

# The Servant of India

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## CONTENTS.

	Page
TOPICS OF THE WEEK ... ..	265
ARTICLES :—	
The Viceroy's Exegesis. ... ..	267
Relief of Indebtedness in Eastern European Countries. By Shyam Sundar Misra. ... ..	268
REVIEW :—	
Problem Of Nutrition. By Principal D. G. Karve, M. A. ... ..	270
SHORT NOTICE. ... ..	270
MISCELLANEA :—	
Servants of India Society:	
(1) Mr. Kunzru's Speech. ... ..	271
(2) Report for 1936-37. ... ..	272
Womemen's Fellowship of Service—	
Rani Rajwade's Speech. ... ..	274
Liberals on the Situation. ... ..	276

## Topics of the Week.

### S. I. Society's Anniversary.

THE thirty-second anniversary of the foundation day of the Servants of India Society was celebrated at the Society's head-quarters in Poona on the 12th instant. The celebration was attended by most of the members of the Society, the exceptions being Mr. Srinivasa Sastri who could not come on account of pressing work at the Annamalai University, Mr. Bakhale who has not yet returned from Japan, where he attended the Asiatic Labour Conference, and Mr. Krishna Prasad Kaul who was prevented from attending by the ill-health of his daughter. Mr. P. Kodanda Rao, who was on a tour in the East on his way back from the United States, returned in time for the anniversary. The 'at home' on the 12th inst. was attended by more than 300 friends and sympathisers of the Society, who were addressed by the President Pt. Hirday Nath Kunzru, on the present political deadlock, the position of Indians abroad and the Society's work. A summary of Mr. Kunzru's speech appears elsewhere in this issue.

THE annual election of three members to the Council of the Society resulted in the return of Messrs. Vaze, Bajpai and Parulekar to the Council. Mr. Rama Shankar Misra from the U. P. was admitted to the membership of the Society on the completion of his year's probation. It has been found impossible to admit any probationers this year, in spite of the need for them, on account of the difficult financial situation with which the Society is faced.

LECTURES of experts on their special subjects were arranged for the benefit of members and associates this year also. Principal D. G. Karve of the Willingdon College, Sangli, delivered two lectures on Federal and Provincial Finance, Prof. V. G. Kale spoke on Capitalism and Socialism in a couple of lectures, and Mr. D. R. Gadgil, Director of the G. I. P. E., discussed Planning in two lectures. Mr. Kodanda Rao, who returned after studying the problem of Indians Abroad at first hand in the Pacific and the Atlantic countries, gave two lectures on his experiences and conclusions therefrom, and is to give another on the "East and West in Civilisation," and Mr. Suryanarayana Rao is to speak on the question of Indians in Ceylon. Swami Kuvalayanand, well-known here and elsewhere for his investigations and experiments regarding the yogic system of exercises, was also specially invited to speak on his subject to the members.

A NEW scheme was initiated this year and proved a great success. Those members of the Society who were engaged in specialised work were asked to write papers on their subjects during the year. The papers were discussed by the members in special sittings of the Society. Great interest was evoked by these papers and it is hoped to continue the experiment next year also. The papers thus prepared were: (1) Rural Development by Mr. N. A. Dravid, Senior Member of the C. P. Branch; (2) The Position of Women in Indian Society by Mr. K. P. Kaul; (3) Better Villages through Scouting by Mr. Sri Ram Bajpai; (4) Social Insurance by Mr. S. V. Parulekar; and (5) The Aborigines Problem by Mr. A. V. Thakkar.

MANY of the discussions were attended by associates of the Society, among whom may be mentioned Sir M. V. Joshi, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Prof. V. G. Kale, Prin. J. R. Gharpure and others. Mr. Vaikunth L. Mehta, Managing Director of the Central Co-operative Bank, Bombay, kindly came down to Poona specially to attend the discussion on the Rural Reconstruction paper. The Society is deeply appreciative of the help and encouragement given by these gentlemen.

THE session of the Society was overcast by the deficit budget which had to be presented to it this year. The financial position of the Society is causing grave anxiety to its members, this year's deficit being something more than Rs. 10,000.

### Summer School Ban Contretemps.

THE official justification of the forcible disbanding of the Summer School at Kottapatnam in the Madras presidency is given as the preaching of violence in the school. As pointed out in an

earlier issue, the allegation, not being based on anything more reliable than police reports, could never have been taken at its face value. Its value however, is still further lessened by the findings of the committee which was appointed by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee to inquire into the whole episode. The committee has come to the conclusion that the allegation has no basis in fact. On the contrary it was fully satisfied that "violence in any form was not advocated in the school." The committee's inquiry was an open one and any party, including the Government, was free to lead evidence before it. If the Madras Government had convincing evidence in support of their statement about the school having in any manner been used to propagate the gospel of violence, it was their clear duty to have made it available for public information. But, one wonders, if in that case they would have kept it to themselves. If in the absence of such evidence the public is expected merely to take their word for it, we are afraid they are making too heavy a demand on public credulity.

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THE committee's report also gives support to the general public belief that needless force was used in disbanding the school. It is difficult to believe that the inmates of the school made any attempt to resist or evade arrest nor, so far as we know, is such a charge levelled even by Government. Where then was the need to employ force? Its use in the circumstances was most uncalled-for and highly improper. But this is not the only misconduct for which the guardians of law and order need to be called to account. The arrested women were made to travel in an open lorry at a time when the heat is almost unbearable and a batch of arrested men was made to walk a distance of about four miles in the hottest part of the day. Surely all this discomfort was avoidable and could have been avoided if the police were not possessed, as they appeared to be, with the idea of teaching the arrested persons a lesson. The interim ministry in the Southern presidency will be hard put to it to justify these, what must be termed, police excesses.

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THE refusal by the organisers of the school of permission to the police to attend it is officially cited as a count against them. It has to be noted that in doing so the school authorities were doing nothing extraordinary but merely insisting upon their right of private meeting. The satisfaction of the police demand would have meant a clear encroachment on civil liberty and the virtual surrender of a right to whose enjoyment no objection has been so far taken. The stand taken in this matter by the organisers of the school thus appears to be based on good and sound reasons. It will be seen from all this that the committee's report constitutes a damaging indictment of the police in their handling of the Summer School situation. But let the public be under no illusion that the officials guilty of such indefensible conduct would meet with their deserts. This of course is not to be expected of a ministry which could not even persuade itself as to the desirability of an inquiry when a prima facie case for one was established to the satisfaction of all reasonable beings.

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#### Manufactured Loyalty.

AN instance of how some people are more loyal than the King himself is reported from Kathiawar. There in a small State by name Bagasra a number of its citizens have been served with notices to show cause why they should not be fined for absence at the celebrations connected with the King's Coronation.

The State authorities are obviously living in a world from which the knowledge of contemporary events elsewhere is completely shut out. Their present action is inexplicable except on this supposition. For if they had even remotely been in touch with the happenings in adjoining British Indian territory they would have had no difficulty in seeing that abstention from Coronation ceremonies was nowhere looked upon as an offence of which notice need be taken. As a matter of fact in obedience to the Congress resolution advising non-participation in the Coronation rejoicings an overwhelming majority of the people, who were not all Congressmen themselves, kept aloof from the Coronation festivities without incurring penalties. If such non-participation was not considered blameworthy in British India we fail to see why it should be otherwise in an Indian State. And should not the State authorities be able to see that such forced exhibitions of loyalty can do good to nobody? The public both in British and Indian India, being thoroughly dissatisfied with the new constitution which is being imposed on the country against its will, is in no mood to be a party to any rejoicings attendant upon a change of sovereigns. And any official attempt, as in the present instance, to compel it to act as voluntary participators in the rejoicings will only add to the existing estrangement between the Government and the people. It is a pity that what is so obvious should not have been apparent to the authorities of Bagasra State.

