cause the difficulty; Jews also have contributed just as much. Take, for instance, the statement of such a responsible politician as the Chairman of the Zionist Commission in Palestine, Dr. Eder:

There can be only one National Home in Palestine and that a Jewish National Home, and no equality in partnership between Jews and Arabs but a Jewish predominance as soon as the members of the race are sufficiently increased.

Lest this be taken as an extreme statement not approved of by the Jewish community as a whole we give below a passage from a speech which Lord Melchett, a moderate Jew, made in the House of Lords on 26th February this year in protesting against the Government's plan of establishing a Legislative Council in Palestine consisting of 5 official members, 11 nominated unofficial members (Moslems 3, Christians 2, Jews 4 and commercial interests 2) and 12 elected unofficial members (Moslems 8, Christians 1 and Jews 3). This will give Moslems 11 seats, Christians 3 and Jews 7. Jews all over the world protested that Arabs should be offered 14 seats as against 7 to Jews. But what is the proportion of all these races in the population? There are 725,000 Moslems; 100,000 Christians and 320,000 Jews. Can one say that the proportion is unfair? But look at what Lord Melchett says:

We take the view that we cannot put ourselves in a minority in a National Home. A minority status of the Jewish people is neither novel nor singular. It has lasted for centuries and it is world-wide. But if "National Home" is to have a real meaning we cannot of our own volition and free will accept a minority status there.

The Jewish demand, therefore, is either that they should be given a parity of representation on the Legislative Council, or, better still, that no Legislative Council should be set up till Jews outnumber or at least equal Arabs. Jews accuse Arabs of a dog-in-the-manger policy in regard to land settlement: cannot they themselves be accused of the same policy in regard to political development? If Arabs say: "Let not land be developed at such a furious rate with the help of foreign capital and foreign labour; let this process wait till we ourselves can do it", Jews say: "Let no representative institutions be established till we can dominate them." Each race looks to its own interests, and not to the interests of the community as a whole.

The old Jewish colonists did not inspire any fear in the mind of the Arab population; the two communities lived at peace with one another. But things have completely changed with the enormous influx within recent years of Jews of very expansionist ambitions. The cruel persecution of the race in Germany and Poland has added largely to the volume of Jewish exodus. For the last three years the immigration of Jews into Palestine has been at the rate of about 50,000 a year, and in 1935 it was as much as

62,000 (53 per cent. of these coming from Poland and 10 per cent. from Germany). They form now 30 per cent. of the total population. Till 1930 the area of land acquired by Jews amounted to 900,000 metric dunams or 16 per cent. of the cultivable area. During the last six years they have acquired additional 228,855 dunams. The land purchased by the Jewish National Fund, which now amounts to one quarter of the land in Jewish possession, is held as the inalienable property of the Jewish people, and in all colonies of the Zionist Organisation only Jewish labour is employed. Land thus acquired is permanently removed from the resources of Arabs, and Jews are solidified by making a closed community of them. Is it any wonder that Arabs have become nervous? Their fears were well described by a member in the House of Commons in the debate mentioned above:

They are terrified that the mandate means an unlimited expansion of Jewish immigration, that in the end the Jews are going to swamp the country, and that the Arabs are going to become a secondary community in a land which is their own native land by historic right. Is it not possible for the Government now to say that the mandate does not mean that the population of Palestine is to consist solely of Jews, that there must be a limit, that the Royal Commission which is to be sent to Palestine will be fully entitled to recommend a limit, and that, if such a limit is recommended, the Government will do their level best to secure that it is adhered to?

That, indeed, is the question before the Royal Commission. It will have carefully to go into the question whether the Jewish cultivation in Palestine is really economic, and whether the orange and grape fruit trade, which forms at present 80 per cent. of Palestinian exports, has an assured future. "The capital cost of the Jewish cultivation is enormous," as was said by Col. Clifton Brown, "and may not be the most economic for the country as a whole." Having determined this, the Commission must consider whether a limit should not be put upon Jewish immigration and land purchase in the interests of Arabs and if so, at what point.

