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Topics of the Week.

Protest Against Repression.

THE Assembly registered its emphatic protest against Government's repressive policy by passing a cut motion last week. Non-official speeches in support of the motion gave faithful expression to the public indignation aroused throughout the country owing to the acts of repression perpetrated by Government. But if there is one act of theirs more than another which has aroused the bitterest feelings against them it is the detention of a large number of young Bengalees on nothing more substantial than mere suspicion.

IF the detentions had been for a few days or weeks, they might have been tolerated as an emergency measure. But in some cases, it was stated, the detention had extended to as long a period as twenty-one years! This is sure to strike every right-minded person as nothing short of scandalous. But the Government are so far lost to a sense of decency or fairness and justice that they have no qualms of conscience in carrying on the administration by the use of methods which can be justified only in an emergency. The fact of the terrorist legislation having secured the approval of the local legislature was officially much exploited. But the argument cannot create much impression on anybody, seeing that the provincial legislature which passed it had become antiquated and unrepresentative.

SIR HENRY CRAIK'S reply contained nothing new—nothing, that it is to say, which needs to be dealt with. But his admission that Government servants in all provinces voted for the Congress cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed. The phenomenon, however unpalatable, is not without a moral for the Government. It shows how deep-seated is the public discontent and dissatisfaction with Government's policy and measures. That even Government's own employees, who are ordinarily expected to side with their masters, should go against them is an unmistakable

measure of the resentment engendered amongst the people by the coercive methods adopted by Government in dealing with public discontent. Is it too much to hope that the phenomenon will point to them the wisdom of abandoning the discredited policy of repression?

Army Indianisation.

THE claims of the rapid Indianisation of the army were pressed on the Government by the Assembly carrying a token cut against Government. The strength of forces ranged against the Government was so overwhelming that they discreetly refrained from pressing for a division. This is far from saying that the exhibition of the depth of public feeling on this vital matter which was witnessed by them would lead to a change in their policy in the desirable direction. They still talk as if Indianisation was nothing better than an experiment. A good deal was also said about lack of suitable material for Indianisation.

OF course, Indian opinion can never see eye to eye with the Government on these points. Indian opinion is so exasperated at the present slow rate of Indianisation that any reference to it as an experiment implying the possibility of its abandonment is bound to be resented as only adding insult to injury. As for the allegation about lack of material, one suspects whether it is not the case of wish being father to the thought. If an adequate number of young lads of the right type refrain from betaking themselves to the military career, it is not an indication of lack of material but of the Government's utter inability to attract such material. Has any encouragement worth the name been offered to such youths or has anything been done to make them take kindly to the new career?

AN ingenuous defence of the segregation of Indian officers was attempted by the Army Secretary which could have satisfied none but himself, if even him. If British and Indian officers had, he said, been allowed to work together in the trial of this so-called experiment the charge of lack of confidence in the capacity of Indian officers would have been laid at the door of Government. The argument is more plausible than convincing. It is making too heavy a call on Indian credulity to expect it to believe that it was this and this consideration alone that decided Government in favour of segregation. But even making this impossible assumption for the sake of argument, one is amazed that no change in the policy should be thought of even though the policy is universally condemned in India ever since it was put in force. But it is useless to look forward to any improvement in this matter where not Indian interests but considerations of racial prestige influence Government policies and measures.

Lesson of Experience.

IN the course of the discussion on the cut motion to express disapproval of the Government's general policy, non-officials were at pains to make Government realise what their expectations were. It is true, they said, that the Government is not a responsible government in the usually accepted sense of its being responsible to the legislature. But does this prevent them, it was asked, from being responsive to the latter? Why can they not show greater respect towards the decisions of the legislature? Is there anything in the law which debars them from doing so? Even though they cannot be legally displaced, why should not they so conduct themselves that the legislature will ordinarily not desire to have them ousted? In short, the Government, the Opposition made it clear, should so behave that it could be regarded as responsible government in fact if not in name.

TO this plea the Government could have returned a flatly negative answer by sheltering themselves behind their subordination to the Secretary of State. That would have been straight and fair. But the Government spokesman, instead of following that course, tried to make it appear as if they were trying, on all possible occasions, to carry the wishes of the legislature into effect. Under existing arrangements the Government are not bound to make way for the Opposition even on an adverse vote being passed against them. But this did not mean, he added, that no value was attached to views expressed by non-officials. We do not know that non-officials, when they express any views, do so because they are anxious that they should have some value in the eyes of the Government but because they are desirous that the popular viewpoint as expressed by them should be acted upon by Government. If the action taken upon the views expressed by non-officials is to be the measure of the value attached by Government to these views, it must frankly be admitted to be negligible. If they are at all considered, it is for the purpose of rejecting them in most cases. This is the lesson which non-officials have learnt to their cost and nothing that the Government spokesman could say to the contrary could belie it.

Clear Misuse.

THE case of a Congress Socialist in Bihar having been declared a member of a criminal tribe has been brought to light by the Indian Civil Liberties Union. He is Mr. Basawan Singh, a Secretary to the Congress Socialist party in the province. The Criminal Tribes Act prohibits members of Criminal tribes from leaving their residence between 9 p. m. and sunrise. Mr. Singh is alleged to have violated this requirement of the law by being found on a public thoroughfare at 10 p. m. His arrest followed as a matter of course.

THE action calls for severe condemnation on more than one ground. Though Mr. Singh may not be much known to fame it is safe to assume that he does not belong to classes known to be habitually criminal. His position in public life precludes such an assumption to his disadvantage. It is an obvious abuse of the Criminal Tribes Act to enforce its provisions in the case of one who is clearly outside its purview. The case reminds one of the proverbial dog who was initially given a bad name in order to justify his being subsequently hanged. One wonders if similar considerations played any part in Mr. Singh's case. Anyway the whole proceeding will strike any normally-minded person as improper in the extreme.

We hope the matter will attract the attention of the higher authorities with a view to its being set right.

Indians Overseas.

POINTED attention was drawn to the hardships of Indians overseas by means of a token cut in the course of the recent budget discussion in the Legislative Assembly. The motion was carried and would ordinarily be looked upon as a censure against Government. But as pointed out by more than one non-official speaker, it was really not intended to throw any blame for the troubles of Indians abroad on the Government of India. It was freely acknowledged that on the problem of Indians overseas, no divergence of view divided the people from the Government of India. If, therefore, their efforts for the amelioration of the lot of our countrymen settled in different parts of the British Empire were not being conspicuously successful, the cause must be sought elsewhere than in the absence of the India Government's sympathy for them.

IT was remarked that the factors making for a failure of the Government's efforts were beyond their control. The autonomous governments of the self-governing Dominions like South Africa where Indians were to be found in large numbers possessed full sovereign powers in regard to domestic policy. In respect of internal affairs they are free to go their own way and to take any line they like, unhampered by fear of intervention from any quarter. Could the Government of a dependent country like India hope for adequate response from them? Had she any remedy against them?