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#### Zanzibar Day.

SUNDAY last was observed throughout the country as the Zanzibar day. And the resolutions passed at countless public meetings held on that day and the speeches made at them bear sufficient testimony to the strength of public feeling on the Zanzibar problem. The one bill that drew on itself more criticism than another was that relating to the clove trade. This is designed to carry into effect Mr. Binder's recommendations. This bill confers the virtual monopoly of the clove trade on the Clove Grower's Association which, as experience has shown, is hardly better than a close British corporation. It was pointed out by speakers at these meetings that the practical result of the operation of such a law would be the ruin of Indians by their being squeezed out of the clove trade in which they are vitally interested and eventually from Zanzibar itself. The speeches took due note of the fact that pressure was being exercised by the India Government on the Colonial office with a view to persuading it to withdraw the obnoxious measure. If the India Government's efforts result in the further progress of the bill to the Zanzibar statute book being arrested nothing better could be desired. But if it proves a vain hope, the Government of India were strongly urged to resort to retaliatory action by the imposition of a heavy import duty on cloves of Zanzibar origin. We shall not be required to wait long to know the effect of the Government of India's representations to the Colonial office.

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It is sometimes supposed that India is kicking up all this row about Zanzibar in order that she may have a hand in the exploitation of the natives. As Mr. Brelvi, president of the Bombay meeting, pointed out, this is very far from being India's wish. All that our countrymen in Zanzibar demand is bare justice and nothing more. Mr. Brelvi thus explained the position:

The Arabs and Africans must be protected against exploitation, whether by Indians or the British. Indians did not want that their countrymen should be given a share in any scheme for the exploitation of the Arabs and the

Africans. Nor could they agree to the exploitation of the latter by the British. What they wanted was that in protecting the interests of the Arabs and the Africans no avoidable injustice should be done to Indians and this end could only be secured if the obnoxious Bill was withdrawn and another measure was introduced, which, while fully safeguarding the interests of the Arabs and the Africans, would avoid any injury to those of Indians.

#### Queerly Arbitrary.

THE latest bulletin of the Indian Civil Liberties Union gives a formidable list of prosecutions for alleged sedition, of magisterial orders under section 144 Cr. P. C., and of demands for security deposits from newspapers. A case is also cited in which the possession of an objectionable book was punished with four months' rigorous imprisonment. In another case the distribution of "prohibited" literature earned for the distributor as severe a punishment as three months' rigorous imprisonment! Innumerable cases of house searches, presumably in order to get at what the Police believed to be undesirable literature, have been brought to light. All which makes one wonder whether the country is in reality despotically governed placing the liberties of the people entirely at the mercy of the executive or by popular ministries having any touch with public opinion.

BUT the bulletin gives publicity to an order which in point of whimsical high-handedness beats all the rest. Under this order an inhabitant of Chittagong has been prohibited from admitting to his premises any males between 12 and 30 who may not be members of his family. The order is issued in the name of the suppression of the terrorist scourge which probably accounts for its queerly ludicrous nature. The Bengal Government apparently look upon youths within the given age-limits as being potential, if not actual, terrorists. And acting upon that assumption, to expose whose unwarranted character no words need be wasted here, they have ordered this resident of Chittagong not to give them any quarter. The order is sure to appear highly oppressive to all having any value for civil liberty. But why should Sir John Anderson's Government at all bother about their feelings? Anyway the order vividly illustrates once more the danger of investing the executive with arbitrary powers.

#### Women Workers in Mines.

IN a press communique recently issued, the Government of India state that they have decided to suspend for a period of three months the operation of the New Regulations prohibiting women from working underground in mines. The New Regulations will therefore, come into force from October 1 in stead of on July. In 1929 the Regulations promulgated limited the number of women, who could be employed underground in any coal mine to a specified percentage of the total underground labour force which was to go on getting less and less every year. The percentage fixed for the first year was 29 and if the Regulations had continued in force the percentage from July 1 would have been only five. It is important to note, in this connection, that the actual percentage of women employed in 1936-37 was only 5.6 per cent. of the total underground labour force, though the percentage allowed for the year was 8. This was due to the fact that some mines had taken steps to exclude women in anticipation of official action. Under the Regulations of 1929, complete exclusion would have been effected by 1939, but the industry was in favour of earlier exclusion and the Government of India issued on February 1 regulations designed to exclude all women from July 1 this year.

THE argument advanced by the Government for suspending the operation of the new Regulations is that the final exclusion of women should not coincide with the time when other labour is likely to be the shortest. In our opinion, this argument is untenable, in view of the fact that there is no guarantee of adequate supply of labour forthcoming even after the 1st of October. If the employers find it difficult to get a sufficient number of men to work in mines, it is their obvious duty to attract more labour by offering higher wages. The Government of India have admitted the fact in their communique that there has been a sharp rise in prices of coal due to greater industrial activity in the country. It is, therefore, all the more necessary that there should be a rise in the wages in order to attract sufficient labour and not the suspension of the new Regulations. By suspending the Regulations till the 1st of October, the Government of India have once again shown their readiness to help the industry at the expense of labour.

## THE VICEROY'S EXEGESIS.

THE silence of the Viceroy ever since an impasse was created in six provinces was interpreted in Congress circles as due to his being favourably inclined to the grant of the Congress demand for assurances of non-interference by the Governors. It was felt that the Governors' refusal to give the assurances was an act of compulsion on the part of the Secretary of State; that the policy was imposed upon the country against the wishes of some of the Governors and in any case against the wishes of the Viceroy. And the longer the Viceroy's silence continued, the stronger became the belief and hope of Congressmen that Lord Linlithgow might even feel constrained to tender resignation of his office. The belief was, however, utterly unfounded and the hope fantastic to the last degree. While the Governors were explaining the constitutional position to the leaders of the Congress party, there was no occasion

for the Viceroy to intervene; and the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State appeared on the scene only because questions were asked in the Houses of Parliament. No opportunity presented itself in the ordinary course of things to Lord Linlithgow to make a pronouncement on the subject, and even the occasion now taken by him did not come in his way naturally. He had to go very much out of his way to make the pronouncement. He must have felt that time had come for him to make it clear that he was in complete accord with the Secretary of State and that there was no question of his contemplating resignation on account of any divergence of view.

