

Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

A WHOLE week has elapsed since Bombay City has become the scene of an orgy of bloodshed and horror; to which there is no parallel in India in recent years. The trouble started with a scare honestly believed in by the ignorant that children were being kidnapped and taken to Baroda for sacrificial purposes in connection with the construction of a bridge in progress there. Such scares make their appearance off and on at different places but disappear without causing much excitement. Perhaps in the beginning there was a tendency to treat it as one such; but it has turned out to be far more serious and has been attended by disastrous consequences. The Bombay Government tried to reassure the public mind by proclaiming the utter groundlessness of the report in question and even the Baroda authorities came out with a denial that there was any bridge under construction anywhere in the State. But the denials did not have the desired effect. People's minds were so seized with the imaginary fear of their children being kidnapped that it was unsafe, even for non-Pathans—for Pathans were looked upon as kidnapers—to resist the attempt of boy thieves to relieve them of their belongings. Thus a Greek who did not allow himself to be robbed of his purse by a boy thief was looked upon as a kidnapper and set upon by a suspicious crowd!

But though the kidnapping scare was the more immediate cause of the disorders in Bombay, they in fact appear to be the legacy of the prolonged industrial strikes there. For later on the trouble assumed the appearance of a quarrel between workers who had gone on strike and the Pathans who had replaced them so far at any rate as the oil workers at Sewri were concerned; and Pathans became the special objects of mob fury. The feeling against them was so violent that a police officer, Mr. Priestly, who in the discharge of his duty went to the rescue of some Pathans who were being pursued by a mob had to lose his life as a result of violence by the mob. Another cause of the anti-Pathan feeling is said to

be their heartless methods of money-lending which have made them odious to those who had to have recourse to them. But whatever else may be the cause of the trouble, one thing was clear beyond doubt that it was not communal; and yet people who should have known better were not wanting who were ready to make communal capital out of it. The repeated disturbances have, as is well known, led to dislocation of business beyond measure and to much loss of life on both the Hindu and Mahomedan sides—the total casualties upto Tuesday were 137 killed and 783 injured—and resulted in complete distrust of each other, Hindus fearing desecration of their temples by Muslims and vice-versa.

The situation was so grave that the Police found themselves unable to cope with it unaided and have since been reinforced by British troops from Poona and Devlali. But though the presence of the military in sufficient numbers is regarded as a source of strength by the law-abiding sections of the community, the situation can hardly be said to have been brought under control, and security of life and property completely restored. The Peace Committees led by Dr. Deshmukh, President of the Bombay Municipality, have at considerable personal risk been doing splendid service in the restoration of peace; and the murder of a few Peace Volunteers serves to show the extent of such risk as also of mutual distrust by Hindus and Mahomedans. The deputation which waited upon the Governor last week recommended, among other things, proper protection of the places of worship of both communities. While with the forces at the disposal of Government this is impossible, every effort is made to do as much in that direction as possible. Following the suggestion made by the deputation, an order has been promulgated prohibiting loitering on public roads between sunset and sunrise, and the assembling of more than five persons. From all accounts the strict enforcement of these regulations has gone some way in improving the situation. Another suggestion made by the deputation, viz., the rounding up of known bad and undesirable characters is also being acted upon and as many as 800 of them have so far been taken into custody by the police. To judge from the results of the enforcement of these measures which have been in operation only for a very short time, there appears to be good ground to look forward to the restoration of normal and peaceful life in Bombay before very long.

IN response to demands made both in the Assembly and the Council of State and from other public bodies the Government have announced their intention of undertaking an inquiry into the banking conditions in India. As a preliminary to this the Finance Member has decided to hold joint meetings with the re-

representatives of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and the Associated Chambers to discuss the lines on which the inquiry should be conducted. Now that the inquiry is a settled plan we should like the Committee of inquiry to examine the working not only of the Joint Stock Banks and the Exchange Banks but also the working of Co-operative Banks and the possibilities of Land Mortgage Banks. In accordance with the suggestions made by Sir W. Gubbay in a paper read in London last year even the part played by Shroffs and Chetties in the correlation of large Banks with the supply of credit to small producers and crafts needs careful scrutiny so as to preserve the good points of indigenous banking. The inquiry should be nothing if not thorough.

While we admit the great utility of such an inquiry we are far from agreeing with Sir G. Schuster in holding that a knowledge of the structure of banking will help us to design the right sort of Central Bank. A Central Bank need not adapt itself to the needs of the existing Banks but should itself dictate as well as guide the lines on which Banks should be developed and worked not only by supplying credit plentifully but by laying down plans which should be worked out by the feeder Banks. The question of the renewal of the Reserve Bank proposal need not therefore be delayed till the inquiry is completed unless it is intended to hand over the work to the Imperial Bank when its present agreement expires at the end of next year. Sir G. Schuster apparently thinks that the time is not yet ripe for reviving the proposals for the Reserve Bank; we should rather think that it can be done even now provided the second condition mentioned by him is fulfilled.

This condition is that adequate support is found among representatives of public opinion and it would be better if he begins to take some of them into his confidence and discusses with them the way out of the deadlock created on the issue of a State Bank. If he thinks along with his predecessor that a shareholders' Bank is a better guarantee of the proper working of a Central Bank than a Bank wholly financed and managed by the State he ought to convince the leaders in the Assembly and bring them round to his views. We have always held the view that the issue of a State Bank is not a vital one provided that the other requirements of a Central Bank are secured but as the Bill has to be steered through the Assembly it is necessary to take into account the opinions of the leaders of various parties as well as of the representatives of trade and commerce in that body. Without such a frank consultation and an attempt to arrive at a workable compromise, a fresh attempt to launch a Reserve Bank might lead to a fresh debacle and the shelving of the scheme indefinitely. Such a task will tax all the resources of the Finance Member in the capacity to unify divergent points of view and we suppose he will not think it derogatory to his position to essay it. A Central Bank is one of the most urgent necessities of the Indian financial system and no attempt to expedite it ought to be spared.

* * *

THE strike of the students in the Gujerat College at Ahmedabad has after all ended in a manner satisfactory to all concerned.

Gujerat College Strike. This was made possible apparently owing to the tactful intervention of the Education Minister who specially went to Ahmedabad to study the situation on the spot. The cause of the strike is well known. On the 12th of October, the day on which the Simon Commission landed in Bombay on their second visit to this country, some students absented themselves from the terminal examination which was then in

progress. The Principal took such a serious view of the matter that he refused to allow any of them to sit for the final examination unless they appeared for another examination which he promised to arrange for their benefit, for which each student was expected to pay an additional fee of Rs. 3. In doing so he appears to have acted under instructions from Government. This action was resented by the students who as a protest went on strike. There were many meetings and demonstrations held in Ahmedabad against the Principal and several non-official gentlemen interested themselves in the matter with a view to bringing about a settlement. There were also others who did not see in their abstention from studies much of an evil and would not have minded an indefinite postponement of its end. The visit of the Education Minister has however led to a settlement under which the students suffer absolutely no penalty for their conduct. The press note in which the settlement was announced was not quite clear on one or two points, which also have since been clarified by the Principal. These points were whether there would be any victimisation and what would happen to the keeping of term days by the students. While the University is the proper authority to decide the latter point, the Principal has notified that there would be no victimisation of anybody. He has also asked the students "to forget the past" which they have done, by going back to the college as usual. If all this has eventually become possible, one wonders why it should not have become so much earlier so that all the unpleasantness of the last few weeks would have been avoided.