BUT the case is, or rather should be, otherwise with respect to Crown Colonies. These are in direct charge of the Colonial Office which ought to show greater attention to Indian representations. But it was unfortunately not so. The phenomenon was in some quarters sought to be explained by the constitutional difficulties in the way of India making direct representations to the Colonial Office. It seems to us that the difficulty can only be a partial explanation of the impasse. The round-about procedure of making representations through the India Office can satisfactorily account only for the delay in the settlement of Indian problems. But how, one wonders, can it explain the hostile and unsympathetic attitude which the Colonial Office habitually adopts in regard to questions affecting Indians? It is this hostility of the Colonial Office which has given rise to many of the ills from which our countrymen in the Colonies are found to be suffering. And it was against the almost uniformly unfriendly attitude of the Colonial Office that the Assembly wanted to register its protest by carrying the motion for a cut. Who can say that the Assembly was unduly harsh in its condemnation of the Colonial Office?

The B. N. R. Workers' Union.

THE demand for supplies to the Industries Department in the Assembly was availed of by Mr. V. V. Giri to discuss the question of recognition of trade unions by the employers and withdrawal of recognition in certain cases. The recent withdrawal of recognition of the B. N. R. Workers' Trade Union by the Agent of that Railway formed a major grievance in Mr. Giri's attack. The B. N. R. Worker's Union had successfully concluded a strike and demonstrated beyond dispute its unquestioned leadership of the workers of the Bengal Nagpur Railway. It was probably his chargin at the heroic fight put up by the workers under the direction of that Union

which inspired the Agent, Mr. Jarrad, to strike at its prestige and power by withdrawing recognition from it for the behaviour and attitude of its leaders during the strike.

MR. JARRAD has not thought it necessary to substantiate his charges against the Union leaders. Like the Great Moghul of old, his displeasure was enough reason for the non-recognition of a great labour organisation. The Agent, however, did not hesitate, as Mr. Giri remarked, to utilise the influence of the Union to bring about a settlement of the strike and get the workers peacefully back to their jobs. As soon as that delicate work was over, he took the earliest opportunity to vent his spleen on the organisation which had fought the employers against great odds and under conditions of great hardship. Mr. Giri gave instances of the carping spirit in which the settlement was being carried out and in some cases openly flouted by the Agent. The Railway authorities were, he said, continuing to employ men who were entertained as blacklegs, strikers who had offered themselves within the stipulated time were refused work, junior non-strikers were being promoted over senior strikers and generally every means was being used to teach the strikers a lesson.

MR. JARRAD knows that these pin-pricks are likely to lead to further aggravation of the discontent among the workers and by hitting at the Union he is trying to leave them leaderless in case the discontent found expression in action. Sir Frank Noyce, we are glad to note, took a reasonable attitude on the question and assured Mr. Giri that he would give his most careful attention to the matter. The Bengal Nagpur Railway administration was characterised as anything but satisfactory and Mr. Giri withdrew his cut motion. It is to be hoped that considerations of the prestige of the man on the spot would not stand in the way of Government exerting pressure on the B. N. Railway administration to remedy the wrong they have done to the Union. Mr. Jarrad must be shown what the Labour Commission has said about the recognition of Trade Unions in India. Without proper Trade Union movement and its due recognition by the employers the working classes movement will only go underground and not go under as Mr. Jarrad seems to expect.

Italian Civilization.

THE resentment of the Abyssinians at the violation of their nation by Italians found expression recently in Addis Ababa in an attempt at the assassination of the Viceroy of Abyssinia, Marshal Graziani. As was to be expected, severe reprisals were taken by the Italian occupants on the Abyssinian residents of the town. The tales which certain papers have published of the violence and cruelty of the reprisals by the Italian soldiers are revolting in the extreme. Anyone wearing Abyssinian trousers was killed on the spot, property was destroyed with indiscriminate ferocity and whole families wiped out with an amount of cruelty that would have put to shame even the wild tribes of the calibanic age in Africa.

It might be said that partisan and anti-Fascist correspondents and imaginative thrill-hunters have given an exaggerated account of the Italian savagery in Addis Ababa. But the replies given by Lord Cranborne, the British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in the House of Commons when questions were put to him regarding these allegations, reveal, in spite of the natural moderation of the expression used, that a substantial part of the stories of these atrocities must be true. Lord

Cranborne said that following the attempt on the life of Marshal Graziani scenes of grave disorder occurred in which reprisals of a severe character were taken by the Italian soldiers resulting in a large number of deaths and the extensive destruction of property. When a member drew his attention to the statements that the reprisals were savage beyond description and surpassed even the worst atrocities in Africa since the Congo, Lord Cranborne replied that reports in the Government's possession tended partially to bear them out.

SUCH are the fruits of the "civilising mission" of the Romans in Africa. The matter is all the more regrettable as it deepens the already wide gulf between the coloured and the white nations of the world and leads to the growth of bitterness and hatred, which in all conscience is strong enough, with all the more rapidity with such evidence of inhuman rapacity in a so-called civilized nation. Italy is not an isolated example in the eyes of the coloured nations. She is an "honoured and powerful member" of the West and for them the sins of Italy are shared by all the West alike. The European nations will not fail to rue the day on which they allowed one of them to conquer hapless Abyssinia.

Children's Aid Society.

THE Children's Aid Society of Bombay which has just issued its report for last year will shortly complete ten years of its very useful career. The period has witnessed a consistent development of the Society's beneficent activities much to the benefit of society in general. The admissions to its remand home in 1928 numbered less than 600. In 1936 the number had more than doubled itself and stood at 1,230, the total number of children handled by it during the decade being more than 8,000. The work of the Society was subjected to some dislocation due to the communal riots which disturbed the peace of Bombay last year. The admissions to the home would have been larger but for the fact that the re-establishment of peace claimed police attention to the exclusion of everything else.

OF the 1,230 admissions 977 were boys and 253 girls. But it is still more interesting to cast a glance at the communal distribution of the inmates. As large a number as 723 were Hindus, Mahomedans, coming next with 386. Christians numbered 88, Bene Israels 10, Anglo-Indians and Parsis 7 each, Arabs, Iranis, Sikhs, Jews and Chinese sharing the balance of 9. It gives one some idea of the complicated nature of the Society's work to remember that 64 of these admissions were sufferers from venereal diseases and 42 were mental and 18 physical defectives.

DESTITUTION or improper guardianship was the cause of arrest in most cases. In 1936, this cause was responsible for 580 arrests, while the crime of thieving accounted for 221. 168 were taken in custody because of being victims of sexual offences or undesirable moral surroundings. We have left ourselves little space to describe the other sides of the Society's work, which are, needless to add, equally praiseworthy and deserving of public support. The Junior School, for whose conduct the Society is responsible, was originally designed for a maximum of 60 boys. Last year it had a roll of 125. One can easily imagine how cramped for space the school must have been. The Society is trying, with public help and co-operation, to solve this very pressing problem of accommodation. We are confident it will be available to it in full measure.

CONGRESS INDECISION.