The statement issued by him explains elaborately the points made often enough before in official pronouncements. His exegesis is clear and unchallengeable. The Indian constitution is admittedly a half-way house; it does not purport to give full self-

government and cannot be turned by any legerdemain into a constitution of full self-government. No kind of assurances which it is constitutionally open to the Governors to give will remove the safeguards, with which it is replete. And the only thing which Indian politicians can in the circumstances do is either to shoulder the responsibilities of office, whether the object in doing so be to work the constitution loyally or to sabotage it from within, or to stand away from the machine of government and reject office. The Congress, however, took none of these courses. Mahatma Gandhi disavowed the intention of Congressmen to play the part of saboteurs in any case, and he expressed a wish to accept office, with a view to giving an honest trial to a confessedly imperfect constitution, provided, however, that the Governors did not interfere in the administration. Complete non-interference is under the Act impossible as the Governors are required in certain circumstances to set aside the advice of the Ministers. The Mahatma therefore interpreted the Congress resolution, drawn in too wide terms, to mean that interference in day-to-day administration alone was sought to be prevented. An assurance in this limited sense was clearly unnecessary. It is provided, as the Viceroy now shows, in the constitution itself. In the sphere allotted to it the Ministry is the cock of the walk, and the Governors have no right to step in. In the other sphere, which naturally the Viceroy tries to make out is small but is really very wide, there is room for give and take. In this sphere there is no doubt that the Ministers will be called upon to give far more than they can ever take, for in the last resort the Governors dominate the whole of this sphere. These limitations are implicit in the Act; nay, they are expressly incorporated in it. And the question is whether under these limitations, which no assurance can override, office should be accepted or not.

Curiously enough, the Mahatma accepted the limitations but insisted that when in the give and take the Ministers are desired to give more than in the best interests of the country they feel justified in doing, they should not be left to quit office but should be kicked out of it, as the *Indian Social Reformer* put it recently. On this strange demand the Viceroy put his foot down in a way which appears to leave no further room for bargaining. Resignation in such a contingency is, he said with several others before him, more in keeping with constitutional theory and the Ministers' own self-respect, and though dismissal is always open to the Governors, they should not adopt this course as a rule. To do so would imply a position of inferiority of the Ministers which it was, the aim of the framers of the constitution carefully to guard against. There is nothing in this last rather ingenious argument, but it must be admitted that the Viceroy is quite right in urging that the insistence upon dismissal in preference to resignation is entirely misplaced. Lord Linlithgow, while rejecting the demand for automatic dismissal, said that if in the event of interference by the Governor the Ministers remained in office, they might publicly

state that they were compelled to resign on account of the Governor forcing an unacceptable policy on them. This will no doubt obviate crisis in small matters but will not give relief in matters of major importance. In any case it is no response to Mahatma Gandhi's and the Congress Working Committee's demand for dismissal and while the Viceroy's utterance was thought sympathetic, towards the end came what can only be considered as an ultimatum. He said: "If what I should regard as a deplorable outcome should emerge from the present situation and if parliamentary and responsible government should as a consequence be suspended in a number of Provinces, it might, however much we might all of us regret it, be beyond the power of any of us rapidly to reverse the circumstances that must then supervene." Here he told the Congress in plain terms that he was quite prepared to face the continuance of the present impasse and would not be deflected from what he regarded as the proper course by any threat of agitation on the part of the Congress. In presence of this final statement of the Government's view the impasse can be resolved only by the Congress waiving its demand for dismissal. An indication of what it will do will be afforded at the Working Committee's meeting on 5th July.

The Viceroy took this opportunity to reassure the vested interests, in whose behalf the safeguards have been devised, that they would never be sacrificed, however fierce might be the attack that politicians might make upon them. This assurance implies that even if the Ministers, after resignation of their office and dissolution of the Assembly, obtain a majority in a fresh election for the view which caused the crisis, the Governor will not yield but will take the same action again as before, contrary to the advice of the new Ministers. The electorate will not thus be recognised as the final arbiter. This is indeed implicit in the fact that the constitution is not one of full self-government, but in Congress circles fond hopes were entertained that the Governors would give in if they could find no alternative ministry. It is just as well that this bubble is pricked. Lord Linlithgow in his statement made no reference to the avowed aim of the Congress to end the constitution, but Lord Zetland in a recent speech made clear that it would be one of the factors that would determine the Government's policy in dealing with the Congress Ministries. This position, we suppose, remains unaltered. The Viceroy's speech, although it does not help in ending the deadlock, has cleared away misunderstandings, and it now remains for the Congress to determine what its line of action shall be.

#### RELIEF OF INDEBTEDNESS IN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

**T**HE burden of agricultural indebtedness increased in every country after the great economic depression due to the catastrophic fall of agricultural prices. The fixed charges incurred by the farmer remaining almost the same, the low money value of the agricultural crops led to deficits in the family budgets of most of the farmers. For example, it was

found out by investigations in Greece that whereas the average income per family was 19,398 drachmas, the annual expenditure considered to be indispensable for such a family amounted to 25,055 drachmas. The average annual deficit, therefore, was 5,657 drachmas for each family. It followed that the farmers were compelled to incur debts to provide for their subsistence. This state of affairs was not peculiar to Greece alone. Most of the eastern European States laboured under these difficulties in some form or other. For example, in Hungary, the interest charges per cadastral arpent (the unit of land) were equal to nearly three quintals of wheat. But the net return from a cadastral arpent did not give the value of even a quintal of wheat. So, the interest charges in Hungary were far higher than the return on the properties.

The reason for this discrepancy between the money value of the crops and the cost of their production is to be found in the fact that the farmer bought more dearly than he sold in comparison with the pre-war period. The heavy interest charges, the investment in farm buildings and dwelling houses, expenditure for the purchase of machines and for improvements which was incurred at the time when market conditions were favourable; all these factors conspired to increase the cost of production of the cultivator, while due to the economic depression, his crops failed to fetch their former money value. The conjunction of these circumstances could lead only to one result. It paralysed the farmers by the incubus of indebtedness. According to an inquiry conducted in Hungary, it was found out that half of the very small land-owners and nearly half of the large land-owners were indebted to the credit institutions. The very small and medium sized properties were particularly burdened with debts of this kind. In the western provinces of Czechoslovakia, 19.8% of the farms were free from debt while in the eastern provinces, nearly 14.5% of the farms were free from debt. Similar was the situation in most of the eastern European States. This state of affairs cried for prompt and effective remedy and it is gratifying to note that in each of these countries, measures were adopted by the respective governments for the relief of the alarming indebtedness of the farmers. The limited space at our disposal precludes the possibility of taking into account each of the individual measures passed by these governments. But, viewing them as a whole, we find that the different measures adopted partook of the nature, either in whole or in part, of the following methods:

1. Declaration of moratoriums of varying lengths of time.
2. Scaling down of debts by a reduction of the interest charges.
3. Provision of cheaper credit facilities by the Government to enable the farmers to pay off their debts.
4. Exemption from distraint of a minimum amount of land as also certain movable and immovable properties.
5. The spreading of instalments of repayment over longer periods.

6. Different measures adopted with a view to raising the prices of the principal products.

Every Government recognised the fact that in order to free farmers from indebtedness, it is not only necessary to reduce their debt, but what is more important, their farms should be placed on such a footing that after paying for the expenses of the farmers, a margin should be left over from which the farmers will pay their outstanding debts. For securing this, improved methods of cultivation should be taught to the farmers and the crops produced by the farmers must be made to fetch a higher price.

With this double object in view, the Governments of the eastern European States have established modern agricultural centres, furnished with modern technical equipment for every branch of production with a view to increasing the yield of the land and improving its quality; foreign commerce has been sought to be regulated in order to extend the outlet for the indigenous products—these two measures seem comparatively simple. But the more difficult, in fact the crucial one, is the attempt to raise the prices of the agricultural products. With this object, an interesting experiment was carried out in Bulgaria, which it is to the interest of every country to follow and practise. In Bulgaria, a system of monopoly was introduced at the beginning of 1934 for wheat, meslin and rey with a view to guaranteeing to the producers higher prices for cereals than the world market prices. The exclusive right to purchase wheat, meslin and rey was granted after the introduction of the monopoly, to the offices for the purchase and export of cereals. Any loss incurred was to be met out of the State budget. This measure was one of the most important measures adopted in Bulgaria as the fall in the price of cereals had been very heavy and the increase in the price resulting from the operations of the office benefited a large number of farmers.

