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Topics of the Week

Bombay Debt Bill: A Suggestion

ONE of the defects that the Select Committee has left unremedied in the Bombay Agricultural Debtors Relief Bill is that no allowance is made therein for the inability of the debtors to pay instalments fixed by the Boards in seasons of drought, frost, etc. In the Central Provinces also such a defect was allowed to remain in its Debt Conciliation Act, but it has been cured by an amending Bill which became law this week. A provision is now added to the effect that when land revenue or rent, as the case may be, payable by a debtor in the province for any year is suspended or remitted by Government, the instalment payable by such debtor in that year shall also be suspended. Where the suspension of remission is less than 50 per cent. but not less than 30 per cent. of the total land revenue or rent payable by a debtor, half the instalment shall be suspended; and where the suspension or remission is 50 per cent. or more than 50 per cent., the whole instalment shall be suspended. No interest shall be charged on any instalment or portion thereof for the period during which its payment remains postponed. A provision found necessary by experience in the C. P. will equally be necessary in the Bombay Province, and we hope that the legislature will adopt this or a similar provision.

Protest against Bombay Repression

TWO adjournment motions were moved in the Legislative Assembly of Bombay on Tuesday last to protest against the taking of securities from the *Savadhan*, a Bombay newspaper, and the Lakshmi Narayan Press, Ahmednagar, under the Press Emergency Powers Act. The Government's defence of its action was that the *Savadhan* published in its columns lives of the late Lala Har Dayal

and two other revolutionaries and that the Lakshmi Narayan Press published a song by Mr. V. D. Savarkar which is under a ban. Both the paper and the Press, according to the Government, incited to violence and thus brought themselves within the mischief of the law.

THE critics of the Government's policy took their stand on the fact that, if in fact there was incitement to violence, the proper course for the Government was to prosecute the offenders under the ordinary law instead of resorting to the short-cut of special legislation always favoured by those who have little concern for civil liberty. To say, as the Government spokesman, Mr. Munshi, did, that an appeal to the High Court was open to the aggrieved parties is to ignore the whole history of the Press Laws, which has proved the futility of this so-called remedy. So long as acts of violence and incitement to violence are recognised as crimes by the ordinary penal law of the country, there is no need to invoke extraordinary repressive laws which were forged by the bureaucracy for its own purposes and to the complete repeal of which the Congress has pledged itself.

BUT it is the Government's plea that there is still need for the use of repressive legislation of a special nature, for under the ordinary law a man can be punished only after he has committed an offence, while the Press Act is mainly intended for preventing offences in future. Why wait, it says, till we are in front of an actual offence? Why not take timely action against those likely to commit offences, and see that no such offences take place? It is preventive even more than punitive action that we want. In putting forward such a plea, the Government clean forgets that the essence of civil liberty in matters relating to the Press is that, if such preventive action is permitted, it cannot but lead to a stifling of the freedom of the press.

THE Government commands such an overwhelming majority in the Assembly that the motions were inevitably defeated, but the fact was borne in upon all sensible men that, where it suits the Congress Governments, they are no less averse than the old bureaucratic Governments to adopting repressive policy. Indeed, Mr. Munshi has proved himself (said Mr. Jamnadas Mehta) to be only an enlarged edition of Sir Ernest Holtson and Sir Maurice Hayward, whom the Congress had, at the time no words strong enough to denounce and hold up to public ridicule.

Non-Co-operation

AT its last meeting at Wardha the Congress Working Committee decided to take a step in non-co-operation. It asked the Congress members of the Central Legislature to boycott the next session. In a long resolution the Committee declared its attitude towards England in the event of war. India would not help England. Though the sympathies of India were with countries fighting for democracy, she could not sympathise with England for the reason that England did not believe in democracy and freedom as such, and would not hesitate to betray them if it suited her imperialistic interests. India would oppose the imposition of war on India and would not permit her resources to be exploited by England for a war forced upon her. Congress Ministries were asked to oppose such exploitation even if it meant their resigning their office. The Ministries were permitted, however, to take defensive and protective measures to ensure the safety of the Indian populations, provided these measures were under the control of the Indian Ministers themselves.

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THE boycott of the next session of the Legislature was suggested as a protest against the actions of the Government of India in sending Indian troops to Egypt and Singapore in spite of the known disapproval of such policy by the Congress, and in spite of the demand of the Central Legislature to be consulted before any such despatch of Indian troops abroad took place. The boycott was also as a protest against the extension of the life of the Central Legislature by another year.

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THE Working Committee's definition of India's attitude towards England in the next war will be generally supported in the country. It has been said by critics that it was inconsistent that India should profess sympathy for democratic countries and yet withhold co-operation with Britain, herself a democratic country, when she fights for other democratic countries. The Committee has answered it. England's democracy is extremely circumscribed; she may be democratic at home, but she is certainly imperialistic abroad, at any rate, in India. Secondly, she has not been a champion of democracies; she betrayed Czechoslovakia. It is next asked: how would India fare if England lost the next war to the totalitarian powers; would she then stand a better chance of achieving democracy? If India will have no democracy then, she has none now either, nor even a prospect of it, if England has her way. Secondly, India can fall only after or with England. If England is willing to face a defeat at the hands of the totalitarian powers, India cannot help a similar fate. Defeat at the hands of the totalitarian powers will be a greater blow to England, now free, powerful and proud, than to India, now bound, weak and humiliated. The critics may well ponder over the question whether England should appease the totalitarian powers and submit herself and India to defeat and humiliation, rather than appease India and win gratitude and glory.

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THE Working Committee did well to protest against the Government of India's action in sending Indian troops abroad without the consent of the Indian Legislature. It is irrelevant whether such consultation was constitutionally necessary or not. There was nothing to prevent the Government of India from taking the Legislature and

the country into confidence in a matter of this kind. The Government of India might advance to the responsive stage before the responsible stage is reached. It has also been said that the despatch of Indian troops abroad would not mean any saving to the Indian exchequer, and that India would be called upon to bear the normal charges. This is also a matter for protest, if true.

We are doubtful, however, if a boycott of the next session of the Legislature is a wise move. It savours of non-co-operation rather than protest. If a protest alone is contemplated, the abstention of the Congress members when the Viceroy addresses the Legislature will be sufficient. It is ever unwise to boycott a legislature.