* * *

THE Bassein Taluka Agricultural Association has challenged the findings of the latest Bassein Revision Settlement Report in regard to the Taluka and has urged that the increased assessment is unjustifiable and ruinous to the further progress of agriculture. The Association contends that although the income from produce has risen by nearly 100 p. c. the cost of cultivation has increased by 300 p. c. or even more. It refuses to accept the statement in the Second Revision Report that the rates of sweet paddy will remain constant for at least 30 years and it challenges the assertion that the rents are the same as those collected at the earlier settlement. It is clear also from the Report that the settlement officer has not made allowance for the fact that landlords have to give remissions of rent in bad years. The salt lands are in a worse position owing to inundation with salt water and the money realized per acre by the landlord is, according to the Association, Rs. 9-8-0 on an average; the statement made in the Second Revision Report that outturn from salt lands is greater than that from others is flatly contradicted by the Association and it thinks there ought to be no increase in the assessment of salt lands. It is worth noting that the settlement officer has taken for granted that Rabbi lands are used for crops; whereas the Association positively asserts that less than 15 p. c. of these lands are used for crops, the rest being under grass for cattle-grazing. The most surprising part of the increased assessment is that on the Warkas lands although the Settlement Report admits that the income from these lands is next to nothing. The only bright spot seems to be the garden cultivation and here too the Association say that the picture painted by the settlement officer is too rosy; it is only because the cultivator does not calculate the wages of the members of his family at the market value that there is a profit of Rs. 200 per acre on the average.

In their reply to the Association the Government of Bombay admit that the Land Revenue Code requires amendment in certain respects, but they say that they are not prepared to admit the suggestion of the Association that revised settlements should be postponed before this is done. In regard to garden lands they do not admit that the prices of produce from these lands have fallen to any marked extent and they contend that in any case they are higher than those operating at the last settlement. The Government however are prepared to grant remissions in the areas under Betel-vines in consideration of the disease which has affected the plant. With regard to salt lands they promise to undertake their reclassification at an early date in view of the fact that a large area has gone out of cultivation. So far so good; but the reply does not touch the detailed facts enumerated in the statement presented by the Association. It is incumbent on them either to accept the facts or to controvert them, failing which the impression is sure to be created that the profits of cultivation have not been properly ascertained in fixing the revised assessment. It is true that the Settlement Report does go into some of these details but the position of the agriculturists has not been met quite satisfactorily; for instance, the statement in the Report that "the expenses of cultivation have not risen to an extent sufficient to affect the agriculturists adversely" is quite wide of the mark. The phenomenal increase in the cost of cultivation has made itself notorious everywhere in the province and he who runs may read it. The question requires a deeper study than the one undertaken by an average settlement officer who has developed a tendency to look more to rents than to the profits of cultivation. The incident is an additional reason why the whole question of the basis of land revenue should be tackled without loss of time and not treated in an attitude of *non-chalance*.

A RESOLUTION just passed in the C. P. Council has some interest from the point of view of debtors all over India. The resolution recommends to the Provincial Government to move the Government of India to enact legislation by which the rule of damdupat applicable to Hindus should be extended to the Muslims of Berar, also to Hindus and Muslims alike in the rest of the province. The object of the Resolution is to remove the invidious distinction between the Hindu and Muslim debtors and the supporters explained that the application of the law was very wide in spite of its evasion. The Hon. Mr. Tambe pointed out that in the Bombay Presidency where the law had been operating for a very long time it had failed to give perceptible relief to the agriculturists. He also gave out that opinions received from the provinces when Maulvi Yakub's Bill was moved in the Assembly revealed a great difference of opinion about the beneficial character of the law of damdupat; he also quoted the opinion of an experienced officer of Government to the effect that the law would add to the difficulties of the debtors by raising the interest rate. The only effect of the law he said would be that the creditors would have recourse to the Court earlier and the debtor will be made to pay off his debt early. Rao Bahadur N. K. Kelkar also supported the Hon. Mr. Tambe in his contention that the law had not done much good either in Berar or in the Bombay Presidency. The institution of the Land Mortgage Banks seems to us to be a more efficacious remedy for giving relief of the indebted agriculturist.

MR. SARDA'S Bill for fixing the minimum age for marriage has been put into the cold storage by the Government of India pending the issue of the Joshi Committee's report on the allied question

of the age of consent. On this subject of the relation of the age of marriage to the age of consent much assistance can be derived from a report [1928, IV.20] of the League of Nations issued on December 10th, 1928, in which a comparison has been instituted between the two ages with a view "to ascertain to what extent the age fixed for consent and marriage may affect the question of the moral protection of children and young persons." The report gives in tabular form the ages laid down for the two purposes in 42 countries; it also gives the substance of the legislation on the subject in all these countries. This information is most useful. The statements show a wide variety of opinion which exists in different countries as to the age up to which the protection of young people can effectively be carried in the matter of fixing an age of marriage and an age of consent. The report merely contents itself with the statement that, "on account of the serious responsibilities involved in marriage, the majority of countries take the view that the minimum age of marriage should be higher than the age of consent". Thus in 23 out of the countries in which inquiry was made the minimum age of marriage is higher than the age of consent; in 8 it is lower; and in 10 the two coincide. These figures however are no guide; for, as the report says, "as regards the protection of young persons, the essential point is not whether the minimum age of marriage be higher or lower than the age of consent, but rather that both ages should conform respectively to the standards required by enlightened public opinion", and what the adequate standard would be is a matter that is still engaging the attention of the League.

THOUGH under pressure from the Legislative Council the C. P. Government stand committed to the goal of prohibition in excise matters, the general complaint is that their progress towards the goal is disappointingly slow. The excise administration report of the province for 1927 shows that there is much ground for the complaint. The consumption of country spirit has decreased from 470,000 gallons in 1926 to 452,000 gallons in 1927—a drop of nearly 4 per cent. Similarly the consumption of foreign liquor has gone down, though not that of malt liquor, which has risen from 145,000 gallons in 1926 to 155,550 gallons in 1927—an increase of 7 per cent. The reduced consumption has affected the Government's receipts, which in the case of country liquor alone have lessened by Rs. 15 lakhs. Much has been made in the report of the fact that the consumption of distillery liquor in the province is less than 30 per cent. of what it was in 1919-20. This is good, so far as it goes, but is surely not all that is desired by public opinion. This will be appeased by nothing so much as by a programme of restrictive action, which is claimed to be the means whereby the C. P. Government desire to attain the goal, which, properly worked, will lead automatically to prohibition. But let us see the working of the restrictive action, as represented by the number of country spirit shops, upon which Government set so much store, in the year 1927. Their number declined from 2,294 in 1926 to 2,538 in 1927—a reduction of 56. In this connection we observe that the taluka of Damoh, in which the experiment of prohibition is being tried, had in the year of the report 19 shops selling country liquor. Incidentally, that was a taluka which yielded to Government the smallest excise revenue per head of the population, viz. 3 as. 2 ps.

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

SINCE the Trade Disputes Bill was introduced in the Assembly some four months ago, strikes and labour disputes have continued unabated and it would be thought that the industrial world distracted by these uncomfortable setbacks to prosperity would welcome any measure calculated to bring about a conciliation between opposing interests by providing a mechanism for the settlement of disputes. But looking to the opinions in the Press expressed since the Bill was circulated for eliciting them one is constrained to say that instead of reassuring the public, the Bill has created distrust and nervousness at the consequences of its operation. The reason is not far to seek; it is that along with providing machinery for arbitration and conciliation it has introduced clauses of the most contentious nature which have, under the guise of protecting the public, threatened the most elementary rights of labour. When the Government of India took up the subject in 1924 the idea was simply to provide for boards of inquiry; in the present Bill however there is a definite attempt to restrict the right to strike in various ways as well as to curtail the application of funds for the furtherance of strikes. A reference to the debate on the Bill in the last session would show that the Government had a general strike on their brains when the idea of amplifying the original scope of the Bill took definite shape in their minds, with the result that clauses of the Trade Disputes Act in Great Britain were copied verbatim into the Bill introduced in the Assembly. The Bill therefore raises the big issue of the right to strike which has been emphasised not only by the Socialists but by other parties as well in England. In fact a strike is the last weapon of Trade Unionism to protect the workman's standard of life, when the elaborate schemes of diplomacy by the agency of industrial courts and conciliation boards have failed to give the needed protection. To protect the community against a General Strike may be a praiseworthy object under certain circumstances but in achieving it we must not lay heavy hands on the rights of Trade Unions which are at the very basis of labour organization.