Now the last question is, how far the measures adopted by these countries succeeded in ameliorating the conditions of the farmers? Evidences of this also are not far to seek. We have already referred to the appreciable effects of the measures adopted by the Bulgarian Government for the amelioration of its farmers. Similarly as regards Rumania the legislation on the reduction of the agricultural debts and the extension of the period of repayment, had a favourable effect on the economic conditions of the peasants. It is estimated that 70% of the debtors at present benefit by the advantages conferred by the law relating to the reduction of debts and paying them off by instalments. The definite solution of the problem of indebtedness has brought about a revival of economic activity amongst the Rumanian farmers. As regards Estonia, a considerable improvement has taken place in economic conditions since 1933 in which year Estonia had been seriously affected by the general economic crises. In Greece again, speaking generally, it must be noted that the Agricultural Bank has brought about an appreciable improvement in the matter of agricultural credit. It granted loans in 1934 to the total amount of 1,884,252,446 drachmas. Similar favourable results have been achieved in



most of the countries, by reason of the ameliorative steps taken by their respective governments.

India is almost wholly an agricultural country. The peasantry which forms the mass of the population is indebted to an extent of approximately Rs. 1500 crores which amounts to many times the total annual land revenue. They cultivate fields, the average size of which for the whole of India is approximately 5 acres. Cultivation is carried on with inefficient wooden ploughs and half starved emaciated bullocks and the yield is perhaps the smallest in the world. We do not know what far-reaching measures for the relief of indebtedness have been planned and undertaken by the different provinces in India. We hope, however, that the new provincial Governments would show some originality and initiative and follow in the footsteps of the more advanced, though smaller countries of Eastern Europe.

SHYAM SUNDAR MISRA.

## Review.

### PROBLEM OF NUTRITION.

**THE NUTRITIVE VALUE OF INDIAN FOODS AND THE PLANNING OF SATISFACTORY DIETS.** BY W. R. AYKROYD. (Manager of Publications, Delhi.) 1937. 25cm. 48p. As. 2.

THE recent publication by Government of Health Bulletin No. 23 dealing with the nutritive value of Indian foods and the planning of satisfactory diets is an event of great importance. That a considerable amount of malnutrition exists in India has been widely known. The nature and extent of this malnutrition can now be judged more or less adequately. Dr. Aykroyd deserves the gratitude of all students of Indian social conditions. He makes it clear in this small yet highly important publication that though the human body possesses a remarkable faculty to adapt itself to semi-starvation there is a certain average nutrition that it must have for a healthy existence.

Malnutrition that results from ignorance about the correct principles of dietetics should now be definitely cured by following the suggestions of the author. We hope that the book will be translated into all the Indian vernaculars and will be distributed very cheaply, if not altogether gratis. A greater regular intake of milk, green vegetable and juicy fruit has been proved by research to be not a luxury or an idiosyncrasy but a physical necessity. It is hoped that all those who can afford will benefit by the doctor's suggestions in this respect.

But for a major portion of the Indian population mal and under-nutrition result primarily from economic poverty. How untrue in fact is the abstract notion of a minimum of subsistence is well proved by the dietetics of the Indian rank and file of the population. Even the least nutritive of foods, cereals, cost for an adequate quantity a sum which is beyond the reach of a large portion of the population. It is calculated on the basis of the present level of prices that a balanced diet would cost from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6. Add to this figure the other necessary charges of decent living e.g. cooking, fuel, house-room, clothing, education, recreation, citizenship, etc. and we shall discover that unless the incomes in the lowest ranks of the Indian population approximate about Rs. 15 per month a good feeding is out of the question.

Even the most optimistic of observers of Indian life cannot put the figure of the earning of the largest class of Indians at a figure approximating even half of this desired figure. The publication of the bulletin is highly opportune in view of the intensive efforts at raising the material standards of the masses that might be expected from popular governments in the provinces. This small publication of 48 pages outlining the nutritional value of all the important constituents of Indian diets and suggesting means of improvement is worth its weight in gold. We repeat our suggestion that it should be translated in all vernaculars and freely distributed.

D. G. KARVE.

### SHORT NOTICE.

**INDIAN WOMEN IN THE NEW AGE,** By T. S. RAJAGOPAL. (The Jaya Electric Press, Mysore.) 1936. 20cm. 246 p. Rs. 2.

A hen is not a bird,

Nor is a woman a human being.—Russian proverb.

NO race in the world, says the author, has gone through so long a period of subjection as women. The woman's movement has been entirely a modern growth, a development of the last hundred years, may be as a further realisation of the democratic principle of equality, the natural development of the process of political and social evolution, or the logical development of the growth of industrialism. Very interesting sidelights are given on the position of women in different countries at different epochs,—women in the patriarchal regime of ancient Babylon, Rome and Greece, as well as women in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, in Russia, Turkey and Japan.

The legal disabilities of Indian women are closely analysed, under the various heads of marriage, divorce, inheritance and succession. Ancient codes and authorities are discussed in detail; and in the end, it is pointed out that a Manu's Code or a Yajnavalkya Institute should not be held a working guide when Internationalism is the order of the day. The British Government is blamed for having avoided its duty towards women under the guise of religious neutrality.

The author further points out the necessity of women in modern India taking their due place along with men in the political, social and economic life of the country. In spite of the strong agitation by representative women's associations, franchise rights in the new constitution are extremely defective. Socially, women seem to have a queer growth. "What is called the nature of women is the result of forced repression in certain respects, and unnatural stimulation in others." Seclusion has resulted in a lack of sharpened intellectuality. Sir M. Visvesvaraya is quoted to support the opinion that the economic backwardness of India is partly due to the seclusion of its women-folk. An eloquent plea is put forward in the end for universal education; for "by educating a girl, you get an educated family."

The author is a thorough champion of the woman's cause. His painstaking array of simple facts and figures side by side with refreshing parallels from countries in the vanguard of progress makes a convincing appeal. A true disciple of Mill throughout, he concludes: "The standard of civilization of a country is to be judged by the position of its women" and every reader of the book, man or woman, will agree with him.

SHANTA BHALERAO.

## SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY.

## MR. KUNZRU'S SPEECH.

*Following is a summary of the speech which Pandit Hirdaynath Kunzru as President of the Servants of India Society made on 12th June in Poona on the occasion of the Society's anniversary :*

**A**FTER welcoming the guests to the 32nd anniversary of the Servants of India Society Mr. Kunzru dealt with the work done by the Society in various directions last year. He was glad to say at the outset that they had been able to publish a life of Mr. Devadhar in Marathi, which had been written by a member of the Servants of India Society, Mr. Phadke. He hoped that a similar book would soon be published in English also. He described briefly the activities of the Society which covered many fields—politics, rural development, labour, depressed classes, co-operation, scouting, education, social service. The work in rural areas which owed its commencement to Mr. Devadhar's inspiring example and precept had taken root and was steadily spreading. It was being carried on in three provinces at present—Madras, Berar and Orissa—and its extension to one or two more provinces in the current year was being considered. Want of funds considerably hampered their work, but they were trying in their own humble way to make some contribution to the solution of a problem which overshadowed all others in importance. Their experience made them think that they had to gain the confidence of the villager by helping him in his immediate difficulties and to bring about those psychological conditions which would tend to rouse the energy that lies dormant in him. They had partly to satisfy the needs of which he was conscious and partly to strengthen his will to live and make him divinely discontented with his surroundings and position. The Government of Lord Linlithgow were taking a keen interest in the economic development of rural areas but the foundations of their work which seemed to be weak as yet would become strong only if they desired the improvement of the villager's status and material position as ardently as a national Government would and if their agents could convince him that they were his friends and servants.

