

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### S. I. S. and the Present Crisis.

IN view of the present political crisis, the Council of the Servants of India Society met at Poona from the 14th to the 18th inst. Its views on the political situation are embodied in the following resolutions:—

1. "The Council is of opinion that the Viceroy's refusal to allow Mahatma Gandhi to discuss the Ordinances with him was inadvisable and unjustified, as a personal interview might possibly have prevented the resumption of civil disobedience."

2. "The Council deplors the renewal of the civil disobedience movement at a time when it is more necessary than ever that constructive efforts should be made in a peaceful atmosphere to reconcile divergent interests and unite all political parties for the achievement of Swaraj."

3. "The Council strongly disapproves of the resort to the Bengal and Bombay Regulations and of the government of the country by means of Ordinances. In view of the sweeping and drastic character of the Ordinances that have been promulgated, it is of opinion that the reign of law has been replaced by the reign of executive discretion. The language of the Ordinances is so wide that even the performance of legitimate duties may be treated as an offence under them."

The Council understands that even such activities as the promotion of swadeshi and temperance may be prohibited. The Council also notes that the power given by the Emergency Powers Ordinance to require a person to report himself periodically to the police may be so used as to humiliate

respectable persons, or to give an excuse for depriving them of their liberty, for if they refuse to comply with such a requirement they can be prosecuted and sentenced to a maximum imprisonment of two years and fine without limit of amount. Cases of abuse of this power have already occurred.

Another instance of the perilously wide scope of the Ordinances is the circular recently issued by the Government of Bombay which warns the editors of newspapers that 'any immoderate criticisms of Government or Government officials' would render them liable to prosecution under the Emergency Powers Ordinance or the Criminal Law Amendment Act. In view of the manner in which special powers taken to control the press have been exercised in the past there is reason to fear that this power may be used to interfere with legitimate criticism of official acts.

Unless at least the Ordinances are modified and administered with great restraint the bitterness which they will create will seriously aggravate the situation."

4. "The Council is of opinion that the indiscriminate use of Sec. 144, Cr. Pr. Code, which is increasingly bringing the public into conflict with the authorities and leading to lathi charges, is creating widespread resentment in the country. As in 1930 the lathi charges are alienating the sympathy even of those people who do not approve of civil disobedience."

5. "The Council is convinced that the only lasting cure for the present troubles is a speedy settlement of the constitutional question, so that Swaraj may be attained without any unnecessary delay. The co-operation of all political parties is essential to the completion of this great task and unless the new constitution is brought into existence in an atmosphere of goodwill, it will fail to bring about full contentment and progress."

### The Situation.

A FURTHER week's rule by Ordinances has done nothing to prove the groundlessness of the public misgivings about the extremely sweeping nature of their provisions. Congress workers arrested in the initial round-up are being gradually released from jail, the release being conditional upon their reporting themselves periodically—daily in some cases—to the police, a condition which when imposed upon persons of position cannot but be regarded as humiliating in the extreme. Disobedience of such orders has led, as in the case of Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Editor, *Bombay Chronicle*, to mention only one

among many similar instances, to a sentence of two years' imprisonment—the maximum laid down in the Ordinance. Incidentally, one cannot help being struck by the uniform tendency of the magistracy in the different provinces to which the Ordinances apply to visit all such offences with the maximum punishment.

Mrs. Gandhi who was charged with assisting the activities of an unlawful association, viz. the Congress, was sentenced last week to six weeks' imprisonment, her host being awarded six months' for "harbouring" her! Boys under 10 who, perhaps playfully, participated in a hartal in their school have been fined Rs. 25, the fine being recovered from their parents. In Bengal some schoolmasters have been ordered to make themselves available to the authorities responsible for the maintenance of law and order for two hours every day for the purpose of identifying their students. The special conditions in Bengal may be cited as an excuse for such action; but there is no knowing when similar calls on the services of members of the teaching profession in the other provinces as well will be made by the executive which has fully armed itself with the necessary powers to that end.