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Christians in Services

IT is surprising what contradictory claims communalists make for preferences in the Government services in this country. Mr. J. A. Saldanha moved a resolution in the Madras Legislative Council on the 9th August asking for an increase of the representation of Indian Christians in the services in proportion to their advance in education and culture. The Muslims, the Harijans and for some time the non-Brahmins in Madras asked for preferential proportions in the services on precisely the contrary ground, viz., that they were backward in education. Apparently, any reason is good enough for a claim for preferential treatment! The claim for the Indianization of the services in India as against British monopoly stood on different and unchallengeable grounds. Indianization did not seek preferential treatment of Indians as against Britishers, much less did it put forward contradictory reasons in support thereof. The demand for Indianization was not based on the ground that Indians were educationally more advanced or less so than Britishers. It asked just for equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of other considerations, and for the elimination of the artificial preferences to Britishers. But communalization of the services stands on wholly different and inconsistent grounds.

* * *

THE Madras Premier, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, was quick to point out that it was not possible to mix up two such different and incompatible criteria: representation on the basis of education and culture, and representation on the basis of population. The latter had more or less been the accepted policy of the Madras Government for some years now, however inherently anti-national it was. It would, of course, be the better plan to abandon it in favour of the policy advocated by Mr. Saldanha, namely, the criterion of education and competence, without reference to race and religion, as the qualification for the services.

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INCIDENTALLY, the debate gave the Premier an occasion to retail certain figures regarding the numbers of Indian Christians in the Madras services, which showed an all-round improvement, and to refute the allegation of Mr. Saldanha that there was a deterioration. Mr. Saldanha admitted that he was generalising from the figures of a single district for a single year and without any figures at all for other districts over a number of years! The Premier rightly warned the communalists against such vague and unfounded generalisations of communal unfairness, which were very dangerous because of the bad blood

that they created. The communalists may remember that every preference given to a community, as a community, must be a deprivation to other communities.

Loka Seva Sangh, Satara

THE Loka Seva Sangh, Satara, started on the model of the Servants of India Society, Poona, and the Servants of the People's Society, Lahore, has evidently done very useful work, according to its last year's report. Experiments of intensive work were carried on in villages. The report gives revealing glimpses of poverty-stricken villages in the Deccan. The almost unbreakable isolation of villages shut up by hills which even postal communications penetrate with difficulty and the complete lack of medical and educational facilities seem so typical. The agricultural yield in the Patan Taluka is hardly sufficient for half the year. In another benighted part of the District it is not even sufficient for a couple of months.

THE workers of the Sangh have approached the formidable problem before them in a right spirit. Rather than adopt the usual way of sermonising the villagers on better principles of life, they carefully searched different avenues of service to them. They taught the illiterates how to read and write, and took newspapers to those who were literate. They stood by them in their difficulties with the "capricious agents of the administrative system"; and undaunted by the vastness of the problems confronting them, they have tried to approach even major problems like that of prohibition in the District with commendable energy. Their work, in fact, has been undertaken "for mutual benefit." "Villages know what public life is and workers know how to tackle the problems of the village." While congratulating the Sangh on its work, one hopes that adequate resources in men and money would be available for enabling it to tackle effectively the hideous problem of perennial poverty.

Baroda Finances

A NOVEL feature introduced in the financial administration of Baroda State this year is the institution of a Land Revenue Equalisation Fund. The land revenue demand is placed at Rs. 91 lakhs, which shows a fall in the total demand for previous years by Rs. 20 lakhs or by 20 per cent., this being the result of remissions of land revenue varying from 12½ to 25 per cent. announced in December last and now made permanent. It is thought that, on account of the mass disintegration of the prices of agricultural produce, it would be unjust to raise more than Rs. 91 lakhs in the way of land revenue, but in order to provide against the dislocation of the annual provision in the budget for land revenue on account of seasonal vicissitudes, it has now been decided to form a Land Revenue Equalisation Fund of Rs. 50 lakhs. "In coming years, amounts will automatically come into or go out of the Fund as revenue collections pass beyond or fall below the fixed standard. Fluctuations under land revenue will thus cease to influence the working of other departments which will continue their activities without hindrance."

ANOTHER Reserve Fund of Rs. 350 lakhs has also been established, the interest from which will be available for capital expenditure, "especially remunerative expenditure." The constitution of these two funds is not expected to cripple the development of the nation-building departments, as the funds will be formed out of the liquid assets of the State, built up by the late Maharaja by "careful management of the finances for many years." This "careful management," however, consisted in budgeting for large surpluses, even after meeting heavy expenses on capital works of a productive nature out of current finances. Thus, in 1937-38 the surplus was Rs. 26 lakhs or 10 per cent. of the total revenue, and this surplus materialised after excluding the amounts realised out of the outstanding arrears of land revenue suspended in previous years, which was about Rs. 32 lakhs! In the year 1936-37 land revenue receipts were less by Rs. 43 lakhs, and yet the surplus during the year was Rs. 6 lakhs. In 1935-36 the surplus was Rs. 63 lakhs. The previous year (1934-35) was again a year of short-fall in land revenue to the extent of Rs. 41 lakhs, and yet during the year Rs. 41 lakhs worth of securities were purchased. In 1933-34 the surplus amounted to Rs. 39 lakhs, though land revenue receipts fell in the year by Rs. 14 lakhs. The previous year saw a surplus of Rs. 66 lakhs, of which Rs. 26 lakhs were employed in railway and other capital works and the rest in purchasing securities or in making loans.

BARODA has thus a story of almost uninterrupted annual surpluses to tell, with the result that in ten years' time the State's investments have grown from Rs. 7.59 lakhs to over Rs. 12.50 lakhs. Of these about Rs. 4 lakhs are in securities which constitute a reserve for emergencies like famines, draughts and floods and for providing a portion of the capital needed for capital works like irrigation projects. It is obvious that the late Maharaja administered the finances of the State as a prudent householder does, putting by as much as he could against unforeseen difficulties. His solicitude for the welfare of his subjects was clearly evidenced by this, but he took no account of the fact that public finance is managed on different principles. No ruler has a right to take more out of the pockets of his subjects than is clearly proveable to be required either for current or prospective needs, and that productive works are best undertaken out of loans. Not only are the subjects of Baroda State taxed more heavily than can be justified, but the distribution of the tax burden too is not fair. Thus only Rs. 6½ lakhs are realised out of income-tax, which is levied at a flat rate of 1½ per cent. on all incomes.

ONE satisfactory thing about Baroda State is that the total expenditure on nation-building services does not fall very much below the corresponding expenditure in British India. The percentage of this expenditure to total expenditure in Baroda State is 25.15, while in Bombay Province it is 25.65. In some departments the expenditure is even greater. On education Baroda spends 17 per cent. of its revenue, while Bombay spends 15.5 per cent.; and on agriculture Baroda percentage is 3, while Bombay's is 1. Notwithstanding this, Baroda State's finances must be remodelled in order that they might conform to sound principles.