Proceeding, Mr. Kunzru dwelt on the informed and sustained interest taken by members of the Society in questions relating to Indians overseas. He thought that owing to the importance of the subject no apology was needed for referring to it at some length. Mr. Sastri who had been deputed by the Government of India to examine the condition of Indian labour in Malaya had submitted a comprehensive report on the subject. His visit had already resulted in the enhancement of their wages to the level at which they stood before they were reduced by 20 p. c. owing to the world economic depression in 1930 and it was hoped that it would soon lead to a further improvement in their position in other respects also. Besides, Mr. Sastri's recommendation with regard to the reversion to the old standard of wages which was introduced in 1928 was not final. It was satisfactory to note that the Government of India were not committed to the mere restoration of that standard but had the whole question of wage rates under consideration. Presumably they were considering the suggestion that Indian labour should share in the re-established prosperity of the rubber industry as it had shared in its adversity.

Mr. Kodanda Rao, who had gone to the U. S. A. on receiving the offer of a scholarship from the Yale

University, on his way back to India visited several countries where Indians were settled in some numbers in order to know something of their condition at first hand, for instance, Japan, China, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and the Colonies of Trinidad, British Guiana, Fiji and Malaya. Each Colony had its own problems, but the backwardness of Indians in education seemed to be a feature common to them all. The descendants of the old indentured Indians were acquiring a new sense of self-respect and nationalism, and their development created questions in which both the Government of India and the Indian public should take a greater interest. The Government of India were in touch with the problems concerning Indians in Fiji, but there did not appear to be enough contact between them and the Indians in British Guiana, Trinidad, etc. That deficiency should be remedied.

In South Africa a compromise had been arrived at between Government and the Indian community. The position of the Indian was, however, not secure. They might be faced any day with new troubles which their opponents were eager to stir up.

The territories which required their attention most at present were Zanzibar and Ceylon where the rights of their countrymen were seriously threatened. Practically speaking, they were in danger of losing both their property and their livelihood in Zanzibar. There they had to deal not with a Dominion Government but with the British Government. This Government, which had used every possible device to ensure for Britishers economic equality with Indians in India under the Government of India Act, had sanctioned legislation which treated Indians who had been settled for generations in Zanzibar as aliens and which would have the effect of ruining them economically and driving them out of the Protectorate. He understood that the Government of India had made strong representations to the British Government on the subject. If those representations failed they would have no option but to demand the prohibition of the import of Zanzibar cloves into India. The British Government might use its power to prevent the Government of India from acceding to this demand. It would be their duty in that case to do everything in their power to make the British Government realise that they would not easily allow their countrymen in Zanzibar to be oppressed, humiliated and ruined. It seemed to him that the hostility to Indians in the Colonies was the result of the growth of the nationalist movement in India.

Friction between the Sinhalese and the Indians in Ceylon which commenced in 1929 was unfortunately on the increase. The anti-Indian feeling was finding expression in many ways. Several attempts had been made to deny to Indians, on whom the prosperity of the Colony depended, rights to which they are entitled, as was illustrated by the Land Development Ordinance and the proposed Destitutes Ordinance. The proposed Village Communities Ordinance seemed to make a distinction between Indians on the one hand and the Europeans and burghers on the other.

The Government of India must have been kept informed of the situation by their Agent in Ceylon. One would like to know what steps they were taking to prevent injustice being done to Indians. It was greatly to be desired that the Sinhalese and Indians should arrive at an amicable settlement of the

questions at issue between them. The Government of India had a duty to discharge in the matter. The report of Sir Edward Jackson who had been appointed by the Ceylon Government to consider the question of immigration was expected to be published soon. It was desirable in the interests both of Ceylon and India that the opportunity which the publication of the report would offer should be taken to discuss all outstanding questions and settle them by agreement. Although Ceylon was next door to India, they were more amply supplied with information regarding Indians in more distant places than in Ceylon. Perhaps Mr. Suryanarayana Rao had done more to keep the country informed of the difficulties of Indians in Ceylon than any individual or association. The Indian Imperial Citizenship Association had done splendid work in keeping India informed of developments regarding Indians in many places. It would add to its record of service if it turned its attention to Indian problems in Ceylon also. This was urgently needed.

Mr. Kunzru next referred to the political situation in the country and the constitutional deadlock in the six provinces in which the Congress party occupied a dominant position. The deadlock was the result of a complete distrust of the intentions of Government. Experience of the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms and the provisions of the present Government of India Act which flouted Indian opinion justified the feelings of resentment and suspicion with which the new constitution was viewed. These feelings were intensified by the policy followed by Government during the last two or three years. The proceedings of the Central Legislature showed no desire on the part of Government to act in harmony with Indian opinion in any important matter. The disregard of Indian wishes was equally clear in the matter of filling up posts under the Central Government. Whenever an important post had to be filled up, whether in the Defence or Finance or Home Department, Railway Board or Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, or even in the Central Broadcasting Station, Indian talent was as a rule disregarded and Britishers, whether already serving in India or specially imported for the purpose, were appointed. The state of things in this respect was nothing short of a scandal. And they might be sure that so long as British control continued it would be used to give preference to British over Indian interests. The psychological background of the demand for assurances from Governors could therefore be easily understood. This demand had been changed twice in response to circumstances during the last three months. The latest compromise put forward by Mahatma Gandhi to bring the present impasse to an end was that when the Governor could not reconcile the ministers to the exercise of his special powers he should call for their resignation. When one considered carefully the various alternatives of voluntary resignation, dismissal and forced resigna-

tion, it appeared clearly that whichever course was taken, the result would be the same. There would be a constitutional crisis, the political efficacy of which depended on the ability of the ministers to retain the support of the electorate. In the case of voluntary resignation the ministers would force a crisis, in the other cases they might be supposed to be victims of it; but the final outcome would depend not on the technical terms used to express serious disagreement between the Governor and the ministers but on the ministers' power to prevent the Governor from forming a ministry which would give in to him. But whatever the value of the new formula from a constitutional or political point of view, Mahatma Gandhi's statement must be regarded as conciliatory. It seemed to bring Government and Congressmen nearer than they were before. Mahatma Gandhi did not want any change in the Government of India Act and was, in his own words, anxious that Congressmen should accept office if they could do so with self-respect. Government were equally anxious that Congressmen should accept office, and Lord Zetland and Sir Harry Haig had been at pains to show that the procedure contemplated in cases of divergence of views between the Governor and the ministers did not militate against the latter's self-respect and left them wide liberty of action. It seemed in these circumstances that psychological difficulties alone stood in the way of the termination of the deadlock and the constructive utilisation of the energies of the legislators. His Excellency the Viceroy, who was undoubtedly keenly interested in the material side of the problem of Indian progress, had unfortunately shown no appreciation of the human side of the problem. It was necessary in the interest of the country that both Government and Congress should realise its importance.

