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# Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### No-Rent Campaign in U. P.

ANOTHER viceregal ordinance has been issued—to deal with the situation created in U. P. by the commencement of the no-rent campaign. An influential section of opinion in that province holds the view that the local Government have done their best to afford relief to the tenants consistently with their obligations to the other sections of the population and that the Congress authorities were somewhat hasty in precipitating the present crisis. Even so, one cannot resist the conclusion that the provisions of the ordinance which in some respects resembles the one recently issued to deal with the terrorists in Bengal are unjustifiably rigorous. This becomes the more inexplicable, when it is borne in mind that while the terrorists indulge in violence, the Congress which is responsible for the movement in U. P. is wedded to non-violence. The ordinance, though applicable mainly to U. P., penalises newspaper writings in any part of India designed to incite people to refrain from paying their land rent or land revenue dues. It arms the Government with extensive powers, as in Bengal, for rounding up groups of persons whom they may regard as engaged in leading or conducting the no-rent campaign. It goes without saying that the U. P. Government will hereafter enjoy virtually unrestricted powers of restraining individual liberty and of commandeering any building for the use of the police or the military. The penalty for disobedience of orders restraining the freedom of movement of persons connected with the campaign will be a term of imprisonment running up to a maximum of two years. A novel feature of the ordinance is that it seeks to penalise parents for the actions of their children under

16, not, however, before the parent concerned has had an opportunity of appearing before a court or of submitting an explanation. There is a provision in this ordinance, as there was one in its predecessor put in force in Bengal, which empowers Government to impose collective fine on the inhabitants of areas considered turbulent by them. A perusal of the provisions of the ordinance leaves one wondering whether it is designed to deal with a foreign power at war with the Government or with a movement which ostensibly has non-violence as its sheet anchor.

### Political Violence by Women.

NEWS comes from Bengal of the assassination on the 14th inst. of the European District Magistrate of Comilla, Mr. Stevens, by two girl students of the local Government High School. It seems the outrage took place about nine o'clock in the morning when Mr. Stevens was in his bungalow. The girls sought an interview with the deceased officer in order to petition him about arranging a swimming competition at Comilla. He referred them to the head-mistress and was shot at with fatal result, while he was returning the petition to them. A servant who intervened also received a shot luckily with no serious consequence. The participation by women in the commission of violent political crime is an unprecedented event in India's recent history. But the fact of women being involved in the commission of the offence in no way lessens the culpability of the act. Violence as a political weapon, whether resorted to by men or women, is equally deserving of condemnation.

The outrage has naturally caused much stir in England where sterner repression is being insistently demanded by Tory die-hards. Repression will no more drive away political discontent than will violence as a political weapon bring swaraj nearer. The need of the hour is for those in authority not to lose their balance.

### The Lords Debate.

WITH the endorsement by the House of Lords of the Government's Indian policy, that policy has now behind it the backing of the British Parliament. This is significant, seeing what desperate attempts were being made by Tory die-hards to prevent Parliament committing itself to Mr. MacDonald's declaration of the 1st inst. Even in the debate in the Lords last week Lord Lloyd who played Mr. Churchill's obstructive part did try his best to induce the Lords by means of his amendment to postpone any expression of opinion of the Government's Indian policy and Lord Middleton, a former Secretary of State for India, left no stone unturned to get the consideration of the question put off for two months. But the House of Lords convinced that any such postponement would give rise to serious misunderstanding in India about the Government's intention to effectuate the pledges given by them signified its approval of the Indian policy after rejecting both

motions of postponement. Lord Lothian, the present Under-Secretary for India, apparently had the advocates of "firm rule" in mind when he remarked that in the long run repression was no remedy and political discontent required a political cure—a sentiment which was later echoed by Lord Irwin. There was nothing surprising in Lord Peel making much of the failure of the different communities to put forward an agreed settlement; indeed he wanted the introduction of central responsibility to be made to depend upon the solution of the communal difficulty by the communities concerned, which was another way of saying that it should stand over till the Greek Kalends. It follows that he did not favour the idea of the British Government imposing a communal settlement of their own making for fear that it would be attacked most vigorously by both sides. This wholesome fear of public opinion seems to be a matter of very recent cultivation with Lord Peel. For as a predecessor of Sir Samuel Hoare's at the India Office, some at any rate of Lord Peel's actions did not show that their author entertained too tender a regard for the dictates of public opinion. In any case, the British Government has not been known by Indians to be particularly responsive to their wishes. To mention a recent instance. Though the appointment of the Simon Commission aroused universal condemnation in India, it went through its programme in accordance with a pre-arranged plan regardless of Indian opposition. We are far from suggesting that they should be giving exhibitions, of such a callous disregard of public opinion on every possible occasion. But we are unable to understand why Lord Peel wants them to be unusually sensitive to public opinion only in respect of the communal settlement. Our point is that if the Government are so minded, they can even enforce a settlement which is fairly satisfactory to the different communities.

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#### A Rift at the Burma R. T. C.

THE Burma R. T. C. is to all intents and purposes going on in an atmosphere of unreality. At its commencement the delegates naturally wanted to know the British Government's intentions towards the question of Burma's separation from India. The Government had apparently not yet made up their mind on the subject, for all the light that the chairman, Lord Peel, could throw on the point was a request to continue the discussion as if separation were decided upon; for otherwise, he pointed out, there would be nothing to discuss as if the delegates having come all the way from Burma had somehow to be kept engaged! This did not satisfy the delegates' curiosity who, scenting danger, later pressed for a declaration of the Government's policy towards Burma. After hurried consultations between Cabinet Ministers, this was forthcoming in due course but was found by the delegates to fall short of Burmese aspirations for their country. For while Burma was keen upon the attainment of responsible government as soon as practicable, the Government declaration seemed to them to be offering only partial responsible government. In other words Burma, they thought, was being offered now what India was promised in 1917. To express their dissatisfaction with this declaration of the Government's policy made through Lord Peel, three Burmese delegates walked out of the Conference for the day on the 14th inst. and though they would be attending its further meetings, they have no intention of taking any active part in its deliberations. The feeling in Burma as expressed at several conferences held prior to the R. T. C. was in favour of separation only if separation led to immediate and full responsible government, failing which the

general consensus of opinion favoured Burma's continuance in its present position as part of India. Indeed some of the delegates to the Conference seem to have been bound by a mandate to accept nothing less than full responsible government which should be in working order on April 1st next year. This was obviously not what Lord Peel's declaration held out before the Burmese people. They therefore asked that the case of Burma should not be considered as apart from India of which it should be allowed to be an autonomous province under the new regime, and that arrangements should be made for it to take part in the constitutional discussions that are shortly to be continued in India. The Government will be bound to accede to this demand if it could be shown that it has behind it the backing of a large volume of opinion in Burma.

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#### Excise Administration of Bihar and Orissa.

