

Servant of India

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

A Fine Prospect ! A *Times Special* cable of the 25th inst. announced to those who cared to read the inconspicuously printed information:— that while the British Government no longer insists on a pre-determined date for the evacuation of Cologne, it remains firm that the evacuation must be separated from French security and depends solely upon Germany's execution of the military clauses of the Treaty.

From this it is clear that Mr. Chamberlain at one time—very properly—had insisted that evacuation of the Cologne sector should take place on the covenanted date (Jan. 10th last) or such later date as might be mutually agreed upon by Germany, France and England: German consent being obtained by a corresponding French curtailment of their Ruhr occupation. Yet this—the only right—attitude Britain has now, we are told, abandoned. A further piece of news imbedded in the cable makes it clear that this abandonment was caused by French pressure for "Security", a pressure which England apparently is still to some extent, though feebly, resisting. France clearly has now quite given up all pretence that evacuation on January 10th was made impossible through German failure to comply entirely with all its disarmament obligations: M. Herriot, as is quite clear from the British reservation above quoted, now makes use of technical breaches of the disarmament clauses, just as M. Poincaré had made use of technical breaches of the reparation clauses, in order to retain by

hook or by crook the Rhine as the Eastern frontier of France, as demanded again and again these last six years by Field Marshal Foch—in the sacred name of "Security." The mail papers to hand give a full account of an amazing speech made by M. Herriot on January 28—a speech which was greeted by the frenetic applause of all the Nationalists of France and which resembled one of Mr. Poincaré's as one pea resembles another. The complete change in French policy towards Germany indicated by this speech in one who for nearly a year has persistently brought that policy back from Poincaresque war-hysteria to commonsense business is inexplicable except on the one supposition that it is a threat—a threat for France to play again the bull in a china shop, unless England gives her "security." Had the Geneva Protocol of Herriot—MacDonald been ratified, M. Herriot no doubt would have only too gladly continued to play the good European; but since Mr. Chamberlain prefers to be a good Imperialist rather than a good European, he will have to pay France the price she demands: which is nothing less than a reversion to the old type "Alliance", which breeds wars as surely as fleas do plague.

* * *

SIX years ago last month for the first time in history a President of the German Republic was elected: and only those who have lived at any time in the former Germany of the Hohenzollerns can realize what mental revolution that fact represents. Friedrich Ebert, the successor of August Bebel, for six long years the undisputed head of the *Reich*! The new elections for President were in any case to have taken place in May next: in fact Ebert's own term of office had already been prolonged twice, both because of his unqualified success in office and in order to save Germany the convulsion of an election. With France back at Poincaréism, the Nationalists and Reactionaries in Germany are sure to make the next Presidential election an occasion for putting forward a Ludendorff or Tirpitz as their candidate. But even if successful at the poll, we for one are convinced that the Republic henceforth is safe in Germany. The six years' office of Friedrich Ebert as head of the *Reich* has set up a record of republican simplicity, honesty and common sense, which have killed the possibility of a Monarchist revival more effectively than anything else could have done. And what finer epitaph could he, could the world for him, desire?

* * *

Railway Board and
the Assembly.

THE discussion on Pandit Motilal Nehru's motion for the total rejection of the budget demand for the maintenance of the Railway Board, was rendered unnecessarily heated by Sir Charles Innes asking the Swarajist leader to retire to Allahabad, collect his forces and fight a battle with the Commander-in-Chief. This loss of temper is unworthy of a member of the Assembly and much more so of a Member of Government. However unreasonable or ill advised the obstructive tactics of Swarajists may be, surely Sir Charles is not so ignorant of constitutional matters as to confuse a deadlock with a rebellion. His remark was properly resented by several members, and we wish he had expressed adequate regret for it. Similarly unnecessary warmth was imported into the latter part of the debate by the chagrin of the Swarajists at the Independents not supporting this motion—the leader of the Independents admitting in his speech that they made a mistake last year in joining the Swarajists for throwing out the budget. The Independents' refusal to be tied to the chariot-wheels of the Swarajists is no doubt inconvenient for the latter, but it does not lie in their mouths to charge the former with inconsistency after having so sweetly coquetted with Government when it suited their purpose. So when Pandit Motilal talked of a conscience Mr. Bepin Chendra Pal could easily crush him. While the House rightly rejected this motion, it accepted a well considered proposal of Mr. Patel for a substantial cut, and, what is more important, passed two nominal reductions which were made as votes of censure. One of them was made because the Government had not appointed an Indian member to the Railway Board in spite of previous promises. The Commerce Member explained that for the technical appointments no qualified Indian of sufficient standing was available, while Sir Basil Blackett said that when the present Financial Commissioner's term would be over, an Indian successor would be thought of: neither of which pleased the House. The other vote of censure, moved by Mr. Joshi, registered the dissatisfaction of the House at the grievances of third class passengers being still largely unredressed and the third class fares not being reduced. This was passed by a narrow majority and the moral effect on Government was not great, as the Commerce Member promised to have the whole matter of third class fares re-examined in autumn next. There was some useful discussion on branch lines and freight on coal, after which the reduced grant was passed.

Minority Commu-
nities and All-India
Services.

THE Home Member made an important announcement in the Council of State regarding the policy of Government in recruiting members of minority communities to the All-India services. He said that one third of the vacancies would be reserved for so being filled as to redress communal inequalities, provided there was adequate qualification. He explained further: "We shall as we did in the past normally appoint officers by observing the results of the competitive examina-

tions. If the results are satisfactory we shall be in no difficulty. If they are unsatisfactory we shall resort to a process of nomination. We shall nominate as far as possible to these vacancies which we hold in reserve by selection from among the candidates who sat for the competitive examination and attained the adequate standard. If there are no such candidates we may have to adopt other means of obtaining them."

We approve of this policy so far as recruitment will depend on the results of competitive examinations. When, however, a sufficient number of candidates from minority communities do not reach the adequate standard in the competitive examinations, the Home Member said other means of recruitment may have to be adopted. This is a bad provision leading to favouritism and we should like to see it withdrawn. The Muhammadans and Sikhs are the two most important minorities who are not sufficiently well represented in the higher services. But in each community a large number of graduates are turned out every year, from among whom the few of adequate standard needed for the services should be easily forthcoming. If, however, other methods are promised recourse to, the tendency will be not to seek the door of competition. It is in the interests of the minorities themselves that all recruitment is made to depend on the results of competitive examinations.

* * *

IN the course of his interesting speech at the Jubilee dinner of the Bombay Millowners' Association A Technological Institution H. E. Sir Leslie Wilson said that in his visit to Manchester before leaving for India, he saw there 'no disposition whatever to claim to dictate the fiscal policy of India.' Not very long ago this was not the attitude of Manchester, but we welcome the change, which is better than never. His Excellency also spoke of the urgent need for a great Technological Institute for Bombay. He observed rightly:

"But when we come to training for what our American cousins allude to as 'big business,' India lags far behind any other civilized country—and we in Bombay will continue to lag behind until an up-to-date technological institute is established here to enable the commercial and industrial genius of the Presidency to play the part it can and I know will, in the economic development of this great country."