THE Working Committee of the Congress has decided by a unanimous resolution to recommend adoption of the policy of office acceptance to the All-India Congress Committee, into whose hands the plenary session of the last Congress has entrusted the final decision on this momentous issue. The Working Committee is in favour of certain conditions being fulfilled before members returned to the provincial legislatures on the Congress ticket can be permitted to form ministries. These conditions reduce themselves to one governing condition, viz. that the Governor should give an undertaking acceptable to the Leader of the Congress Party in the legislature that he would be guided in all matters by his Ministers and would refrain from any kind of interference with the Cabinet by resort to his reserve powers so long as the Ministers act within the limits of the constitution. Nothing could be more futile than to subject acceptance of office to such a condition. In the first place, what does the proviso mean—"so long as the Ministers act within the limits of the constitution"? The constitution admittedly confers very limited powers upon the popularly elected Ministers; it specifically provides for contingencies where the advice of Ministers can be set aside by the Governor. A Governor in these circumstances may honestly promise not to interfere with the Ministry and yet freely use his overriding powers on the not unreasonable ground that recourse to such powers was provoked by the Ministry by reason of their ignoring the limitations upon their own powers which are imposed by the constitution and their acting as if the constitution was one of full self-government. An accommodating Premier, on the other hand, may meekly submit to the use of reserve powers by the Governor and yet continue in office on the sober reflection that he was really going beyond the limits of the constitution within which he had agreed to confine himself. On this interpretation of the condition stipulated by the Working Committee, the Congress Party may go on working the reforms in the normal way, without giving any thought to the policy of wrecking, which is solemnly enjoined upon it as a duty and in regard to which only the devising of practical ways of translating it into action is all that is left to the All-India Congress Committee.

The Working Committee's resolution also makes mention of the fundamental fact that the Congress is pledged to the ending of the constitution, and it may, therefore, be presumed that office acceptance which it recommends is intended to subserve the same purpose. If so, its resolution is not only futile but ridiculous. The constitution will last so long as the Ministers act within its limits. In order to wreck it they must go beyond the constitution; and as soon as they try to transcend its limits the Governor will use his reserve powers, and he will be fully entitled to do so, because even the assurance to be asked of him is not intended to cover cases in which the Ministers will ignore the limits of the constitu-

tion. The assurance on the contrary implies an assurance on the part of the Ministers that the Congress Party will ever keep strictly within the limits of the Government of India Act, however heavy may be the chains that it places upon our limbs. In other words, while asking of the Governor a promise to give them freedom to follow what policy they would like, they themselves give a promise in return that, in following this policy, they will not impinge upon the powers reserved to the Governor; in fact they give a promise to work the constitution in a loyal spirit without ever trying to upset it. Fancy, a Congress leader being invited to form a government saying to the Governor: "Very well, I shall be pleased to form a ministry, but I must tell you that my avowed aim is to shipwreck the constitution, and that you must promise, not to try to keep it afloat, although the constitution not only gives you the power to do so but lays it upon you as a command"!

There are only two courses open to the Congress—to acquiesce in and respect the limitations to which the power of the Cabinet will be subject, to frame its policy with this supreme consideration constantly in mind and thus to work the constitution, with all its defects and imperfections, with the intention of giving it an honest trial, or to ignore and defy these limitations and act as if the constitution provided no checks of any kind on the popular Ministers, with the result, if not with the intent, to make it unworkable. The Congress for all its talk about wrecking has not yet given any clear indication as to which of these alternatives it will adopt eventually. But whichever alternative course it may decide to embrace, an assurance by the Governor on which the Working Committee would make acceptance of ministerial office contingent is wholly uncalled for and indeed is worse. Let us take the first alternative. Let us suppose that the Congress would scrupulously respect the limitations in the constitution and try out its social and economic policy within those limitations. There are of course enough grounds to fear that even so the Governor would be tempted to bring his special powers into play in cases where properly he ought to hold his hand. But why go to the Governor for an assurance that he for his part would respect the constitution as they for their part are resolved to do? The constitution, however bad it may be, provides an effective safeguard against such a contingency. They have it in their power, if only they know how to use the constitution to the best advantage, to make the Governor's position impossible if he will be so unconstitutional as to hamper the Ministry unnecessarily in carrying out their policy. To ask for such an assurance is to betray one's ignorance of the processes of responsible government. Indeed such an assurance has been given often enough almost by every Governor and by the Viceroy in their pronouncements on the constitution. What they will actually do when the constitution comes into operation is another matter. On this the Government must be judged by its past

record, which is not encouraging. But whatever its deeds may be, its promise is both unreliable and unnecessary. We want at this moment to stress the superfluity of the promise because if the Governor acts unconstitutionally a strong Cabinet has always the remedy in its own hands. It need not go about asking for a promise which is not of the slightest practical use.

Let us on the other hand assume that the Congress is resolved to ignore the limitations, defy the Governor's power of overriding the Ministry and bring the constitution to ruin by deliberately producing deadlocks. In such a case the sort of assurance cannot be honestly given, because it is as much the duty as the right of the Governor to invoke his special powers whenever in his opinion their exercise is necessary. And if the Congress wishes to wreck the constitution and thinks that the best way of doing so is to accept office why need it ask for and obtain the leave of the Governor before it launches upon its wrecking tactics? The Governor, when approached, is bound to say that he is unable to give such an assurance. Would the Congress, thereupon, refuse office although in its judgment wrecking would be best promoted by its assuming positions of power? The Governor is simply an irrelevant factor in so far as a decision on the office question is concerned. In certain matters he is endowed with powers which he must bring into use. For the Congress to expect

that he would not use these powers, and that he would further promise to that effect, would be as reasonable as for the Governor to expect that the Congress though pledged to wrecking would in practice abandon this policy and submit tamely to a constitution which it has vowed before the world to reject and to destroy. In certain other matters the Governor must bow to the Ministry, under the constitution. If he does not do so, the Ministry can bring him to reason. In any event, whichever policy the Congress wishes to pursue, it can accept office with no loss to itself, whatever be the kind of Governor it has to deal with. To make its decision on this vital question wait on the Governor's pleasure would be silly in the extreme.

Very likely the Congress has not yet made up its mind whether to work the constitution or to wreck it and all these manoeuvrings are intended for the purpose of averting the people's eyes from its own indecision. The important question is not whether it is going to accept office or not, but whether it is going, as it avers all the time, to bend all its energies to demonstrating the unworkability of the constitution and thus paving the way for its destruction. On this question we are yet as far from a clear answer as ever before. The indecision is sought to be covered up by a formula, and no one is more adept in devising an obscuring formula than Mahatma Gandhi.

BOMBAY STOCK EXCHANGE.