One other important question must be adverted to here. All such long-range economic planning necessarily involves Palestine not only retaining the position of a mandated country but being under close British supervision for a long time to come. Iraq's mandate has been terminated; Syria is moving towards self-government; and is Palestine alone, though placed in the category of A mandates, to be treated as one belonging to the B mandate class of countries? Is it to be indefinitely under Britain's political control and not to obtain independence in the near future? That will suit Britain very well. Lord Balfour's Declaration of 1917, which was later incorporated in the mandate, was itself dictated by the desire to attach Jews to the cause of the Allied and Associated Powers. Mr. Lloyd George has said so often enough before, and he repeated it in the debate on 19th June last.

Let me recall the circumstances to the House. At the time the French army had mutinied, the Italian army was on the eve of collapse and America had hardly started preparing in earnest. There was nothing left but Britain confronting the most powerful military combination the world has ever seen. It was important for us to seek every

legitimate help we could get. We came to the conclusion, from information received from every part of the world, that it was vital we should have the sympathies of the Jewish community. In these circumstances and on the advice which we received we decided it was desirable to secure the sympathy and co-operation of that most remarkable community, the Jews throughout the world. They were helpful in America and in Russia, which at that moment was just walking out and leaving us alone . . .

In these conditions we proposed this to our Allies. France accepted it, Italy accepted it, and the United States accepted it, all the other Allies accepted it, and all the nations which constitute the League of Nations accepted it. And the Jews—I am here to bear testimony to the fact—with all the influence they possess responded nobly to the appeal which was made. I do not know whether the House realises how much we owe to Dr. Weizmann with his marvellous scientific brain. He absolutely saved the British army at a critical moment when a particular ingredient which was essential we should have for our great guns was completely exhausted. His great chemical genius enabled us to solve that problem. But he is only one out of many who rendered great services to the Allies. It is an obligation of honour which we undertook, to which the Jews responded. We cannot get out of it without dishonour.

Out of the 14 million Jews in the world, 7 millions were in Russia and 3 millions in the United States. The Declaration of Lord Balfour, promising a National Home for the Jews in Palestine, was not inspired by any humanitarian motives, in order to help Jews who are being treated as lepers and outcasts, but by the motive of linking the Jewry in the world to the Allied side by hoops of steel. It was a war-bargain. And even now the Jewish cause is being supported by British statesmen out of imperialist motives. Mr. Amery said on 24th March, 1936 :

In these days when defence problems are uppermost in our minds, we cannot forget the immense importance of Palestine as the effective air centre of the British Imperial system, not only from the point of view of protecting the Suez Canal and of guarding the Eastern Mediterranean, but from the point of view of our communications with India and the East. Palestine offers the very outlet to

the Mediterranean for oil supplies under British control. Who knows whether we shall have access to American supplies in future? The importance of Haifa, both as an oil base and as a general naval base, more secure than Malta would be in certain circumstances, is very great. If we had in Palestine a prospering and developing community bound to this country by ties of gratitude, influenced by the fact that we have made an ancient dream come true, the effect would surely be well worth keeping in mind.

Once again, on 19th June, Mr. Amery dilated upon the strategic importance of Palestine in the new Mediterranean situation and as affording an alternative route to the Suez Canal. He said :

In defence Palestine occupies a strategic position of immense importance. It is the Clapham Junction of all the air routes between this country, Africa and Asia. It occupies an immensely important naval station in the new conditions in the Mediterranean. Cyprus, Palestine and Egypt, effectively held, would make it possible not only to keep open the Suez Canal, but to hold the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean. While it is true that we are not allowed under the Mandate to maintain a naval base in Palestine, yet Haifa, developed as one of the greatest ports and industrial centres in the Mediterranean and a great source of oil supplies which might not be available to us from elsewhere in time of war, would be an asset of immense consequence. There is also the possibility of railway communications between Haifa and Akaba giving us an alternative route to the Suez Canal.

Nobody wants the Jews to be left unaided in their dire distress; we at any rate would like them to be given all the help which it is possible to give in Palestine consistently with the legitimate interests of the Arabs. How far this help can be given is a matter for determination, but it must be determined without any imperialist bias. When this is done it would be possible for outsiders to appeal to Arabs to take a broad view of the situation, but for the present at any rate it is clear that the British Government's policy is animated by motives not wholly disinterested or even worthy.

INDIAN LABOUR IN BRITISH GUIANA.