His Excellency modestly hoped that before his term of office expired the foundation stone of the institute would be laid. Much more progress than that is certainly possible, and we are sure that co-operation from every section of the Indian public will be readily forthcoming. An institute of the kind and other steps for spreading technical education among the people were recommended by Sir M. Visvesvaraya and the Indian members of his committee which reported on the subject a few years ago, but the work of that committee was rendered futile by the Indian and European members taking respectively opposite views, and financial stringency making matters worse.

* * *

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

THE net military expenditure for 1923-24 has been finally fixed at 59.25 crores. For 1924-25 although an expenditure of 60.25 crores was budgeted, the actual is likely to be in the vicinity of 57.43 crores. For 1925-26 a net military expenditure of 56.95 crores, the exact figure of the year before the last, is budgeted for. Thus though there has been a progressive reduction it is still far from reaching the standard fixed by the Inchcape Committee. Although we ought to be grateful for what has been achieved we must not rest content till the military expenditure has been reduced at least to a third of the total revenue figure. We cannot say that the reduction has been substantial except by comparing, as Sir Basil Blackett does, the last three years with 1920-21, when the expenditure was 87.38 crores; but as he himself explains, that year was an exceptional one on account of the special operations in Waziristan and the Frontier. The Inchcape retrenchments should not be regarded as sacrosanct but as models of the pruning process. A further important reduction is promised for the next year and we hope that active military operations, "the night-mare of every Finance Member," will not cloud the bright prospects in the near future.

We are thoroughly at one with the suggestion of the Accounts Committee that expenditure in all departments should be shown net in the Budget estimates as this gives a truer picture of the financial position. The Committee also has done good service in pointing out the harm done to the credit of the budget by over-budgeting and has devised checks against wrong estimates of expenditure.

The increase of customs revenue due to revival of trade is a gratifying feature of the closing year and along with increased net receipts from Railways has been responsible for a substantial surplus. For 1925-26 customs duties and salt duty are expected to yield less. The expected surplus is correspondingly reduced to 3.24 crores.

The debt position appears to be serious as the total debt in 1925 is 1013 crores. In the United Kingdom, where the income per head is nearly fifteen times that in India, the total public debt in 1914 the pre-war year was 10,605 crores. India, having practically nothing to do with the great war, has a public debt which is $\frac{1}{17}$ th of that figure. It is high time therefore to reduce our indebtedness and we think that 4.78 crores a year is not a bit too much for achieving this end. At the same time we should like to emphasize what we said in our comments on the last year's Budget that the first reduction should be that of the sterling debt. The establishment of the Provincial Loans Fund and the systematization of the arrangements by which advances are made to provincial governments is a happy innovation. At present the Government of India is the sole banker and the sole borrower whereas this scheme would separate provincial debts from Imperial debts.

The Finance Member has apparently such a real antipathy to Sir Purshotamdas' bills to stabi-

lize exchange that he devotes a large space to the discussion of exchange. His theme of course is the advisability of fixing the exchange at 1s. 4d. We thoroughly agree with Sir Basil Blackett that the high exchange of last year has prevented prices in India from dancing in tune with the prices in Europe and also in other countries. This has been a clear gain. We are also willing to believe that the Government of India have no interest in forcing up exchange and it is perfectly true that at times they have taken steps to prevent exchange from going very high. But when he goes further to confute the general proposition that high exchange is unfavourable to producers he is over-shooting the mark. The instances he gives of the higher sterling prices are instances of a remarkably inelastic demand, when after the war Europe could not put off the purchase of some commodities. But normally when demand itself depends on price a high exchange is bound to slacken demand. Of course there is a gain to the consumers on the imports, with a high exchange; but then which interest is predominant, that of the producer or the consumer? The fact is that a high exchange and a low exchange can both be supported on different grounds, and we can never get out of the tangle by such arguments as those urged in the Budget statement. With all this, we agree with the general conclusion that it is best to leave exchange alone for the present especially as prices are likely to be forced up by bringing exchange down to 1s. 4d. and cause embarrassment by increasing expenditure in all departments. We however trust that the question of exchange will soon be decided on its merits by the Currency Committee shortly to be appointed. The more the matter is delayed, the greater will be the misunderstanding. For the present, however, we are glad that the Finance Member has made a frank statement of his position, and those who are in favour of a 1s. 4d. ratio should marshal their arguments in order to place them before the Currency Committee.

The Ways and Means position for 1925-26 is quite satisfactory. The Railway capital outlay is the same as in the Revised estimate for the closing year, viz. 23 crores. The Rupee loan is at a modest figure of 12 crores—as contrasted with 23 crores for 1924-25. There is no sterling loan and the saving bank deposits are 5.1 crores. The purchase of the G. I. P. Railway's debentures will operate to substitute an Indian liability for an external liability.

The disposal of the surplus has taken the form of remission of the Bengal provincial contribution and the reduction of the contribution of four provinces. The remission of the Bengal contribution is most invidious and is a premium upon financial ineptitude. It is besides a violation of the terms of the Meston award. We hope the Bengal Government will avoid the acrimony of the discussion on the Resolution to be brought in the Assembly shortly, by voluntarily consenting to pay their own contribution.

The Budget statement proffers no explanation of the inequitable character of the remissions by

singling out Bombay amongst the major provinces for bearing a large burden of taxation without the possibility of a relief from provincial contribution. It is no wonder that the Bombay Council has given expression to the opinion that this is a price Bombay has to pay for putting its house in order. If there are any technical difficulties in the way it behoves the Finance Member to lay them before the Assembly when the Resolution on provincial contributions is moved.

After the deficit budgets of three years, when phenomenal increases in taxation had caused deep discontent and heavy expenditure was making the position of Government unenviable, we are glad to find that at long last we have turned the corner and are in the sight of the goal. Much of the credit belongs to the Retrenchment Committee and Sir Basil Blackett gives it willingly. Had it not been for the Committee we would still be going on in our headlong career of extravagance. We hope the lesson of the last three deficit years will not be lost on administrators who ought to be ceaselessly vigilant about needless expenditure.

THE BOMBAY BUDGET.

WITH regard to the general financial position the principal grievance of the Finance Member is that the most important heads of revenue have ceased to expand. Land revenue has ceased to expand owing to the postponement of revision settlements, excise on account of the policy of prohibition, stamps on account of the Legislature having refused to sanction enhanced rates. Since expenditure has been cut down to the lowest possible limit, fresh expenditure on the nation-building heads cannot be undertaken without recourse to fresh taxation. The budget as it is cannot balance the two ends and there is a deficit of 41 lacs. "The house is confronted with a very urgent issue." As the issue is so urgent we are compelled to examine the several heads of revenue as well as expenditure in order to arrive at a decision whether fresh taxation is inevitable.