Articles.

DISCIPLINE vs. FREEDOM

THE Working Committee of the Indian National Congress which met last week in Wardha regretfully took disciplinary action against Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, ex-President of the Congress and President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. Mr. Bose was disqualified from holding any elective office in the Congress for three years. The conflict between the Committee and Mr. Bose is the eternal one between discipline and freedom. The Working Committee moved two resolutions at the last meeting of the A. I. C. C. They were opposed by Mr. Bose among others, but they were passed by overwhelming majorities. Mr. Bose organised public and country-wide protests against the resolutions in spite of the explicit orders of the Congress President to the contrary. The Working Committee took the view that it was not open to an executive officer of the Congress to organise public protests against the resolutions of the A. I. C. C. or to disobey the orders of the Congress President, whatever be the merits of the resolutions and the wisdom of the orders. Mr. Bose, on the other hand, contended that he was merely exercising the right of the individual Congressman to differ from the views of the Congress majority and to convert his minority into a majority, and that, even if there were a technical breach of discipline, the gravity of the issues involved justified it.

Ordinarily speaking, it is not permissible for an officer of an organization to disobey its lawfully-promulgated orders. Otherwise, the organization will fall to pieces. If an office-bearer is unable to give loyal obedience and co-operation, the only course open to him is to resign his office and then organise his opposition if he is so minded. When Mr. Bose found himself in opposition to certain resolutions of the A. I. C. C., he should have resigned all his executive offices in the Congress and then organised the opposition in order to convert his party into a majority. But, for reasons best known to himself, Mr. Bose did not adopt this most obvious and straightforward course. He insisted on retaining office and, far from loyally carrying out the resolutions of the A. I. C. C., openly organised protests against them and even defied the explicit orders of the Congress President. His complaint that he was being prevented from expressing his opinions and propagating them is wholly unjustified; he was free to express, and did express, his views in the A. I. C. C., which was open to the public. Others besides Mr. Bose have opposed the particular resolutions both within and without the A. I. C. C., but no disciplinary action has been proposed against such dissenters. If Mr. Bose had

resigned his office, and then carried on his propaganda, there would not have been the slightest objection. When dissenters like Mr. M. N. Roy, who holds no executive office, felt that dissent did not demand defiance of the Congress President's orders, Mr. Bose, who held an important executive office, took a contrary view. It is impossible to justify the conduct of Mr. Bose.

At the same time, canons of official discipline are difficult to apply to the Congress, constituted as it is. When the Congress itself is not in session the A. I. C. C. is a legislative rather than an executive body. Mr. Bose is both a civil servant and a member of Parliament of the Congress, as it were. If Mr. Bose is an office-bearer who is bound by the decisions of the A. I. C. C., was he free to oppose them publicly in the A. I. C. C.? If so, was he not free to continue his opposition even outside the A. I. C. C. meetings, with a view to converting his party into a majority? Is it not too much to expect that a person, who bitterly opposed a resolution in the A. I. C. C., will immediately it is passed accept and defend it cheerfully and execute it loyally? Mr. Bose has made it clear, and the Working Committee has not challenged it, that he did *not disobey* the resolutions of the A. I. C. C. They are binding on him as an executive of the Congress, but he agitated for their modification, which he was free to do as a member of the A. I. C. C. and the Congress. The tragedy of the matter is that Mr. Bose had shouldered two responsibilities, the executive and the legislative, when they conflicted.

There is a further complication in that Mr. Bose, as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, was elected by and responsible to that body and not to the Congress President or A. I. C. C. When the policies of the B. P. C. C. conflict with those of the A. I. C. C. Mr. Bose's position becomes very awkward, as is happening now. He cannot be loyal to both and must choose between the two.

The point to be considered here is that the present constitution of the Congress permits such conflicts of loyalty and duty, and Mr. Bose is a victim thereof.

In view of the fact that the Congress constitution itself permits of such conflicts, and the fact that differences between the majority and the minority in the A. I. C. C. are far more fundamental than the obligations of discipline and as Mr. Bose did not, in his executive capacity, actually disobey the mandate of the A. I. C. C. but advocated, in his legislative capacity, a change in the mandate, the Working Committee might have taken a less severe view of Mr. Bose's indiscipline. The severe action taken against Mr. Bose, while it displayed that the Working Committee was not lacking in strength to discipline even a person of his status, is bound to be exploited as his martyrdom and to win for him greater sympathy, and perhaps support, than he would otherwise have received.

Mr. Bose justified his protest on the ground that the resolutions of the A. I. C. C. were such that they jeopardised the future of the Congress inasmuch as they made for constitutionalism and reformism as against revolution. The Working Committee did not discuss the merits of the resolutions as, in the first instance, it was not competent to question the decisions of a superior

authority, and, secondly, perhaps because it wholly agreed with them. But in so far as Mr. Bose's charge is true, all those, who these many years advocated constitutional action and discountenanced direct action, will view with satisfaction the drift, as Mr. Bose calls it, of the Congress towards constitutionalism and reformism.

THE AMENDED AGRICULTURAL DEBTORS RELIEF BILL

FUTURE CREDIT MACHINERY

WE have repeatedly pointed out an important difference between the Debt Settlement Acts of other provinces and the Bombay debt adjustment legislation. It is that, while the framers of the other Acts were anxious to disturb as little as possible the existing machinery of rural credit, the Bombay Bill gives no importance to this consideration. The sponsors of this legislation were evidently prepared to supplant entirely the present moneylender and provide a complete alternative; and they were evidently prepared to do this within a year or two. The Bill in its original draft had made it compulsory on all debtors whose debts had been adjusted to become members of a resource society. The Government thereby accepted the responsibility of starting enough societies and providing these societies with enough resources to finance all debtor-agriculturists. We did not share these optimistic estimates and, therefore, viewed and still view the future with considerable misgivings.