The national flag has now become a red rag to Government who are using all their powers to prevent its display, and even private individuals are asked, as was done in Surat, to pull it down, non-compliance being punished with six months' imprisonment. As if all this was not sufficiently provocative, particular care is taken to replace the National Flag by the Union Jack on all Congress buildings which the Government have seen fit to take into their possession. If the Government believes that the Ordinances are called for by the requirements of the political situation, there is no reason why they should be administered so provocatively.

The Government's efforts for cutting off the supply of the sinews of war to the Congress continue with what success nobody can tell. But the police are reported to have closely scrutinised the bank accounts of some prominent Ahmedabad mill-owners and to have attached nearly three-quarters of a lakh of rupees found with a citizen of Surat on suspicion of the funds being Congress funds. Among the more important Congressmen arrested last week may be mentioned Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj, the treasurer of the Congress, Mr. Abhyarnkar, the C. P. Dictator since sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 10,000, a sentence rightly looked upon by the public as uncommonly severe and Mr. Hardikar, the organiser of the Congress Volunteer Corps.

#### Lathi Charges in Madras.

LATHI CHARGES in Madras, unlike in Bombay, are made with such severity, nay brutality, that one cannot help thinking that their object is not so much to disperse a crowd as to strike terror in the minds of the people. Such lathi charges have been made both in the city and in the districts. In many cases Congressmen and Volunteers are severely beaten and then arrested. Why beating should be a preliminary to arrest one is at a loss to understand. There have been cases of broken limbs, of profuse bleeding, of victims being rendered unconscious; and in one case death has resulted. A Vakil of Coimbatore was so severely assaulted before arrest that he had to be brought on a stretcher from the jail hospital and the trying magistrate had to adjourn the case for a fortnight in order that the accused may get well enough to stand the trial. Red Cross Volunteers have been beaten and driven away when they were rendering first aid. This police frightfulness has created the

keenest resentment in the public mind. The South Indian Medical Union, said to be the largest organisation of independent medical practitioners in Southern India, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"While not wishing to enter into politics and while dissociating ourselves from every kind of political agitation, we most emphatically protest against the present police violence towards nonviolent individuals and crowds and particularly against persons rendering first-aid and ambulance help".

On the 15th inst. the leading women social workers of Madras, headed by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi met the Police Commissioner of Madras and remonstrated with him regarding the conduct of the police. A report says:

"The ladies explained to the Commissioner that they had reliable reports that a woman with a Red Cross badge who went to remove volunteers was hurt and rendered unconscious by lathi blows, was ill-treated by the police and her blouse torn and coloured water thrown on her from the water hose. She was thus prevented from rendering help to the injured picketers.

They also told the Commissioner that the police frequently aimed blows at the head, stomach and chest of the volunteers without any regard to the consequences. Therefore they urged that the police should be instructed to avoid unnecessary violence and also allow the women workers to remove the injured people from the scene of action".

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi also informed the Commissioner that after being disabled the volunteers were dragged along the road by the foot as far as the People's Hospital and there left outside on the road! The Commissioner told the ladies that he had given strict orders to the police that the lathi should never be aimed at the head and that he would again re-affirm the orders. That in spite of strict orders the police all over the province should be beating the victims on the head, shows a deplorable desire in them to inflict injury for its own sake and without a sense of responsibility. The Local Government will therefore do well to consider the advisability of prohibiting lathi charges altogether.

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#### The Prime Minister On Separation Of Burma.