THE excise administration of Bihar and Orissa for 1930-31 in common with other provinces was marked by a notable fall in the consumption of country liquor due to the picketing of liquor shops which was such a marked feature of the civil disobedience campaign last year. The consumption of country liquor decreased from 960,300 gallons during the preceding year to 636,800 gallons in 1930-31, which works out to a drop of 33½ per cent. The revenue from this source also showed a decline in almost equal proportion, the figures of revenue being Rs. 73,65,000 and Rs. 49,13,150 for 1929-30 and 1930-31 respectively. It is gratifying to note that decreased consumption of country liquor was not, as in some provinces, accompanied by an increase in that of foreign liquor. The effect of the prohibition activity on the part of the Congress was also noticeable in the moribund condition of excise advisory bodies almost throughout the province. It must be added in fairness that this inactivity on their part was by no means self-imposed but was of the making of the Government, which in the situation then existing deemed it fit to suspend these bodies and thus deprive themselves of their advice on excise matters. Not that they had done anything to deserve this antipathetic treatment at the hands of the local Government. Indeed the working of the eight Licensing Boards in the province which is reported by the Excise Commissioner to have been satisfactory does not lead one to fear that these lesser bodies would have behaved differently, had they been allowed to function. Even supposing that facts had justified the worst fears of Government, one fails to see how their unreasonable demands would have prejudicially affected the Government, seeing that their recommendations had nothing more than an advisory status. As it is, Government seems to have put themselves in the wrong with public opinion owing to their hasty and ill-considered action with regard to these bodies. We see from the report that cases of illicit distillation during the year under report more than doubled themselves, having risen from 1,233 to 2,718, a rise of 119 per cent. which is rather disquieting. It is a matter for regret that the prohibition experiment which was in operation in a taluka for three years was discontinued from the beginning of 1931-32. It is difficult to see why this step was decided upon, for the report is conveniently silent as regards the reasons in its support. It is to be hoped some member of the Legislative Council will look upon it as his duty to elicit information on the point. What the public would be really interested to learn is whether the closure of the experiment was decided upon on financial grounds alone or whether the Government's decision was based on the usual fear of increased illicit consumption.

## Britain's Paramountcy and India's Independence.

IT may now be taken as proved that Mahatma Gandhi, while nominally asking that paramountcy over the Indian States be transferred to the federal government, is in effect willing to let it vest in the Viceroy. The effect of his complaisant attitude to this question on his demand for independence deserves to be particularly noted.

The Congress members of the All-Parties Committee in 1928 experienced considerable difficulty in formulating a constitution on the basis of dominion status and deemed it necessary, before putting their hand to the so-called Nehru Report, to preserve the Congress position by making it clear that they for their part took the "higher ground" of independence. They joined with other parties merely to demonstrate the unanimity among all shades of thought in India that no constitution which at the least did not come up to the standard of a dominion constitution had any chance of being accepted in any quarter; but such a constitution, if it stopped short at dominion status, would still be unacceptable to Congressmen, who would use it only as a stepping stone to Independence. The Report says: "Our deciding, as a Committee, in favour of such a Constitution simply means that the maximum degree of agreement was only obtainable on this basis. It does not mean that any individual Congressman, much less the Congress itself, has given up or toned down the goal of complete independence. Those who believe in this goal retain the fullest right to work for it. But the maximum agreement thus reached will, we trust, serve as a satisfactory basis for a constitution which all parties can unite to work without prejudice to the right of any party or individual to go further ahead."

The passing of the Statute of Westminster has since put it beyond doubt that the political communities within the Empire which have been invested with dominion status enjoy a measure of self-government which is not easily distinguishable from that enjoyed by sovereign independent states. The ground of the Congress objection to dominion status is and has been not so much that under it India will have less autonomy than independent states but that in juridical form it will remain an integral part of an empire which, as Professor Toynbee says, is still a unitary state in international law. That India, when she attains dominionhood, will like other dominions be at liberty to cut the painter and cease to remain a part of the empire was to the Congress no consolation. It was not mere ability to sever the imperial tie that the Congress wanted to secure for India, but the severance itself. India must become a sovereign independent state, as much in legal theory as in political effect. That was the ground of the Congress' rejecting the traditional objective of dominion status in favour of independence.

Mahatma Gandhi has already by means of finessing which is so characteristic of him given independence a new meaning. He is willing to let India remain within the British empire provided that she can get out of it at will. A union with Great

Britain is not in itself intolerable to him; only the union must be capable of being dissolved by India as well as Great Britain. The juridical inferiority of dominion status is not very galling to him. This interpretation really explains independence away. For even before the Statute of Westminster was enacted we all knew that dominion status confers upon a dominion the right of secession. Even so, the Congress insisted upon independence and in doing so broke from other parties. By making independence to mean, however, equal partnership with Great Britain dissoluble on either side Mahatma Gandhi has in fact reverted to the pre-independence or dominion status position of the Congress. The Congress too seems to have acquiesced in this self-stultifying process; and we non-Congressmen who do not believe in national independence but who rather believe in international interdependence need not quarrel with such a dexterous handling of the Congress following by its leader.

But the content of independence cannot be watered down still further. If it does not connote actual severance of the British connexion, it must at least connote practical and theoretical competence to sever it when it so pleases the country. If however paramountcy over the Indian States is reserved to the British Crown, the very possibility of such severance is barred for all time. It is obvious that so long as the Viceroy as representative of the Crown retains in his hands control over Political Relations and wields the power to interfere with the internal administration of the States, the latter cannot possibly cherish any thought of going out of the empire. If the States are thus tied to the empire, so must be British India in a federal government. It is inconceivable that one unit of federation can be within the empire and the other without. If British India is bent upon seceding, she cannot do so without first parting company with the States. But it cannot part company with the States because federation is, unlike the British empire, an indissoluble union. The only way open to British India therefore for achieving independence is to cut the States loose from Great Britain's control over them as a paramount power, but this it cannot do if it accepts reservation of Political Relations and the theory underlying it.

It cannot be too often repeated or too strongly emphasised that reservation of paramountcy will be permanent. British Indians make light of it, but they are gravely mistaken in doing so. Even those who, unlike Mahatma Gandhi, are agreeable to the reservation of Defence and External Relations, insist upon setting a term of years for their transfer. Without such a limit they fear lest the self-government that may be accorded to them in internal matters should be evacuated of all its substance. The Mahatma, it would appear, is not content with the eventual transfer of the departments. He wants them transferred here and now. But at any rate they are destined to be transferred, if not today, tomorrow; and

if not tomorrow, the day after. But paramountcy, if now agreed to, will remain reserved to British control in perpetuity. And through the States Great Britain will always be able to keep its hold—its stranglehold—over British India. Mahatma Gandhi has in his interview with Mr. Brailsford frankly admitted the danger of the cohort of States' members in the federal legislature really performing the task that may be set to them by the Britishers. The necessity of vesting paramountcy in the Indian Federal Government instead of in the British Crown's representative should therefore be patent to him. But we are now concerned in showing how, with paramountcy reserved to British control, independence even of the Mahatma's interpretation, viz. capacity to effect separation, becomes absolutely unattainable, not only now, but at any remote time in future.