If we are serious at all about prohibition of drink, we must acquiesce in the reduction of excise revenue and ultimately its extinction. We cannot have it both ways. But in regard to land revenue an all-round increase of 25 p. c. would give us 110 lacs ultimately, although this would not solve the problems of the current deficit. Till such time as the land revenue reaches such a maximum we have to put up with enhanced stamp duties. This, however, raises the question of the incidence of stamp duties. The Finance Member assumes that these will be paid by money-lenders and merchants who otherwise escape taxation. But although the merchants will bear the taxes in the first instance they will ultimately recover the major part from the debtors. The tax therefore will be falling heavily on the poorer portion among debtors including the poor peasants.

In spite of this higher stamp duties should have been sanctioned by the legislature till they are in a position to suggest alternatives.

Now as to expenditure. Compared with the last year, expenditure on the following heads has increased. Land revenue by 5 lacs; excise by 10 lacs; general administration by 3 lacs; education by 18 lacs; public health by 5 lacs; civil works by 1½ lacs. The excise increase is due to the whole cost of the Commissioner and his establishment falling on excise on account of the separation of customs from excise. The other increases, being on 'nation-building' items, are beneficial and need not be objected to. Where then to apply the scissors? We can only suggest lump retrenchments in the absence of the knowledge of detailed items. We think that the general administration figure ought to be carried back to the point of 1920-21 and thus a cut of 22 lacs effected. The interest item of 48 lacs for Development is too much for a total budget of 15 crores and all further capital expenditure should be severely scrutinized. A small cut in civil works which during the current year will cost 121 lacs ought to be effected.

Apropos of this question the much-maligned Meston Settlement comes for consideration. It is quite natural that Bombay should feel the total loss of the income tax revenue. But when provincial autonomy is secured, heads of revenue cannot be mixed up, and we think the Meston Committee were perfectly logical in the separation of imperial and provincial heads. The proper thing would be to revise the Settlement in such a way as to make income tax a provincial head altogether. If provincial contributions are abolished, then the Imperial Budget would devise new taxes to make up for the loss and these taxes would impinge upon the people of this presidency in just the same way as local taxation would. We think that needless dust is raised about the Meston Settlement which we think is essentially just.

With regard to the contention of the Finance Member that the expenditure on the essential necessities of administration has increased by 28 p. c. and the expenditure on the beneficial activities has increased by 179 p. c., we are satisfied with the correctness of the figures, but the general impression conveyed by the presentation is misleading. Amongst the beneficial activities are included roads and buildings, forests and famine relief. But what is the solace from good roads and fine structures, if the people are ill-educated and wanting in stamina? The representatives of the people want more to be spent on education, medicine, public health and agriculture, and the expenditure on these has increased only by 48 p. c. Of course the phrase 'nation-building', like many other catch-phrases, becomes divested of any connotation by careless use. But what is at the back of the minds of critics is that the pace of supplying the paraphernalia of a civilized government ought to adjust itself to the civilization of the inhabitants.

It is clear from the budget that if retrenchment has really reached the limit which cannot be crossed without loss of efficiency, fresh taxation is inevitable if we are to build up the nation. The question tha

is raised in this connection is that of ascertaining the total wealth of the province and how much of it is easily available for further taxation. This question needs to be separately examined by competent authorities. Some economists have estimated the per capita annual income for the whole of India at Rs. 75, and if the figure for Bombay were not higher than that for the whole of India, the percentage of the provincial taxation to the provincial income would be 10.6. But we know for a fact that the income of Bombay is higher than for the rest of India and the incidence of provincial taxation therefore requires to be separately worked out.

In general it may be said that this is neither a prosperity budget nor a deficit budget; the small deficit may be made up, partly by retrenchment and partly by additional taxation. As for the retrenchment already effected we have to thank the Inohcape Committee and we hope that economy will in future be the watchword in all departments.

V. N. GODBOLE.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON THE JHARIA COALFIELD—II.

IT may be asked how we are to meet those objections against taking the women out of the mines and to get the great mass of inertia on this subject on the move. We suggest two lines.

(1) By advocating that women should be taken out of the mines on general principles. It is one of the best known of the King George's sayings that "the happiness of a nation has its foundation in the homes of the people." Anything that strengthens the home, strengthens the nation. No man can do his best work unless he has a good home at the back of him, and that is just as true of the Santal as of the European. The essential minimum for any home which is worthy of the name is a good house, good food, sufficient clothes and an adequate supply of fuel. It is a woman's full time job to make a home out of these. Given these she can do justice to herself, to her husband and to her children.

(2) Again, by keeping women and children out of the mines, the way will be prepared for the creation of a strong hereditary class of miner. At present one of the greatest difficulties of the labour is that it is so casual. Labourers are drawn now from many parts of India, though still mostly locally. If the mines were sufficiently attractive, the miner would be induced to make his home permanently in the coalfield, and to a much greater extent than at present men would become professional miners like their fathers before them. By taking the mothers and children out of the mines the children would have a better chance on the top of developing strong, healthy bodies, and there is no reason why a strong, healthy, hereditary class of miner should not become a feature of the coalfield, just as in England. We have to acknowledge gratefully that in a few cases the women are sent home for a month prior to childbirth and allowed to stay there for a month afterwards, while pay is drawn for the whole period at a fair rate.

It is important in this connection to draw attention to legislation which will have a great effect in improving conditions in the collieries and which is bound to make the elimination of the women from the mines only a matter of time. We refer to the new

Indian Mines Act which came into force on July 1st 1924. There are three main provisions that directly concern our present subject.

(i) Under Section 26 of this Act, children are not to be allowed to go either *in* the mine or *in or about* the mine. A mother may still take her children into quarries or on the surface of the mine, but not underground. If the child can't go down, then neither can the mother in many cases, and so a little step forward is being made in taking the women also out altogether.

(ii) The age-limit of a child is now 13. Formerly a child was defined as anyone below 12. This also makes a small but definite advance. (Section 3 c.)

(iii) Under Section 23 of the Act a definite limitation of working hours is provided for. The law enjoins that no person shall be employed in a mine on more than six days in any one week. Further no person shall be allowed to work more than 54 hours below ground and 60 hours above ground in any one week. Thus the way is paved for the introduction of regular day and night shifts, a very desirable next step.

In view of these considerations we think it would be a reasonable proposition for Government to fix a period of, say, five years from now, at the end of which time all women should be taken out of the mines. Where there's a will there's a way, and five years seems to us a reasonable time within which the management of the mines can make the necessary readjustments so that there may be a minimum of dislocation in the transition period.