THE Government are entitled to thanks for taking serious notice of the recurrent troubles on the Sugar Estates and appointing a Commission of Enquiry with wide terms of reference.

The character of the Commission, however, might have been different. A judicial commission is appropriate when both parties to a dispute are on a level, as it were, and both are able to present their cases and defend their interests. In the present case, the Indian labourers on the Estates are unorganized, un-influential and without resources and apprehend victimization. The Commission itself must supply what the weaker party is unable to supply.

If this need could not be met locally, the Government of India might have been invited to depute one of its own experts to sit on the Commission or at least to assist the Indian labourers to present their case, even as Sir Benjamin Robertson was sent to South Africa and the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri to East Africa.

Investigation of complicated economic questions needs the assistance on the Commission of economic

experts. The South African Wage Commission had Prof. Clay as its chairman, if memory serves right.

A partial examination of the evidence presented specially by the planters and Government officials makes it fairly clear that the claim of the managers that the relations between themselves and their estate labourers were cordial is rather untenable. The managers, with striking, almost suspicious, unanimity, asserted that the strikes took them by surprise, that even their Indian drivers who enjoyed their confidence, were unaware of the impending strikes, that the strikes were due to outside instigation, and that they were organized. It is somewhat of a strain on one's credulity to be told that the unorganized Indian labourers on the Estates were able overnight to organize strikes on the Estates and that too so secretly that even the Indian drivers had no inkling of it.

It is also noteworthy that the troubles were initiated by the "creole gangs" who form the younger generation, more familiar with modern conditions of

labour than the old immigrants from India. The managers, on the other hand, were mostly of the older generation, brought up in the traditions of indentured labour.

Of the grievances and demands of the labourers some were conceded by the managers. Those who did so, contended that they conceded the claims because they were just and not because of the pressure of the strikes. Their own complaint was that the labourers resorted to the method of strike instead of approaching them in their offices in the ordinary way.

As regards the nature of the grievances, almost all those referred to in the Pillai-Tiwari Report in 1922 were there in 1935. In some respects the situation has grown worse. The statutory safeguards in favour of labourers contained in the Immigration Ordinance have ceased to operate: hours of work, inspection of the Immigration Agent General, the keeping of prescribed accounts, etc.

Apart from individual variations with each Estate, the general complaints have been insufficiency of wages, fixing wage-rates after work had commenced, abuse of labourers and particularly of their women. It has been admitted that almost all the overseers, who are recruited from Great Britain, were bachelors on the Estates. The grievance about the time for wage-fixing has also been generally admitted.

The question of adequacy of wages is disputed. It has been contended that wages have not been reduced and that the finances of the sugar industry do not permit of a general increase of wages. According to Mr. M. B. Laing, the District Commissioner, the wage returns supplied by the managers have no statistical value. It is admitted that the decline of Sugar Estates and the rice industry in the Essiquibo Coast has led to an exodus of labour from that country seeking work on the sugar plantations on the East Coast and the Corentyne Coast. The Commissioner of Essiquibo estimated that in 1934 about 25 per cent. of the East Indians in that country, who numbered 11,000 according to the Census of 1931, emigrated to other Sugar Estates temporarily for employment. Unless the contrary is proved, this is presumptive evidence for the view that wages have declined on the Sugar Estates.

From the labour point of view it is contended that in cases where the *wage-rates* for task work have not been reduced, the tasks themselves have been increased.

In the case of those who had rice cultivation to supplement estate labour, the recent fall in the price of rice has reduced their total income, granting that the wages from estate labour remained constant. The total income of the labourers is not so great as to leave a margin which is dispensable without hardship.

It is also admitted that the standard of life of the labourers has been rising, particularly of the creole labour. Increasing efficiency in the enforcement of the Compulsory Education Ordinance has been depriving the household of the earnings of child labour.

These seem to indicate that the earnings of labour are inadequate.

The question whether the Sugar industry can pay better wages is difficult to judge without information which is not generally available. Even if the Sugar Estates were to show losses, it is not conclusive proof that the industry cannot pay better wages. It is necessary to have correct information as to the financial position of the managing agents and holding companies which, financially speaking, run the estates, as it were. In the absence of full and accurate information on these points, the benefit of doubt must be given to the labourer.