THE Bombay Stock Exchange has been an object of criticism for some time past and the Government of Bombay recently appointed a committee to enquire into the modifications in the organization and methods of working of the Exchange that may be found necessary. The Bombay financier has always had a great reputation for high speculation ever since the days of Premchand Roychand and the American War boom. Speculation on a scale and character similar to that of the sixties of the last century was witnessed in the post-war boom of the early twenties of this century; and this post-war speculative craze so disorganized the market that it made Government appoint the Atlay Committee to investigate the entire working of the Exchange. Certain reforms were brought about by the adoption by the Exchange of some of the recommendations of the Atlay Committee. These reforms were, however, not far-reaching enough and the recurrent troubles on the Exchange have again brought up acutely the question of its reorganization. The recently appointed Committee though much smaller than the Atlay Committee was yet a strong body. Its report is comparatively short and deals with all the important questions raised in a minimum of space. The "corner" was the most important evil to which the Atlay Committee had to pay attention. It has latterly not been in evidence but it cannot yet be said that the Exchange works smoothly. The internal disorganization of the market is made evident by two external symptoms; the extremely wide fluctuations in the prices of securities

and the frequency of the interference of the Board of the Exchange with the normal course of business. These are both clear indications that the Exchange is not serving the needs of the community as well as it is expected to and that some reform is called for. What is at the root of this is the extremely high percentage of purely speculative transactions, conducted on the Exchange and the essentially gambling spirit in which a large number of members approach their vocation. The result is a state of continuous reckless overtrading which is extremely unhealthy for the market and which grossly inconveniences the genuine investor. The Stock Exchange Committee faced essentially this problem of diminishing the percentage of speculative trading and checking the purely gambling element.

The fundamental principle on which all Exchanges, whether produce or stock, work all over the world is this that all contracts are for delivering or taking delivery of real goods, whether produce or securities, and are enforceable at law in this sense. That a large proportion of these contracts may be closed without any such actual delivery is merely a matter of convenience and mutual understanding. If as compared with the total stock of a good, there is continuous and reckless overtrading in it, this can only result in the buyers or the sellers coming often into trouble. Ordinarily the severe losses involved as a result of speculative miscalculations should exercise some amount of check over this tendency to overtrade. It is maintained by most responsible critics

of the Exchange that it is because the results of reckless speculation by the members of the Exchange are, at every stage that there is a considerable fluctuation, tempered by the intervention of the Exchange Board that the normal restraining influence is not felt by them. The members feel sure that if any large body of them are caught in difficulties as a result of mistakes in their speculative operations, the Board will help them out. They can thus afford to take risks on a large scale and in a somewhat careless manner; and they do this with well-known results. The Stock Exchange Committee, therefore, rightly puts forward its main recommendations in order to curtail the powers of the Board to interfere with the normal course of business. The Committee definitely recommends that the Board should have no power to suspend the selling-out rule. That is when there has been overtrading in a security and speculators find themselves with large numbers of it on hand on a depreciated market the Board shall not interfere to lighten the loss of these speculators. This is the most important recommendation of the Committee in this respect and it will be agreed to by most people. With regard to the suspension of the "buying-in" rule which is necessitated on the other hand when a "corner" is established, the Committee recommend that though this power may not be altogether abolished, yet it should be used with great caution and only after obtaining the previous sanction of Government. The Committee recommends that the Board should have the power of closing the Exchange in an emergency for a period of twenty-four hours but it should obtain the consent of Government if it is found necessary to extend the period. Another important set of recommendations of the Committee deals with rules with regard to defaulters. Here again the present tendency is to treat these leniently; and the Board often intervenes to effect a compromise in order to obviate default on the part of a member. The Committee recommends that no compromise in any shape to avoid a default be allowed, that failure to fulfil obligations incurred on the Exchange with a non-member must also entail declaration of default, that only a defaulter who pays 16 annas in the Rupee may be readmitted to the Exchange at the discretion of the Board. The Committee would, however, reserve the power to the Board of readmitting a defaulter who has not paid 16 annas, if they find that his conduct is irreproachable and if his failure was due to causes entirely outside his control. Similar power, it is said, is possessed by the London Stock Exchange Committee, but we are not sure that in the peculiar circumstances of Bombay, even such emergency power may not be used too liberally.

A severe curtailment of the power of the Board to intervene and prevent the lightening of the consequences of a default are indirect but perhaps, in the long run, the most effective means of checking speculative overtrading. Direct action has also been, however, advocated by many reformers. Some of the recommendations of the Committee in this behalf are meant to check opportunities of easily entering into speculative dealings by non-members. Such are

the strengthening of the rules regarding sub-brokers, prohibition of speculative dealings by employees of members and of partners of a member-firm in their individual capacity. The most important direct check advocated on the dealings of the members themselves has been the establishment of the system of margins. A large number of elaborate schemes have from time to time been put forward. The Committee recommend the adoption of a comparatively simple scheme with an initial margin which would increase with each settlement if the security is carried over. When for each deal a certain proportion, however small, of the price has to be deposited it is expected that speculation will be kept at least to some extent within the means of the speculators. It is only if it is found that the system of margins cannot be adopted that the Committee recommend the adoption of fortnightly settlements as the curtailment of the length of the settlement period would act as a check on the accumulation of speculative liabilities.

We have given an indication above of the main problem faced by the Committee and the principal recommendations that it has made in this behalf. We do not think that there will be any disagreement regarding the main line of approach of the Committee. It is, therefore, a pity that a calm consideration of the Committee's recommendations should have been rendered difficult by the temper in which they have been received by the Exchange. It is not clear why the Exchange received the report by a hartal. It may be the natural reaction of a body used to a lax regime to the proposal of a comparatively strict regulation. The main reason that has been put forward is, however, the proposal of the Committee giving increased powers of interference to Government. At present the coercive power that the Government can use over the association is the ultimate threat of the withdrawal of recognition. The Committee feel that it is necessary to provide for intermediate types of powers and suggest that the Government should have powers of imposing rules on the Association and of nominating special directors on the Board under extraordinary circumstances. The Committee has unfortunately given no reasons proving the necessity for these new powers. We prefer that bodies like the Exchange should be completely autonomous as far as possible. They carry heavy public responsibilities and must ultimately submit to such broad regulation or control as is proved to be necessary under any circumstances. But an attempt at detailed regulation such as is involved, for example, in the assumption of rule-making powers by Government, would cause unnecessary friction and should be avoided. At present, for example, the Government can wait and observe the steps taken by the Association on the report of the Committee and interfere only if the Association refuses to put its house in order on the main lines indicated to it. While thus we are not in favour of the proposals of detailed control we would at the same time suggest to the members of the Association the inadvisability of taking a stand of wholesale opposition as is indicated by a hartal. No member of the public would to-day be inclined to listen to a plea of absolute non-inter-

ference; the Association is a privileged body and performs an important public function. It has notoriously failed to perform this function satisfactorily. The public and Government have every right to

demand internal reform measures and outsiders would give a hearing to the protest of the Association against particular proposals only if this fundamental position is fully accepted by its members.

KEEPING SOUTH AFRICA WHITE.

LIKE the Nazis of Germany, who have passed legislation for the purpose of maintaining the purity of the Aryan race, the whites in South Africa are taking measures to keep the European races free from an admixture of non-European blood. A private bill was introduced in the Union Assembly on 22nd January last to prohibit marriages between the Europeans on the one hand and the Asiatics and the natives on the other. The Union Government has maintained a neutral attitude towards this proposal, the Minister of Education (Mr. Jan Hofmeyr) having opposed it and the Minister of Native Affairs (Mr. P. G. W. Grobler) having supported it, but there is no doubt that the bulk of the white population in the Union is enthusiastically in favour of the Bill. Only two members of the Assembly, besides Mr. Hofmeyr, raised their voice against it in the debate on 22nd January, Mr. Derbyshire who was a member of the South African deputation who visited India recently and Mr. Burnside; all the others, and some of them members of the good-will deputation, urged the Government to accord their support to the measure.