Before we come to the detailed consideration of the several clauses it is necessary to emphasize that even a 'general strike' is perfectly legal as well as moral. For example, as a writer on trade unionism has said, the 'general strike' might be for a laudable object such as the prevention of war and it might have the solid mass of public opinion behind it; in such a case legal prohibition would range the whole moral force of society against it. Although a 'general strike' for purely industrial purposes cannot be imagined it must still be said that it is perfectly legal because it is the natural right of every worker to refuse to work, whether he exercises this right alone or simultaneously with other workers. In any case, apart from rights and ethical considerations, it has been proved in England that the best safeguard for the public lies in sane trade-unionism and not in legal prohibitions. In India,

where trade unions are in an infant stage a general strike is a greater improbability than in countries where the union organization is so perfected as to marshal all the workers at the beck and call of the central executives of the unions. With regard to a 'general strike' therefore the only plea which Government can offer is that it is better to make provision against future possibilities instead of being caught napping when such a danger threatens society. We would recommend therefore the elimination of that part of the Bill which deals with a 'general strike.'

In section 4 it is provided that the Government may at their discretion appoint a Court of inquiry constituted only of one person; this should be deleted in the select committee, and it should be obligatory on Government to appoint an equal number of representatives from the two disputing parties. In the interests of labour a provision needs to be introduced that the Board of Conciliation should complete their work in a stated time; in the present Bill there is no such limit and the absence of it is likely to increase the state of tense feeling if the inquiry is prolonged indefinitely. We suggest a period of three months as the maximum within which such a Board ought to be ready with their final decision on the matters under dispute. The example of the Mill Strike Enquiry which is fresh before us has illustrated the possibilities of the violation of an agreement to keep peace if the enquiry is not brought to a finish at an early date. With regard to section 13 which enjoins on the Board or the Court to keep all matters confidential which have been revealed under the pledge of secrecy we feel it necessary to acquiesce in this provision because, failing such a pledge, there will be various matters which both the employers as well Trade Unions will find it inconvenient to place before it for fear of their being made public property and possibly used against their interests. Section 2, clause (f) of the Bill gives discretion to the Governor-General in Council to declare any industry or concern as a Public Utility Service by giving three months' notice of his intention to do so. This is a very wide discretion and is certain to be misused; according to this clause any private concern might at any time be declared to be a service in which a strike without notice is penalised.

Section 16, clause 1, which penalises a strike intended to coerce the Government or to inflict hardship upon the community is the most objectionable clause in the Bill. As a matter of fact it was pointed out in the discussion of the Trade Disputes Bill of 1926 in England that almost every strike inflicts some sort of hardship on the community and it will be so difficult to distinguish between a legal strike and an illegal strike. We think therefore that this clause should be removed altogether as it prevents the law from being clear to every citizen. Every one ought to be able to know when he declares his refusal to work whether his action is illegal or not; as a matter of fact it is clear that according to the wording of the clause it is possible that a strike

may not cause hardship to a community in the beginning but may begin doing so if other strikes in sympathy with it are added to it, thus increasing the dimensions of the harm done to the community. If at this point the Government declares that it is a strike intended to inflict hardship on the community he finds that he has taken part in an illegal strike although he had no bona fide intention to do so. This difficulty of defining a strike intended to coerce the Government or the community would end in the autocratic fiat of the Executive being the last word on the matter. Hundreds would be sent to prison without having the least suspicion that they were engaging in an illegal act. It is obvious therefore that Indians cannot be expected to support the Bill unless this objectionable clause is expunged altogether. Section 18 which withholds the application of certain sections of the Indian Trade Unions Act to a strike or a lockout illegal under the section which we have just criticized curtails the liberties of the union just in their prime of life and the select committee ought to see that it is modified in such a way as not to cripple trade union activities. With regard to sympathetic strikes which are also prevented by section 16, it must be urged that unless a clear definition of an industry is given it would be difficult to decide which is an ordinary strike in furtherance of a dispute in the same industry and which is a sympathetic strike which transcends the limits of an industry. Mr. N. M. Joshi, in speaking on the Bill when it was introduced in September last, pointed out for instance that the transport industry includes railways, tramways, motor services and many others and pertinently asked whether all these are to be taken as one industry. The upshot of this criticism is that section 16 is the vaguest piece of phraseology imaginable.

Unless these details are tackled satisfactorily in the Select Committee now that the principle of the Bill is accepted by the Assembly, it would be the duty of those who are interested in the healthy and normal development of Trade Unionism in India to resist the Bill with all the power at their command and prevent it from passing into law. It would be more advisable if the Government would separate the part from section 15 onwards, which deals with Public Utility Services and illegal strikes, from the rest of the Bill and present it as a separate enactment thus facilitating the adoption of the sections about which there is greater agreement. There is no gain-saying that the latter part of the Bill is a definite obstacle to the growth of Trade Unions and is unmistakably directed against all well-organized strikes. It would be wrong to suppose that the opposition to the Bill is based on a reluctance to adopt the peaceful method of arbitration and reconciliation. But when this method has been tried and yet has failed to give the needed satisfaction the resort to strike as the last method of realizing the basic objects of Trade Unionism ought not to be questioned. We are glad to see that in moving that the Bill be referred to a select committee, Sir B. N. Mitra admitted that barring the Public Utility Services

which lay in a category by themselves there was no intention to interfere with the right to strike.

The very fact that a dispute had been raised as to what the principle of the Bill is, shows that the Bill is not a logically coherent whole and that there are parts of it which are not easily deducible from the main principle. There are many who still think that clause 15 is disjointed and that any one who agrees to the principle of the Bill may yet oppose the adoption of the clause. This is an additional reason in support of our contention that section 15 and the following sections should be separated from the rest and embodied in a separate Bill. This would prevent what Pandit Kunzru described as the smuggling of the dangerous parts of the Bill along with the more acceptable part. In any case it is the duty of the select committee to make changes in the Bill with the primary object of coordinating the different parts so as to make them hang together. It is good that the President made clear the position of Government by declaring that they could not, after the Bill had been referred to the Select Committee, drop it on the ground that amendments amounting to material alterations had been made by it.

A GESTURE OF APPEASEMENT ?