(iii) *Prohibition.* The third item in the whole scheme of suggested reform is that of prohibition. A man and his wife after a long spell in the mine only too readily go to the grog shop when they come up, where their good wages are swallowed up in a night. Drinking and gambling form the natural reaction under the present conditions. A tired woman is not in a mood to prepare food for her husband. A bout of drinking only too often leads to a bout of quarrelling. With little or no money left to procure good food and clothing, they have to go back to the mine to make more money. That may seem a good thing in the eyes of some, as it keeps the miner at his work, but on a long view it is suicidal. A miner working under these conditions will not last long, he can have no happiness in his work, and he is in the long run an economic loss to the industry. Were this temptation removed from him, and were his wife always in his home on the top, the wages which he at present gets would be sufficient to procure him good food and good clothing, with the prospect of being a capable workman for many years, and contented at his work. Grog shops that were originally opened to give the workers some relaxation are fast becoming a first class nuisance. The Santal knows his own weakness, and the present system of grog shops helps to turn casual drinkers into confirmed drunkards. The Santal also knows what is good for him, and, were this great temptation removed from his path, we do not think that he would raise any outcry. One thing that we consider quite indefensible is the provision of country spirit under Government auspices. Country spirit is not the Santal's natural drink, it not only makes him drunk, but makes him madly so, and worst of all, stimulates the craving for drink. Government, unfortunately, makes a huge revenue out of this traffic for which there does not seem to be an atom of justification. Last year, in Bihar and Orissa, the revenue from excise amounted to 1 crore and 90 lakhs. Miners have sometimes admitted to us that they are not any better off in the long run than they are in the villages, because so much of their money so quickly disappears through drink. Even with their bigger pay in

the mines they are often much deeper in the debt of the money-lender there, than they were in their own villages. An all round scheme of prohibition would do much to raise the tone, the comfort and the intelligence of the workers in the mines.

(IV) *Compulsory Primary Education.* The fourth item in the general scheme of improvement suggested is, compulsory primary education. Children running about wild on the top will quickly fall into mischief unless some means is provided to meet the new conditions caused by the new Act. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." The natural line of progress is to equip the miners' children with the elements of education. The amount of litigation, trickery and sorrow in India through inability to read the simplest documents is appalling. The right to be made familiar with the three "R's" is the birthright of every child. A great many of India's troubles will disappear on the day that every man and woman is able to read a receipt, write a simple letter and calculate accurately in rupees, annas and pies. There are at present a number of schools in the coalfield, but they are chiefly attended by the children of babus, sirdars, shopkeepers and money-lenders. The last named know only too well the value of education in their nefarious trade and are able to raise and support schools without any outside aid. The education which they acquire is just sufficient to keep the illiterate miner permanently in their grip. We do not believe there is much in the saying that if you educate the miner he will want to handle a pen and not a pick. That is not true in the west, where the miners as a class are amongst the most intelligent of citizens. What we are advocating here is *primary* education, that is the education, to which every child that is born has a right to, an education that will enable him to protect himself and to hold his own in the sphere of labour to which he happens to belong. The money-lender, for example, simply battens on the miner because he knows that the miner does *not* know. This year the President of the Association of Colliery Managers in India gave it as his opinion that education of the labour was desirable because of the accidents that took place, and the harm done to expensive machinery through ignorance of the labour in handling it. What he advocates on behalf of the more skilled workman we advocate on behalf of the humblest miner. There is a great deal of economic waste in India through the fact that the simplest orders have to be explained and re-explained from the manager down through the different grades of intelligence, and endless trouble is caused in financial matters, too, because money is passed down and down till it reaches in the end the unskilled and illiterate worker, who sees it getting less and less on its way down. An elementary education in "Reading", "Writing", "Arithmetic", would enable the miner to understand simple instructions, read danger signals in the mines, barter on better terms with the shopkeeper, and above all, help him to read receipts for rent or loans.

This fourfold scheme we consider to be practicable in the near future. Each of the four items is good in itself, but will not be of nearly so much value unless carried out in conjunction with the others. Each paves the way for the accomplishment of the others, and cumulatively, we believe that they will have an immediate effect in raising the social and economic status of the mining industry in India.

WILLIAM HAMILTON.

THE INDIAN TRADE UNIONS BILL.—I.

TRADE unions, like the whole of the labour movement, are an outcome of modern industrial condi-

tions and to the extent to which these have replaced the old state of things in India, it is inevitable that they should arise. The emergence of the trade union movement thus forms a natural consequence of modern industrialism, but it need not on that account develop on exactly the same times as in other countries. Like all other movements it is materially influenced by the social, political and economic conditions of the people among whom it develops. For this, if for no other reason, an attempt to introduce *in toto* the English or any other model in this country is to be deprecated. But there is a stronger argument against the attitude of those who pin their faith upon a particular piece of legislation in a foreign country and suggest its adoption here as the only reasonable way of meeting the requirements of Indian labour problems. In every country where the so-called leaders and guides are themselves not led by extraneous monitors, an attempt is continuously going on to adjust the law to the needs of society, to add provisions that would make for better social justice and to amend such as have proved fruitful of more social injury than justice. This continuous change in the public estimation of the merits of an existing law proceeds very slowly, and political and economical courses further delay the crystallisation of a change in public opinion into a change in the provision of the law. The attempt of an aspiring leader of Indian labour to adopt a particular law in England for the purposes of his countrymen is on a par with the ardour of an Indian society woman to copy a Parisian dress model, which, when worn by her, has already become out of date in the land of its origin. This is not, however, to suggest that the experience gained in other countries has to be ignored or that a good law should not be introduced because it is a foreign import. But the peculiar social, economic and political circumstances of India must be given due consideration and the developments in foreign countries must also be closely studied.

In this way three circumstances seem specially to indicate that the treatment of trade unions in this country ought to proceed on a line slightly different from that followed in the West. In the first place, Indian labour, with its ignorance, its inefficiency and its unsteadiness, has very little in common with its Western brother to recommend with safety such concessions for itself as have been abused even in the West. There is no inviolable charm about these legal privileges of the working classes. They have been granted after striking a balance between economic and legal inequality, between the danger that would result from continuing a privileged economic position for the employers and from investing the working classes with special privileges under the civil and criminal law of the land. This balance, which at different times and in different countries was represented by their respective trade union legislation, there is reason to believe, would not be the same in India as elsewhere. The social danger involved in granting indiscriminate civil and criminal protection to trade unions is only one point to be taken into account. The employers in this country have themselves learnt a good lesson from the excesses of the economic conflict in the West, and their treatment of their employees, as also their general attitude towards the welfare of their workers, has reduced to an extent the keenness of the economic injustice which alone necessitates legal discrimination. The Indian capitalists, it must, however, be admitted, are after all human, endowed with all the weaknesses of human nature. And if by an injustice to the workers an appreciable immediate gain is to be secured for themselves a majority of employers would very like-

ly succumb to the temptation. Hence arises the need for state legislation for the purpose of supplementing and regularising private action. Not only is an attempt thus made to secure full economic justice for the worker, but to meet a case where economic injustice has led to a trade dispute, machinery for conciliation and arbitration is also contemplated. Though these methods also have their limitations, their existence ought to be recognised in recommending legal exemptions for trade unions in this country. An essential condition for the effective working of arbitration in trade disputes, and of the grant of such protection and privileges to trade unions as are found necessary, is that they should be registered and their *bona fides* ascertained. Though it is thus necessary to secure the healthy progress of the trade union movement in this country by registering them, either compulsorily or by effective inducements, and though all legal privileges that are necessary for their economic protection, and can be safely given to them, should be so conferred, the need for caution is very great when attempts are being made, on the one hand, to claim all the sympathetic treatment from the employers and all the protective legislation of the state, and on the other, to confer special legal privileges upon trade unions, whose members have shown little promise of being able to use them well.