In order to place the problem in its proper perspective, it is necessary, in the first instance, to gain a clear idea as to the amounts involved. This is all the more necessary as we have heard responsible persons putting forward absurdly low estimates. Unfortunately, no enquiry into agricultural debt has been conducted recently in this Province. For authoritative estimates we have to go as far back as the report of the Bombay Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee. This Committee estimated the total agricultural debt of this Province at well over Rs. 60 crores. This figure, however, is not particularly significant for our calculations. It has been pointed out that there has been a continuous process of the accumulation of old debts, and that a considerable proportion of outstanding debt is made up of debt contracted for unproductive and unnecessary purposes. The process of debt adjustment and a careful and strict regulation of the economy of the cultivator may make it possible to eliminate to a considerable extent these two elements from our credit structure. For the estimation of future requirements we have, therefore, to resort to another calculation made by the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee. This is an estimate prepared by the Committee for the finance required for current agricultural

needs. The Committee have made a careful calculation strictly of the cash requirements of the cultivator for agricultural purposes and, after allowing duly for persons who may not require such finance, arrived at a total figure, of Rs. 23.78 crores. It should be remembered that this amount provides only for current agricultural needs. It does not take account of any finance required, for example, for marketing, for land purchase or improvement, for domestic requirements, for ceremonials or for litigation. It may be possible with concentrated effort and under specially favourable circumstances almost to do away with debts for litigation and to reduce greatly debts for ceremonials. As long, however, as the earning capacity of the agriculturist remains low and his income uncertain, accruing to him in large uneven instalments, current finance for domestic requirements cannot be dispensed with. Further, the demands of improvement and of marketing finance should increase and not lessen in the future. The Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee prepared no estimates for these items of financial needs similar to their estimate for current agricultural finance. It is not possible, therefore, to arrive at any estimate of the total financial needs of the agriculturist even for the period for which the calculations of the Committee were made.

In attempting to use the estimate of the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee for our purpose, we shall have to allow for the fall in the general level of prices during the last decade. It is reasonable to suppose that the fall in the prices of the requirements of the agriculturist and the wages of agricultural labour will lower, in a roughly proportionate manner, the needs for current finance. If this fall is calculated at a third of the level for the years 1927-29, we may reduce the estimate (in round numbers) of Rs. 24 crores of the Banking Enquiry Committee to about Rs. 16 crores. To this figure must be added an amount for finance for the other important purposes that we have enumerated above. The latter amount we are not in a position even to guess with any approach to accuracy. We, however, hazard the opinion that to put the needs, even under a carefully regulated economy, of future finance of the agriculturists of this Province at Rs. 25 crores would be no over-estimate.

It may be as well to draw attention to the available recent statistics. The only comprehensive statistical data relating to agricultural finance that exist are those contained in the annual reports on the working of the co-operative societies. According to the report in 1936-37, the percentage of the number of societies to villages was 22.8. Agricultural societies thus existed in just over a fifth of the total number of villages. In the villages in which societies exist their membership does not embrace the entire body of cultivators; neither do the societies meet all the financial needs of their members. Co-operative finance thus forms a small proportion of total agricultural finance. The total dues outstanding of the agricultural co-operative societies were Rs. 248 lakhs in 1936-37, and in the same year fresh finance was afforded by the societies to their members to the extent of Rs. 78 lakhs. The latter figure needs to be interpreted with caution. It is well-known that enormous overdues have accumulated over the period of the depression and that consequently societies and central finance agencies are extremely cautious in advancing sums to the agriculturist. What is called fresh finance in the co-operative movement to-day really waits on the progress of recoveries and is correlated to it. It, therefore, bears no definite relation to the current financial needs of the members of the co-operative societies. If all the factors that severely limit to-day the part played by the co-operative agencies in current finance of the agriculturist are taken into account, it will be realised that the amounts revealed in the reports of the co-operative department do not militate against the rough guess put down above by us. It may be urged that all agriculturists do not fall within the scope of the Agricultural Debtors' Relief Bill. But the number of those excluded may be safely neglected, especially since the Select Committee has done away with the exclusion of tenants and has provided for Government extending the maximum limit of debt, in particular areas, to Rs. 25,000.

We do not know what arrangements are contemplated by Government for shouldering this enormous responsibility and what are the sources from which they expect to obtain the necessary funds. The Select Committee has no doubt made some changes in the Bill which make the problem perhaps a little less pressing than before; but these changes in no wise modify its fundamental character. The Select Committee has introduced the Land Mortgage Banks into the picture. But this will have little effect on the extent of the unfulfilled demands for future finance. The provision made by the Select Committee will enable the Land Mortgage Banks to finance, for the purpose of liquidating existing debts, some of the better-off among the debtor class. We do not expect the number of such cases to be large; for the Land Mortgage Banks will necessarily continue to work, broadly, along the same

comparatively conservative lines along which they operate to-day. The intervention of the Land Mortgage Banks will result only in the present creditors getting back their money promptly. So far as the debtor is concerned, the only difference made is that he will now pay the instalment—which may, however, be somewhat smaller—to the Land Mortgage Bank instead of to his old creditors. The Land Mortgage Banks could not obviously help in future current finance. For purposes of this finance Government seem mainly to rely on the co-operative credit movement. The present resources of this movement are, however, totally inadequate, both in men and money, to meet the demands of the future. We have already indicated the very small part that it plays to-day in financing the agriculturist. It has been argued that a much greater proportion of the resources of the movement could be employed in financing the agriculturist than is the case to-day. The experience of the last decade should provide a salutary check on any extravagant hopes in this direction. The depression rendered very weak the position of just those Central Financing Agencies, a large proportion of whose funds was lent to the agriculturists. And though the new dispensation may perhaps make recoveries more prompt, it cannot eliminate the fundamental risks involved in the business of agriculture. In the ultimate analysis, if co-operative finance is to cover the whole field within a short time, Government must provide the necessary funds. The extent to which fresh deposits may be attracted depends on a number of uncertain factors. The two main sets of considerations seem to be the state of the general money market and public belief in the stability and solvency of the movement. It should be further noted that because of the national desire to still further lower the cost of credit to the agriculturist the co-operative movement will not be able in the future to offer competitively attractive rates for deposits as it has sometimes done in the past. It would, therefore, be hazardous to depend on largely increased deposits from the public, at least in the near future. We thus emphasize the direct responsibility of Government in this matter because of the failure of Government, so far, to enlighten the public as to its efforts and intentions. It will be cruel to cut off the agriculturist by legislation from his present sources and then not be prepared to meet his legitimate and pressing current needs. A detailed statement by Government of its programme of ways and means for this purpose is, therefore, highly desired.

Attention may be drawn in passing to the necessarily changed character of the co-operative movement of the future. A large number of societies will have to be hurriedly "opened" and their operations should in future resemble much more those of official land banks than of co-operative societies. It is also to be considered whether the unlimited liability principle will not

be affected by the passing of this legislation. As a consequence of the process of adjustment, the entire property of a large proportion of debtors will remain charged for a considerable length of time. Unlimited liability will have little meaning under these circumstances, except perhaps an ominous one for the small class of debt-free members.