THE simple announcement by Earl Winterton that the Committee of the Central Legislature which may be deputed to place its views before the Joint Parliamentary Committee in England will not necessarily be the same in personnel as the Committee which is now co-operating with the Statutory Commission has unnecessarily agitated certain Anglo-Indian newspapers. They both see in it the beginning of a new change of policy consequent upon a realization by the Imperial Government of the strength of the boycott movement in India. The *Times of India* fears, and the *Pioneer* hopes, that Government have now come to feel that Sir Sankaran Nair, Dr. Gour and other members of the Simon Commission are broken reeds so far as placing reliance upon them for influencing public opinion is concerned, and that they must now turn to other quarters for help in winning India's acceptance for the constitution that will now be evolved. As a matter of fact, both the fear and the hope are entirely misplaced; for the announcement indicates no change in policy whatever. There is nothing in the pronouncements of November 1927 to show that the representatives of the Central Legislature selected for appearing before the Statutory Commission and the Joint Parliamentary Committee must needs be identical. On the contrary, it seems to have been contemplated from the very start that these two delegations may be differently constituted. It is therefore neither a climb-down nor a concession on Government's part now to offer to the Central Legislature, if it so choose, to make a change in the composition of the present Committee. The position therefore remains just what it was a year and quarter ago. We are particularly concerned to dispose of the concession theory propounded by the *Pioneer* which makes out that, by a change of policy now

obliquely announced, a glorious opportunity is being afforded to the Central Legislature, denied to it before, of practically converting the Simon Constitution into the Nehru Constitution by electing its strongest nationalist representatives to plead before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Even assuming that a change in the Committee's personnel is an afterthought, not provided for in the original scheme of the Commission, there is still nothing in this so-called concession which the members of the Central Legislature could not have secured before. They were free in September last to elect Pandits Nehru and Malaviya in the place of Sir Sankaran Nair and Dr. Gour as their spokesmen before the Joint Committee if they had thought that the presence of the former in the place of the latter would be such a great advantage as the *Pioneer* imagines. Our contemporary indeed has an altogether too exalted a notion of the status of the delegation to be sent by the Central Legislature to represent their views before the Parliamentary Committee. It believes that they will occupy a position of equality with the Joint Parliamentary Committee in relation to Parliament. There is no warranty whatsoever in official pronouncements for such a belief. In the case of the committees set up to co-operate with the Commission, there were at least some expressions loosely used by the Prime Minister and others which could be invoked as establishing an equal status of the two bodies. But British statesmen have left no excuse for anyone to presume that the Committee of the Indian Legislature will be co-equal with that of the British Parliament. The former is to be one of the many witnesses who will appear before the latter. No doubt, crystallising as the Central Legislature's Committee may be supposed to do the opinion of all sections of India, the Joint Parliamentary Committee will probably attach more weight to its representations than to those of the other witnesses. Possibly it will not be dismissed immediately after tendering evidence as other witnesses will be, but may be kept at hand for the purpose of a continued consultation. These advantages, however, if they come, will not alter its fundamental character, viz. that of a witness before a judge. Even the *Pioneer* is afflicted by a sort of doubt that this theory of a change of policy on the part of the British Government is "almost too good to be true." Well, it is.

THE PUBLIC SAFETY BILL.

THE Government of India has succeeded, as was only to be expected, in saving the Public Safety Bill against the overwhelming opposition of the elected Indian members of the Legislative Assembly. The members who opposed the Bill have no sympathy either with the principles or the practices of Red Communism. Nor was their attitude inspired by a desire to pursue obstructive tactics. The Nationalist Party, which was no less vehement than the Swarajist Party in denouncing the measure, abjures such tactics. The elected members feel generally that no connexion has been made out between such manifestations of lawlessness as have been witnessed recently in the industrial areas and the activities of foreign emissaries of Communism, and that it has not yet

been demonstrated that the ordinary law is inadequate to deal with incitements to violence which it is alleged these emissaries indulge in. If the Government of India have evidence on these two points they have succeeded eminently well in keeping it from the representatives of the people in the Assembly. The *Pioneer*, which opposed the Bill when it was introduced in the last session, professes itself to be converted by the array of facts which Mr. Crerar is said to have placed frankly and unreservedly before the Assembly. We have ourselves found not a single new fact adduced and therefore see no reason for a change of opinion similar to the one that has come over the *Pioneer*. After all, as was so well put by Secretary Haig on another occasion, no popular assembly can give its consent to the enactment of special legislation like this unless an overwhelming case for its need is established by Government. Mr. Crerar has certainly not succeeded in this, whatever evidence he may have in his possession.

The most conclusive proof that can be advanced of the unnecessary character of this legislation lies in the fact that the representatives of Indian industry and trade in the Assembly are opposed to it. The brunt of the Communist attack, even on Mr. Crerar's showing, falls upon industry; and industrialists are certainly sufficiently wideawake to their own interests to clamour for protection when the menace becomes at all serious. Government however have received no call for help from them. Even if they did receive such a call, they would have to sift the matter thoroughly before they agreed to arm the executive with extraordinary powers such as are contained in the present Bill. For industrialists are naturally apt to reckon little of individual liberty when their own interests are jeopardised or are supposed to be jeopardised and to press for exceptional legislation if it is likely to give them any relief. In the present instance, however, industrialists not only do not invoke Government aid, but actually spurn it. They think that the legislation in question is prejudicial not only to the interests of the country but to their own interests as a class. Why should Government then force this protection on them? There is no other class or interest which is at all likely to demand such legislation. Clearly therefore the professions of Government in this matter do not correspond to facts, even as when the King of Yugoslavia recently abrogated the Constitution his profession that the step was necessary in the interest of the minorities did not correspond to facts. The view of Croatia as a whole is that the Dictatorship is directed against the very existence of all that the Croats stand for, even as the view of the mercantile and employing community in India is that the Public Safety Bill will only add to their existing difficulties. An expression of opinion, so emphatic as this, coming from the accredited representatives of the interests which, if any, are menaced by Communism, should alone be enough to decide Government to withdraw the Bill even if, on a consideration of the potentialities of the situation, they were inclined to present it to the Assembly for consideration.

While the representatives of commerce and industry have done well by the country, we must confess to a certain amount of misgiving as to the real attitude of Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas to the Bill. Mr. Birla, who was not present when the Bill was discussed in the last session, opposed in this session the very principle of the Bill, urging that no exceptional powers were necessary to cope with the Red menace. But Sir Purshotamdas, in the last session as well as in this, was rather ostentatious in basing his opposition on the details instead of on the basic principle of the Bill. To urge as he did that

Regulation III of 1818 should be used for deporting foreign Communists out of India instead of the proposed measure may be a good debating point but it may be carried too far. The main question is not under what Act the executive should take the necessary extraordinary powers, but whether such powers are necessary. It is immaterial to the country whether deportation takes place under the Regulations of 1818 and 1864 or under an *ad hoc* Act like the one now before the Legislature in the form of a bill. What does matter is that deportation should not take place at all as an extrajudicial proceeding. If exceptional powers are to be allowed, it is far better that Government should seek them in a new measure prepared specifically for the emergency that may have arisen rather than employ an old measure which was intended to serve them in all possible contingencies. That Government have retained Regulation III of 1818 and such other Regulations and often misuse them is an argument for their repeal rather than for their employment against Communists. It is certainly no part of the duty of popular representatives to incite Government to use them more frequently than they are willing to do. By offering to have a conference with Government as to the best means by which exceptional powers should be taken, Sir Purshotamdas showed that his opposition was not to the fundamental principle of the Bill but only to specific provisions intended to carry it out. In that case we do not see why he should not have gone into the Select Committee where his suggestions could well have been considered.

What causes even more concern to us in Sir Purshotamdas's attitude is his insistence that the Bill should be made "comprehensive". We do not know what exact significance attaches to this criticism; but we fear he makes it a matter of complaint that the Bill is not made applicable to Indian as well as to foreign Communists. In the last session of the Assembly the elected members feared that the present Bill was only a precursor of another directed against Indian Communists. Government have given an assurance on the point, which of course the members cannot accept as entirely shutting out the possibility of the introduction of a similar measure intended to rope in Indian Communists, but which will reassure them to some extent. If our interpretation of Sir Purshotamdas's speech is correct, his dissatisfaction arises not from the fact that the Government's pledge is not absolute but that a qualified pledge has been given which prevents Government from widening the scope of the Bill so as to cover both Indian and non-Indian Communists. No one of course can complain against the processes of the ordinary law being applied to both. The question here is quite a different one, that of arming the executive with extraordinary powers. It may be that our interpretation is not correct; we sincerely hope that it is not. Anyhow Sir Purshotamdas's plea met with no response either in official or unofficial quarters, and so for the present we must thank members of the commercial interests for their opposition to the Bill, though that of Sir Purshotamdas might have been more logical and downright like that of Mr. Birla.