THE Prime Minister's declaration of the British Government's Burmese policy was a mere repetition of the recommendations of the Peel Committee to which reference was made in these columns last week. The only fresh point dealt with by him in the statement relates to Burma's separation from India. He announced the Government's intention to carry separation into effect on being satisfied that that was what was desired by the Burmese themselves. Thus in regard to Burma at any rate the British Government is determined to give the principle of self-determination full sway on which they deserve to be congratulated. The ascertainment of the wishes of the people of Burma on this point would be carried out by means of the general election to the local legislative council, due in a few months, which, the Premier suggested, should be fought on the broad issue of Burma's separation from India. If the verdict of the Burmese people is found to be in favour of Burma forming herself into a separate political entity, the British Government will proceed to prepare a constitution for Burma on the lines of the Peel report subsequently endorsed by the British Government through Mr. MacDonald. If on the other hand Burma desired to continue to form part of India, she would enjoy the status that would be enjoyed by the other Indian provinces. In this case, as the Premier distinctly warned Burma, that would be her political

destiny for all time. For a Federation cannot be built up on the basis of its members being free to leave it whenever they like. It is thus clear that once Burma joins the proposed Indian federation, she cannot get out of it, even if later she comes to revise her view of her connection with India. To those who had been maintaining since the close of the first session of the Indian R. T. C. that the principle of Burma's separation from India had already been accepted, Mr. MacDonald's remarks on the point will come as a surprise.

#### How it looks to Britishers.

THE London correspondent of the *Hindu* writes as follows as to how the existing political situation in this country, faced as it is by official coercion on the one hand and civil resistance on the other, appears to Britishers who are in full sympathy with the national aspirations for political freedom. "There are many in this country," says he, "who equally deplore the policy of the Government and the threats of renewed civil disobedience on the part of the Congress. India is likely to suffer as much from the resistance of one as she is from the repression of the other. It is possible for the Congress to create a very awkward situation for the Government by no-rent and no-tax campaigns, by the boycott of British goods and everything else of British origin. But will these things of themselves advance the national cause of India? They will certainly not bring the British Government to its knees, damaging though the effect of such a revolt must be. There are at least two factors which tell against the ultimate success of the Congress in this business. One is that the movement would be far from unanimous. There are large sections of the population in India and wide areas of country where the writ of the Congress would not run. With all its great influence it could not expect to be a match for the ruthless efficiency of the Government machine. The machine might wobble here and there, but with so many interests engaged to support it all over the country it could hardly be put out of action.

"Then there is the old difficulty of keeping the masses in line with the non-violence on which the movement would in principle be based. Bitter experience has shown that when public passion is inflamed it is impossible to restrain irresponsible hot-heads from acts of violence. Communal strife and bloodshed have too often been the by-products of civil disobedience, despite the efforts of the leaders to prevent such developments. The line of demarcation between passive resistance and physical force would tend to become blurred, especially as there are always plenty of hooligans about to exploit such a situation to their own advantage. With the best will in the world to keep the movement on a spiritual plane, Mr. Gandhi and his associates would probably not be able to prevent its deterioration into a tragedy of violence and reprisals."

#### A Better Way.

THE correspondent further adds: "Surely there is a better way, and in the long run one which will prove a more certain road to victory. The Round Table Conference, with all its disappointments and shortcomings, at least pointed to a possible alternative. It may require more patience to pursue that slow and tortuous path to national self-government, but who can doubt that ultimately it would lead to the desired end without the hatred and horrors which are inseparable from revolutionary upheavals? I agree that there is cause enough in the proceedings of the Government for protest and even resistance (within the law), but it seems to me and

to many other friendly observers on this side that Indian nationalists have the ball already at their feet if they will only play the game with wise strategy and perseverance. By moral pressure alone they can undoubtedly extort from the present Government a constitution which, in the near future, would place them in a position to advance without much delay to the full achievement of their goal. The principle of government by consent was practically conceded at the Round Table Conference and has since been endorsed by Parliament, though with many doubts and qualifications. It must also be admitted that the methods at present being pursued in Bengal and the United Provinces are the very opposite of 'government by consent.' But that, surely, can only be a passing phase, since no one will maintain that the administration of any country can ever be normally conducted on such lines. Despite all the devices of autocracy, power is obviously passing to the people. With an extended franchise control of the legislatures would soon be established and after that the citadels of the executive would not long resist capture. Of course there are difficulties and dangers in that direction also, but there can be little doubt that real independence is more likely to be secured in that way than in any other. A prolonged struggle of the kind which now seems to be impending between a widespread popular movement and a powerful Government may well bring both to the verge of ruin, involving untold millions in a common catastrophe."