From this point of view, Mr. Kunzru thought, it was necessary that the interim ministries should not be allowed to remain unduly long in office. He did not think that their appointment was illegal, but their unjustifiable continuance in office was unconstitutional in spirit and would increase the psychological impediments to a solution of the impasse. They had had enough time to formulate their programmes. They should now present them to the legislatures which should be summoned to meet at an early date. The ministries would certainly be defeated, but this result could not in any event be deferred much longer. The defeat of the ministries might lead to a constitutional breakdown, and the passing of all powers into the hands of the Governor; but this unfortunate result might be avoided by a tactful handling of the situation, and by a realisation on one side of the spirit of new India and on the other of the country's urgent need for practical service.

In conclusion, Mr. Kunzru referred to the very unsatisfactory financial condition of the Society. It was causing the members more anxiety than ever. He appealed to the public to assist it liberally to enable it to serve the country to the best of its capacity.

## THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY. ACTIVITIES DURING 1936-37.

### Introductory.

It is now thirty-two years since the Servants of India Society was started by Mr. G. K. Gokhale, with the object of providing a trained agency to serve the people of India in all ways and to help in the building up of a self-governing and prosperous nation.

During the year under report Messrs. Desai, Phadke and Misra, who had completed their proba-

tionary period, were admitted to the membership of the Society and two new probationers were enrolled. The admission of three additional members brought up the strength of the Society to thirty-three.

It was an agreeable duty for the President of this Society to usher into existence on the 12th June 1936 the Women's Fellowship of Service by admitting Miss Shanta Bhalerao, M. A. and Miss Godavarthi Gokhale,



B.A., LL.B. as its first members-under-training. The Fellowship is inspired by the ideals and methods of the Servants of India Society and while its membership is confined to women, its objects and constitution are very similar to those of the Society. At the request of the foundation-members of the Fellowship and in consonance with an article in its constitution, the Society has agreed to manage its affairs during the first three years, including the admission and training of its members. The Fellowship has made quite satisfactory progress during the first year.

It has been pointed out in previous reports that the members of this Society work largely through organisations already existing or brought into existence by them. It would certainly not be fair for the Society to claim as its own the work done by those organisations. But so much time and energy of its members is given to the work—often the day to day routine work—of those institutions, that some reference has necessarily to be made to it in a report of the Society's work. While doing so the Society would like to express its thankfulness to those institutions for giving it an opportunity to serve them and to serve the country through them. It, however, lays no claim to their work beyond what is justified by the service of its members. A list of the more important institutions of this kind is appended to this report.

#### Political.

When the year under report opened, Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru was touring South India. He visited a large number of places where he delivered lectures on the political situation. In November, 1936, he presided over the Agra Divisional Political Conference; and in December attended the National Liberal Federation at Lucknow, where he spoke on a resolution. In the same month he was elected to the Council of State and thenceforward much of his time was given to its work.

As a member of the Council of State Mr. Kunzru attended the Delhi session and took part in the discussions on all important subjects. He himself was responsible for moving some resolutions on important matters.

Criticising the Railway Budget in general, he pointed out by giving facts and figures that while the Railway Board tried during the last five or six years to reduce their expenditure, the reduction had not taken place proportionately in all grades of services and that the axe had fallen more heavily on the employees in the lowest ranks. He drew attention to the fact that in consequence of the separation of Burma from India, the latter would have to pay about a crore and two-thirds to Burma from the Railway Depreciation Fund, although during the last five or six years the loss on the working of the Burma Railways was greater than the sum which would have stood to their credit had there been a separate depreciation fund for them. He claimed that in these circumstances India owed nothing to Burma.

Speaking on the General Budget he criticised the enhancement of duty on silver and sugar. He contended that the excise duty on sugar would, in the last resort, be paid by the poor cultivators who grew sugarcane. He pleaded that to keep down expenditure the higher salaries should have been kept at the reduced level at which they stood for a year or two and that, if extra taxation was necessary, the surcharge on income-tax on the higher incomes and the super-tax which had been reduced during the last two years should have been reimposed so that the burden might fall on the rich alone. He pointed out that the army expenditure amounted to about 27½% of the total revenues of the Central and Provincial Governments, in spite of the reductions made since 1931-32. This scale of expenditure was too heavy to be borne by a poor country like India.

Moving his resolution regarding the Indianisation of the Government of India Secretariat, he pointed out that in regard to several departments the position was practically what it was about 12 years ago. In two of these departments viz., Home and Defence, there were no Indians occupying any of the higher posts and the position was the same in the Foreign and Political Department if temporary posts were left out of consideration. In the rest of the departments the situation was a little better, but with the exception of the Education Department, Indians practically speaking occupied the lower posts only. He also referred to the exclusion of Indians from the Railway Board, the Central Board of Revenue, etc. Reviewing the figures relating to the position of the higher personnel of the Secretariat he concluded that not only was the position of Indians virtually what it was, say in 1927, but there was also no indication that the policy that had been followed hitherto would undergo any change in the near future.

Speaking on the position of Indians in Zanzibar, Mr. Kunzru dealt with the decrees of the Zanzibar Government as they affected the position of Indians as owners of property and as traders in cloves. He pointed out that the Agricultural Indebtedness Commission appointed by the Zanzibar Government, which had an official majority and was presided over by the Chief Justice, had completely exonerated the Indian community from the serious charges levelled against it by its detractors. He then examined Mr. Binder's recommendations and showed that they not only offered no solution of the question which was troubling the Indian community but threatened to complete its ruin. He drew pointed attention to the recommendation that the Clove Growers' Association which had already been given the monopoly of the export of cloves should also be given the monopoly of purchasing them. If this recommendation were carried out the Indians would be economically annihilated and would be practically compelled to leave Zanzibar where they had been living for generations. He thought that unless the Government of India took steps to prohibit the import of Zanzibar cloves into India, there was little likelihood of any improvement in the situation. He thought that owing to the political development of India Britishers were nervous and wanted to prevent Indians from occupying a prominent position in the life of any colony. He suggested that the Government of India should appoint an agent in East Africa to look after the interests of the Indians there.

In his resolution regarding the replacement of British troops by Indian troops in the Army in India, he showed that the proportion of British to Indian troops had remained unchanged since 1859. Another fact which revealed the true purpose of keeping a British force in India was that the proportion of British to Indian soldiers was much higher in the internal security troops than the field army. These facts showed clearly that notwithstanding the recent constitutional changes, the importance of which was often impressed on Indians by the authorities, their military policy continued to be what it was before and that they were still determined to maintain an army of occupation in this country. Indians had been charged by their detractors with want of initiative and capacity for leadership, but the martial qualities of Indian soldiers had never been questioned. Their record in the Great War was such that any nation might be proud of it. There was no reason therefore for not substituting Indian soldiers for British soldiers who cost thrice as much.

Mr. Kunzru moved an adjournment motion regarding the effect of the reorganisation of the Indian Medical Service on the position of Indians. The cadre of the service, he said, had been reduced but the old

restriction on the proportion of Indians admitted into it remained. This was partly due to the fact that a reserve of European officers had to be maintained in the I. M. S. to look after the medical needs of the British section of the army during a war. Such a reserve, Mr. Kunzru contended, should be maintained in the Royal Army Medical Corps and the needs of the British soldiers should not be made an excuse for limiting the admission of Indians to the I.M.S. Even if the present system continued, he showed that the number of Indians in the medical posts under the Government of India could be increased if Government wanted to extend the employment of Indians.