We have not commented so far on the recommendation of the Select Committee that it should not be obligatory on a person whose debt has been adjusted to be a member of a resource society. In one way this is a fundamental change. For, in so far as Government does not compel the debtor to become a member of a resource society, Government may not accept the responsibility for providing finance to all debtors. It is our opinion, however, that the situation is not truly altered. The structure of the legislation and the nature of the process of debt adjustment are such that they make the continuance of the present machinery extremely difficult. Government which thus upsets existing arrangements is morally responsible for providing an alternative. And though it may not compel all to be members of resource societies, it must make reasonable arrangements for financing all those who voluntarily demand such finance. In this connection it is necessary to realise how little inducement there will be for anybody to finance a debtor-agriculturist in the future. The debt adjustment award made in the case of each debtor will include a list of all the moveable and immoveable properties of the debtor, and a debtor who is a party to such an award cannot alienate "any property included in such award." As the Board has been directed to include all the property of a debtor in the award, a debtor under an award cannot in the future alienate, or consequently create a charge on, any of his property. It is obvious that no private creditor would think of lending money to a debtor so circumstanced. We fail to see why the charge should be on the entire property of all debtors. There is at least a strong case for limiting the charge only to the immoveable property of the debtor. Now that the Select Committee has defined paying capacity in terms of the value of immoveable property only, alienation of moveable property may be freely allowed. This will leave at least some means to the creditor for raising small temporary loans. If this is not done, the resource society will have to come to his help for the pottiest sum needed. As a member of a resource society, he will also not be free to alienate any part of his produce and may find it difficult, therefore, to find money even for his domestic purchases at the weekly market. In short, the Act binds the debtor hand and foot, renders him thoroughly helpless and hands him over to a resource society or an authorised individual or association.

We have no objection in principle to making the main body of agriculturists dependent almost

entirely on a resource society. Our apprehensions in this respect arise from a feeling that the resources of the Government and the co-operative movement fall far short of the extent of the responsibility undertaken and that the services rendered by the credit and marketing societies will neither be adequate nor efficient. We have, on the other hand, a fundamental objection to the idea of finance by an authorised individual or association. For, the authorised person will be far different from merely a licensed moneylender; he will be a monopolist creditor. It may be said that more than one person may be authorised in any region or locality. But whatever the number of persons authorised, any particular debtor can have resort to only one such person. The wording of section 75 makes this clear and it is only logical that this should be so. If the idea is to regulate severely the supply of credit to debtors, the power of granting credit to any debtor must be restricted to a single person. Even the Reserve Bank of India has sponsored the idea of a single monopolist creditor. Such a system, however, grants an enormous power over his debtor to the authorised creditor. The possibilities of an abuse of this position when the creditor is a resource society are extremely small as compared with the position when the creditor is a private individual or an association of such individuals. The authorised individuals will be in even a stronger position than in the days before the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act; and it is not impossible to contemplate under such a system conditions similar to those described in the report of the Deccan Riots Commission. The Bill no doubt provides for laying down conditions on which such authorisation will be granted. But he must be an incurable optimist who believes in the strict enforcement of such conditions in the wide-spread expanses of rural India—especially when the debtor is a perpetually needy poor man bound to a single source and the creditor a rich and authorised individual. It is surprising to note that even alienation of land which is charged under an award may be permissible in favour of an authorised individual. Thus while the Bill seeks to stop alienations in one direction it creates possibilities of transfers of land to moneylenders in others. These authorised individuals could become centres of enormous power and patronage, and the possibility of abuses radiating from them in a variety of directions is so enormous that we would desire the elimination of the entire idea.

The immediate prospect looks to us extremely disquieting. Already one hears complaints of lack of availability of the necessary credit to agriculturists. These complaints are bound to grow in volume and intensity. The public reports of the state of preparedness of Government and the co-operative agencies do not reveal adequacy of arrangements. A liberal resort to the provision of authorised individuals we would look upon as

a great evil. We do not, of course, believe that economic life will thus be brought to a stand-still. Credit transactions will no doubt continue, but under different guises and different conditions; and the party to suffer will be the needy debtor. It has been the universal experience, whether in this province under the D. A. R. Act or in other provinces or countries, that where the creditor has been forced by legislation into evasive or fraudulent practices he has recuperated himself by making the conditions harder for the debtor. Credit transactions will then continue, but the

net charge for the credit will be very much heavier than even to-day. One partial safeguard against such a contingency is a Moneylenders Act, property enforced. A reasonable, comprehensive Moneylenders Act may prevent the grosser abuses; but it will do so only if its working is supervised by an efficient inspectorate. May it not be reasonably said that prompt action in respect of the Moneylenders Bill is the least we now expect of Government?

D. R. GADGIL

THOSE XB ENGINES

IV

“ON the other hand, it is difficult to resist the conclusion... that the business of Standardisation was concentrated in the hands of too small a Committee which did not adequately represent mechanical engineering opinion (sic) on the Railways in India.” With these words ends the description of the unsuccessful struggle which the Pacific Locomotive Committee had in resisting the conclusion. We wonder whether the Committee's first impulse was not to say 'talent' for 'opinion' in the preceding quotation. In any case to blame the TWO-MEN Committee, as the Locomotive Standards Committee in fact was, would in our opinion be only a little less reasonable, on account of the human factor concerned, than blaming the clay in the hands of the potter. A crowd of three or four men of the kind would hardly have made any difference in the circumstances then existing and consequently in the results which followed.

In our article last week we indicated how the question of the apportionment or localisation of individual responsibility was shirked by the P. L. Committee on frivolous grounds, although the question was essentially one for real *technical* experts alone to tackle successfully. In the circumstances all we can do is to try and trace the role played by the different parties in the origin and development of the faulty design of the X class engines through its various stages, to its final form—which last eventuated in the disaster of July 17, 1937, to the Punjab Express with 450 passengers on board. A close study of the history of the design and construction of these engines leads to the suspicion that there is in the whole report more than what meets the eye.

There is in India a quasi-official body which deals with all railway matters of general applicability and forms the mouth-piece of the different Railway Administrations in their collective capacity *vis a vis* the Railway Board. This body is called the Indian Railway Conference Association. It has now been in existence for nearly 40 years

and consists of members representing each separate Railway Administration. Until about 1925-26 its primary function was to frame arrangements for the management of traffic interchanged between the different railways. It also considered and advised upon all other questions of railway management referred to it by its Member Railway Administrations or by the Government of India. Its functions were carried on by technical sub-Committees and the aim was to perfect the harmonious working of railways in India and improve efficiency in the service of the public. Eventually, about 1925, *at the instance of the Railway Board*, the I. R. C. A., in view of the new "configuration" (a phrase for the contextual loan of which we are indebted to the Railway Administration Report) resulting from the G. I. P. and E. I. Rys. being brought under State management, agreed to surrender into the hands of the Railway Board its functions and activities in respect of the standardisation of equipment, such as locomotives, rolling stock, track and bridges.