Considering the policy of White South Africa as a whole, whether of one political party or another, the Bill need cause no surprise. It is indeed the culmination of a long series of measures, inspired by a spirit of extreme racialism, that have been deliberately adopted by all sections of white opinion. All these measures are based on the principle of segregation; and there is hardly a politician of any consequence in the country who is a European by race who does not pay homage to that principle. As the mover of the Bill, Mr. Pienaar, said, in commending his Bill to the House, "It is merely a logical continuance of an already agreed policy." This is very true, and for this reason he claimed that the measure need not be regarded as contentious at all. He made good his position thus:

Since the commencement of the Union, measures have from time to time been placed on our statute book which have laid down a definite segregation policy in the Union. There are, for instance, the native Acts of last year. That native legislation lays down political segregation as well as territorial segregation. We remember the Act of 1927 about carnal connection between white and black being forbidden to a certain extent, that is social segregation. Then we come to our industries where the colour line has also made its appearance. Although our legislation in this respect still leaves much to be desired, there has nevertheless been a colour line applied up to a certain extent. Hon. Members see, therefore, that in connection with the segregation of races, we have already so far progressed that at the moment we have political segregation and territorial segregation and partial industrial segregation as well as partial social segregation. When, therefore, we introduce a bill like this to the House, it is not outside of the generally accepted policy of all the Governments that have existed since Union. The Bill before the House only goes a small step further. Its main object is

to remove as far as possible an anomaly between our marriage laws and the Immorality Act of 1927. In consequence of that anomaly we are today in the peculiar position that . . . while the Immorality Law imposes very severe punishment on miscegenation between white and black, the marriage laws legalise it . . . Inasmuch as the segregation of the coloured races is the declared policy of the present as well as the previous Governments of the Union since its establishment, and inasmuch as the segregation measures are already on our statute book, this Bill is merely a completion of the measures that have already been taken, and it cannot, therefore, be regarded as a contentious Bill.

The whole of South African life is based on a rigid social distinction. As on an earlier occasion—on 28th April, 1936—when this very question was under debate, a member put it. If we object to the coloured people going to the same bioscope with us, travelling in the same trams, allowing them to come into our drawing rooms; if we consider it a shame for a white girl to stand about the streets chatting to a coloured man, although that coloured man is possibly employed at her home, or a white young man with a coloured girl; indeed, if the natives have been deprived of their vote because of the fear that white and black going to the same polling booth to vote would lead to mixture of blood—is it possible for one to contemplate that the law of the country should sanction mixed unions? The point of view of the average South African white was well expressed by Mr. Van Den Berg: "The line between black and white was drawn by Providence. It befits and pays us, as a people, to recognise the line that is being drawn by Providence as such and to adopt it in principle in our laws." If it is necessary to maintain racial distinctions in order "to save a white South Africa" in industrial, economic and political matters, much more is it necessary to maintain them in marriage laws. European politicians here stand on impregnable ground, if once the basic conception of their social structure is admitted to be sound; and it is so admitted by all politicians, however liberal they may be.

Mr. Hofmeyr too, while opposing the measure, had to express agreement with the fundamental psychology of the whites in South Africa. He was not in favour of mixed marriages—not he. "I have exactly the same feeling of aversion," he declared, "to the principle of mixed marriages as any hon. Member of the House has." He therefore took the stand that the evil was not widespread enough to be serious. On an average only four marriages took place in recent years between Europeans and Asiatics every year, and seven between Europeans and Natives. The figures were much too small to worry about. It was not necessary, for the purpose of maintaining a white South Africa (the urgency of maintaining it not being disputed) or for the

purpose of preventing race mixture and race degeneration, to prohibit mixed marriages by law. "However much I should like to see mixed marriages disappear as an institution," he remarked, "the legislative approach is not the right approach in dealing with this admitted evil. Surely, there is a more effective way of dealing with a social evil of this kind, and that is by the application to the evil of a healthy and well-informed and rightly inspired public opinion. That method of public opinion has not failed in South Africa. Perhaps we, more than any people in the world in similar circumstances, can claim that we have kept our race pure, and it should be our glory and our pride that we have been able to do that without legislation." In other words the proposed legislation was condemned by him as "unnecessary." He also condemned it as "dishonouring," and as "unworthy of the nation," but this latter condemnation he did not found on any argument, as indeed he could not do so without condemning the entire principle of racial segregation which is the corner-stone of the South African polity.

To condemn such a measure merely as unnecessary and not to condemn it as immoral is, of course, very weak opposition, and the supporters of the Bill were not slow to point it out. They said, and not without reason, that what mattered in this case was not so much how many mixed marriages took place, but whether mixed marriages should at all be permitted in a white country. If such marriages were wrong in principle, as Mr. Hofmeyr himself admitted, that was ground enough to put a ban on them. Marriages between Europeans and Asiatics and between Europeans and natives were not too numerous, it is true, but marriages between Europeans and the coloured persons were not quite so few. In the six years from 1925 to 1930 there took place on an average 83 such marriages every year and from 1931 to 1935, 70 marriages every year. Already a coloured population of 767,000 had grown up in South Africa, when the number of Europeans is 2,300,000. It showed that the menace of mixed marriages was not to be ignored. Although the Bill as moved sought to place no prohi-

bition on marriages between the whites and the coloured, it was only a stepping stone to the prohibition of all marriages between Europeans and non-Europeans. The supporters of the measure thus claimed that the Bill, being only the first step towards a more comprehensive bill, ought to be placed on the statute book as the evil of white-coloured unions could not be left merely to public opinion to combat. Mr. Hofmeyr in his speech expressed some sentiments which were very soothing to the national dignity of India, but these words did not facilitate his task in defeating the measure. In speaking of the effect the Bill might have on the relations between the Governments of the Union and India, he said :

The Government of India is a friendly government, it is an associated government, it is a government with which we have every reason to desire to continue to co-operate. That government speaks for a nation of 350,000,000 people, most of them, it is true, sunk in poverty and illiteracy and backwardness, but a very considerable number of them standing very high indeed in the level of civilisation among the peoples of the world. It speaks for a nation with a great heritage and a sensitive pride and it speaks for a nation which is almost inevitably destined to play a very great part in the affairs not only in the British Commonwealth of Nations, but of the world. Do not let us lose sight of the fact that by passing this Bill we shall be touching the pride of the whole of that great Indian nation.

This had no effect upon the Assembly. One member's reaction to it was shown in these words: "Let the Government of India first start uplifting the depressed classes in India before they come in here and meddle in connection with this matter." When on 1st May last year a similar appeal was made to the members of the Assembly not to hurt India's feelings by prohibiting marriages between Asiatics and Europeans in view of the Capetown Agreement, another member retorted: "What has the Agreement with India got to do with miscegenation in South Africa? Did we agree then that miscegenation could take place here with Asiatics?" There is little doubt that attempts to prohibit intermarriages between whites and non-whites cannot long be resisted in South Africa, where racial segregation has been the cardinal tenet of all political parties and the ruling principle of all governmental activity.

MR. ROOSEVELT AND THE SUPREME COURT.