It has been maintained by the planters that they pay the same rate of wages to labourers resident on their estates and to non-resident labourers. The resident labourer has, besides other privileges, free housing, free medical aid, sometimes rice lands and grazing lands free or on reduced rents. It has been estimated by a very experienced manager that these extra privileges amounted to some \$36 per head per year. At the same time the managers do not lay claim to being philanthropic persons; they claim to be business people. And yet they continue to incur an extra expenditure of \$36 per head per annum in these hard days on account of resident labourers when they might save it by employing non-resident labourers.

The explanation for this seems to lie in the admission of a manager before the Commission that there was an understanding that resident labourers, men and women, should furnish labour to the estates for a certain number of days a week, whether they like it or not. If women do not turn up for work, their menfolk are fined and the families evicted from their homes. The Chairman of the Labour Disputes Commission enquired of Mr. Laing if the only difference between indentured labourer and free labourer today was that the indentured labourer could have been prosecuted for not turning out for work, while the free labourer of today was entirely dependent upon the estate for his house, his rice land and his cattle facilities. Mr. Laing said yes. There is reason to believe that while the indentured system is gone legally, it continues in reality. And what is worse, only the safeguards in favour of labour under that system have disappeared.

It has been claimed that during recent years great improvements have been made in the living conditions of resident labourers on the estates; raised ranges, individual cottages, artesian wells, lavatories with septic tanks, cricket fields, light railways, school buildings. The Sugar Estates are entitled to due thanks for such improvements as have been made in these respects, particularly when it is remembered that these improvements were effected when the Sugar industry, according to its owners, was in a bad way.

Qualitative statements are, however, inadequate and sometimes misleading. If, for instance, there are some forty cottages while there are needed some four hundred cottages to house all the resident population, it is rather a misleading generalization to say that housing has greatly improved, for that would give an impression that the great majority of labourers are now housed in modern cottages. Further, it is necessary to note the rate of progress. Or, it may be

said that these forty cottages are meant to act as window-dressing. On some estates the new houses are given to fresh recruits while the resident population continues to be housed in the old ranges. It is also contended that, notwithstanding the privileges given to the resident population, the tendency is for all those who have saved enough money to move out of the estates. As one planter said, the labourers outside the estates feel more "independent."

From all these considerations, the conclusion seems to be irresistible that the relations between the management and labour on the Sugar Estates are far from being cordial or satisfactory, and that labour is discontented for one legitimate reason or other, that labourers fear to make individual representations to the managers, that they are unorganised and that they suffer their grievances quietly until some crisis arises and gives them a chance to give expression to them without much fear of victimization, and that in the absence of or pending the organization of efficient labour unions, they need some body to look after their interests.

The revival of the post of a whole-time agent-general of immigration, useful as it may be, is not the best solution. The better one is to have an agent of the Government of India in British Guiana, accredited not only to the Government of British Guiana but also to the Government of Trinidad and Surinam. Being himself an Indian, the Indian labourers will more readily approach him for advice and guidance. His constant presence and timely intervention will stave off crises before they arise. His advice will be available to the Governments to whom he is accredited. Local Indian communities will find in him a guide, friend and philosopher, who will not, however, supersede their own initiative and independence. The Government and the people of India will get regular and periodical reports containing accurate information and responsible advice.

P. KODANDA RAO.

Review.

DICTATORSHIP vs. DEMOCRACY.

DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRACY. By JOHN A. R. MARRIOTT. (Oxford University Press.) 1935. 22cm. 231p. 10/—

THOSE who turn to this book for practical guidance in dealing with the current controversy between dictatorship and democracy are likely to be disappointed. The author, being primarily a historian, is not much interested in presenting a case for or against democracy or dictatorship or some intermediary form of government. He is not even interested in suggesting practical ways and means by which both democracy and dictatorship can be made safe for the world. His chief concern is to *explain* dictatorship as a present phenomenon.