In 1912 the I. R. C. A. had adopted the following Resolution: "This Committee considers... that it is undesirable to standardise types of locomotives and minor details as it is liable to hamper progress in design." In 1921, the matter was again considered by the I. R. C. A. which reiterated their opinion of 1912. Only a little more than a year later, i. e., November 1922, however, the Railway Board expressed their disappointment to the I. R. C. A. and circulated a note pointing out that the resolution of 1912 was "*inapplicable to present, or at any rate to prospective, conditions*;" also that, with regard to "*standardised types of locomotives*," India had not, up to that time, adopted either the Pacific or the 2-8-2 types which the B. B. & C. I. Ry. were then proposing, "*an obvious and necessary development to enable us to extend the use of low grade fuels without detriment to train loads. It is fairly certain that other Railways will follow suit.*"

A further extract from the note referred to above emphasised that: "*There is nothing whatever in the principle of Standardisation to prevent the adop-*

tion of heavier engines if the traffic needs them." This reference was backed up by unseen, but none the less real and strong, psychological pressure. The commotion caused by the disclosures of accumulated shortcomings of the administration of Indian railways led, among other things, to the appointment of a Chief Commissioner *solely* responsible under the Government of India for arriving at decisions on *technical* matters. He was not subject to be outvoted and overruled by other members of the Railway Board. The other members were to be his colleagues *de jure*, subordinates *de facto*. Thus the term Railway Board employed in communications serves the purpose of a mere façade or camouflage to hide the tyrannies or foolishnesses of a single individual placed in a position of absolute autocracy. It would have been more honest if the doings of the officially recognised autocrat were to be known in his own name or under his own designation just as are the actions of the Governor general as distinct from those of the Governor-General-in-Council. In short this constitutional change placed the holder of the office of Chief Commissioner in the position of a dictator without being publicly called so. The first Chief Commissioner was appointed on November 1, 1922. The appointment was a secret and hasty creation on exorbitant terms. It was made behind the back of the Legislative Assembly in direct breach of a promise repeated only two weeks earlier. The first Chief Commissioner, therefore, came riding on the crest of a mighty wave of full Government backing pledged beforehand. As a result there came over the public mind high expectations of the sight of a new earth and a new heaven, on the one hand; on the other hand, so far as the Railway Administrations were concerned, they were overwhelmed with nervous uncertainty as to the future. (A concrete example of this will be found later.) These effects were still further heightened when, in an address delivered before the I. R. C. A., the Chief Commissioner was gubernatorially likened, in right military phraseology, to the Chief of the General Staff. It was under these psychological reactions to new conditions that the reference of 1922 to the I. R. C. A. was made. This reference, it must be remembered, was made within only a few weeks of the first Chief Commissioner assuming office. Like the third degree methods, this had the desired effect and in September 1923 the I. R. C. A. went clean back on their repeated opposition and supported a recommendation of the Locomotive and Carriage Superintendents' Committee as follows: *That standardisation of locomotives, coupled with the periodical revision of standards, is essential in the interests of economy and efficiency, and that additional types be introduced suitable for burning low grades of fuel.*" Agreeably, the Committee also recommended the formation of a permanent Standing Technical Committee to deal with "*progress in, and variations from, standards of locomotives,*

coaching stock and wagons." The Railway Board therefore duly decided, in consultation with the Agents in October, 1923, that a Committee should be constituted to implement the above recommendation of the I. R. C. A.

A Committee, called the Locomotive Standards Committee, was accordingly formally constituted in February 1924 consisting of two members and a technical Secretary picked out by the Railway Board as the best men available in India. It just missed being a one-man show by one, a foolish convention having decreed that, to be called a Committee, the number must not be any of the innumerable numbers which precede the number TWO, that the Committee need not have a Chairman, but that it must have a Secretary. This TWO-MEN Committee was informally christened as the Locomotive Standards Committee during its ante-natal period (compare paragraphs 25 and 27 of the P. L. Committee's Report) and sent out on an all-India tour from November 1923 to February 1924 "*to visit the headquarters of the different Administrations and to obtain from the technical officers all necessary information regarding practical difficulties which have been experienced and the steps taken to surmount them.*" The object was with this information "*to standardise the several modifications introduced into B. E. S. A. types of locomotives, and to prepare diagrams and general specifications for new types required on Broad and Metre Gauge systems.*" The results of the tour were incorporated in a report and sent to the Railway Board in May 1924. No notes of the discussions with the Railways on which the report was based have been preserved, thus making it impossible to ascertain how far, *if at all*, it reflected the combined opinion of the Chief Mechanical Engineers of the various Railway Administrations! The original intention right down to as recent a date as February 1924 was that the six *experimental* Pacific locomotives, sanctioned for the B. B. & C. I., the E. I. and the M. & S. M. Rys., should be thoroughly tried in running for at least a year in order that any defective details which show in operation or manufacture could be rectified *before* bulk orders for new types were placed. Yet, curiously enough, the Committee was in a mighty hurry to send and the Railway Board to receive the First Report of the TWO-MEN Committee without waiting to avail themselves of the experience which was to be gained from the operation of the *experimental* Pacific engines sanctioned specially for the purpose between 1921 and 1923. The experimental engines arrived and were put into service only a four-month after the submission of the FIRST Report. In preparation for the Railway Board's meeting of October 1923 with the Agents of Railway Administrations referred to above, the Board had circulated a Memorandum in which they had definitely stated that the proposals formulated by the Locomotive Standards Committee would be sent to the Loco-