### UPLIFT OF DEPRESSED CLASSES IN MADRAS.

WITH the recent appointment by the Bombay Government of a Backward Classes officer to work in close association with a non-official board, the depressed classes in this presidency will at least know where to turn for help in case of need. This does not mean that the care of the untouchables will be his whole time job. As in Madras, where the Commissioner of Labour is expected to look after the depressed classes as part of his duties, the new Backward Classes officer in Bombay will combine his work for the so-called depressed classes with his other duties which principally concern the reclamation of criminal tribes. How the new officer will proceed about his business is not yet known; but he will surely find a good deal in the activities of the Labour Commissioner in Madras, whose report for 1930-31 is just published, to guide him. It is necessary to add that this special agency, though in existence for nearly ten years, has not yet been able to extend its beneficent activities to all parts of the presidency. During the year to which the Commissioner's report relates, it was at work in 20 out of the 27 districts and in Madras city.

The main difficulty experienced by these unfortunate people is on the score of their housing. They are almost invariably consigned to unhealthy and insanitary localities and are tyrannised over in all imaginable ways by their landlords. The Commissioner of Labour therefore makes it his business to give them relief in this matter by the provision of suitable house-sites. This is done either by assignment to them of waste land belonging to or at the disposal of Government or by acquiring privately owned land, the cost being in due course recovered from the depressed class assignees. In 1930-31, 1973 sites were provided out of 557 acres of Government owned land and 2,414 out of 139 acres of private land acquired at a cost of nearly Rs. 90,000. During the time this special agency has been at work, more than 66,500 such sites have been thus provided, which is no mean achievement. It is not as if only as many house sites are provided as are in demand. In this

matter the department does well in looking beyond the needs of the immediate future. It keeps in reserve large plots of land which could be assigned to the depressed classes when there is a demand from them. Thus we find from a statement appended to the report that there is available for assignment almost as much land as has already been taken up.

Another direction in which the special agency under the Commissioner makes itself useful is by providing special educational facilities for the depressed classes. The attempt of course is to avoid as far as possible such special provision by securing admission to the pupils belonging to these classes into schools already existing. This is as it should be, for the experience of the segregation of these classes in special schools does not appear to be particularly happy, as the recent abandonment of the practice of providing special schools to the depressed classes by the Baroda State shows. The report does not say whether the rule in force in Bombay under which public schools or schools maintained out of public funds are bound to admit depressed class pupils obtains in the southern Presidency. But apparently it does not. For if it did, the report would not be talking impotently of the denial of admission to depressed class pupils to existing schools as a ground for starting special schools for them. Only in such cases and in localities without schools, special depressed class schools are started, care being taken to avoid needless duplication and consequent waste. The number of such schools at the beginning and end of the year was respectively, 1,582 and 1,784, out of which 1,656 were day schools, 60 night schools and 68 combined day and night schools. Out of the total of 63,604 children reading in these schools, 52,858 were boys and 10,746 girls. In respect of teaching efficiency too these schools seem to be in no way inferior to the ordinary ones, seeing that as much as 84 per cent. of the teachers employed in them were trained.

To push on the spread of education among these classes, a large number of scholarships are provided. Thus we find that there are 35 residential scholarships of Rs. 18 each per month for nine months to pupils reading in Secondary Schools and 15 similar ones of Rs. 25 each for pupils receiving College education. Then, there are over 1200 scholarships of amounts varying between Rs. 2-8-0 and Rs. 7 a month for depressed class pupils studying in recognised schools. A large measure of discretion is given to the Commissioner in their distribution and also in regard to their amounts so long as he keeps within the budget provision, preference being given to candidates reading in higher classes. Thus in 1930-31 the number of such scholarships was 1,354. In addition a certain number of scholarships whose monthly value varies between Rs. 9 and Rs. 14 is at the Commissioner's disposal for being given to boarders in hostels run under Government auspices who are undergoing a college course and have been unable to secure any other scholarship under the control of the Education Department. With a view to encourage depressed class teachers to undergo the training course, 50 stipends of Rs. 10-8-0 a month are also provided,

out of which only three remained unutilized during the year under report. 170 industrial scholarships of the minimum and maximum monthly values respectively of Rs. 3-8-0 and Rs. 7 are also available every year. 96 of these were given for carpentry, 12 for metal-work, 29 for fitting and driving, 2 for electric wiring, 22 for weaving, 3 for mechanical engineering, 2 for engraving and 2 for lace-making. Ten monthly scholarships of Rs. 20 each for six months are intended to enable suitable depressed class students to learn motor-car mechanism and driving, while ten commercial scholarships were also provided during the year. Moreover through the efforts of the Commissioner exemption from payment of examination fees is secured in some cases. Last year it was secured in the case of 72 students appearing for various university and Government examinations. In really necessitous cases writing materials, books and even clothes are provided at the public expense. For the benefit of depressed class students, five hostels were maintained at Government expense, while grants were made to institutions which cater for the boarding and lodging requirements of depressed class pupils. Prominent among such must be mentioned the Depressed Classes Mission, Mangalore, for whose management the Servants of India Society is now responsible, and the Madras Seva Sadan which in 1930-31 received a grant of Rs. 100 towards the boarding expenses of five depressed class girls at Rs. 15 each for eight months.

Another activity of an ameliorative type specially for the benefit of the depressed classes consists in the construction of new wells. Water is such a pressing human need that it should really be as easily available to everybody as the air. But for obtaining even such a necessity of existence the depressed classes have in some parts to contend against formidable difficulties and to face popular prejudice. By providing for them easy and adequate water-supply due to the construction of new wells the Government is doing nothing more than its duty by them as human beings. This part of the work therefore that is going on under the auspices of the Labour department in Madras is without doubt deserving of great nation-building value. During 1930-31, 410 wells were constructed and 164 repaired, bringing the number of wells constructed or repaired during the time the special agency has been at work to about 3,560 at a cost of nearly Rs. 14 lakhs. It may be added that the amount spent during the year on the provision of suitable drinking water facilities for these classes was nearly Rs. 3¼ lakhs.

There are also other directions in which the special staff under the Labour Commissioner makes itself serviceable to the depressed classes. But what is said above is enough to give the reader some idea as to the kind of work that is being done in Madras with a view to raise the general level of these suppressed classes. Such work is particularly needed in Madras, where of all the Indian provinces these people receive the worst treatment from their fellow-men. They also constitute quite a considerable element of the population there. According to the 1921

census, they numbered 6.4 millions out of a total population of 42.8 millions or, formed, say, its seventh part. With such a large part of the population oppressed and down-trodden, it is obvious our march to Swaraj will be neither rapid nor easy.

## Our European Letter.

### THE STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER BILL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

GENEVA, NOV. 28.

THE Statute of Westminster Bill has gone through all the stages in the House of Commons. Fifty Conservatives, led by Mr. Winston Churchill, cast their votes against the Bill. But on the whole, the Bill seems to have been cordially received by a considerable section of the British public and their accredited representatives in Parliament. Contrary to previous rumours, the opposition in the House of Lords was anything but stormy. Lord Salisbury did not oppose the Bill, although he regretted the necessity for passing it. Lord Buckmaster thought that it was undesirable to subject Imperial inter-relations to legal definition and that the free growth of the Empire would be less impaired if the Bill was not passed. The debate was wound up by Lord Hailsham who expressed his reluctance "to confine the living growth of the constitution of the British Empire within the straight waistcoat of legal enactment", and his inability to go against the wishes of the Dominions for a formal assurance of their status.