The frequency of strikes in the chief industrial towns in India, an apprehension that the chronic features of the labour unrest in the West might be repeated in this country, and the wave of legislative enthusiasm that followed the draft Convention of the Washington Labour Conference, led to the introduction of Mr. Joshi's resolution for registration and protection of trade unions, in the Legislative Assembly, on March 1, 1921. The resolution as it originally stood was: "This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should take steps to introduce at an early date in the Indian Legislature such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade unions and for the protection of trade unionists and trade union officials from civil and criminal liability for *bona fide* trade union activities." As will be readily observed, the wording of the resolution was as indefinite as its effects were expected to be comprehensive. In the discussion that followed upon the introduction of the resolution, there seemed to be an almost unanimous opinion that trade unions were inevitable in India and that some measures for the regulation of their activities was necessary. But the sting of the resolution that lay in the tail was smartly resented by a number of members not excluding Sir Thomas Holland, the then Member for Commerce and Industries. The resolution was ultimately passed in the following form: "This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should take steps to introduce *as soon as practicable*, in the Indian Legislature, such legislation as may be necessary for the registration of trade unions." (Vide Legislative Assembly Debates, p. 506.) The resolution was then circulated among the Local Government, and on the basis of their recommendations a draft Bill was prepared. This draft Bill was again sent round to the Local Governments and to other bodies in the country interested in the matter. After considering the criticisms received on that Bill, the Government of India saw no ground for modifying the general principles underlying the Bill, and, except for minor alterations, the present Bill is a reproduction of the Bill previously published.

The Bill now before the Assembly has been avowedly based upon the British Trade Unions Act of 1811 and the Trade Disputes Act of 1906. Alike in their analogy to and their difference from these

enactments the provisions of the proposed Bill are very remarkable, and while it is condemned on the one hand as not being a faithful copy of the British model, it is denounced on the other, as too great an advance in that direction. It is needless to suggest that both these attitudes are not justified by the merits of the Bill or by the requirements in India, and that though the framers of the Bill have undoubtedly been justified in using caution in adopting the provisions of the British Acts, at the same time, they have left out a number of essential features, which are necessary if the Act now contemplated is to serve its double purpose of the registration and protection of trade unions.

At the very outset it is important to notice that the Bill proposes a voluntary, and not a compulsory, registration of trade unions. The majority of employers in this country and those who hope to introduce an effective scheme of conciliation and arbitration in trade disputes would have liked the adoption of the principle of compulsion, as it leads to a definite organization of labour with whom the employers and the state might easily deal. But experience in other countries and solicitude for the freedom of the individual worker have rightly weighed with the Government of India in refusing to accept compulsion as an integral part of their Bill. It was suggested, however, by Mr. N. M. Joshi, when the present Bill was proposed for reference to a select committee on the 14th Feb. 1925, in the Legislative Assembly, that the Government have not nominally accepted the proposals of the employers, but they have so framed the Bill that registration will become compulsory to trade unions. He further added: "You place difficulties in the way of trade unions getting themselves registered and then give immunity only to members of the registered trade unions. Sir, it is not a fair way of dealing with the working classes of this country." Presumably the difficulties referred to by Mr. Joshi are three: (1) that a registered trade union will spend its funds on the benefit of its own members and not others; (2) that it will not be able to spend on municipal or legislative elections; (3) that an unregistered trade union is not to get the trade immunity from the law of conspiracy. When the respective provisions to which these alleged difficulties refer come up for notice during the course of this article, an attempt will be made to show that these difficulties are partly illusory and partly surmountable. But while considering at this stage the question of voluntary versus compulsory registration, it is necessary to object to the implication that by conferring special privileges upon the registered trade unions some existing privileges of the unregistered unions have been taken away. In fact this is not so. The position of all unregistered societies remains what it was, and though they are not specially recognised by law, they are in no sense illegal bodies and enjoy all the protection from the courts granted under the law of equity. Any special concession is granted under economic compulsion and extreme care is required to see that only *bona fide* trade unions enjoy such privileges. For this purpose it is necessary that if trade unions are not to be compulsorily registered, at least all the special concessions should be granted only to such among them as will undertake to maintain their *bona fide* character in fact by observing the simple provisions of the registration law.

Most of the definitions set out in the preliminary chapter of the Bill are based on the corresponding clauses in the British Trade Union laws. The definition of a trade union is specially to be noted as being comprehensive enough to refer to "any combinations, whether temporary or permanent, formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations

between workmen and employers or between workmen and workmen, or between employers and employers, and any federation of two or more trade unions." It will be noticed that certain combinations of employers, no less than those of workmen, are brought within the scope of the Act and that federations of trade unions are not excluded. The fact that benefit purposes are not expressly included in the definition of a trade union is likely to give rise to a fear that these are not sanctioned by law. The frequent allusions to various kinds of benefit and insurance in the subsequent provisions of the Act make such apprehensions unfounded.

The second chapter of the Bill is also of a technical character and deals with the requirements of the process of registration. A reference is, however, necessary to two of its clauses. Section 6 lays down that before a union is entitled for registration the rules thereof must provide, *inter alia*, for 'the manner in which the members of the executive and the other officers of the trade unions shall be appointed and removed.....' No specific reference is made to the appointment of a treasurer or a trustee. It is necessary, however, that a separate post of a treasurer should be made obligatory by statute and it be declared that the treasurer need not necessarily be a member of the trade union. Section 13 lays down that, "Every registered trade union shall be a body corporate by the name under which it is registered, and shall have a perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to acquire and hold both moveable and immovable property and to contract, and shall by the said name sue and be sued." The words 'a body corporate' and 'power to contract' are likely to prove misleading. A trade union is not a corporation in the sense that all the obligations, undertaken by its constituents according to the byelaws of its procedure, are enforceable by a court of law. This has been made clear in section 18 in Chapter III; but in the interest of definiteness and simplicity it would be better if the wording of section 13 is slightly amended. It should also be noted that no restriction is placed upon the acquisition of immovable property by a trade union as is the case in the British law.