The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri spoke frequently on political subjects during his visits to different towns in India. His visit to the Federated States of Malaya on a Government of India Commission to investigate the condition of Indian labour there was availed of by Indians in Rangoon and in the Federated States to arrange lectures by him on political subjects.

Mr. N. M. Joshi took part in the Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference held at Sholapur in July and in the National Liberal Federation session at Lucknow in December 1936. At the former he spoke on the Constitutional Reforms and pointed out the desirability of taking advantage of the Reforms, strongly opposed to them though we were, for whatever constructive work could be done and for making use of the powers given under them to effect further changes in the constitution itself. He emphasised the unwise of not accepting office when others might make use of it to the detriment of the country's good by passing reactionary legislation, imposing oppressive taxes, etc. During his visit to London he spoke to the Conciliation Group on India's attitude to the new constitution and to the Paddington Rotary Club on India's attitude to the Empire.

Mr. Kaul wrote a book in Urdu on the Indian Constitution for the United Provinces Hindustani Academy. As Secretary of the Reception Committee of the National Liberal Federation held at Lucknow in 1936, he was primarily responsible for making arrangements for the holding of the session. Mr. Ambekar continued to be a Secretary of the Deccan Sabha. His political work was largely done through that organisation which took a live interest in all

public questions. He organised numerous meetings of the Sabha to consider various political problems as they arose from time to time. He also visited some places to canvass support for the Provincial Liberal Conference held at Sholapur.

Mr. Bakhale continued to be on the executive committees of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Western India Liberal Association. He gave his whole-hearted support to an adjournment motion in the Bombay Legislative Council protesting against the restrictive interpretation put on the University franchise rules. Agitation on the same subject was carried on in the C. P. by Messrs. Shahane and Mani, whose efforts helped considerably in rousing public opinion and resulted in broadening somewhat the University franchise rules in that province. Mr. Shahane with the help of Mr. Mani organised a meeting of the local University voters in Nagpur at the Society's Hall where all the candidates for the University seat, except one, appeared on one platform and presented their programmes and policies to the electorate. The meeting was a unique one in election meetings in India and attracted wide notice.

Messrs. Kunzru, Dravid, Joshi, Venkatasubbaiya, Suryanarayana Rao, Dube, Shahane and Gokhale took part in the deliberations of the 19th session of the National Liberal Federation held at Lucknow. Messrs. Kunzru, Dravid, Joshi and Shahane were elected to the Working Committee of the Federation.

Mr. Kodanda Rao, whose activities in the U. S. A. were referred to in last year's report, toured in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Japan, China, the Dutch East Indies, Malaya and Siam and addressed numerous meetings on the Indian political situation and the reaction of India to the new reforms. His speeches, delivered at places where authentic knowledge of India is rare and Indian visitors rarer still, evoked great interest and discussion. It is gratifying to know from various quarters that his visits to foreign countries and his speeches there have created a feeling of friendliness and understanding towards India and evoked admiration for him personally. He has now returned to India. His thesis on "the East and West in Civilization" has been approved by many competent scholars.

( To be continued. )

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP OF SERVICE.

### RANI LAXMIBAI RAJWADE'S SPEECH.

*The following speech was delivered by Rani Laxmibai Rajwade as President of the meeting held at the Gokhale Hall on the 19th inst. to celebrate the first anniversary of the Women's Fellowship of Service :*

**I** THANK you for the honour you have conferred on me by asking me to preside here this afternoon. I do think it is an honour; because the feeling is strong within me that the institution, with the first anniversary of which I have the privilege today of associating myself, is going to prove a truly momentous undertaking. For one thing, a person like me belonging to an older generation and naturally rather conservative in outlook, inevitably sees the Women's Fellowship of Service against the canvas of the new life which has made its appearance here during the last decade and a half. The new ideas and roused enthusiasms are almost disconcerting alike in their richness and vitality as in their curious lop-sidedness and inadequacy—the latter possibly due to some lack of discipline and forethought.

Against such a background the Fellowship necessarily assumes a momentous significance because it seeks to harness this new life to disciplined and constructive vision. I see in it the turning of the young generation towards the same impulse as led the late Mr. Gokhale as also the venerable founder of the Women's University—Prof. Karve—and their contemporaries to establish institutions here like the Servants of India Society, the Deccan Education Society, the Women's University—institutions of which any country may well be proud. Above all that this need for discipline and sanity and sacrifice should have so impressed the younger generation among women as to lead to the establishment of this Fellowship is, I think, reassuring beyond words. Indeed I hardly know how to congratulate the two young authors of the scheme, Shrimati Shantabai Bhalerao and Shrimati Godavari-bai Gokhale, and their sponsors, the Servants of India Society, who helped them to launch it. Perhaps the most creditable tribute I can pay to my young friends here is to say that they have succeeded in making some of us wish our youth back again, that

we might the more fully share in this great opportunity which they have created for themselves and their generation. And I add my confident hope that the Fellowship will in years to come send out in increasing numbers the women leaders and workers whom we badly need.

This is no idle hope. My confidence is not wholly due to the obvious sincerity and promise of the two original members of the Fellowship, nor to the impressive background of the Servants of India Society. It is due largely to my conviction, that the Fellowship has a well-defined *raison-detre* and very fair prospects of success. It is true that some questions have to be answered before the reason for its existence becomes clear. Why, for instance, could not the scope of an institution like the Servants of India Society be enlarged so as to include opportunities of training and work for such women as desired them? If, again, the problems against which both men and women workers alike will have to pit their training and experience are identical, why then should women have separate training and service centres? Indeed if those problems will not yield except to vital co-operation between men and women, it seems essential that they should have common service centres. Have women as women a distinct socio-political programme? Or is the Fellowship no better than a belated appearance in this country of militant feminism?

These and such other questions arise. But to my mind the Fellowship has an aspect which lifts the question of its *raison-detre* above these considerations. I should like to stress that aspect to-day. It seems to me that an institution like this is surely much more than a training and service centre. It is also a distinct community. It is not merely a place where certain uniformities are enforced as in a regiment or in office. Quite as important as the practical training in social and political work is the initiation into an atmosphere rarified by a spirit of sacrifice, intense devotion and a constant sharing of experience, for such a Fellowship is really a group of people who subject all their worldly instincts to the service of social purposes. In fact, you create here an order almost as austere as a religious order though wedded to less spiritual aims. All this naturally involves the coming together of persons with lasting affinities which possibly transcend the commoner affinities of political preference, class feelings or material interest. Finally, you will agree that the affinity of womanhood is as vital and transcendent a basis for such a community as any you can find. You may or may not agree that women as women have any aptitude or opportunities unshared by men. You may or may not set any store by the idea of co-operation between the sexes. But you cannot, in all conscience, deny the vital significance and even the urgency of women workers dedicating themselves to social and political work through a special order and, to that end, undergoing the discipline of that order.

This then seems to me the major premise of your Fellowship. That premise effectively counters the suggestion that the existing service centres (of whatever political hue you choose) are, or should be made, so inclusive as to admit women workers. I shall come back to the question of co-operation later. But in the meanwhile I should like to note incidentally that such a Fellowship should solve some of the commonest personal problems in our social world. Apart from those who will do the work as a labour of love, for many women it may prove to be a much-needed avenue for sublimation, a means of assured recognition of their work and status, a vocation for lives set adrift by tragic social circumstance, a precipitator of a variety of inferiority complexes, a means of forcing

on us that most difficult of habits—team work among women.