Expert opinion in England is uniform in claiming that the Statute of Westminster Bill does no more than provide legal recognition to the rights and privileges already assured to the Dominions in practice. Ever since parliamentary institutions were begun to be granted to British oversea possessions three centuries ago, there has been a gradual and sustained weakening of centralised imperial control. The Dominions and India stood solidly by the mother country during the Great War and the recognition of that help by the British public created a favourable atmosphere for progressively transforming the Empire into a Commonwealth of free and self-governing units. The Imperial Conferences furnished an excellent platform for exchange of ideas and good-will between the different Empire statesmen and aroused a new sense of dignity on the part of the Dominions and a new sense of responsibility on the part of Great Britain. The Balfour Report, a direct result of the Imperial Conference of 1926, summed up the essence of Dominion Status in the following terms:—"The British Empire is not founded upon negotiations. It depends essentially, if not formally, upon positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security and progress are among its objects." To give practical effect to this spirit, a special conference, known as the Conference on the operation of Dominion legislation, was convened in 1929 and its report, which was adopted by the Imperial Conference of 1930, contains proposals for the speedy removal of

all restrictions on Dominion legislation. The Statute of Westminster Bill clothes in legal phraseology those proposals.

There are two ways in which the Imperial cabinet holds control over Dominion legislation, having statutory restrictions. The King, on the advice of his Ministers, may disallow an Act which has been duly passed by a Dominion Parliament and assented to by the King's representative. Or, the latter can reserve a Bill for the King's assent which may be delayed or withheld on the advice of the British Ministers. Again, the Colonial Laws Validity Act renders void a Dominion law to the extent to which it is repugnant to an Imperial statute. The Mercantile Marine Act prevents a Dominion from legislating against merchant shipping. The Dominion legislation has no extra-territorial effect. In all these respects, the Dominion Parliaments are subordinate to the sovereign law-making body at Westminster. The Statute of Westminster Bill removes all these anomalies which are utterly incompatible with the professions and practices in inter-imperial relations so far.

Mr. Churchill and his followers are extremely alarmed at the possible consequences which may result from the application of the above Statute to Ireland and India. The present constitution of Ireland is based on the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922 which says that Ireland shall be given the same status as the Dominion of Canada. The question arises whether the Treaty conferred on Ireland only those rights and privileges which Canada enjoyed in 1922 or all rights and privileges which Canada enjoys at any point of time. It is purely a question of interpreting a treaty and cannot be settled arbitrarily either by the Dail or the Imperial Parliament. Some inter-Imperial tribunal, as the one envisaged by the Statute of Westminster for arbitrating on disputes between the different parts of the British Empire, will have to decide that question. Mr. Cosgrave, the present, head of the Irish executive, is by no means an 'anti-imperialist'. He does not declare that as soon as the Bill is passed he would abolish the oath of allegiance, declare Ireland a republic, scrap the provisions of the Irish Treaty and secede from the Empire. But there is every likelihood of the right of appeal to the Privy Council being abolished by Ireland. But the British Government has given sufficient assurances to the Churchillian school that adequate safeguards will be provided for respecting the provisions of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. In any event, the rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords is out of question. Such a step will revive old suspicions of Imperial domination and strengthen the disintegrating forces which have been at work for some time in the past. The only political bond which will hereafter remain between the different Dominions is allegiance to the same King. A clause in the preamble to the Bill provides that any alteration in the law relating to the succession to the throne or Royal styles and titles must receive the assent of the Dominions also. The idea of Empire economic unity is becoming more and more popular, and the re-organisation of the Empire on an economic basis may infuse new

life and energy and cohesion into the Empire.

Long before the meetings of the Ottawa conference the above Bill would have become law. The Empire statesmen are awaiting with fluttering hearts to avail themselves fully of that opportunity and embark upon a common scheme for reviving prosperity. India, as in the past, will no doubt be invited to attend the Ottawa conference. But it is obvious that neither Great Britain, nor the other Dominions have any considerable economic advantages to offer her in return for valuable concessions which are in her power to grant. Political concessions may win her sympathy. But the Empire statesmen have so far failed to evince a keen interest in her political destiny, nor is there anything like a settled Empire Indian policy. Mr. Churchill's attitude towards India is yet another disquieting factor. Addressing the House of Commons on the Statute of Westminster Bill, he said:—

For the first time, we see set out in cold, legal language, what Dominion Status means. Let any one who reads those clauses contemplate the frightful disaster which would be brought on India if the full Dominion Status, as set out here, became the law governing India. In India we have an inalienable responsibility and adequate and necessary powers to maintain it. Now that they have before them the actual legal provisions of a Dominion Status, is there any one who does not see the folly and the wrong of declarations which excite the hopes of the Indian political classes that, after a brief period of transition, full Dominion Status would be conferred on an Indian Central Legislature? The declarations in favour of Dominion Status for India, which were made a year or two ago, took no account of the fundamental change between the time of the Montagu Report and the Irwin declaration, in the meaning of Dominion Status. The term is the same, it is printed in the same letters, it is pronounced with the same accents, but it means, after the passing of the Statute, something fundamentally different from what it was in the days of the Government of India Act, 1919. No one can doubt that Dominion Status, as defined in this Bill, would be incompatible with the highest symbols of Imperial authority for the races, peoples and States of the continent of India.

How far these opinions find support among the British public is somewhat difficult to say. But the Rothermere-Churchill school represents the extreme side of Conservative thought. In regard to tariffs and other home affairs, it is at present wielding great influence. The National Government finds it well-nigh-impossible to resist its most persistent and vociferous attacks. So long as the Conservative majority prevails in Parliament, this school must be a source of considerable apprehension among Indian political circles. Unless substantial political concessions are granted to India in the near future, the cause of Imperial economic unity, the pet dream of the Churchill school, is bound to receive a serious setback. Besides, the Churchillian philosophy seems to have no place for India within the British Empire on a footing of equality and freedom for any length of time.

The case for India is, however, not without support. In an admirable letter to the *London Times*, Lord Irwin replied to Mr. Churchill's challenge thus:—

Indian opinion is prepared to recognize that both the interest and particular circumstances of India

necessitate a period of transition, during which the constitution must contain safeguards for several essential matters now under consideration. But apart from the question whether or not the Statute of Westminster Bill does more than extend legal recognition to a relationship already existing between Great Britain and the other Dominions, the broad, and indeed the only, conclusion of Mr. Churchill's argument is that, while one grade of constitutional liberty is suitable for those Dominions at present entitled to bear that name, we must for any period that can now be foreseen restrict Indian hopes to the horizon of another and inferior grade of constitutional status. From such an Imperial philosophy I, in common with all who can realise what the effect of this doctrine would be upon the development of Indian political thought, must emphatically dissent.

Such choice sentiments are not widely shared by those who are the real masters of India and without a change of heart on their part, India must inevitably continue to regard the British Empire as a prison-house.

## Reviews.

### THE ECONOMICS OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

THE ECONOMICS OF UNEMPLOYMENT. By J. A. HOBSON. (Allen & Unwin.) 1931. 20cm. 152p. 4/6.