BARODA IN 1927-28.

DURING the twelve months covered by the latest Baroda administration report, the Maharaja was in India—not in his State, be it noted—for three months. He landed in Bombay on January 13, 1928 and sailed for Europe on April 14, 1928. And even for this all too brief visit the disastrous floods of 1927 must be thanked, for we are assured the visit was under-

taken in defiance of medical advice, His Highness being anxious to see for himself the ravages caused by the floods. His stay in his State was punctuated by a short visit to the Viceroy at Delhi, a week's hunting trip in Kotah forests, a three days' visit to Gwalior, etc., all of which must have occupied him for at least three weeks, so that he could give only about two months to the affairs of his State. No wonder that his subjects complain of want of touch on his part. His long absences in Europe involve considerable delays in the decision of important points, which his people find extremely embarrassing. Thus, to give one instance, during the year under report, we observe, 45 appeals against the decisions of Ministers, the Executive Council and departmental heads were submitted to him with the opinion of the Bench which together with those standing over from the previous year numbered 58. Out of these 36 were disposed of, leaving a balance of 22. The number of appeals awaiting disposal by him thus increased from 13 to 22. This shows how work which for its disposal has to wait for his decision goes on accumulating. While it is believable that grounds of health rather than of pursuit of idle pleasure necessitate his prolonged sojourns in England, the least the Maharaja owes to his subjects is to arrange for the disposal of public business with due expedition. It need hardly be pointed out that this can be done by delegating his powers to somebody on the spot, say the Dewan, if necessary, in association with the Maharaja's other trusted advisers, but whatever the method, the object must be to prevent all avoidable delay in the disposal of public business.

Another point connected with the ruler to which it is necessary to draw attention here is the palace expenses. These increased in a single year by over two lakhs of rupees, being Rs. 20.29 lakhs in 1926-27 and Rs. 22.30 in 1927-28. Increases in other items are accounted for in the report; but no explanation is given as to why the ruler's personal expenses went up by as much as 10 per cent. We think it is time Sir Sayajirao placed a definite limit to the amount he is to appropriate for the expenses of himself and his family.

The account of the working of what is known as the Infant Marriage Prevention Act given in the report is full of interest to us in British India. Its working was so far supervised by the Legal Remembrancer, but in 1927-28 the task was entrusted to the Varishtha Court. There were 340 applications for exemption from the operation of the Act, a very large proportion of these coming from the Golas of Baroda. This is explained by the curious custom prevailing in that community under which all marriages can be celebrated only in every thirteenth year, which happened to be 1927-28. The ground urged in most of such applications was the impossibility of postponing marriages for the next twelve years. But though such a large number of exemptions were applied for, it does not mean that all of them were granted, 38.8 per cent. of them being turned down. If however we take into consideration only the number of exemptions allowed, the Golas secured as high a percentage as 93.8. In this connection it is curious to note the number of applications made in the preceding four years, which were 7, 5, 12 and 7, the exemptions being as a rule granted. Another plea generally put forward is the old age or bed-ridden condition of the parents or guardians.

The number of offences against the Act in the year of the report was fairly high, viz. 7,557, the percentage of convictions being 86.5. A comparison of the statistics in this behalf for the last five years shows that while the number of offences shows a ten-

dency to decline, the proportion of convictions is steadily rising, the figures for 1923-24 being 9,377 and 81.8 respectively. During 1927-28, registered marriages contracted after the prescribed age limit numbered 11,663, and exempted ones 201. The percentage of marriages below age to the total number which stood at 24.5 in 1916-17 was 36.1 in 1927-28. The proportion of such marriages ought, as time goes on, to get less and less; instead however it has been showing a fairly consistently upward tendency, which must give much food for thought to His Highness's Government. As many as 6,376 marriages were, we are told, penalised, the fines under the Act amounting to Rs. 81,000. The Act is thus a fruitful source of revenue to the Baroda Government, which they must be careful to return to the people in some form or other. In this connection it is to be noted that Rs. 20,000 out of the total recovered from fines were allotted to the medical department for schemes connected with medical relief to women and an equal amount was placed at the disposal of the education department for scholarships to girls and for the encouragement of physical culture. While the manner in which the fines are expended is a matter for satisfaction, the fact that they yield a large amount shows that the Act is somewhat ahead of public opinion, at any rate in some backward communities like the Kolis and Kurbis and that the State must carry on considerable propaganda before they come up to the level of the more advanced communities like the Brahmans, Kshatriyas and the Banias.

Turning to the educational condition of the State, we find that while the position has improved since the present Maharaja took up the reins of his office, it has not improved as much as one would have wished. In 1881, when Sir Sayajirao came to the throne, there were 180 primary schools with 7,465 pupils throughout the State; for 1927-28 the corresponding figures were 2,879 and 208,158 respectively. The number of schools was smaller than in the previous year by 41 and that of pupils by about 300. The decrease is accounted for by the fact that some single-teacher schools were closed and some of the minor ones were amalgamated with the bigger ones near by. The total number of educational institutions at the end of 1927-28 was 2,964 as against 2,996 in 1926-27, while the total number of pupils attending them was 222,513 as against 217,036 of the previous year. Thus though the number of institutions decreased by 32, that of pupils increased by nearly 5,500. This however does not give us a proper idea of how much still remains to be done before there is universal literacy in the State, so far at any rate as the rising generation is concerned. The population of Baroda State, according to the 1921 census, was 21,26,522; and if, according to the practice followed in such cases, we take the school-age population at 15 per cent., we find that there are 318,930 children in the whole State who ought to be at school. Instead however there are only 222,513 in receipt of instruction of any kind in Baroda, so that nearly a third of the field still remains to be covered before every child of school age in the State is brought to school; and this after 22 years' operation of compulsion! It is to be hoped that the authorities will do their best to reach this consummation as soon as possible. But recently there have been loud complaints that their enthusiasm in the cause of mass education has cooled down. Of this we get an indication in the report. Primary education has so far been a responsibility of the State; but in the year under notice the Maharaja, we are told, approved of the transfer of education to local bodies. It is not surprising that presumably owing to their very meagre resources these bodies refused to shoulder this responsibility and we are relieved to learn that the

idea of transfer was eventually abandoned. We should have thought that the experience of the Bombay presidency in this respect would have served more as a warning than as a model.

The policy of the Maharaja is to subject the compulsory system to periodical examinations, the third of which was held in 1926. During 1927-28 orders were passed by the Maharaja on the results of this inquiry. In these orders, we are told,

"His Highness reiterated the central idea underlying the scheme, that the village schools should be the centre of all beneficent activities in the village and that the people should regard it as a part of the life of the village. From this point of view, it was laid down that (i) the teacher should as far as possible be a native of the village and should not be liable to transfer; (ii) a rural bias should be imparted to the instruction given in the school; and (iii) the village panchayats should inspect the schools and bring shortcomings to the notice of the Government."

As in the case of the Infant Marriage Prevention Act, the Compulsory Education Act also brings to the State coffers a considerable amount which in 1927-28 came to Rs. 91,468 by way of fines imposed on defaulters. "60 per cent. of the fines are utilised for the construction of school buildings, 35 per cent. for giving scholarships to poor and deserving students in primary schools and 5 per cent. given to patel talatis as remuneration for collecting the fines. Fines amounting to Rs. 21,549 were remitted."