BY his decision to press upon the Congress a measure to enable him to change the reactionary character of the Supreme Court of the United States, President Roosevelt has placed not only before the people of his own country, but democrats all over the world, a difficult proposition. If there is anything abhorrent to the democratic conscience, it is the suggestion of "packing" the judicial tribunals of the country to suit the conveniences of the government of the day. Superficially, that is exactly what President Roosevelt proposes to do. No wonder that among the opponents of his Bill we find such extremists as Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate for the Presidentship in 1932.

The Bill to enable the President to add to the Federal Courts' strength of judges is ostensibly meant

to remove the admitted congestion in them. But the chief reason why such a Bill is being sponsored at this time is the consistent obstruction by the Supreme Court of the United States to the progressive measures which the President had undertaken to meet the terrible depression conditions in the States. This Court consists of nine judges appointed for life and the division on the Presidential measures, when submitted to the Court, has always been three against six or four against five. It has been observed, therefore, that judicial arguments to prove that the measures did not go beyond the constitutional powers vested in the Federal authority are not lacking and that the decision that they were illegal was arrived at by the majority of judges because of their political bias and not because of an impartial examination of

the legal implications of enactments like the National Recovery Act (N. R. A.) or the Agricultural Adjustment Act (A. A. A.). Obviously, if three members of the Supreme Court could find arguments to make the Acts legal more such judges could be found to agree with them.

President Roosevelt, therefore, proposes to assume power to invite the resignations of those Judges on the federal courts, including the Supreme Court, who are above seventy years of age and thus to create vacancies for the infusion of fresh and younger blood. In case any judge or judges refused to retire, he proposes to nominate an equal number of judges on the bench. The immediate result of the power, if approved of by the Congress, would be to enable the President to invite the resignations of six members of the Supreme Court who are above seventy or to add six new justices to it, thereby practically neutralising the opposition to his measures from the Supreme Court. The attempt goes, on the face of it, against the grain of every democrat as it amounts to what seems like a packing of a judicial bench to serve political ends. The confusion, and even consternation in some respects, among the political thinkers of America is, therefore, understandable.

The situation in which a judicial authority could hold up the beneficial measures of the supreme legislative body of a country is unfamiliar to those who have been accustomed to think on the model of the British Parliamentary system in which the Courts have to accept the laws passed by the legislatures and possess no power to invalidate them. But the American Constitution creates a Government of checks and balances, in which the written Constitution of the United States is the touchstone on which every action of the legislature has to be tested. The House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Supreme Court act as mutual safeguards against the encroachments, if any, of each other on the word of the Constitution and the rights and authorities vested in the federating states, the federal government and the American citizen by it. The conflict of opinion in interpreting the federal laws arises because the Justices of the Supreme Court are called upon to interpret words like 'liberty', 'property', 'contract', etc., whose interpretation differs according to the personal predilections of the individual judge and not according to his legal knowledge. As such, President Roosevelt argues, the rulings of the Supreme Court on measures connected with these matters are political and not judicial interpretations. By its recent obstruction of the N. R. A., the A. A. A. and similar Acts the Supreme Court has in fact unmistakably revealed what it has become for more than a century viz., the Third Chamber of the republic with a vetoing power over the other two.

The Supreme Court is charged with the duty of guarding the "sacred rights" of the American citizen vested in him by the Constitution. The Constitution on account of the great struggle which preceded it has assumed almost biblical authority in the mind of the average American and as the interpreter of that venerated document, the Supreme Court's "nine old

men" have become the oracles of the United States whose judgments have the power and authority to hold up national schemes, paralyse the speedy adjustment of old social systems to modern conditions and generally to slow down the pace of reform in the United States. As long as the Supreme Court's judgments kept pace with the national will and whatever checks it provided were inspired not by personal politics but by public-spirited caution, they were accepted by the nation with due respect. But the crisis has laid bare the danger of making a few individuals the repositories of a final veto on the nation's popular legislatures and has involved them, in fierce public controversy.

The opposition to the President's proposals comes from those who believe that the judiciary and the Constitution are their only safeguards against executive encroachments on their civil liberties granted by the constitution. The extreme oppositionist view has been well put in the *America*, a Catholic weekly by a writer. He says:—

Every man who wishes to be a dictator should begin by attacking the Courts. As long as there is a fundamental law which protects the rights of the people by binding the Government with the chains of a Constitution, as Jefferson wrote, there can be no dictator. What a dictator must have is untrammelled power to issue decrees and edicts. He can tolerate no independent courts. No one has said that President Roosevelt is preparing to make himself a dictator. But he is undoubtedly paving the way for one, to make some successor a dictator. Rubber-stamp congresses are not unknown. Congresses controlled by the President through his control of political patronage have ere this disgraced this country. But it is horrifying to think what will certainly happen to our constitutional liberties and to the guarantees of our natural rights, if in addition to our rubber-stamp Congresses we are also to have a rubber-stamp Supreme Court.

This objection to "rubber-stamp courts" is at the root of much of the opposition to the measure, even among the President's own camp. The fear that however public-spirited and patriotic the present President of the United States may be, his virtues and the confidence reposed in him by the American people may not be the instruments to create powers which men of lesser mettle might abuse,—and the United States is not unfamiliar to the sight of such persons ruling in the White House,—is the greatest obstacle to the quiet submission to his will in the country. Objection is also taken to the idea of a President appointing to the Supreme Court, with however good a motive, "men with a mandate to uphold legislation extorted from a weak or corrupt Congress." Even men like Norman Thomas, who recognise the inevitability of a conflict between the progressive will of the nation and the orthodox authority of the Supreme Court, hesitate to endorse the policy of depriving the courts of all power to review congressional and State legislation because of "the fact that to a limited extent the courts have granted some real protection to civil liberties."

I am far more concerned, (Mr Thomas says) now and for the future, with protecting those civil liberties upon which all hope of ordered progress and the genuinely good life depend than any dogma of Congressional supremacy. Those civil rights rest on a basis that is very different from and far more valid than any property rights in our changing society.

Therefore, Mr. Thomas opposes "any blanket abolition of the judicial veto."

The difficulty of undertaking any ameliorative measures involving the property or contractual rights of the citizen in America, which confronts the Roosevelt administration today, is inherent in the Constitution itself. The amendment of the Constitution is, it is urged, the correct procedure to follow for any one who desires to rid the United States of the prejudices of the eighteenth century social system. But the amendment of the Constitution is not an altogether simple matter. In fact it is the most cumbersome and the least useful way to meet the pressing problems of the country. It would certainly cover for Roosevelt the whole period of his presidentship and may in the end prove futile. An amendment to the Constitution requires the approval of not merely two-thirds of each House of Congress, but of three-quarters of the State legislatures. As it is, so rooted is the belief about the sacrosanctity of the Constitution that the President finds ranged against himself men who were themselves responsible for many of the measures vetoed by the Supreme Court. Thus Norris, the father of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Senator Wagner, a supporter the N. R. A. and an open critic of and a probable candidate for the Supreme Court, Hiram Johnson, an advocate of a more flexible constitution, Norman Thomas and such other progressives are opposed to the President's proposal. They are opposed not because they do not want the powers of the Supreme Court curbed but because the measure proposed fails exactly in that particular respect while setting up, in their opinion, a dangerous precedent. It does not curb the Court's power, it only increases the number of the justices by those who, for the time being, might agree with the President of the day, but might quite likely prove equally obscurantists in other respects or in relation to other measures sponsored by other Presidents. What a progressive President can do today, a reactionary President can do tomorrow.