MR. HOBSON, the well-known economist, has already won his spurs as a vigorous writer and thinker on current economic problems and the present book on unemployment amply sustains his reputation. In this, he has endeavoured, and that successfully, in our opinion, to explain that the main causes of the depression to-day are over-production and under-consumption caused as a consequence of inequalities in the distribution of national income, which places a larger proportion of the aggregate income in the possession of comparatively small classes, who, after satisfying all their economic desire, have large surpluses for automatic saving and investment. It is generally believed that it is this surplus that is usually sent out again as capital for industrial development and that therefore they are a necessary feature and with them of course the inequalities originally in existence. Mr. Hobson exposes this complacent delusion by showing how these surpluses only go to increase over-production without a corresponding expansion of the consumption of articles, and he shows how instead of allowing large surpluses to accumulate in few hands, they are more equitably and evenly distributed amongst the generality of the population, that would not in any way reduce the proportion of income saved but on the other hand actually increases it.

Mr. Hobson explains that the phenomenon of cyclical depression is due to oversaving and misapplication of capital and an equally grave misapplication of savings from industry towards the purchase of commodities. Merely to increase production of commodities without helping to increase the purchasing power of the vast majority of the population and thus increase consumption leads to great waste. In other words, "savings and investments for enlargement of production are economically valid on condition that the enlarged production is accompanied or soon followed by a proportionately enlarged consumption." The equalization of incomes brings about this balance between production and consumption while at the same time it will not lessen the total amount of capital saved nor hinder the maintenance of as high a

rate of economic progress as before. As Prof. Hobson says, "The surplus nature of much of the income which results from inequality of distribution disturbs the true balance of productive activities and disturbs it normally in the direction of postponed consumption of articles, which, if consumed now by those into whose hands they would fall would satisfy no felt want but would spell depletion." In short, under the present system of inequality of distribution, the surplus of unearned income, involving no personal cost of production to the recipient and furnishing no personal satisfaction of consumption, accumulates unduly, congests the economic organization, clogs its ducts, and causes stoppages, trade depression, under-production and unemployment which we are all familiar with.

Mr. Hobson is not an advocate of such remedies as wage reductions, removal of tariff barriers, restriction of out-put and similar others, all of which he considers as mere palliatives and not capable of achieving any permanent results. On the other hand he advocates a radical change in the present system of distribution, which is the root cause of all evils. To this end, Prof. Hobson is not also against state action, which he thinks necessary in order to bring out the evenness of distribution by heavy taxation of all surpluses, the proceeds being utilized for social purposes. In conclusion, it may be said that readers of Mr. Hobson's book will be convinced that the remedy proposed by him for the present economic malaise is the only possible and rational one, if extremer remedies like Communism and Bolshevism are to be left out of account or are to be guarded against.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

### A CHALLENGE TO ECONOMIC ANARCHY.

MONEY VERSUS MAN. By FREDERICK SODDY. (Elkin Mathews & Marrot, London.) 1931. 17cm. 121p. 3/6.

THIS is a remarkably well written book and for lucidity of exposition and simplicity of language it would be difficult to improve on its contents. Professor Soddy is frankly heterodox in his views on money and has no patience with the bankers or their policies. His attack on the present economic organization of the world has a great deal of truth behind it, though it may be that the way out may not exactly be through Prof. Soddy's prescription, for the obvious reason that it is an impossible prescription. Dr. Soddy has attempted in no uncertain language to give a new orientation to the ideas on banking and currency which ought to be seriously considered by present-day radical reformers.

Let us now examine some of the characteristic statements of the author and his general outlook. In his very first chapter he says :

This book has been written in the belief that economic sufficiency is the essential foundation of all national greatness and progress. The crime perpetrated to-day is not the mere waste, or worse than waste, of wealth, but of the opportunity it affords to build up a civilisation, nobler and more human than was possible in a world held in the mere grip of and limited by want.

Great hopes indeed, but how far realisable is a matter of considerable doubt.

Like the earlier reformers of the nineteenth century, Prof. Soddy has a great deal to say about the mal-distribution of the income of the community :

The submerged tenth of the 19th century ever grows, the penury of the masses ever accompanies and enhances the relative wealth of the few. This is not national wealth but the reverse.... Acute and chronic

poverty and involuntary unemployment is not a nation, but an anarchy in the economic life of the community.

Holding very clear views on the social life of the community, Prof. Soddy finds in the cheque system of the banks a very insidious method of adding to the currency of the community and his indictment of the banks in their policy of creating fictitious credits is remarkable for its sincerity and depth of conviction. To-day Professor Soddy says: "97 per cent. of the total money owned by individuals of the nation is privately issued and by far the larger part of it has no tangible existence whatever." In the light of present knowledge and experience the system appears to be high treason against the state. And again, "clearly the profits of the issue of money must belong to the community, a counterfeiter issuing money is punished, but the banks with their cheque system have done worse." "Cheap credit facility is in plain English a double theft."

One striking sentence of Dr. Soddy's deserves attention:

Once destroy the power of the banks and private financial people to issue money and confine their operations to legitimate transactions and there would not be the least difficulty in maintaining the index number constant. So long as private people can get money created for them and destroyed again money must be capricious.

It is difficult not to sympathise with Dr. Soddy's analysis but the remedy may be very difficult.

Dr. Soddy again with characteristic perspicacity points to the red spot in the economic organisation of the present day:

No thought has been given to the ultimate purpose of all the wealth we have been patiently preparing for over a century to be in a position to produce. Now we can make it, no one seems to know what to do with it. Except as a mere transitory phase the idea of producing more and consuming less is a contradiction in terms. If something is not done speedily to increase consumption the world will speed up till it bursts.

Prof. Soddy pleads for a national monetary system which will keep prices constant and is shocked at the sight of "the monetary system being surrendered to and becoming a monopoly of the money-lender without the public being aware of it at all." "The whole financial system of the country is so rotten that it cannot face a genuine enquiry." (p. 112.) "At present it is costing the nation over a hundred million pounds a year in bogus taxation for not doing its job." Dr. Soddy wants a real democracy which will know how to produce and distribute without loss and a Government that knows its own mind and works for the real people! His appeal to democracy to rise to the full heights of its responsibility and to do the right thing for the nation as different from the private individual merits consideration from the leaders.

The book is a striking survey of the field of economic activities and is a deliberate challenge to individualism and economic anarchy. It is extremely provoking for the self-satisfied and Prof. Soddy would not have written in vain if he succeeds in educating in some degree the great democracy of England.

S. V. AYYAR.

### HISTORY OF PUNISHMENT.

**THE STORY OF PUNISHMENT. A RECORD OF MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN.** BY HARRY ELMER BARNES. (The Stratford Company, Boston.) 1930. 22cm. 292 p. \$ 3-00.