The bulk of the book is taken up with tracing the history and constitution of countries ranging from Greek democracies to modern dictatorships. In particular, it deals with the Greek *tyrannies*, the Roman dictatorship, the mediaeval city state oligarchy, the Tudor dictatorship, the evolution of democracy—

direct, parliamentary, and presidential—and the three principal types of modern dictatorships—the Russian, Italian and German. The material presented is all too familiar to the student of history, and there is not much that is new or original. The book seems also to lack in interpretation and, for that reason, fails to give the reader a distinct point of view for his consideration. It is true that the historian is expected to be altogether impartial and not pass judgments upon the events which he narrates. However, it is well to remember that it is easy to overdo this requirement of the historian. The need of the hour is for a combination of the historical sense with the highest moral judgment. The prevailing tendency of the day, to make the end justify the means, is to some extent found in the volume under consideration, especially in those chapters which deal with Fascism and Nazism. While the author is not an apologist for either of these systems, he seems to prefer them to the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

The author approvingly quotes Aristotle to the effect that, in the realm of government, there is no 'absolute best', but that the excellence of a constitution depends on circumstances. All this may be very true. But this does not necessarily mean that to the extent that parliamentary democracy is good for the people of Great Britain, Fascism is good for the people of Italy and Nazism for the people of Germany. We are convinced that Jew baiting, racialism, militarism, wanton aggression on a helpless people such as the Abyssinians, and suppression of honest opinion are bad for any people in the world. If there are moral standards in the world, there ought also to be political standards, and no nation should be allowed to fall far below them. The glib statement that if parliamentary government is good for one people, dictatorship may be good for another, is fraught with much danger. It is likely to lead to the perilous position: "whatever succeeds, is right"—the Hegelian position with a vengeance. Are we to say that, just because Fascism and Hitlerism have succeeded in giving the people of the countries concerned a new sense of self-respect and welded them together into a national whole, they are necessarily right? Are we not to take into account the unmoral, if not immoral, methods adopted in reaching their end?

The general conclusion to which the author is led from his study of dictatorships through the centuries is that dictatorship is the product of some great emergency in public affairs and that it is transitory in character. How long the present dictatorships will last, the author rightly refuses to prophesy. He entertains the belief that dictatorship in Germany and Italy is the result of premature constitutionalism and that, just as England had to pass through the Tudor dictatorship before arriving at a stable system of popular government, Europe may have to go through her experiments in dictatorship before she attains her political salvation. So long as dictators confine their 'beneficent' activities to their own countries, we may not concern ourselves much with them, although even that is impossible in the interdependent world in which we live. But when dictators graciously turn their attention to countries outside their jurisdiction and seek to impose on them their methods and policies, we have a right to protest.

Therefore, we conclude that the mere *explanation* of dictatorship which the author undertakes, however valuable in its own way, is not enough. We want to know the rightness and wrongness of it.

E. ASIRVATHAM.

Miscellaneous.

BOMBAY PROVINCIAL LIBERAL CONFERENCE.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED.

The session of the Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference which was held at Sholapur on Saturday and Sunday last under the presidency of Sir Cowasji Jehangir was a success. Among the resolutions adopted by it are the following :

NEW CONSTITUTION.

THIS Conference, whilst once again expressing its great dissatisfaction at the new Constitution as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, which is more objectionable than the Bill originally introduced, is strongly of opinion that it is the duty of all citizens to take part in the forthcoming elections, to utilise the Constitution for obtaining from it the maximum advantage and also to accelerate the revision of the Constitution, so as to secure at an early date the realisation of India's goal of Dominion Status.

LIBERAL PROGRAMME.

This Conference is of opinion that every effort should be made to put up Liberal candidates for both the Chambers of the Bombay Legislature and recommends to the Liberal Associations in the Presidency to take active steps in this behalf.

The Liberal candidates shall appeal to the electorate on and undertake to carry out the following programme:—

- (a) to secure an early revision of the new Constitution with a view to the attainment of Dominion Status at the earliest possible date ;
- (b) Ministers will resign office if the safeguards or reserved powers of the Governors are exercised unreasonably or arbitrarily for interfering with the responsibility of Ministers, or if the Governor acts against the spirit of the Constitution ;
- (c) to promote and support legislation having for its object the improvement of the condition of the agriculturists, by
 - (1) a reform of the land revenue system ;
 - (2) protection of the interests of agricultural tenants ;
 - (3) relief of agricultural indebtedness by such measures as debt conciliation and legislation for debt redemption through extension of the policy of establishing land mortgage banks and improvement of existing co-operative agencies ;
 - (4) encouragement of indigenous industries and particularly cottage industries by all possible measures ;
 - (5) establishment of a system of compulsory primary education, particularly for the labouring and Scheduled Classes ;
 - (6) rural uplift through such measures as improved sanitation, medical relief, better housing, improved animal husbandry, etc.
 - (7) measures for relieving unemployment both of industrial and agricultural labour and of the educated classes ;
 - (8) legislation for protecting the interests of and improving the condition of industrial and agricultural labour ;

- (9) removal of untouchability by all suitable means.