It is a pity that the Maharaja who is generally regarded as enlightened and progressive does not yet see the need of liberalising the constitution and functions of the Legislative Council. It consists of 27 members with the Dewan as President. Out of the remaining 26, 12 are State officials, 4 nominated non-officials and only 10 elected, not by direct vote, but by mahal panchayats. The popular element is thus in a hopeless minority in the Council with the result that no proposal which fails to commend itself to the Government has any chance of passing. The present Council has clearly outlived its purpose and it is high time its constitution was democratised so as to place the elective non-official element in a majority. Otherwise Sir Sayajirao will be bracketed with those unprogressive rulers of whom India has a good number. It is because we feel that he does not wish to be so ranked that we venture to hope that the Baroda Legislative Council will before long be brought on a level with the provincial legislatures in British India.

OUR EUROPEAN LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

GENEVA, February 24.

AFGHANISTAN.

AFGHANISTAN is doubtless the most discussed topic in Europe at present. With the increasing number of reports reaching here regarding the Afghan situation, the greater and surer the conviction tends to be concerning its true character. It is, in the characteristically guarded language of a Genevese journal, that "there is no doubt that a certain Foreign Power stands to gain from the present Afghan crisis, whatever be the actual facts." Outside Geneva there is neither the need for such reserved expression nor the habit. Even Pertinax, who has a reputation for being reactionary, say in the *Echo de Paris*:

"It would not be surprising if the rebel tribes had found at least a certain benevolence on the Indian border. Did not Amanullah boast, a short time ago, of having visited in disguise the Moslems who were the most hostile to British domination? Since the check which

was inflicted on its arms in 1919 the Government of India has been preoccupied, perhaps not without reason, with the modern State which was being organised in Kabul. The Afghans are the traditional conquerors of India where, under the name of Pathans, live six millions of them who are the police of the country and the mainstay of its regiments."

Pertinax finds, nevertheless, that the repercussions of Russian, Turkish, and Anglo-Indian politics on Afghanistan are very obscure, although he believes that it would not have been difficult for Britain "to excite the rebels both against the Turkish Military Mission and against the Soviets, whose guest of honour King Amanullah recently was in Moscow." The Afghan situation is followed in Germany with still greater interest on account of the large orders that the ex-king had placed with German firms.

"It is established", according to the *Boersen Zeitung*, "that England had armed the disaffected tribes. King Amanullah had underestimated the power of England and England's money in Asia, and the result is that he has lost his crown, a splendid success for England and the signal for the reversion of Afghanistan to be England's vassal".

To this the *Kreuz Zeitung* adds the moral:

"All the more or less 'peaceful' conquests of England for the last five hundred years have been a chain of un-interrupted acts of violence and oppression against the weak which have sometimes aroused the anger of the whole world—as during the subjugation of the Boers—but have always been crowned with success."

The more direct and important factor for the European situation is alluded to by the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* when it draws attention to the "heavy defeat in Afghanistan for Russia," up to whose vulnerable frontiers the power of London is now menacingly advanced.

EAST AFRICA.

Such bitterness in the German comments regarding Anglo-Afghan relations is accentuated by the publication of the report of the Hilton Young Commission.

"The proposals of the Commission are completely incompatible with the Mandatory trusteeship of Great Britain in East Africa", says the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*. "Great Britain is proceeding slowly but surely to the complete incorporation in the British Empire of the most valuable German Colony. The German public must awake to this danger in time and insist on the preservation of the mandatory principle in regard to its former colonies". "In Germany," repeats the *Germania*, we have every reason to observe these proceedings with attention and even with distrust. The merging of the former German East Africa in a great administrative system would mean that the Mandate would be a facade behind which an annexation of Tanganyika would be carried out."

BRITISH POLITICS.

While such is the general foreign attitude towards British diplomacy, the Houses of Parliament have met for the last stage before the general election. Until Easter, at any rate, the House of Commons will devote its time almost entirely to two subjects, the reform of the local government and finance. Both matters would make politics dull. The concessions which the Government is prepared to make to the local authorities after the conversations which have taken place will make the passage of the Bill much easier. Difference of opinion exists to a marked extent only regarding the Conservative amendment which would deprive breweries, distilleries and tobacco factories of the benefits of de-rating. After this will come the supply votes for the financial year and it will probably be followed by the

Budget. By that time the general election will be so near that unless Mr. Churchill's proposals are contentious—in a party sense—members will be more intent on getting among their constituents than on speaking in Parliament.

The Conservatives are beginning to realise that the fate of their party must largely depend on the Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is straining every effort to make it popular, and if there is still talk of a return to the penny postage, despite Mr. Churchill's previous disclaimer, and six pence off the income tax, it is because of the realisation that the Government will have little else for 'window dressing' for the general election. Even the de-rating scheme, like indeed all the proposals of the present Government, is to cost several million pounds more than was anticipated, and the Cabinet Economy Committee is having a difficult task with the spending departments. The Channel tunnel question is the only entertaining item in the present Parliamentary programme. Concurrently with the completion of this programme there will be waged the most vigorous campaign of modern times for the general election, aimed chiefly at capturing the new women voters. All the latest scientific devices will be brought into the service of party politics, and these latter will have a special significance because, as Mr. Lloyd George has said, the present Parliament is nearly dead, and the chief work lies henceforward on the platform. Whether one regards British politics from at home or abroad, there is little doubt that the course British history takes between now and next summer will leave a permanent mark upon it.

REVIEWS.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.

TOWARDS SWARAJ. By S. K. SARMA. (M. K. Srinivasa Iyengar, Madras.) 1928. 7¼ × 5. pp. 428. Rs. 5.

IF the daring novelty of suggestions contained in a book can ensure for it in India a wide reading public, Mr. Sarma's *Towards Swaraj* should not be lacking in readers. In the prefatory note the author refers to the great divergence between his own views and those of the Nehru Report on many important constitutional questions, and, very valiantly, makes this divergence a title to the book being read and pondered. In fact he differs not merely from the Nehru Committee, who indeed were content to tread the beaten path in constitution-making, but from political scientists of most countries who have fashioned democratic constitutions. His claim therefore for the book not being neglected by Indian politicians stands much higher than perhaps he suspects.

The author is a vehement opponent of the federal system of government. The Nehru Committee have not much love for it either, but he differs from them and most other advocates of the unitary form of government in that he does not weigh the merits and defects of federalism and then conclude that a preponderance of advantage lies in favour of a unitary and centralised government. To him federalism is an unmixed evil; it has no element of strength, but very many elements of weakness. In his anxiety to have a strong central government he would endow it with power which in no country at all comparable to India is possessed by the national government. The whole of public finance and taxation he would make a central subject. The Central Government would determine

both the pitch and form of taxation for the whole country, and since these can only be determined with reference to the purposes to which the proceeds of the taxes are to be applied, it follows that the Central Government "must necessarily decide the needs of the year and adjust the revenues accordingly." The machinery of the Provincial Governments would no doubt be employed in collecting and disbursing revenue, but in regard to it they would act as mere agents of the Central Government, with no independent powers. The local sources of revenue, therefore, which the Provincial Governments administer now on their own, would, according to Mr. Sarma's suggestion, have all to be transferred to the Central Government for regulation. Thus land revenue, stamps (general and judicial), registration, excise and forests—all would be entrusted to the Central Government, the sphere of the Provincial Governments being limited to the administration of law and order, local self-government, education, public health, sanitation, rural reconstruction, religious and charitable endowments, etc., with moneys earmarked by the Central Government. Under this scheme the work of the Provincial Governments would be thus very attenuated, indeed to such an extent that, rejecting the idea of a second chamber for provincial legislatures, Mr. Sarma says, even "a single chamber will hardly find enough work to keep it going." The only reason which the author gives for this unparalleled centralization that he recommends is the supposed impossibility of otherwise securing financial justice for state governments. "If taxation is to be used as a lever to remove the existing inequalities in the distribution of wealth, it is certainly a matter of supreme importance that it is not mishandled by a number of semi-educated amateurs," he says, in a sentence which is characteristic of the assurance with which the author writes.