THIS is a very interesting and instructive book. Its main theme is that most of the criminals do not require punishment, but adequate treatment on psychiatric

principles. This the author has tried to bring home to the reader in every section. The opening chapter is on ascertaining guilt, and the author has conclusively shown how the police torture makes the alleged offenders to admit the wrong-doing. In this respect the police in civilised countries do not show better record than their Indian *confreeres*. And the only trace of civilisation is to be found in their application of the electric current in the process of torture or what is called the "Third Degree" method. The jury system Mr. Barnes condemns in the strongest possible terms, and commends, in its stead, a staff of experts in psychology, psychiatry and medicine and the scientific application of lie-detectors. That is certainly a counsel of perfection whose realisation seems yet very far off. The chapters on "Crime and Punishment in Early Society," "Corporal Punishment," "Transportation and Capital Punishment" bring out vividly how savage and fiendish were the methods which our early ancestors were using to punish criminals and how blood-curdling miseries were inflicted upon those who were transported to Australia by the British, to French Guiana by the French, and to Serbia by the Russians.

The treatment of female prisoners and boys certainly defies description. Male officers and even prisoners were allowed to have their will on them and such rapes not unoften led to the birth of children in jails. There are also records to show that the criminal courts had sometimes sent to prison boys of ten or even nine who did not know even the use of their clothes. Such things provoked the wrath of the Quakers who were the first to move in the matter of prison reform and the efforts of Beccaria, John Howard and others are surely but slowly being crowned with success in the U. S. A. and the European countries.

The author has taken great pains to show that present-day methods of trial and punishment do not deter a criminal from crime, but on the contrary make him a confirmed one. And the only solution of this menace to society is to abolish imprisonment and substitute treatment on psychiatric lines. A beginning has been made in this direction in the state of Massachusetts, and its law has now been adopted by some other states in U. S. A. also. Psychiatric tests would detect incorrigible criminals, and if society is to be saved from their depredations, the consensus of opinion is that they should be permanently segregated and sterilised completely.

The author has laid great stress on the reform of criminal law, and the classification of so-called criminals, most of whom, according to the psychiatrists, are but victims of bad environments and heredity. Hence the author's main contention is that nearly three-fourths of the so-called criminals require not punishment but treatment based on psychiatric principles. In the first place, he argues, that many of the so-called offences require to be expunged from our penal codes, and many acts, done deliberately by unscrupulous dishonest cheats whom society calls gentlemen, must be included in the list of heinous crimes. Bernard Shaw's memorable comparison between a criminal and a gentleman is very apt on this point and certainly bears repetition:—

We may take it, then, that the thief who is in prison is not necessarily more dishonest than his fellows at large, but mostly one, who through ignorance or stupidity, steals in a way that is not customary. He snatches a loaf from a baker's counter and is promptly run into jail. Another man snatches bread from the tables of hundreds of widows and orphans and simple credulous souls who do not know the ways of company promoters, and, as likely as not, he is run into parliament... For, the depredations of the criminal are



negligibly small compared to the military holocausts and ravaged areas, the civic slums, the hospitals, the cemeteries crowded with prematurely dead, the labour markets in which men and women are exposed for sale for all purposes honourable and dishonourable, which are the products of criminal ideas imposed on the whole population (by such gentlemen).

Many will certainly agree with this indictment of Shaw's and would wish such "gentlemen" clapped into prisons or worse places than those dwellings. Compared to them the criminals, who are misfits in society, are more harmless, and require much better treatment than what is given to them even in such ideal prisons as the Pennsylvania, Auburn and the Elmira.

The author however is not very hopeful about the realisation of reforms which he advocates. He is conscious of the almost insuperable difficulties in the way of reform, and hence the ideal which he aims at is not likely to be reached for generations to come. However his suggestion that lawyers and judges should not be allowed to deal with offenders unless they go through a course of criminology is very commendable and it would be better if the Universities were to include this subject in the curriculum of law examinations. Such books would be very useful in the study of such subjects and also to those social workers who would like to take up the cause of the unfortunate convicts who find their way to jail and try to abolish the inhuman cruelty involved in life there.

V. M. BHAT.

### EVILS OF BIG CITIES.

#### METROPOLIS OR THE DESTINY OF CITIES.

By PAUL BANKS. (C. W. Daniel, Co., London.)  
1930. 17cm. 86p. 3/6.

BIG cities have sprung up like mushrooms in the wake of modern civilisation and are an essential product of the world-wide industrialisation. The growth of these cities has been spontaneous and therefore unnoticed. They have always been considered as the surest signs of the prosperity of a country. People have flocked to them, considering them to be the big centres of civilisation. Paris is something special to France. It has more than once decided the fate of the whole country and is supposed to represent French culture. London is the pivot of the whole of English life. Nobody until now has questioned the domination of these big cities over the national life.

In this book the writer tries to open the eyes of the people to the evil influence of these cities. He tells us how every phase of life and art has lost all its attraction and even its soul. The "revues", which are considered to be the special attraction of a big city, are described by him as momentary attractions, which, "act only as sensual stimulant, and are frequented by those who are at the same time too jaded and too dense either to give continuous attention or to sleep . . . ." The Press of London, according to him, is merely an industry of publishing public opinion which, "continually lulls people into a condition of optimism that every journalist in Fleet Street knows to be false. Newspapers are merely devices for hiding the news." Then the market of London, "for commercial products has trodden every aspect of life under foot. Artists and other persons of culture have found it difficult or impossible in London to serve the tastes of connoisseurs directly and have become the employees of merchant shop-keepers." Art has been banished from life altogether. Even the architecture of London merely suggests that commerce is the whole life of man. Everything in

London has been thus rendered soulless. Then, these big cities have a pernicious influence over the people living in the country. In an attempt to be "up-to-date and to follow the fashion," they imitate these cities and lose their own souls too. Evil influence always pervades quicker than anything else. The author brings us to the rather alarming conclusion that life for cultural purposes and ends is impossible in a big city like London.

Towards the end of the book the author gives us his own solution of the problem. He thinks that one big London should be replaced by thirty or even forty smaller cities well-planned and beautifully laid out. These Londons in miniature can have all the amenities of life on a small scale and develop their own culture and feed the soul of the individual with something aesthetic and artistic.

This book deserves to be widely read in India. This country is bound to be industrialised in the near future, which in the normal course of affairs will be followed by big cities with all the attendant evils so clearly enumerated in this book. Therefore this suggestion of setting up a number of small cities ought to help as a guide to the builders of future India.

M. S. CHEEMA.

### A SURVEY OF THE INDIAN SCENE.

MODERN INDIA. A CO-OPERATIVE SURVEY. Ed. by SIR JOHN CUMMING. (Oxford University Press.) 1931. 20cm. 304p. 3/6.