#### Condemnation of Communalism.

SOME prominent Muslim young men from Bombay have recently issued a manifesto dissociating themselves from the narrow communal attitude adopted at the R. T. C. by Muslim delegates. In the course of the manifesto they say:

The events of the last few months in Britain and India have naturally been engaging our closest attention. We have followed, with as much sorrow as shame, the conduct of the so-called Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference. We cannot find words strong enough to condemn their tactics. We completely dissociate ourselves from their communal demands. The younger generation is swayed by thoughts and feelings entirely different from theirs and the wide gulf that separates us from them is indeed so wide as to be unbridgeable. Our self-respect prompts us to announce that we of the younger generation are proud to call ourselves Indians first and Indians last. We are not prepared to tolerate communalism in any shape or form, and desire the freedom of the country with as much intensity as our brethren of the other communities.

We consider it needless to go into the details of the communal demands formulated by the Muslim Delegates to the Round Table Conference. Suffice it to say that, in our considered opinion, the foundation of a Swaraj India must be laid in unstinted nationalism and no constitution will be acceptable to the younger generation of Muslims until it is broadbased on the three principles:-

- (1) Joint Electorates;
- (2) Residuary powers to vest in the Centre; and
- (3) Adult Suffrage.

In our own humble way, we have resolved not to rest content till our country's freedom is attained and communalism has been wiped out.

It will be noticed that the Congress too is partly involved in this condemnation since it has declared itself to be in favour of the residual powers of the constitution being vested in the Provinces and States which will form the constituent members of the proposed federation.

## HOW TO BRING ABOUT PEACE ?

WHEN the non-co-operation movement was started by the Congress at the instance of Mahatma Gandhi it was a novel development in Indian politics. Government had no previous experience of it. Being based on the principle of non-violence, it was difficult to ban it. Government was also anxious to promote the success of the newly introduced Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. They therefore decided to wait on events and took vigorous action against the Congress more than a year after the commencement of satyagraha by proclaiming its volunteer associations unlawful under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. According to the non-official view the movement was dying of inanition and that had Government stayed their hands a little longer their patience would have been amply rewarded in the end. The enforcement of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, however, revived the movement. Mahatma Gandhi himself said to me and Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas in December, 1921, "Government had successfully opposed my satyagraha with theirs. I did not know what to do, but the Criminal Law Amendment Act has come to my rescue." The disobedience of the Act created a critical situation for some time, but the Act served its purpose in the long run, as the supply of Congress volunteers prepared to defy it ceased after a while.

When civil disobedience was restarted in 1930, for a variety of reasons, one of the most important of which was that Lord Irwin was at the head of the Indian administration, Government again decided to take no hasty steps and to watch the manifestations of the movement. It was thought that the movement, the main plank in which was the manufacture of salt, might soon sink under its own weight. This hope might have been realised, but as in 1921 the action taken by Government to repress the movement put new life into it. The unnecessary dispersal of public meetings by force and ruthless lathi charges, which became the order of the day, gained for the Congress the sympathy even of people who disapproved of its programme.