Mr. Sarma makes a strong plea for the grant of full responsibility in all the functions of the Central Government, with only one exception, viz. that of foreign and political relations, which, according to him, should be in the portfolio of the Viceroy, who will of course not be amenable to the control of the legislature. Defence he is not prepared thus to keep out of popular control. He would however subject responsibility in regard to it to the exercise of powers of interference by Parliament "when the standard shows a tendency to depart from the original." "As a supreme legislative body it (the British Parliament) can pass laws for its proper upkeep and vest with the Secretary of State for India the appointment of the principal officers in the higher command." The power of interference which is here reserved for Parliament in fact extends to other spheres also, for in the author's scheme the Governor-General is not to be a wholly constitutional governor; when he disagrees with his ministers, he is not meekly to defer to their wishes, but to write in to the Secretary of State, who is to have the final voice in the matter. If he agrees with the Indian ministers, the Governor-General must give way; but if he agrees with the Governor-General he will make the ministers yield by invoking the veto of Parliament "by means of its concurrent power of legislation." Most political writers have a horror of concurrent jurisdiction; not so our author, who thinks the arrangement is "replete with political advantages." Appeal is made to this normative power of Parliament in allaying the fears of British capitalists in regard to discriminatory legislation on the part of the Indian legislature. "Any legislation repugnant to the understanding, implied or express, on which foreign trade has been stimulated or internal commerce fostered and developed by

the free and unfettered motion of capital or labour, may be specially reserved for the concurrent jurisdiction of Parliament. The prospect of a parliamentary veto will have a wholesome effect on Indian legislation, objectionable to the highest standard of human conduct and international morality," &c. &c.

Similarly the author would reserve to the Central Government concurrent jurisdiction in the matter of legislation on provincial subjects. Nay, more. "It would also be open to the Central Government to prepare a schedule of the more important subjects in which legislation may require their previous sanction." Thus would he provide against decay in the morale or efficiency of the police or any other key department. When this safeguard is provided there is no longer any excuse, in the view of the author, for reserving any subject in the provinces for the control of an irresponsible bureaucracy. It is not clear however how even this restricted responsibility is to come into effect, since the responsibility for all revenue and therefore for all expenditure is the Central Government's. The author himself admits that "in the determination of such expense the policy will be that of the Government of India," which would obviously reduce the ministers in the provinces to the position of mere executants of the decisions of a higher body than themselves. No doubt he seems to be willing to leave a small poky sphere of taxation to the Provincial Governments such as is usually left to local bodies, but it is obvious that this revenue will be utterly inadequate for the discharge of functions assigned to them, among which the preservation of law and order is one. It follows therefore that since in political institutions of the British pattern responsibility of the Ministry is enforced through the power of the purse, no real responsible government in the provincial sphere is possible under Mr. Sarma's scheme which would make Provincial Governments live upon the doles of the Central Government and spend the doles in a manner predetermined for them by the Central Government.

Mr. Sarma does not believe that an extension of self-government necessarily requires an extension of the franchise. He is on the contrary opposed to any lowering of the present qualifications. The depressed classes and the labouring population can, in his opinion, be best represented by the method of indirect election by their own organizations. Not only does he think adult suffrage to be utterly ruinous to India in existing circumstances, but he thinks it evil in itself and therefore bad even for advanced countries. He asks in none too delicate a manner, "Is every man or woman, who has entered into the world not by reason of his or her volition, but because of somebody's folly, fit to exercise the vote and understand its implication? So far as England is concerned she has resolved henceforth to be ruled by women and imbeciles", &c. &c. But the crowning piece of grossness is provided by his onslaught on the author of *Mother India*. There is a whole page reeking with filth it is much too vile to permit of transcription here.

On the question of Indian States our author is very emphatic. The claim of the Princes to have direct relations with the Crown he characterizes as preposterous. "That treaties can be entered into and preserved only so long as the internal political system between the contracting parties continues to be the same and must be modified or revoked if it should change finds support in no principle of international jurisprudence." He is clear that no financial injustice is involved in the present economic arrangements and that no encroachments on States' rights have taken place, thus rendering any

financial readjustment unnecessary. On the subjects of coinage, currency and mints "most of the States have by virtue of special agreements placed themselves in a position of subordinate equality with the British Indian system and have abandoned minting their own coins", which he thinks is all to the good. The claim to a share in the customs revenue which the Princes put forward he scouts as utterly untenable and preposterous. Any disadvantage from which the States suffer is due to their "being in the hinterland for which nobody can help." Thus he takes up one claim after another and shows that all of them are equally ridiculous. On the other hand he asserts the right of the Swaraj Government as a successor to the present Government to exercise powers of interference in the internal affairs of Indian States. Indeed he says that the need for such interference will be greater when India attains self-government. "A misgoverned Native State will be a corroding source of political nausea to corrupt our own institutions. The instinct of self-preservation must induce a people who have attained their liberation by a tardy process to expurgate the tainted administrations about them."

S. G. V.

WOMEN AND CO-OPERATION.

THE WOMAN WITH THE BASKET. By CATHERINE WEBB. (The Women's Co-operative Guild, London.) 1927. pp. 205. 4¾ × 7¼. 2s.

THIS book contains the history of the Women's Co-operative Guild from 1883 to 1927. The Guild is a self-governing institution, the object of which is to work "through co-operation for the welfare of the fair sex. It began in a very humble manner in 1883. The wife of a well-known educationist moving about with her husband in the north of England among workers, both men and women, was deeply impressed with the value of co-operation for women who naturally possess the purchasing power in normal households. She promptly issued an appeal for co-workers from among women in the organ of the co-operative movement, the *Cooperative News*, and as a result arose the Women's Co-operative Guild. This body soon proved so successful and popular that at the end of the first decade it had 137 branches in Britain and 6,412 members. In December, 1926 its membership was nearly 58,000. The principle on which it is based is that of democratic self-government. Both individual members and branches are given as much freedom of action as is compatible with the efficient conduct of the Guild. At the same time their share of joint responsibility for the good name and the proper working of the Guild is insisted upon.

A glance at the varied items of work of this body will help us to a better recognition of its usefulness. Its primary business is to bring the co-operative movement to the door of every housewife so that she might spend her money more economically and to better purpose. But in addition it undertook other work. Educational meetings were held in which domestic subjects as well as those of "citizen interest" were discussed. To the former class belong the papers on "Health", "Economic Cooking", and "The Training of Children"; to the latter belong those on "The Municipal Duties of Co-operative Women", "Social Purity" and "Co-operation". Though theoretically the co-operative movement imposed no restrictions on women on the score of sex, yet in practice women were not allowed on committees and other governing bodies. Against this injustice the Guild put up a stern fight, which of course ended in complete success. This was one of

its campaigns. Another was in favour of "a federal system of production" as distinguished from the system of profit-sharing and of co-partnership. Difference of opinion having arisen among the members as to the system of production most advantageous to women, a special study of the question was made. And as a result it was concluded that "it was more to the advantage of the worker to have good wages and shorter hours than the doubtful chance of a share in the profits." The federal system, i. e., the system according to which production is carried on by and on behalf of distributive societies (through the Co-operative Women's Guild), was therefore adopted.