The objectionists to the proposals have failed, however, to meet the contention that the Supreme Court, like any other branch of the government of the country, must reflect the opinions of an overwhelming majority of the citizens in a matter which is essentially political. As the *New Republic* puts it:

There is no way to safeguard eternal progressivism in government, whether by President Roosevelt's method or by any other. If there is no guarantee of obtaining a progressive Court, there is surely no guarantee that new words in the law or the constitution would be much differently interpreted than the old ones. The essence of the matter is not thematic or logical, but political. Some effective ways or way must be found of registering the national desire that the Court act differently at the present time. "Packing" the Court is as good a way as any. It is not undignified to seek to add to it new members who will have different opinions about the constitution and about policy from those of the present majority.... Nor is there any betrayal of the existing constitutional system in acknowledging that the issue is and must be political in the deepest sense and that the tendency of an overwhelming majority of citizens has a right to representation in the Supreme Court as in other branches of the government. To reject

this measure in favour of a constitutional amendment, is to reject a means of pressure immediately feasible for one that might take years to effectuate and might be blocked by one more than a fourth of the states, containing a small minority of the electorate.

The Constitution of the United States as interpreted from time to time has given the Supreme Court staggering powers; President Roosevelt has been returned to the White House because people believed that he would not accept the obscurantist veto of the Supreme Court on his progressive measures with quiet resignation. His success implied a vote of the nation in favour of still more active measures to relieve their suffering. Such measures cannot be taken if he is to submit to the Court's protective interest for the capitalist and the vested interests. To fulfil his promise he must remove the constant threat of the Court's veto which paralyses and throws into chaos great schemes undertaken for the masses by the Federal Government. And since the Supreme Court, or rather the five or six men who seem to consider themselves above the popular will of the whole nation, would not retreat from their position of obstructionist obduracy, it must be curbed by speedy methods by which the nation can assert its freedom to move in any direction it desires undeterred by the amorphous and antiquated constitution evolved in circumstances and by men who could not foresee and provide for the complexities of modern industrial life.

Our Parliamentary Letter.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

New Delhi, March 14.

MOST momentous issues were raised in the Assembly when the House devoted five days to the discussion of the cut motions. In all, six important cut motions were carried by the Assembly and it is worthy of note that in none of them did the Government obtain a victory. The Government of India has few friends in the Assembly and whatever might be said in defence of its policies, the fact is certain that it has completely lost the confidence of the non-official members. With regard to every policy followed by the Government, there are disapproval and opposition from the non-official benches. People like Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan and the Raja of Kollengode find themselves in agreement with the Congress party members and sometimes, even the European group takes up a censorious attitude which may well do credit to the members of the Opposition.

PROTEST AGAINST GENERAL POLICY.

The most important cut motion moved by the Opposition related to a censure of the general policy pursued by the Government. Mr. Desai who moved the cut motion gave a harrowing description of the conditions of the people. Unemployment, he said, was striding ominously throughout the country and during the seventeen years that the Reforms were in operation, the earnings of the villager had not increased by a pie. The Railway Member conveniently turned down the proposal to manufacture locomotives in India, because he thought that it would not be paying. But could not the Government add one crore more to the 800 crores already sunk in Railways in order

to train the Indians in the manufacture of the locomotives? It was a curious logic, he said, which the Government was following. The Government would give no training to the people and make lack of training an excuse for denying it. It was a great speech which the Leader of the Opposition made on the occasion. Indeed, his case was so strong that he needed no surfeit of words to strengthen his position. The Railway Member who took part in the discussion argued curiously to ward off the censure. He said that the present constitution was an illogical one and if under the present system, the Executive failed to respond to the wishes of the Legislature, then the constitution was to blame and not the Executive. To this, Sir Cowasji Jehangir gave a very suitable reply. He admitted the fact that the constitution was illogical but it was intended by the framers of the constitution that the Executive would respect the wishes of the Legislature, as far as it could. But the Bombay Baronet narrated instances to show that even in minor matters the Executive flouted the wishes of the Legislature. The lowering of the post-card rates and the building of Quetta not out of revenue but out of loan, was pressed very strongly by the non-official members but the Executive turned a deaf ear to this advice. Surely, these were not matters of such fundamental importance that by carrying them out, the Executive would have imperilled the safety of the country. Why were these recommendations not accepted? Sir Cowasji Jehangir proved conclusively that the Reforms were not worked in the spirit in which they were given. Mr. Aney, the leader of the Nationalist Party, voiced the same feelings. The debate was closed by the Finance Member who very much wished the Congress to work the constitution. Why? Not that it could do something which the bureaucracy has failed to do, but when the Congress governed, it would see that achievement was but a small dividend on aspiration and would have sympathy for what it said the men of his race were not able to do. In other words, the Finance Member frankly suggested that he had no defects in him. Only the Opposition was unreasonable enough to censure his policy.

REPRESSIVE POLICY CONDEMNED.

The next defeat of the Government on a cut motion related to the condemnation of the repressive policy followed by the Government. Mr. A. C. Dutta who moved the cut motion has little ability of a persuasive character. But the facts were so strong that the House did not require any persuasion to vote for the motion. On the admission of the Home Member, 1,100 persons are still in jail, though of these 255 are to be released immediately. What the fate of the rest would be nobody can tell. The Government's defence is that the evidence against these detenus is of such a character, that its divulgence would imperil the lives of the informants. But, if this position is taken up by the Government how will the country be convinced of the propriety of their action? In no country are the citizens left to the tender mercies of the Executive. If the Executive be supposed to be impartial and just, then what is the necessity of a judiciary at all? As regards the other argument, that if detenus are released before terrorism is extirpated, they might again drift into the cult of terrorism, it might well be said that the detenus are so discontented with their present position, that any prolongation of their detention without weaning them away from terrorism will only make them desperate followers of it. In any case, the repressive policy of the Government has wrought such havoc that it would be wise for the Government to abandon it completely. Otherwise there would be no peace and contentment in the country.

Besides these two cut motions of paramount importance, four other cut motions were passed by the Assembly. Of these, we have noticed the cut motion of the Raja of Kollengoda. The three other cut motions related to (1) The Indianisation of the Army, (2) Censure of Government's policy with regard to Indians Overseas and (3) Censure of the Frontier policy pursued by the Government.

ARMY INDIANISATION.

The Indianisation of the Army question was moved by a member of the Independent Party. The leader of the Party being absent, the sponsoring of the motion devolved on a member who could do only scant justice to the subject. But other good speakers assisted the mover and the debate turned out to be a first-rate one. The most unfortunate incident during the debate was the provocative speech of Mr. Griffith which evoked strong rejoinders from Mr. Satyamurty and Sir Cowasji Jehangir. Mr. Tottenham delivered a conciliatory speech. He said that he knew the strong feelings of the House on the question of Indianisation. But Indianisation in the Army could not be pushed further unless the Indianisation of the Commissioned ranks proved a success. It is no wonder that this reply of the Army Secretary did not satisfy the House and the cut motion on Indianisation was carried.