INDIAN STATES.

This Conference is of opinion that time has now arrived when political organisations in British India should take increasing interest in problems affecting the interests of the subjects of Indian States so as to bring them in line with the political progress in British India.

INDIANS OVERSEAS.

(a) *Zanzibar*.—This Conference records its satisfaction at the unanimous report of the Agricultural Indebtedness Commission appointed by the Zanzibar Government which supports the conclusions arrived at by Mr. K. P. S. Menon, I. C. S., who in his report to the Government of India exposed the one-sided character of the anti-Indian decrees and requests the Government of India to press for the repeal of these decrees.

(b) *South Africa*.—This Conference, while strongly opposed to the principle of residential and commercial segregation of Indians, on which the Asiatic Land Tenure Act of the Union of South Africa is based, urges the Government of India to press upon the Union Government the justice and necessity of providing adequately for the existing and the future needs in dealing with the report of the Feetham Commission. This Conference also urges the Government of India to take steps to protect the rights and interests of Indian settlers in connection with the operation of the Union Slums Act.

This Conference accords a cordial welcome to the deputation from South Africa which is visiting India and trusts it will lead to a better understanding between the two countries.

(c) *Fiji*.—This Conference expresses its acute dissatisfaction with the recommendations of the Fiji Legislature to substitute nomination for election to the Fiji Legislative Council and urges the Government of India to represent to His Majesty's Government that the proposal will injuriously affect Indian interests and will be greatly resented in India.

SPEECH BY MR. N. M. JOSHI.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A., in seconding the resolution on the New Constitution at the Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference at Sholapur on the 19th July said :—

ON account of the reactionary nature of the Government of India Act the National Liberal Federation at its session held in Poona expressed its opinion that the Indian Liberals would prefer to remain under the present constitution rather than accept the new Act. This decision was endorsed at the session of the Federation held in Nagpur in December 1935. It also declared that, unsatisfactory and reactionary as the Act was, it should be utilised in such a way as to extract from it whatever benefit it could be made to yield and, what was more important, the power given under the Act should be so used as to compel the British Parliament to revise the Act at the earliest possible moment in such a way that it might become acceptable to Indian public opinion. The resolution which is now under discussion reaffirms both these decisions. The Liberal Federation declared the new Government of India Act unacceptable, firstly, because powers of self-government conceded to Indians are extremely meagre. The Act is based upon distrust of all sections of the Indian people from the Princes to the masses. If this distrust had been confined to the masses and to politically-minded middle classes there would have been no need for the numerous reservations and safe-

guards contained in the Act such as the excessive representation given to the Princes, to the zamindars and the industrial plutocrats. These safeguards are enough to prevent power conceded under the Act passing into the hands of the masses and the politically-minded middle classes. On account of this distrust it made clear that there would be reservations and safeguards so long as there remain any British vested interests in India such as those of British services, of British investors, of British traders and even of Britishers of the liberal professions.

The second reason why the Liberals declared the Government of India Act unacceptable is that even though the powers of self-government conceded under the Government of India Act are very limited, the legislative machinery provided for the use of that limited power is made thoroughly undemocratic as a further safeguard to remove completely the possibility of any power passing into the hands of the masses. Not only is the franchise denied to more than half of the population which should be ordinarily eligible for it, but second chambers are provided not only at the centre but in most of the provinces. These second chambers are to be the strongholds of the wealthy classes in the country. Not only are the rights of self-government conceded under the new Government of India Act meagre and the legislative machinery undemocratic, but future changes of a substantial character in the constitution are made practically impossible by the provision that the consent of each and every Indian State that may join the federation will become necessary for every change. Prof. Keith, who is a very high authority on constitutional law, has endorsed this view regarding the unchangeability of the new Constitution. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Liberal Party, which cannot be accused of being reckless or irresponsible, has taken a very serious view of the reactionary character of the new Constitution.