It may have seemed to Government when they were threatened with the resumption of civil disobedience three weeks ago that the events of 1921 and 1930 showed that the policy of forbearance had proved a failure. We believe there was also a reaction against the "sloppy sentimentalism" of Lord Irwin which culminated in the Gandhi-Irwin pact of March last. Instead, therefore, of trying to extinguish the fire after the flames had spread, swift and stern action was taken to put out the sparks that might lead to a conflagration. The entire Congress and all allied bodies have been placed under a ban and most of the prominent Congressmen are under detention. Even the Nationalist Muslim Party, which is not affiliated to the Congress has been proclaimed. Drastic Ordinances have been issued. The Emergency Powers Ordinance is scarcely distinguishable from martial law. The executive is all powerful, and can practically suspend the ordinary law of

the land. Misuse is being made of section 4 of the Emergency Powers Ordinance. Respectable persons whose movements can be easily traced are required to report themselves to the police at prescribed intervals, and their refusal to do so is made a ground for inflicting severe sentences on them. The case of Mr. Brelvi is the most flagrant instance of this kind. District magistrates seem to be inviting trouble by unnecessarily prohibiting public meetings, and the use of excessive force is creating a revulsion of feeling as in 1930. At Dohad, according to the *Indian Daily Mail* of the 20th January, 104 persons including four ladies, out of 500 persons forming a procession, were injured in a lathi charge. This, if true, is a serious matter, and requires to be looked into by the Bombay Government.

What is the net result of the strong action taken by Government during the last fortnight to have its authority respected? What kind of effect has it had on our political and economic life? It is too early yet to make any statement about the final outcome of the measures adopted by Government, but it appears, for the time being, that the civil disobedience movement is lacking in the vitality which it showed in 1930. The sudden action taken by Government prevented it from maturing its plans and organising its forces, and left it without a directing head. To this extent the anticipations of Government have been fulfilled, but discontent has become more deep rooted, and men's minds have been turned away from the reforms. The most urgent task before the country is to acquire the power which will prevent the recurrence of a catastrophe like the one which faces us now. It requires deliberate handling and the united energies of all parties for its consummation. But such is the state of feeling in the country that the ordinary man regards all talk of reconstruction, which should be our most important preoccupation, as unreal.

As regards the economic situation, so far as one can judge from newspapers, business is at a standstill. The boycott of foreign cloth is being vigorously pursued. Dealers in foreign cloth are unable to carry on their trade. There is no doubt that the Ordinances have added to the public disinclination to buy foreign cloth, and have increased public sympathy for those who are preaching its boycott. The commercial exchanges and markets in Bombay practically remain closed. Responsible bodies are exhorting the public to have no dealings with foreign textile or banking or insurance companies and to patronise indigenous companies only. The financial position of the country is also causing considerable anxiety. Customs and Railway receipts, in spite of the enhancements recently made in Customs duties and Railway fares, have been very disappointing, and it appears as if Government will have to come before the Indian legislature with fresh demands for taxation. The economic depression is world-wide, but in India it has been accentuated by political

causes. Our economic recovery is closely bound up with an improvement in the political situation.

The position in the country requires the settlement of the constitutional problem at the earliest possible date. The sooner the responsibility for the administration of the country is cast on Indians, the sooner will there be peace in the land. It was therefore suggested to the Prime Minister during the first session of the R. T. C. that even before the new constitution received Parliamentary approval, steps should be taken to make Government more responsive to Indian aspirations. The Prime Minister referring to this in his closing speech said,

"One or two of you who have had large experience in administration have pressed upon us that under the existing Government of India Act some things of importance could be done by administration, to bring Indian administrative action more into accord with the declarations made here than is the case to-day. We cannot commit ourselves as to whether that is so or not, but we propose, in consultation with Indians of administrative experience, to explore that, and as the result of the exploration we shall take action or otherwise."

We do not know what action the Prime Minister took to implement this promise. But Sir A. P. Patro is reported to have said the other day that Mr. Benn made the necessary inquiries and found that the course suggested was not practicable. We find it difficult to believe that had this been the case, responsible members of the R. T. C. would have pressed upon His Excellency the Viceroy a proposal which had already been investigated and discarded, and that His Excellency would have lent a favourable ear to it. It is true that the Muddiman Committee's view was that large constitutional changes in the existing system of government would not be consistent with the "structure, policy and purpose" of the Government of India Act, but they would be quite in accord with the new policy enunciated by the British Government, and even within the existing framework of the Act, it is possible to take administrative action which will change the spirit in which the government of the country can be carried on. The higher personnel can at least be rapidly Indianised. Along with this, two other steps can be immediately taken which will be an unmistakable proof of the new spirit which inspires the British Government. The recruitment of the higher grades in the Civil Service in England should be completely stopped. The Assembly demanded this in 1922, and the O'Donnell circular created the impression that the Government of India were inclined to consider the demand favourably, but possibly owing to the resignation of Mr. Montagu, the old policy remained unchanged.