D. G. KARVE.

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS.

RACE FEELING IN U. S. A.

DARKER PHASES OF THE SOUTH. By FRANK TANNENBAUM. (G. Putnam's Sons, New York.) 1924. 7½ x 5. pp. 203.

THIS interesting book will come as a surprise to any who is accustomed to think of the United States as the scene of Humanity's most triumphant progress. For instance, we are introduced to a Prison System of appalling brutality, where women are compelled to bathe naked in front of young men; to chain gangs, bands of convicts always chained together, with no adequate provision against heat or cold, full of vermin, compelled to bathe two or three in the same water; and to Prison Guards drawn from the worst of the population. Economically, things are no better. The single crop, especially if it is cotton, reduces farming to the level of factory work. It is a money crop, and they have to borrow on it. Hence they become tenants, they cease to improve their land and become vagrants. They may migrate to the mills, in which case they are so well looked after that they are practically slaves or soldiers. They are given houses, but deprived of them if their

children do not work in the same mill as they do. The moral and intellectual slump that follows such a life is well depicted. Much of this social problem is caused by speculators from the North, so that the United States as a whole cannot escape blame.

It is a pity that a book containing such acute psychological analysis of "Race" problems should be influenced by current pseudo-scientific emotionalism. There is at present in America a small but noisy group of people who are exalting the Nordic Race as the natural guardians of morality and rulers of the world; needless to say, this Nordic Race is typified in themselves. This is reflected in the chapter heading "The South buries its Anglo-Saxons." It refers to the effect of the mills. It is unquestionably wrong to reduce any community to impotence and torpor, but it is no worse if they are Anglo-Saxons than if they are Red Indians or Negroes or Chamars or Bhils. This much for justice; and for utility, it is probable that the Negroes are on the whole more promising. If it is right to bury anyone, Anglo-Saxons have a good claim to such treatment. We have often wanted to bury some of our fellow Anglo-Saxons.

As regards the Race Problem, Mr. Tannenbaum warns us against idealistic solutions. There is a tendency, (this is sound psychology) to avoid giving a practical solution to a problem by enunciating an idealistic one, and thus saving trouble. At the same time, we think that the writer is pessimistic about the latter: there are also dangers in ignoring the "impossible." To remove the Negroes to Africa, or to give them a state, such suggestions are absurd: the idea, seriously propounded in America, that they should all be killed, needs no comment here: but surely it is impossible that "the South should forget its memories," memories of slavery and futile pride of birth. One thing only—let those who propound such theories proceed to live them. That is what some have done in India, and have done more than regiments of theorists, whether "practical" like Mr. Tannenbaum or "idealistic" like those he despises.

The best thing in the book is the analysis of the lyncher's mentality. Here are a group of people, desperately anxious to preserve a vanishing social relationship, and living very dull lives. Whenever man wants an excuse for being unfair to his fellow-men, he persuades himself that his women are in danger. In addition to this, the White is really afraid of being outnumbered in the South by the Negro. So an atmosphere of emotional distrust is built up, which actually does produce the "Rape Fiend" from the feeble-minded of the Negro community. Also it may have the effect on the over-sexed white girl, starved by a dull life, of making her imagine herself attacked when she is not: the situation, in fact, depicted by Mr. Forster in "A Passage to India." Then, boredom and fear and the feeling of lost superiority combine and produce a lynching; after which, the complex is quiet for a time. We may be very thankful that at least we have not such a state of things as that in India. But it is well to be warned of the possibilities of abnormal psychology that follow from adjusted social relationships.

WALTER O. FITCH.

STUDIES IN LABOUR CONDITIONS.

FACTORY LABOUR IN INDIA. pp. 216. Rs. 4.
FACTORY LEGISLATION IN INDIA. pp. 92. Rs. 3.
THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN INDIA. pp. 112
 Rs. 4. All the three by RAJANI KANTA DAS:
 M. A., M. Sc., Ph D. (Walter De Gruyter & Co.
 Berlin and Leipzig.) 1923. 8 x 5.

THESE three books by Dr. Rajani Kanta Das, late Lecturer in Economics, New York University and at one time Special Agent in the Department of Labour of the U. S. Government, form a valuable contribution to the literature on Industry and Labour in India. The first is a comprehensive work dealing with (1) The Rise of Factory Labour, (2) Factory Discipline, (3) Hours of Work, (4) Health and Safety, (5) Industrial Efficiency, (6) Remuneration, (7) Standard of Living, (8) Factory Legislation and (9) Labour Organisation. The last two chapters have been amplified into the last two books. On account of this and also owing to the fact that much of the factory legislation was due to the labour movement, the information common to all the three subjects has been repeated in each of these three books. This repetition could have been avoided by issuing one book containing information on all these three subjects together. The present arrangement was, however, inevitable as the idea of amplifying the last two chapters of the first book in two separate volumes occurred to the author after the first volume was issued. In spite of this repetition the books provide interesting reading in that the reader finds valuable information regarding factory and labour conditions in this country that cannot be found elsewhere in so few pages. The author has utilized all available sources of information and presented it in an agreeable form. The only book as useful as the three volumes under notice is that by Dr. Miss G. M. Broughton (now Lady Chatterjee) called "Labour in Indian Industries," which, though less comprehensive, contains more detailed information on certain points and also is more up-to-date in certain respects. Mr. Das was not able to use the Census Report of 1921 while writing his book on Factory Labour. Moreover, he had the disadvantage of writing from a distance, while Lady Chatterjee could make use of her first-hand knowledge of labour conditions both in England and India. In fact, Mr. Das' treatises and Lady Chatterjee's book are complementary to each other.

The documentary bibliography given at the end of "Factory Labour in India" is pretty exhaustive and the treatise bears testimony to the extensive use made of all those books. The author has laid under contribution all official publications bearing on the subject, but his treatment of the subject on that account is not dry-as-dust. The chapter on "Industrial Efficiency" affords striking proof of his independence. He has carefully analysed the factors of efficiency and the causes of inefficiency, and ably exposed the hollowness of the charge of inefficiency levelled in season and out of season at the Indian workmen. Rightly does Mr. Das lay stress on administrative efficiency and scientific management, which are so sadly lacking in this country and of which those who decried the poor workman take so little notice. The fact is the Indian workman is as efficient or as inefficient as his employer may be said to be in his administrative or business capacity; the former being, in addition, subject to the adverse influences of his economic condition and social surroundings. The author's views on labour turnover and absenteeism are on the whole sound and should prove helpful in dispelling wrong notions usually accepted without question even by those who are not interested in underestimating the qualities of Indian workers. The pages devoted to the Indian workman's standard of living, especially the quality and quantity of his food, provide interesting reading. The lack of first-hand knowledge on the part of the author is, however, a serious drawback in his otherwise most useful and authentic work. Some of his statements are not quite accurate. On page 21, for instance, he says: "... in the Bombay factories most of the weavers come from the Zola caste, the Ghatis supply workers for heavy lifting, while