Beyond its significance as a Women's Fellowship of Service, it shares with the Servants of India Society a feature which has always appealed to me. The Society attempts a scientific approach to spheres of activity where even now and even in the West, the need of a scientific approach is not generally conceded. I mean the spheres of politics and social service. That is a feature well worth perpetuating and reproducing as it is reproduced in your Fellowship.

What then are the Fellowship's prospects of success? Obviously it will succeed in proportion to the degree in which it makes its work crucial to the community. I need not remind you of the criticism usually levelled at such institutions—that their effort is too often remote and irrelevant, that their outlook is too cloistered, that their experience too urban and bourgeoisie—indeed too stereotyped. The point of that criticism is not, I think, that you should work only in the villages and among the proletariat or that your training should fit you only for direct action politics. The point surely is that your training and work should deal directly with life, with men and women. It is more important that social workers should learn to understand the need of men and women than that they should merely have an intellectual grasp of their problems; more important that they should continually measure their effort against the happiness and freedom of the men and women they serve, than that they should merely rise to the top of social political movements. And lest all this preaching appear arrogant in me, let me remind you that Mahatma Gandhi has always insisted on this condition of success for any social service venture. As the first annual Report of the Fellowship which has just been read shows, the young women who at present make up the Fellowship have already had experience of work in direct touch with men and women in several walks of life. If that habit persists and permeates the life of the Fellowship, I have no doubt of its ultimate success.

I should also like to commend the wise thought which enables the new Fellowship to be affiliated for the time being to the Servants of India Society. Apart from guidance and material help, it will mean the engendering of the habit of co-operation. The recent experience of national movements in this country has, I think, conclusively shown that militant feminism has no place in the modern Indian world, for the co-operation given by our men has been so unstinted and spontaneous that the need for militant feminism has never really arisen. Close co-operation between the sexes, then, is the only form in which we need envisage the social order of the future. I am sure that, as far as the Fellowship is concerned, everybody realises, on the one hand, that the habit of co-operation is essential and, on the other, that the Fellowship must develop its own point of view in all matters. The Fellowship as well as the Society must be perfectly aware that in time a separation of identities must be realistically faced which might, though it might not, involve radical divergences of outlook.

Along with the growth of individuality the Fellowship must also develop its own strength and attain economic independence. I should like to appeal here to all those who are interested in the possibilities of the centre to help its finances to the best of their capacity. I am sure the Fellowship's appeal for funds will find an adequate response from everybody, irrespective of creed, caste, class, or political opinion. For, obviously, the work done here will transcend all these limits. I am not sure I ought to let this occasion slip without making an appeal to those assembled here to put down whatever figures they can on the spot. I would like to appeal specially to my sisters that the time has come when they should think seri-

ously of diverting the amounts they spend in religious ceremonials which has no value either as religion or as social service towards nation-building activities.

I would like strongly to appeal to the young women of this country to join the Women's Fellowship of Service, though I know from personal experience of the women's movement of this country—and I consider it a most happy sign of the times—that there are women who are only waiting to be given a reassuring framework for their sacrifice and dedication to service. This institution provides that framework. I, however, fear that the work which is being done by the Fellowship and its possibilities are not sufficiently known to the women in the country. I would therefore request my two young friends to give as much publicity to the organisation as possible.

Destoievsky has a story in which a Grand Inquisitor chances upon the resurrected Christ in the street and immediately claps Him into prison. Later in the evening, he visits Christ in the prison and storms and raves over the bent head about the stupidity of His teaching that "Man liveth not by bread alone." When the Inquisitor has spent himself, Christ smiles and gently shakes His head until the tormentor in sudden defeat lifts the prison latch and lets the prisoner out. It would seem that though in the modern world and in this country what we seem to need is bread, yet perhaps equally we need a reaffirmation of the ancient Indian claim that man liveth not by bread alone. We expect the Women's Fellowship of Service to do its work in the spirit of that claim. I wish the Fellowship every success.

### LIBERALS ON THE SITUATION.

*The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India met in Poona on June 13. Among the resolutions passed by it were the following :*

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS.

(i) The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India is of opinion that strong dissatisfaction throughout the country with the present Government of India Act, which it has repeatedly condemned in no uncertain terms, provides the psychological background for the demand for assurances from the Governors, by the Congress. It nevertheless regards the refusal of the Congress majority in six provinces to accept office as unfortunate. The Council feels that the Congress should accept office in those provinces where its representatives in the legislatures hold a dominant position in order to carry out measures calculated to improve the lot of the people and to hasten the drastic amendment of the Government of India Act by a demonstration of its inherent defects in its actual working. The Council notes that the demand for assurances has undergone several interpretations and is of the view that the latest statement made by Mahatma Gandhi with regard to this matter shows that the two parties are much nearer each other than before and that the impasse should be capable of being resolved by the exercise of tact and good-will on both sides.

(ii) The Council deems it essential that the Provincial Legislatures should be immediately convened as delay in convening them would be unconstitutional in spirit.

#### INDIANS IN ZANZIBAR.

The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India, while appreciating the strong representations

which the Government of India are understood to have made to the British Government with regard to the legislation recently introduced in the Legislature of the Zanzibar Protectorate, which seriously affects Indian interests, is strongly of opinion that if the legitimate rights of Indians are not adequately protected, the Government of India should take steps to prohibit the imports of cloves originating from the Zanzibar Protectorate into India.

#### INDIAN LABOUR IN MALAYA.

(i) The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India puts on record its appreciation of the work done by the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, which has already led to the restoration of the 1928 standard of wages for Indian labourers working on rubber estates, and urges on the Government of India to negotiate with the Malayan Government regarding the early implementing of the various recommendations contained in Mr. Sastri's report in respect of the abolition of the distinction between "key" and "non-key" areas, application of the standard wage with statutory force throughout the country, prevention of illicit recruitment of Indian labour, extension of co-operative societies, and appointment of Indian members on the Indian Emigration Committee, on State Councils and other public bodies.

(ii) The Council welcomes the restoration of wages to the 1928 standard and notes with satisfaction that the Government of India do not regard this as a final settlement of the wage question but are examining the question of wage-rates as a whole. The Council hopes that the new rates will be so fixed as to enable Indian labour to have a due share in the prosperity of the rubber industry.

The Council further urges on the Government of India to press for the provision of better educational facilities for Indian children both in the estate and non-estate areas and the removal of the prohibition now in force against the admission of non-Malayan born Indian children to higher Government educational institutions. The Council emphatically protests against the appointment of a European as the Inspector of Tamil Schools.

#### INDIANS IN CEYLON.

(i) The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India expresses its deep concern at the growing estrangement between the Ceylonese and the Indians and regrets that measures calculated to endanger the interests of Indians such as the Destitutes' and Village Communities' Ordinance are under consideration by the Ceylon State Council. In view of the contribution which Indians have made and are making to the prosperity of Ceylon and the ties which bind India and Ceylon, the Council hopes that questions at issue between Indians and Ceylonese will be amicably settled.

(ii) The Council requests the Government of India to inform the public of the steps that they are taking to safeguard Indian interests in Ceylon.

#### REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION AND RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

The Council of the National Liberal Federation of India is strongly of opinion that action should be taken in every province to repeal all repressive legislation and to effect the release of persons convicted for political offences or detained without trial. It further recommends the removal of restrictions placed upon the liberty of persons for political reasons and with-drawal of all restrictive orders on printing presses and newspapers.