INDIA is exciting a good deal of public interest in England and there is a general desire for information about the different aspects of the Indian problem which this book is intended to satisfy. It does not claim, as the editor explains in his short preface, to be "a history of India; it does not profess to supply solutions of the problems of current politics, nor does it forecast the future. But it does strive to set forth some important elements of the Indian situation by means of a dispassionate presentation of things as they are, together with some account of the causes which have made them what they are." We are afraid the claim to dispassionate presentation cannot be wholly conceded, for mostly it is the bureaucratic view of the problem that will be found presented in these pages. Nor is this surprising. For the writers of the different articles are British administrators who have put in long service in India and are looked upon as "experts" on India in their country. For them to divest themselves of prepossessions which coloured their view of the Indian scene is really expecting the impossible. It must of course be added in fairness to them that they try their best to see that their presentation is not unduly influenced by them. But in the main it is the official view of the different sides of the Indian problem with which the reader comes across in this book. Thus e.g. in the article dealing with the Army the difficulties which are represented as impeding rapid Indianisation are the familiar ones about the division of India into martial and non-martial races etc. The article brings up the history of the problem to the appointment of the Chetwode Committee and was apparently written before its report was published. The information given is mostly accurate, as may be expected of people whose close association with the different departments of Government extending over nearly a generation gave them exceptional opportunities of studying its working. We, however, detect a slip in Sir Harcourt Butler's article dealing with the peoples, languages and creeds. He speaks of the depressed classes in Southern India being so strong as "to secure a majority in the Madras Legislative

Council." To our knowledge, it is not the depressed classes, but the non-Brahmans, that constitute a majority in that Council. There is no doubt however that the publishers deserve praise for having brought together in a handy volume so many articles by well-known persons conversant with the subjects dealt with by them which will go some way in providing the British democracy with easy means of access to knowledge about Indian conditions.

D. P. I.

### RURAL UPLIFT IN THE DECCAN.

**REPORT OF THE DECCAN AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION, POONA, for 1930-31. (Hony. Secretary, Propaganda Sub-committee, Poona 2.) 1931. 31cm. 98p. As. 8.**

THIS Association differs from the general run of agricultural associations in this presidency in that it has a more extended sphere of activity. While agricultural associations as a rule concern themselves almost exclusively with the problem of the improvement of agriculture, the Deccan Agricultural Association, besides tackling that problem, also devotes its attention to the wider problem of general rural uplift. In fact it can be said without exaggeration that the bulk of its activity since its reorganisation a couple of years ago when Mr. Devadhar, President of the Servants of India Society, came to be associated with it as the chairman of its executive committee, has a close bearing on the question of raising the general level of the villager in the Deccan. This is sought to be done by methods with which Mr. Devadhar's name has come to be associated in a special degree.

The Association has selected Khed-Shivapur, a village about 14 miles from Poona, as the main centre of its rural uplift work, whose nation-building value has been testified to from time to time by the large number of distinguished ladies and gentlemen that have visited it so far. The agricultural activity of the Association at this centre consists in the popularisation of the improved methods of agriculture. To this end the Association has kept at its centre 8 improved iron ploughs which are given to agriculturists for use on a small fee. Two members of the Association have leased out at Khed-Shivapur 35 acres of land and have kindly allowed the Association free use of this land for purposes of practical demonstration of cultivation by new methods. The educational work there is very largely attended to by Miss Dwarkabai Bhat, Lady Superintendent of the Training College run by the Poona Seva Sadan Society who hardly ever misses her weekly visits to the village. Primary education classes for girls are conducted under Miss Bhat's supervision and the women of the village are given instruction in sewing. Valuable adult education work is also going on by means of night classes, magic lantern lectures, and the free reading room that is maintained at Khed-Shivapur. In co-operation with the Poona Seva Sadan, the Association is also able to make itself medically useful not only to the people of the village but to those of the villages round about. As a result of its work the value of medical relief and maternity help is widely appreciated; with the result that the services of the midwife lent by the Poona Seva Sadan are being more and more largely utilised. Instruction in weaving is a feature of the Association's activities at Khed-Shivapur and the opening of a community centre at no distant date is also under contemplation.

The Association does not, however, content itself merely with this practical work. The propaganda side

is by no means overlooked and lectures intended to impress upon the rural people the importance of the kind of work for which the Association has made itself responsible are systematically arranged. Among such propaganda activities of the Association during the year under report, the first place, in our opinion, must be given to the successful session of the Rural Uplift Conference which the Association was able to hold at Poona in June last with the veteran Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the chair. The monthly magazine in Marathi which is a part of the propaganda activities of the Association and has happily ceased to be a source of financial anxiety to it is also doing good work.

G. B. P.

### SHORT NOTICES.

**VEDANTASARA OF SADANANDA.** By SWAMI NIKHLANANDA. (Advaita Ashram, Calcutta.) 1931. 18cm. 129 p. Re. 1/4.

THIS is an edition of Sadananda's popular text-book on orthodox Vedanta, with an introduction, a new English translation and explanatory comments. The chief object in bringing out the book in the present form is, as we are told, to place before the reader some of the special features of the various Sanskrit commentaries on the text. Every one familiar with Indian philosophy knows the important place of commentaries in the development of Indian thought. The commentators are very often original thinkers and are well versed in the subject. The commentaries, therefore, are always highly illuminating comparative studies; sometimes they are even creative.

The text itself has a permanent place in all scientific study of Vedanta as a reliable and accurate handbook. An edition, therefore, of this handbook with a glimpse into the commentaries as its special feature must be highly welcome to all. The translation is faultless though there has of course been no attempt at literary embellishment. The short Introduction also is helpful and is refreshing for its brevity and accuracy.

It is to be hoped that besides being useful to persons who do not know Sanskrit, the edition will encourage people who can, to read the text and the important commentaries for themselves.

P. R. DAMLE.

**MARRIAGE, FREEDOM AND EDUCATION.** By H. CRICHTON-MILLER. (S. C. M., London.) 19cm. 52 p. 1/-.

THIS is a very thoughtful and thought-provoking booklet. It draws the attention of parents to many problems in the education of children, but unfortunately most of the parents are, as the author says, "people who should not be allowed to have children." So careless are they, in his opinion, of the education of the future generation. The author's remarks about marriages between diverse races are noteworthy, the more so as such marriages do incalculable harm in the growth of the children both morally and physically. On this point he says: "All marriages of diverse races tend to produce a detrimental effect upon the character-growth of the child" and "hybridisation is less successful in the human than in any lower species." The author deals with much ingenuity with the problem of "surplus women" and "wives," who refuse to become mothers by contraceptive measures

and whom therefore he, and with him many, calls "legalised prostitutes" who have done harm to society. He comes to the conclusion that perfect chastity and the idea of "joint trusteeship for evolutionary purpose" between the parents is the only solution of the problem.

V. M. B.

## Correspondence.

### THE NASIK SATYAGRAHA AND THE CONGRESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—Mr. Gaikwad, the Secretary of the Nasik Temple-entry Satyagraha, having approached the Anti-Untouchability Committee of the Indian National Congress for support to his satyagraha, Swami Anand, the Secretary of the latter Committee, is reported to have sent a reply extending to the cause "full moral support on principle", but expressing his Committee's inability to do anything more practical for it in the present condition of the nation. While the Swami admits that the satyagraha that the temple-entry satyagrahis are conducting is in no way unjustifiable, being the inevitable result of the obduracy of the orthodox Touchable Hindus, he ends by stating that his Committee is "averse to do anything that may divert people's energy into a feud and consequent dissipation of the national strength."

If it is true that a man is worth something when the fight begins with himself, the "feud" that the Swami deprecates is certainly a thing to be welcomed. In the words of the Gita, blessed are the warriors that are privileged to fight in such a just and righteous cause, regardless of pusillanimous considerations of policy and immediate results.