in the mixing department are found the Konkani Maratha workers." The "Zolas" are really "Zulais" and although their number is large, they do not form a majority of the weavers in the Bombay factories. Nearly half the number of weavers in the Bombay cotton mills are Konkani Marathas, the remaining half being distributed among the Zulai Telugas, Ghati or Deshi Marathas and Karnatakis. On page 26 the author states that the universal requirements for admission into a trade are health and vigour, freedom from communicable disease, and training and experience. But as a matter of fact in most cases the admission is indiscriminate and the practice of paying tips or *dasturi* to the foreman is not as rare as Mr. Das supposes. Also, it is open to question whether the weavers and spinners are healthier than the dock-workers (page 78). The author seems to be under the impression that at present very few Europeans are employed as managers in the cotton mills of Bombay. But the fact is that not only many mills are still managed by Europeans, but even the heads of the spinning and weaving and other departments are Europeans, and they are given these posts not because they are more competent than Indians in their work, but chiefly because they are supposed to be able to exact better discipline from the workmen than equally or more highly qualified Indians. Even the head of the gate keepers of a group of mills under the agency of a well-known Indian firm is a European. It cannot be contended that such appointments are necessary for the prosperity of the industry, as almost all of the most successful mills are managed and officered by Indians.

Had Mr. Das been able to utilize the information that has been recently available on some important labour questions, his work would have been still more illuminating. Many startling facts regarding the condition of labour in this country have been brought to light during the last three or four years and a good deal of statistical data have been collected in the course of investigations carried on in connection with certain labour problems, and labour legislation also has taken important strides. The deficiency of up-to-dateness which the reader feels in "Factory Labour in India" is made up to a certain extent in "Factory Legislation in India." But as the latter has confined itself strictly to factories, the unfair legislation enacted in the interest of tea-planters and other capitalists is lost sight of.

"The Labour Movement in India" is thought-provoking in addition to being a useful handbook. The information regarding facts is as complete as possible under the circumstances. Mr. Das has divided the Indian labour movement into three periods, viz., the Regulation Period, 1875-91, the Abolition Period, 1891-1917, and the Organisation Period, 1918-22. The second period refers to the agitation for the abolition of the indenture system. After giving the history of these periods Mr. Das discusses wider problems in connection with the labour movement in general.

One, however, regrets to find that the author has allowed himself to be inconsistent in some of his statements and views. Although he approves all the legislative measures for the protection of labour individually, he somehow believes that labour legislation has retarded the industrial growth of the country. His side objections to restrictions on the work of women and children and long hours appear to be rather prompted by political bias and render him inconsistent in his advocacy of labour. As a matter of fact, factory legislation has in no way proved a hindrance to the development of the factory system. There are also some untenable statements such as that an increase in the standard of living may tend to lower the birth-rate and eventually

limit the supply of labour, and that the labour unions will gradually replace the old caste system. An improved standard of living lowers more the death-rate than the birth-rate and the caste system, having its roots in religion rather than in economic differences, is not likely to be replaced by trade unions, unless special efforts are made to cut down its very roots. Such lapses, however, do not detract much from the value and utility of these treatises.

P. G. KANEKAR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MORLEY ON MONTAGU REFORMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—I have read with interest Mr. Sastri's comment upon the impressions of Gen. Morgan and Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey, the Editor of the "Spectator." With the help of a friend, I have been able to trace back Lord Morley's views on the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme after Mr. Montagu had already returned to England. On the 25th July of that year, it will be remembered, as a token of gratitude to Lord Morley for his services to India during his five years of office as Secretary of State, a bust of him, executed by Mr. Bruce-Joy and subscribed for by Indian admirers, was unveiled at the National Liberal Club by Lady Baig. The Marquis of Lincolnshire presided, and among those present were Viscount Bryce, Mr. Montagu himself, Sir Herbert Samuel, Mr. Birrell, and Lord Sinha. The "Times" report of the proceedings contained the following passage which is very pertinent to this matter:—

"Referring to the general effect and tenor of the Reforms now proposed, he (Lord Morley) said that neither Lord Minto nor himself ever said that their reforms would put a stop to agitation or that they would satisfy the political hunger of India. Correspondents had asked him what he thought of the proposed reforms. He would be precipitate if he gave a bold "Aye" or "No" of praise or dispraise, though it would not matter if he did. He had given a careful study to the report, but he was not going to pronounce on the clauses, or what might happen on the Committee stage, and he felt that he could not be mistaken in tracing the lineaments of the physiognomy of 1918 in the progeny of 1908."

The "Morning Post" report, as follows, certainly does not give colour to the hostile criticism attributed to Lord Morley by Gen. Morgan or Mr. Strachey:—

"He had made himself acquainted with the general effect and tenour of the reforms submitted by Mr. Montagu, and when he was asked whether he would refuse to take part in reforms if he thought they would lead to the establishment of an Indian Parliament he would like to ask what was meant by 'a Parliament,' and he did not know whether what Mr. Montagu proposed would amount to a Parliament or what sort of Parliament it would be. But nobody could believe for a moment that with all these great convulsions throughout the whole world India could be passed over. Anything more irrational could not be imagined. (Hear, hear.) He had the highest admiration for the zealous counsels and active experience and influence which Mr. Montagu had brought to bear upon the problems of Indian government from the day that he had entered the India Office, and no doubt he had continually cast the lead and taken his soundings before making the recommendations. At this early stage of the discussion the truculent tone adopted by some organs of opinion who treated this serious and important movement in connection with India as if it were a mere passing difference in our own public and political life was to be greatly deprecated. (Hear, hear.) Was it surprising that India should show herself alive and awake to the events that were now passing in the world? While we rejoiced in the political progress that was taking place

in India, let us beware of political retrogression in our own country. Whatever form the proposals contained in the Montagu Report might ultimately take they could not be met by a dogmatic negative." (Hear, hear.)

It is significant that immediately afterwards Mr. Montagu, referring to what had fallen from Lord Morley, said that "from the moment when he became Under-Secretary for India in 1910, he tried to absorb and to learn how to apply the principles for which Lord Morley had laboured. It had now fallen to his lot, in colleagueship with Lord Chelmsford, to continue the great work which Lord Morley and Lord Minto began in 1909. He approached the task with full consciousness of its difficulty, and in all humility, but profiting from what he had learned from Lord Morley, and building on the indestructible foundations of the fabric which Lord Morley had erected, he was able to say, with great respect to his teacher and master, that the highest tribute to his work was that today something more was wanting and necessary."