INDIANS OVERSEAS.

A similar cut motion was moved by Mr. Saksena to censure the Government's policy with regard to the position of the Indians Overseas. Mr. Saksena is not a good speaker nor can he marshal his arguments well. It is curious but true that excepting the leader, deputy-leader and secretary of the Congress Party and a few other speakers like Messrs. Asaf Ali and Sri Prakasa, the Congress benches lack to a great extent both advocacy and cogency. Sir H. P. Mody was right in saying that they indulge mostly in mere fire-works. If the numerical strength of the Congress Party had been supplemented by cogency and persuasiveness, then it would have made a fine Opposition indeed. As it is, the impression is left on the mind of an observer that the Congress Party carries on by the sheer force of numbers. Mr. Saksena's cut motion raised an interesting debate, in which both Sir Jagadish Prasad and Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai participated. Sir Girjashankar's advocacy was very able indeed and kept up the reputation of the all-knowing I. C. S. The leader of the Opposition took part in the debate. As usual his diction and delivery were of the ideal type. But the same cannot be said with regard to his arguments. Mr. Desai committed an error of facts when he said that Mahatma Gandhi carried on his work in South Africa absolutely unaided by the Indian Government. This is not true. Mahatma Gandhi had the active support of Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India. Secondly, Mr. Desai advocated a policy of retaliation. But nobody can be sure of its results in future. As Sir Jagadish Prasad pointed out, nearly two lakhs of Indians stay in South Africa, whereas less than 100 South-Africans stay in India. This is true not only with regard to South Africa but with regard to other countries where Indians have settled. In view of these circumstances, a policy of retaliation if followed by India may redound to the disadvantage of the Indians themselves. But admitting all this, it cannot be denied that in this respect, India has been shabbily treated by the British Government. As regards discrimination against Indians practised by the Dominions, the British Government may not have anything to do. But this cannot be said with regard to discrimination practised by the Colonies. The

British Government can exert influence on them to change their policy. But the British Government has done nothing of the kind. So it deserves the censure passed by the House though due to the irony of circumstances the censure motion had to be passed against the India Government.

As regards the cut motion regarding the Frontier Policy, it must be admitted at once that the present frontier policy of the Government is more costly to India. It would be better if some method could be devised by which India will have to spend less on its frontier policy. But as matters stand, there is no chance of its being done in the near future. As the Foreign Secretary pointed out, the conditions demanded by the Afridis for a peaceful settlement were so impossible to fulfill that no Government with any self-respect could agree to them. Of course, steps should be taken by the Government to end disorder and to restore peaceful conditions as soon as possible. But the Government is not a free agent in the matter. It must shape its policy according to the behaviour of the frontier tribes. So it is unjust to attach the whole blame to the Government.

COMPULSORY STATE INSURANCE.

Besides these six cut motions which were pressed to a division, there were other cut motions which were withdrawn on sympathetic assurances being given. Mr. Joshi moved a cut motion urging the Government to undertake a uniform system of compulsory state insurance against risks incidental to the lives of the industrial workers. Sir Frank Noyce replying to the cut motion said that he had every sympathy for the insurance scheme, but Mr. Joshi had ignored the question of finance and constitutional implications of the motion. Sir Frank Noyce stressed the fact that the provision of Rs. 5 to people over 60 would cost Rs. 7 crores and this would involve the Government in incalculable liabilities. But if the Government would not undertake nation-building measures simply because they are costly, then what right can it have for being called a civilised Government? Making the world safe for the poor and the destitute is surely very costly, but every progressive Government must make attempts to do it as far as is possible. It is only this, which will raise the Government in the estimation of the people and draw them nearer and nearer to the Government.

Mr. Joshi moved another cut motion in the postal grants to discuss the grievances of the postal employees. He said that the Government had not complied with the Draft Convention on Forced Labour and that the postman's house allowance had been reduced in Bombay. Mr. Giri also detailed the grievances of the lower scale employees. Mr. Thorne, replying to Mr. Joshi, said that full information on the Draft Convention would be made available to the House. Mr. Bewoor, replying to the criticism on the reduction of house allowance, said that the Government had considered this matter carefully before taking action. He emphasised that the house allowance was not meant to cover full rent, but to cover extra cost where the standard was high. This debate gives a clue to the readers as to how the Postal Department is effecting economies. The house allowance of the poor employees is being reduced and the plea is advanced that the house allowance is not meant to cover the full rent!

SHORT NOTICES.

HEALTH AND A CHANGING CIVILISATION.

BY E. OBERMER. (John Lane the Bodley Head.)
1935. 20cm. 171p. 3/6.

It goes without saying that health constitutes the foundation of human happiness. In its absence, life becomes a source of misery and a burden. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that the Twentieth Century Library should devote one of its volumes to the discussion of a topic so intimately bearing on human life. In this book Dr. Obermer treats the problem of health in an entirely new light and puts forward many suggestions designed to promote health. Needless to say they are extremely useful to humanity not in this country or that but all the world over.

With a view to ensuring medical treatment for all, both preventive as well as therapeutic, the author has suggested a plan which he calls a Central Individual Health Institute for every important town and also for the mofussil. He describes the inadequate medical help which the present civilised nations get at the hands of their governments. In this connection it is interesting to note the figures of population per physician in 1932 in the various countries. In U.S.A. the population per physician was 780, in England 1490, in Germany 1530, in France 1690, and in Belgium 1850. When we compare these figures with those for India or for that matter for all Asian countries except Japan, the contrast is most distressing. The causes at the root of these appalling conditions are certainly a lack of fellow-feeling and a state of extreme poverty which prevents governments from providing adequate means of medical help and other amenities of life. It is to be hoped that methods for promoting health like those enumerated in this book will be resorted to wherever possible.

R. A. RAIRKAR.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS (MARATHI.)

BY S. S. BARVE. (Author, 525, Narayan, Poona 2.)
1936. 18cm. 141p. Re. 1.

AGRICULTURAL Economics is an attempt by Mr. Barve to bring together his own views that were placed before the public on different occasions in the form of lectures and articles in leading papers.

The title of the book is a bit misleading. The present system of land taxation in India, its pitfalls and ultimate consequences in comparison with the old one-sixth of income method form the main theme. With a view to emphasising his own point the author has presented all related factors with apt quotations. Besides, he points out the disadvantages under which an agriculturist labours owing to stoppage of free minting, 18d. ratio, etc.

His comparison of the burden of taxation of agriculturists with that of merchants and his emphasis on the proportion between land-tax and income from land are instructive because income includes consideration of factors beyond individual control. But his decision that the proportion should be one-sixth of income because it happens to be the old one, indicates conservatism.

Mr. Barve, who has been spending his retired life so fruitfully, making available to the public his own experience, deserves every encouragement. The book which has been written in very simple Marathi should prove of great use to the general public interested in the land problem in India.

M. B. GHATGE.