motive Carriage and Wagon Superintendents' Committee. The P. L. Committee blandly say : " We were informed, that, after full discussion, the views of the Board, which were thus expressed, were accepted as the policy to be aimed at in future, and the Memorandum generally expresses the policy of the Board to-day." Yet something appears to have happened between the acceptance of the policy in October 1923 and "to-day" which led to the proposals formulated by the TWO-MEN Committee not being referred for consideration by the Locomotive Carriage and Wagon Superintendents' Committee. On the contrary, although in August 1924 the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the B. B. & C. I. Ry. in his masterly Memorandum criticising the whole policy of the Railway Board in connection with the chimera of standardisation, drew their attention to the omission of and urgent necessity for referring the TWO-MEN Committee's report for discussion by the Locomotive Carriage and Wagon Superintendents' Committee, no action of any kind whatever was taken by the Railway Board, but the Memorandum was apparently simply buried and ignored. This Memorandum from the B. B. & C. I. Ry. was, perhaps unavoidably, exhumed during the course of the P. L. Committee's enquiry and held up to posthumous praise by the Railway Board 'as being the only reasoned and recorded objections to their policy of Standardisation.' The Memorandum is now placed in the museum of the Appendices to the P. L. Committee's report as being of sufficient general interest to be so honoured. Instead of sending the First Report of the TWO-MEN Committee for focussing the informed criticism of the Locomotive Carriage and Wagon Superintendents' Committee, it was circulated to all Railway Administrations individually and their remarks were invited, presumably seriously. Yet, no notes of the discussions with the Railways are available and the P. L. Committee found it difficult (sic) to say to what extent the diagrams and specifications in the Report represented the combined opinion of the various Chief Mechanical Engineers. Somewhere between May 1924 and November 1924, the specifications and diagrams drawn up by the TWO-MEN Committee for new types of standard engines together with the report were forwarded to Messrs. Rendel, Palmer and Tritton, Consulting Engineers to the India Office. The Consulting Engineers were asked to prepare, in consultation with the British Engineering Standards Associations and with Manufacturers, the necessary drawings and specifications in compliance with the requirements in the Report of the TWO-MEN Committee. They also discussed the suggestions with technical authorities and manufacturers of locomotives in the United Kingdom. But the Consulting Engineers considered that the recommended Standardisation was of such ' importance ' (a courteous term which may cover many very uncomplimentary features) that they

sent Sir Seymour Tritton, one of their partners, all the way to India on a special visit lasting from November 1924 to February 1925, to discuss it with the TWO-MEN Committee, the various Railway Administrations concerned and the Railway Board. Many alterations in the original specifications resulted from these discussions and were included in a Second Report by the TWO-MEN Committee in March 1925. This Report contained at least two remarks having a material bearing on the *vehicular* aspect of the engines.

The Railway Board decided *for themselves* the outlines and preliminary specifications for the new types of locomotive, and the matter was then referred to the Consulting Engineers. The Railways were not given an opportunity to comment on the final proposals put forward in the Second Report; but, "in fairness to the Board," say the P. L. Committee, "it must be repeated that the design of the engines as *vehicles* was hardly mentioned in that Report." We admire the P. L. Committee's simplicity in the *free* but irrelevant bestowal of compliments scattered throughout their report. The argument to our mind behind this empty compliment is that this *vehicular* aspect escaped the notice (i) of Sir S. Tritton, (ii) of the Consulting Engineers who had been regularly dealing with previous locomotive design work for the Indian Government Railways, (iii) of the expert TWO-MEN Committee, and (iv) of the authoritative experts called the Railway Board. The logic, of course, is that it was not even possible for the mere mortals of Locomotive Superintendents in the plains here to have noticed the many imperfections of this *vehicular* aspect. This is a preposterous argument. The first three parties were apparently all a crowd whose personal experience of practical working under local conditions of locomotives on Indian Railways had long evaporated, leaving only a useless sediment of antiquated theories at the bottom. It is extremely uncharitable—we shall not say conceited—to suppose that the tragic omissions would have necessarily eluded the vigilant eyes of Locomotive Superintendents in India who had close and daily contact with the running of locomotives and whose experience was always a fresh and live one. It is another matter whether the undignified treatment meted out to them would have encouraged self-respecting Locomotive Superintendents to express their views boldly or unreservedly. We have said 'boldly' advisedly. The demoralising influence of the new regime to which we referred earlier is exemplified by the fact that, so far at any rate as we can see from published papers, of all the Locomotive Superintendents throughout India it was the Locomotive Superintendent of the B. B. & C. I. Railway alone who manfully dared to question and attack the standardisation chimera

of the Railway Board and thus bearded the lion in his own den. Perhaps he was thus disloyal to enthroned autocracy, but what is immensely more moral and nobler is that he was loyal to his profession. Yet the P. L. Committee in paragraph 222 has the effrontery to remark: "We have given considerable thought to the impressions which we gained in India from the various Administrations that their officers felt that much of the responsibility for the type of engine, and for the details of design in connection with it, had been taken from their hands, as the result of the Board's Standardisation policy and the method of dealing with that policy. ... At the present time, however, there appears, on the part of Administrations, to be a lack of interest in the scope of the work undertaken by the Central Standards Office. This is no doubt largely psychological, as the officers of the Administrations take only a small part in this technical development." What is the insinuation? Pique?

To resume our narrative, the Railway Board decided for themselves the outlines and preliminary specifications and referred them straight to the Consulting Engineers. It was important that the working drawings prepared in England should be scrutinised by the TWO-MEN Committee, prior to trial engines being built. But the wretched air mail had not yet come into being, while the time to reach the British manufacturer and the British unemployed with actual work was flying faster than ever. The submission of the working drawings to India and their return back to England meant delay which could not be brooked. It was therefore arranged that a Locomotive Officer who was luckily one of the original members of the TWO-MEN Committee possessing the double advantage of intimate knowledge of Indian requirements and of the views of the original TWO-MEN Committee should collaborate in London with the Consulting Engineers. During the manufacture of the locomotives the Consulting Engineers were to supervise the preparation of accurate standard drawings of all details assisted by this Locomotive Officer from India. By this means, unprecedented but 'appropriate' (as later certified by the P. L. Committee), the drawings were prepared in England and examined and approved by this Locomotive Officer on behalf of the Railway Board. The P. L. Committee also certify that "the procedure adopted was in our opinion a business-like arrangement. ... Shortcomings in the X class Pacific Engines as delivered to India were shortcomings of design only." Does this remind the reader of the curate's egg?

This completes the description of the procedural aspect of the design of the first batch of XB engines which were despatched in October 1927 and were placed in service in January 1928. Meanwhile between the short space of May 1926 and August 1927, with loyalty to their

profession rendered all the more commendable by contrast, the Consulting Engineers had protested on no less than three occasions against ordering "more engines of these new types till the first have been made and tried out." This had no influence on the Railway Board who persisted in placing more bulk orders, viz., for 48 X class engines in October 1927 before ever any of those originally authorized had even arrived in the country; for 27 more in August 1928; for 71 more in October 1928; for 29 more in November 1929 and for 37 more in June 1930.