It is noteworthy that Lord Morley made no adverse comment upon Mr. Montagu's deduction on this public occasion.—
Yours, &c.,

YOUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

MISCELLANEA.

Y. M. C. A. AND RURAL WORK.

The following address was delivered by Mr. M. S. Madhava Rao of the Servants of India Society, who is engaged in Malabar Reconstruction work, at the anniversary of the Madras Y. M. C. A., H. E. Lord Goschen presiding.

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I rise to say a few words of grateful commendation of the Rural Programme of work of the Y. M. C. A. in India. In a country like ours where more than 90 per cent of her people live in villages and where for many centuries the village has been the unit of all national life and welfare, the bedrock of our civilization, there is no need to emphasise that advance is possible only with the proper rehabilitation of the village life. It is a significant sign of the times that everywhere there is a recognition of this fact and also a desire and enthusiasm for this work. Poet and prophet, student and statesman, politicians both Tory and Swarajist, all proclaim with one voice that rural life in India should be reorganised. The Poet Rabindranath Tagore talks of "inducing that abundance of life which would drive the car of the village God and like spring itself awaken the inner soul of the whole country," and to realise this end he has given the subject a prominent place in his great *Viswa-Bharathi*. Mr. Gandhi exhorts the young men of India to devote themselves to the betterment of the village, to establish real Swaraj there first in all its aspects, so that Swaraj for the whole country may be built up through its very nerves and fibres. The students of the Grant Medical College of Bombay at a recent meeting of their Association seriously discussed the deplorable condition of the villages and decided that they should dedicate their knowledge to make them clean, healthy and happy. Every scheme for further political advance in the country, as prepared by her leaders, has laid down that India's right to self-government is to be exercised from the village upwards in each successive autonomous area of wider extent. Our popular Minister for Education misses no opportunity to tell the people, whether they be of the Reddi Maha Jana Sangam of Ganjam or the teacher pupils of Saidapet, that they should give more and more attention to the improvement of the conditions in village life. The great Swarajist leader, Mr. C. R. Das, and the Conservative Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead, seem to agree most wonderfully in at least one thing, namely, that the Indian village should be properly studied and reorganised. Mr. Das is appealing for vast funds and large bands of volunteers for this work, while Lord Birkenhead, we are told, seriously contemplates sending out a Royal Commission for the purpose which, I am sure, if it may not be welcomed heartily for other

reasons, will still be preferred to some other Royal Commissions that have come to this country.

Happily the idea once entertained of urbanising India has been definitely abandoned. A study in contrast between half a dozen modern city areas and the country-side in the most decayed state in which it is at present, has resulted in favour of the latter. The question is how to make the villages rich and prosperous, clean and healthy, and happy and contented, in fine, to introduce into them that "abundance of life" which would stop their people migrating to towns, and which would enable them to contribute their quota to the building up of the national structure. The Y. M. C. A. has very appropriately taken up all-sided work, economic, educational and general advancement, and what has been achieved by its secretaries in their various centres is very praiseworthy indeed, considering the material and environments they have had to deal with. In agriculture, remunerative crops and economical methods of production have to be introduced with, however, great care and patience. The conservatism of the villager is not entirely his fault. His age-long practical experience has, in many cases, outwitted the theoretical knowledge which the peripatetic agricultural demonstrators have scattered, and then complained as wasted, upon him. The workers of the Y. M. C. A. will testify by experience to the fact that once the villager is convinced by practical demonstration about the superior value of new crops and new methods he is most eager to adopt them. Only, alas, owing to poverty he is unable to do as much as he should or would. So also in the improvement of his livestock, as my friend Mr. Jayakaran has found in simple matter of poultry farming. Similarly in home crafts, as Mr. Jacobi has proved in Areacode. Agriculture by itself has never been the sole occupation of our villagers. Some craft or other has been practised as a supplementary industry and these crafts have now either declined to a precarious condition or have totally disappeared. Our efforts should, therefore, be directed to resuscitate such crafts and industries and also to start new ones, adopting all the recent labour-saving methods and principles of organisation, but preserving by all means the elements by which the Indian crafts and craftsmen have gained and retained their peculiar individuality different from the products of the men of a modern factory. The old guild spirit could easily be revived and worked on modern lines and for modern needs through the co-operative movement, the spread of which, we all know, is one of the important activities of the Y. M. C. A. In education it is doubtful how far the mere elementary education now available, alas! not in all places though, will suffice. The village school of ancient India was a unique institution, traces of which are still visible in some villages. Education was free and the school master derived his income either from the lands of the temple or from a fixed share in the harvest. Adult education and general culture were spread and preserved through bars and story-tellers and periodical jattras or religious dramas. These methods are still the best to convey knowledge to the villagers and we all know the wonderful success which Mr. Popley has achieved through his Hari-katha Kalakshepams. In educating the people, and it is so especially in the case of the village, great care should be taken that we do not teach them to undervalue or despise the achievements of their forefathers or their religion or their traditions. For that way great spiritual injury lies. But rather education should revivify them and make them dynamic so that with their aid—and there can be no better aids than they—the villagers may live and act as their great forefathers did in the past. People who smiled at Mr. Jacobi "playing the doctor" at Areacode may be interested to know that the Government of Bombay contemplate distributing medical relief to villages through schoolmasters. There are no doubt communal jealousies in the villages but happily they are not more vociferous and insistent than they are in Presidency towns, say, in Madras at present—and they are easily transmuted or settled. May I respectfully suggest and recommend to your Excellency the method successfully adopted in Areacode so that it may be applied it, if necessary in

Madras? The Moplah lads there are given a football to kick about in the evenings and periodical matches are played with the Hindu teams. Sometimes a combined team of one village plays against a similar one from the neighbouring place. These and the panchayat meetings of the co-operative societies are our unity conferences in Malabar and they promise well for the future.

It is high time, however, that the Indian villages are given some element of responsibility in their own affairs. That, more than anything else, would raise their standard of life, infuse a new hope, build up their souls and make them living organisms in the nation. In ancient India political freedom had been built upon the basis of the village republic, and Dr. John Matthai, in his illuminating and inspiring book, has described how till as late as the first quarter of the 19th century, civic duties like education, poor relief, sanitation, public works, watch and ward, and the administration of justice were carried on by the villagers themselves. Why should not the villages be entrusted with these duties again? A mistaken policy can well be set right now, by the Government restoring to the villages their ancient burdens of responsibility. The times are most propitious, when organisations like the Y. M. C. A. and Servants of India Society are ready to assist, and the time spirit is strongly in favour of such constructive work. Thus India will be set on her own feet to grow in her own way and fulfill her destiny, God willing, as a prosperous, contented and willing partner in the great Indo-British Commonwealth. Meanwhile, everybody who labours, however humbly, in this field to bring what Gokhale said "a ray of light, a touch of refinement, a glow of hope into lives that need them most" deserves your fullest support.

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