It may be asked why, if the Liberals consider the new Constitution to be so reactionary, they do not boycott it. Those who expect the Constitution to be boycotted on account of its unsatisfactory character do not sufficiently appreciate the fact that a Constitution and the legislatures set up under it are not like voluntary public organisations which people may join or may not join according to their wishes. Governments and legislatures set up under the Constitution will have powers to impose taxation upon and control and regulate the life and activities of not only those who accept the Constitution but of all the citizens of India. As we have therefore no choice of either accepting or not accepting the control to be exercised by the Governments and legislatures to be set up under the new Constitution, it will be foolish on our part not to exercise whatever power we have under the Constitution to influence the decisions of the Governments and the legislatures. The Liberal Party, therefore, very wisely came to the decision that the new Constitution, in spite of its defects, should be utilised for a twofold purpose. In the first place the Act should be utilised for the alleviation of the poverty of the masses and for the spread of education among them. These needs of the masses urgently require a solution. The masses are naturally impatient and they cannot wait for relief till we succeed in getting a satisfactory Constitution. Their immediate needs must, therefore, be attended to. The Liberals will accordingly use the new legislatures for promotion of measures for universalising a system of free and compulsory education and for improving the condition of the toiling agricultural and industrial workers. The Liberals feel

that, simultaneously with these legislative activities, they can so use the powers conceded by the new Constitution as to bring pressure upon the British Parliament to compel it to undertake an early revision of the constitution so that the goal of Dominion Status may be fully attained. The recent Irish history proves the practicability of this course. Some of the Irish leaders who had first boycotted the Constitution on the ground of its being unsatisfactory to them afterwards adopted the wiser course of using the power which their Constitution had given to them for wresting from the unwilling British people further powers to make the Constitution satisfactory. If the Irish people have succeeded in doing this, there is no reason why we, in spite of the differences in circumstances, should not succeed in attaining our goal. Of course the Irish methods cannot be copied wholesale, nor can those of any other country. Modifications, and substantial modifications, will be necessary. If we use the power given to us in a manner suitable to our circumstances we too will succeed. I strongly recommend the resolution for being adopted by the Conference.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- GENERALOGY OF SEX. By CURT THESING. Trs. from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul. (Emerson Books, New York.) 1934. 23cm. 286p. \$ 2.95.
- THE CATHOLIC TRADITION OF THE LAW OF NATIONS. By JOHN EPPSTEIN. (Catholic Association for International Peace, Washington.) 1935. 23cm. 525p. \$ 3.50.
- THE YELLOW SPOT: THE EXTERMINATION OF THE JEWS IN GERMANY. (Gollanoz.) 1936. 22cm. 287p. 5/-
- I WAS HITLER'S PRISONER. By STEFAN LORNANT. (Gollanoz.) 1936. 21cm. 318p. 5/-.
- CITIZENSHIP. By J. WILLATT. (Oxford University Press.) 1936. 20cm. 213p. Re. 1-8.
- AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLES OF CIVICS. By SUDHIR KUMAR LAHIRI and BENOYENDRANATH BANERJEA. (2nd edn.) (The Book Company, Calcutta.) 1934. 20cm. 159p. Re. 1-12.
- THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION. By SUDHIR KUMAR LAHIRI and BENOYENDRANATH BANERJEA. (The Book Co., Calcutta.) 1934. 20cm. 287p. Rs. 2-4.
- THE QUESTION OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS. By A. J. ROWSE. (Hogarth Press.) 1935. 19cm. 64p. 1/6.
- POVERTY AND PLENTY: THE TRUE NATIONAL DIVIDEND. By W. R. LESTER. (Hogarth Press.) 1935. 19cm. 31p. 1/-.
- THE LEAGUE AND ABYSSINIA. By LEONARD WOOLF. (Hogarth Press.) 1936. 19cm. 35p. 1/-.
- THE FUTURE OF COLONIES. By LEONARD BARNES. (Hogarth Press.) 1936. 19cm. 45p. 1/-.

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