A detailed reference to the questions in which the Guild took interest is not necessary: mere mention of the more important of them is sufficient to convey a clear idea of the wide scope of its activities. Educational propaganda was carried on in favour of woman suffrage, for bringing women workers into the Trade Union Movement, and in favour of a minimum wage. Problems connected with motherhood and family life also engaged the attention of the Guild. And accordingly the national care of maternity was strongly advocated. In 1920 the Guild declared its whole-hearted support to an alliance with the Labour Party. Mrs. Webb says eloquently in the last paragraph of the book:

"Students of social history at large, looking back in future years, must, it seems to me, see in the rise and growth of this unique women's organisation—with its members scattered over the whole country, living the narrow lives of housewives, bound by small means and absorbing economic problems, yet seeking with determination to gain knowledge wherewith to fit themselves for a full life of civic duties,—a movement of impressive significance in the progress of humanity. The spirit of co-operation which binds the Guild into one united whole in purpose and action and gives to the shopping baskets of its members a great power to lift the ordinary commerce of daily existence into a movement for social betterment, is also the spirit which can regenerate the world."

The book is one which will inspire all co-operators in India and benefit especially the women of the country by providing them with a standing example of self-help and enterprise among their sex.

S. P. SARMA.

SHORT NOTICES.

KARL MARX'S CAPITAL. Trans. by EDEN & CEDAR PAUL. (Allen & Unwin.) 1928. 8¼ × 5½. pp. 927. 12s. 6d.

THIS is a new translation of Marx's epoch-making work from the fourth German edition by Engels. The authors of this new book again have not ignored the translation by Moore and Aveling, which so far had been the principal source of the knowledge about this work. To all, and not merely to those who regard Marx's *Capital* as the Bible of working classes or of modern socialism, the volume will be welcome as a new rendering from the authoritative German text. Although Marx's theories will hardly be accepted by those who are not socialists of the particular school which he helped to inaugurate the history contained in his '*Capital*' is immensely valuable and shows an erudition which is the envy of economic historians. It is this historical portion which makes this work indispensable to students of economics. Marx shows in this work how the centralization in industry which has been proceeding all these centuries points to its ultimate culmination in State-Socialism. There is no gainsaying that Karl Marx is the fore-

most maker of modern socialism and the originator of most of the ideas which have been at the basis of modern demands for the reconstruction of society in the interest of labour. The publishers ought certainly to be congratulated on this enterprise of giving to the public a rendering of one of the epoch-making volumes in German economic literature.

V. N. G.

INDUSTRIALISM IN JAPAN. By WALTER F. FRANCE. (The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, London.) 1928. 7¼ × 4¾. pp. 71. 1s.

ONE looks in vain in "Industrialism in Japan" for exhaustive information about the state of industry in Japan. The aim of the author is to exalt Christianity above the Japanese faiths and find a wide market for this commodity in that country. Instead of developing his subject in the proper manner, Mr France, with episcopal license, wanders away from it. He thinks that Industrialism in Japan wears a peculiarly sinful aspect because of the lack of the Western conception of justice, Christian in origin and Christian only, of justice, right, truth, compassion, the love and like." He flatters himself that if at all there are evidences of social service in the Japanese community, their origin is purely Christian. "Justice and truth," he brags, "as we know these graces have little foothold in uninfluenced Japan. Compassion and love, as we know them, have none." There is not the least doubt that Mr. France is completely out of touch with modern Europe. It is not the religion of Europe that is responsible for the birth of class consciousness but its irreligion. Christian religion, like all dogma-ridden religions, has always tried to please rapacious capitalism and offered the miserable worker the sop of Lazar's story or some such other-worldly consolation. Industrialism at first virtually drove religion into the background, for it was not possible for the capitalist to be both greedy and charitable at the same time. The Labour movement at last dealt a death blow to it with the result that we have to-day an organised working class of faithless people. At the present time Europe as a whole has, as Tagore says, "lost faith in religion but not in humanity." All the welfare movements, the social service organisations in that continent are the offspring of anti-Christian humanitarianism. Mr. France in the excess of his Christian zeal robs Buddhism of its inalienable title to compassion and the noble eightfold path and arbitrarily transfers them to Christianity. He also unfairly accuses the Japanese of unscrupulous moral turpitude and lays the blame for all that at the doors of Buddhism which, wherever it has spread, has brought out the best in man.

The book can only be of use for those who wish to know how Christianity thrives on uncharitable opinions.

K. VENUGOPAL RAO.

SEXUAL SECRETS. By M. N. GANESA AIYER. (Grant & Co., Madras.) 1928. 7 × 4¾. pp. 320. Re. 1-4.

THE booklet ranges over the usual topics connected with sex which it is necessary for young men and women to know. We are relieved to note that it is written in a manner calculated to appeal to the intellect instead of to the passions, and it breathes the higher motive of teaching young people to appreciate

the sacredness of sexual functions as well as sexual relations. We think however that the part of the booklet dealing with the mother and the baby and the treatment of infantile diseases is too scrappy and is not likely to be of much use to young people. Much the same might be said of the chapter on contraception which requires an amount of elaboration and bringing up-to-date. Similarly the stray hints that the author gives about the important diseases of sexual organs are hardly sufficient to enable a person to treat himself without reference to an experienced medical man. In fact the prescription of remedies should be avoided altogether in such a booklet as it is likely to give the patient a feeling of false security and delay consultation with the proper physician. The author's object is to keep young folk from dangerous pitfalls by giving them a timely warning and it would surely be fulfilled if it is read in the proper spirit. We would recommend to the author that the style of writing should be made more eloquent so as to appeal with greater force, when issuing a fresh edition. Similarly we recommend the introduction of illustrations in the earlier part treating with reproduction among plants and animals.

A SOCIOLOGIST.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS. By J. M. KENWORTHY and GEORGE YOUNG. (Hutchinson.) 9½ × 6. pp. 283. 18s.
- MORE FAMOUS TRIALS. By THE EARL OF BIRKENHEAD. (Hutchinson.) 1928. 9½ × 6. pp. 310. 21s.
- CHRONICLES OF KENYA. By A. DAVIS and H. G. ROBERTSON. (Cecil Palmer.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 311. 7s. 6d.
- LIBERTY IN THE MODERN WORLD. By GEORGE BRYAN LOGAN. (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 142. \$2.00.
- THE INDIAN STATES IN RELATION TO THE BRITISH CROWN AND BRITISH INDIA. By K. B. MCGHEE. (Author, Gamdevi, Bombay.) 1928. 9½ × 6½. pp. 172.
- A FAITH FOR THE WORLD. By W. PATON. (Edinburgh House Press.) 1929. 7½ × 4½. pp. 256. 2s. 6d.
- BARODA AND ITS LIBRARIES. By NEWTON MOHUN DUTT. (Author, Central Library, Baroda.) 1928. 9½ × 6½. pp. 191. Rs. 2-4.
- THE ECONOMIC ADVANCE OF BRITISH CO-OPERATION, 1913-1926. By H. J. TWIGG. (The Co-operative Union, Manchester.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 96. 2s.
- LAST WORDS ON THE ROMAN MUNICIPALITIES. By W. E. HEITLAND. (Cambridge University Press.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 80. 4s.
- THE POWER OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCE. Discussed by JOHN FOSTER DULLES and MORRIS HILLQUIST. (Foreign Policy Association, New York City.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 23.
- THE VEDANTA AND MODERN THOUGHT. By W. S. URQUHART. (Oxford University Press.) 1928. 8½ × 5½. pp. 256. 12s. 6d.
- IRELAND'S SECRET SERVICE IN ENGLAND. By EDWARD M. BRADY. (The Talbot Press, Dublin.) 1928. 7½ × 5. pp. 160. 3s. 6d.
- THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF WALTER DRUM. By JOSEPH GORAYEB. (The American Press.) 1928. 9½ × 6½. pp. 313. \$3.00.

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