The conclusion is that although rush orders for locomotives in quick succession may be attributable to the anxiety to feed the British manufacturers and the British unemployed, the faulty design arose out of conditions for which the TWO-MEN Committee were not responsible. We have not yet been able to discover the names of the members of that Committee or their history, but presumably they were men already in the service and they were there not of their own choice. We therefore think that the members of the TWO-MEN Committee are innocent of all blame, even as they were perhaps innocent of the specialised technical knowledge which is demanded of locomotive designers. The blame clearly lies at the door of the Authority which selected the wrong men and persisted in ignoring the Locomotive Carriage and Wagon Superintendent's Committee representing the Locomotive Superintendents of Railway Administrations. Even when the imperfections in the design were so glaring as to attract the notice of a body even so distant both in space and in knowledge of experience of local working conditions as the Consulting Engineers and to compel them in the interest of their own reputation to send out one of their Partners, the Locomotive Superintendents on the spot nearer home were simply ignored in later developments, although they were vitally interested in the design of engines which were to be inflicted upon them and for the actual working of which they would be responsible from the point of view of safety and efficiency. This is power taken away with vengeance from the hands of those in whom ultimate responsibility was to reside; or power was divorced from responsibility when for efficiency both must go hand in hand. The Railway Board made the X class Pacific engines in their own image a high-power machine without being fit to run as a safe vehicle!

Reviews

THE LATE SIR N. G. CHANDAVARKAR

NARAYAN GANESH CHANDAVARKAR. (IN MARATHI). By DWARKANATH GOVIND VAIDYA. (Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay.) 1937. 22cm. 567p. Rs. 3.

MR. D. G. VAIDYA'S Life of the late Sir Narayan G. Chandavarkar may be said to mark one stage in the growing excellence of Marathi biographical

literature. For a biography to be authoritative, the biographer must either be intimately associated with his hero for a number of years or, next to that, must be in close touch with those who have lived and worked with the hero of the biography. He must have free access not only to all relevant printed literature but also to diaries, letters, notes and other unprinted and perishable literature without which no biography worth the name can be written. Mr. Vaidya had the advantage of the close co-operation of friends and family members of the late Sir Narayan. Sir Narayan kept a diary and was a prolific letter-writer. All this material was placed at the disposal of Mr. Vaidya. Naturally, therefore, the author of this book writes with a full mind. He has given a true and faithful picture of the personality of Sir Narayan. While it is natural for Mr. Vaidya to idealize his hero, he is said to his credit, that he has tried to be uniformly fair and just to his opponents. This is particularly the case when he traces Sir Narayan's connection with the famous Tai Maharaj case. So far as we are aware, the points he has advanced have not been satisfactorily replied to by Mr. Tilak's biographers and friends. We wish Mr. Vaidya had traced Sir Narayan's relations with Mr. Tilak from the very beginning of their careers. Another important point Mr. Vaidya has left over: he has not adequately told us why Sir Narayan, who in the earlier part of his career devoted as much time to politics as to social reform, later on left politics altogether in favour of social reform. One of the most interesting chapters in the book is the one dealing with Sir Narayan's Prime Ministership of Indore State. Mr. Vaidya has given us full details of the circumstances under which Sir Narayan had to sever his connection with the state. These details deepen our respect for him. Mr. Vaidya has given us an interesting account of Sir Narayan's early days. The chapters dealing with Sir Narayan's spiritual life also afford interesting reading. The numerous anecdotes of Sir Narayan with which Mr. Vaidya has embellished his work add to its value and enable the reader of today to understand and appreciate the reformatory zeal, the intellectual versatility, and the catholic outlook of one of the most engaging personalities of modern Maharashtra. Mr. Vaidya's style and his general handling of the theme is more journalistic than literary, but the accuracy and the evident restraint, moderation and sincerity with which he writes are not qualities which can be easily met with in the journalistic world. The politics of Sir Narayan may be forgotten. In this godless age we do not know how much his religious bent of mind would impress the people. But friend and foe alike will have to concede Sir Narayan's claim to be regarded as one of the greatest social reformers Western India has produced during the last seventy years. In his long and useful career, Sir Narayan has been an editor, a politician, an orator, a pleader, High Court Judge, President of the National Congress, and President of the Bombay Assembly. Whatever work he undertook he brought to it untiring industry, brilliant intellect and a conscientious heart. And this book is a valuable record of the work accomplished and services rendered for two generations by one whose name will long be cherished in Western India as one of the makers of Modern Maharashtra.

A

TAMBARAM

THE WORD MISSION OF THE CHURCH: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL, TAMBARAM, MADRAS, DEC. 12-29, 1938.
(International Missionary Council, 2 Easton Gate, London,) 1939. 23 cm. 208 p. 1/6.

It is true, that one of the gospels ends with an exhortation to the disciples to preach the gospel to every creature. It is equally true, but much less often observed, that the emphasis in the last chapter of another gospel is on quite another aspect of the church. It contains the famous exhortation to the chief of the apostles to: 'Feed my sheep'. In the report of such a Conference as was held at Tambaram we naturally expect emphasis on the first of these two aspects, the evangelistic; but it is one of the most encouraging signs of progress towards a proper perspective that allowance is made, to a greater extent than formerly, for the pastoral aspect, the idea of the duty of the Church of building up the spiritual life of its members.

The Conference was divided up into several sections to deal with the several subjects which came before it. The first reports contain little that is new. The Christian Faith and Function of the Church do not change. They can only be restated. When we come to the practical side of the Christian life, and the relation to those amongst whom the Christian lives we may hope for fresh guidance. We see with satisfaction, the stress laid on the need for courtesy towards those of other faiths, which is to show itself in a resolute attempt at understanding and appreciation. With equal satisfaction we see the advice to co-operate with others in social reformation. We are glad to find that in the reports on Christian Education and Medical Service the principle is acknowledged that they are of value for their own sake, as expressing the love of God in service to men's minds and bodies. We would wish to see this principle more widely accepted, since the suspicion that such labours are simply baits for new converts vitiates much of the good that can be done by them.

The general impression given by the Report as a whole is that Christians of the various countries are more ready than ever to manage their own affairs, and desirous that the Church to which they belong shall become a natural and accepted part of their national culture and life. On certain sides help is still required from lands, where the faith has been established for many centuries, by those whose members have embraced it comparatively recently, but in most matters the time has come for each race to discover and make its peculiar contribution to the world-wide life of the Church as a whole. To aid in this, stress is laid on the necessity of union among Christians, now divided into denominations. The need for this is the greater because ideologies have appeared in recent decades which challenge not only the Christian view of life, but the very conception of man as primarily a spiritual being, which is fundamental to all religions.

W. Q. LASH