If, however, the Swamiji had based his *non-possumus* on the ground that the Congress being a non-denominational institution, religious or communal questions like that of temple-entry could not come within the purview of its activity, it would have been an understandable plea. Although the Congress has once violated its non-denominational character by identifying itself with the Sunni institution of the Turkish Khilafat, yet the proper position for a Congress Swami to take in the circumstances would have been to say: "The Indian National Congress is a non-denominational organisation. As such it cannot identify itself with a communal movement like temple-entry for the Depressed Classes. But the Congress is not only entitled but bound to remove all those incidents of untouchability which have the effect of depriving any class of Indian citizens of the enjoyment of the elementary rights of citizenship on equal terms with the rest of the population. Therefore, if it were a civic grievance like the ban on the use of a public tank or road, or non-admission to or segregation in a public school or hospital—that was the objective of your satyagraha, my Committee would most gladly have identified itself with

the campaign both morally and materially. As it is, your satyagraha for temple-entry does not come within the purview of the Congress." He might have said like that, and yet added that personally he, as a Hindu and one in 'holy orders' (Swami), felt bound to support the satyagraha with whole-hearted active sympathy, and to advise all Hindus to do likewise to the best of their means both moral and material. But the political Swami stops short at expressing sympathy with the aim of the satyagrahis, for which mercy, of course, he is entitled to the thanks of the satyagrahis. He even admits that the satyagraha that they have undertaken is the inevitable result of the obstinate refusal of the Touchable Hindus to concede the just rights of their Untouchable brethren in faith. But, says he, (and after all those noble sentiments it is a most pitiable 'but',) "the condition through which the nation is at present passing makes it necessary that the matchless weapon of mass satyagraha should be used for the attainment of Indian political independence alone"; and this view, the Swamiji claims, is the same as his colleague Seth Jannalal Bajaj formerly expressed on the same satyagraha.

Now the only occasion on which, I remember, Mr. Bajaj expressed himself on the merits of the Nasik Satyagraha was in March last year, and the following extract from his statement published in the *Bombay Chronicle* (March 15, 1930,) will show how far from the truth is the Swamiji's claim that his above view represents also Sethji's:

I congratulate the organisers of Nasik Satyagraha most heartily for their perfectly peaceful and disciplined behaviour, and am confident that provided they are able to maintain the same to the end they are bound to triumph. I should have been myself happy to take part in it or supported it more actively if I were not engaged in the larger campaign calculated to end all ills and to pave the way as nothing else can to deliver the nation from all bonds, political, social as well as economic. But I hope all those who cannot similarly occupy themselves and who believe untouchability to be a stain on Hinduism, will whole-heartedly associate themselves with the Nasik Satyagraha and support it in every way they can, as long as it is conducted peacefully and in strictly non-violent manner as at present.

This was uttered at a time when the country-wide campaign of political Satyagraha of last year had just begun. But now that there is no such campaign on, the field may be said to be clear for internal reform and adjustment. These are quite necessary; for, as Mahatma Gandhi said on the occasion of opening an old temple to the Untouchables at Ahmedabad in August, "if we came into power with the stain of untouchability uneffaced, I am positive that the untouchables would be far worse under that 'Swaraj' than they are now, for the simple reason that our weaknesses and our failings would then be buttressed up by the accession of power... This self-purification is an indispensable condition of Swaraj." (*Young India*, 6-8-1931.)

Then, there is another utterance of Sethji of more recent date, which also may be said to belie the Swamiji's claim that Sethji is as chary as he himself of

causing "a feud and consequent dissipation of national strength". Speaking at Puri on Oct. 17th last, Seth Jamnalal is reported to have given

a warning to the citizens of Puri to soon efface the obscene images found in the sacred Jagannath temple. He added that they are a slur upon the Hindu religion and culture. By December they must be effaced, otherwise he would advise the Hindu public to resort to satyagraha for the effacement of those images. If necessary, he would not hesitate to lead the satyagraha himself. Nobody with his daughters and sisters will dare visit this sacred temple without hanging his head in shame and repentance for going over there. He would not allow the exhibition of those obscene images before lakhs of persons visiting Puri during the next Congress session. Secondly, Sethji said that all the temples in Puri should be thrown open to all people, including the so-called Untouchables by December. Then alone Puri can justify holding the Session. He then asked how many will resort to satyagraha if the obscene images were not effaced and many hands rose. (Vide *Free Press Journal* of Oct. 18, 1931.)

So much for the internal harmony of the Anti-Untouchability Committee of the Congress. Now, let us look into the ground on which the Swamiji excuses himself and his Committee from helping the Nasik Satyagraha further than "extending its full moral support on principle" (what exactly does this mean, I wonder),—the ground, namely, that it will "divert people's energy into a feud" with the "consequent dissipation of national strength", which "in the condition through which the nation is at present passing" should be utilised with the help of "the matchless weapon of mass satyagraha" for "the attainment of Indian political independence alone".

Were it not a Swami and one of the immediate entourage of the forger of the "matchless weapon", that has put forth this argument, one might be excused for suspecting unspiritual motives of base expediency behind the objection. As it is, the objection would apply not only to satyagraha for temple-entry, but it would be equally applicable to satyagraha undertaken to secure to the Untouchables any of the 'fundamental rights' (as the Congress phrase goes) of citizenship. If the Swamiji's objection were valid no satyagraha might be undertaken, till the complete Congress Swaraj materialised, to vindicate the right of the Untouchables to use a public well, road or rest-house, or to stop the segregation or to remove the ban on the admission of Untouchables to a public school or to public conveyances like boats and buses, and such-like disabilities. If a satyagraha were undertaken to vindicate the Depressed Classes' rights, even in such cases would the Swami take the same attitude as he has done in the Nasik case, and say: "This is not the time. It will cause needless division in our ranks. Let us win political independence first, and then we will remove untouchability".

When a similar plea was advanced by no less a Congressman than Mr. K. M. Munshi in Bombay, the *Bombay Chronicle* in its issue of Nov. 3 last dealt with it in a way which it is to be wished most other

Congress organs also did, instead of echoing such croakings. "If Untouchability is a crime and a sin", the *Chronicle* pointed out, "any truthful and peaceful attempt to awaken, through one's own suffering, the conscience of another, can never be inopportune or premature. If we demand Swaraj for all, the 'Untouchables' as well as the 'Touchables', the demand will be more powerful and made with an easier conscience if we concede to the Untouchables at once the most elementary rights of a human being, let alone a share of Swaraj, or at least if we make every possible honest effort to win that right for these victims of double degradation, social as well as political." Yours, etc.

S. D. NADKARNI

Karwar, Dec. 8.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- UNEMPLOYMENT: ITS CAUSES AND THEIR REMEDIES. By RUPERT TROUTON. (Day to Day Pamphlets (The Hogarth Press.) 1931. 20cm. 51p. 1/6.
- THE INDIAN PEASANT UPROOTED. By MARGARET READ. (Longmans, London.) 1931. 19cm. 256p. 5/-
- WHAT WE SAW IN RUSSIA. By ANEURIN BEVAN & OTHERS. (The Hogarth Press.) 1931. 18cm. 29p. 1/-
- THE FUTURE OF CAPITALISM. By LEWIS WATT. (The Catholic Social Guild, Oxford.) 1931. 18cm. 72p. 1/-
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