The other question which should be immediately tackled is the Indianisation of the Army. The report of the Indian Military College Committee has caused profound disappointment in the country. To use the words of the Defence Sub-Committee of the R. T. C. its proposals are not "commensurate with the main object in view." They are far from being a serious

attempt to train Indians to defend their country, and have created doubts whether the constitutional control of the Army will be transferred to Indians within any measurable distance of time. An honest and liberal policy in this matter will go far to reconcile Indians to the reservation of the Army, and be the surest pledge of England's intentions with regard to Indian Dominion Status.

H. N. KUNZRU.

#### "WITHDRAW FROM R. T. C."

THE question propounded in our last week's leader has been answered generally in the affirmative, for though it is not yet known whether Sir Purshotamdas Thakordas will serve on the Working Committee of the R.T.C., other non-Congressmen have agreed to do so. And we cannot say that they have taken a wrong decision. The opposite view is very ably presented by a valued co-worker in our correspondence columns. It can be summed up thus: when Government repress how can you co-operate? Surely, our correspondent will easily detect for himself the fallacy underlying such a question, for non-Congressmen when they offer to work on the R.T.C. committees do not co-operate with Government in its repression, but only in devising ways of expanding our political rights. Not only do they not share any responsibility for repression, but they expressly dissociate themselves from it and protest against it. It may suit the enemies of the country to misrepresent their attitude, but Indian nationalists who are not interested in making it appear that the Government's present policy of indiscriminating coercion has popular support need not join such enemies.

While protesting against repression, non-Congressmen are not willing to let their protest take a shape which, without helping Congressmen in any way, will only result in postponing and seriously jeopardising constitutional advance, which alone will be a lasting remedy for a state of things like the present. Our correspondent says that mere abstention from R.T.C. committees on the part of non-Congressmen will be effective: it will be effective certainly in impeding the constitutional progress of the country, but it will be wholly ineffective in stopping further repression. After all this form of protest is available to just a handful of men in the country; those non-Congressmen who have not been invited to work on the committees cannot, even if they will, express their protest in this manner. In these circumstances it appears to us that the best interests of the country would be served, not by withdrawing the few men who perchance may offer stern opposition to the machinations of British die-hards at the R.T.C., but by enlisting the support of others who are not called upon to take any part in the R.T.C. proceedings in a general movement of protest. How such a movement can be organised and made effective is by no means an easy question to answer, but it is just in answering a question like this that the talents of all thoughtful men like our correspondent can be employed to the best advantage.

Anyway, it is a poor sort of protest for some half a dozen people to rest content with pursuing a negative policy of abstention from the R.T.C. committees.

Our correspondent seems to think that since non-Congressmen did so much to get the Congress into the R.T.C. they must logically themselves retire from it when the Congress goes out. This reasoning is not too easy to follow. Mahatma Gandhi himself was of the opinion that the subjects of the Indian Princes ought to have been invited to the Conference, and it is believed that he used his great influence towards securing their entry. In this eventually he did not succeed; but that did not prevent him from attending the R.T.C. himself. In fact he must have agreed the more readily to enter the Conference in order to protect the interests of a section of the community who he felt would otherwise find no champion. Nor did the people of the States make a grievance of it. It should be possible, we think, to extend a little of such charitable interpretation to the conduct of non-Congressmen who, finding all their efforts to keep the Congress in the R.T.C. fruitless, now think of continuing their work on the committees with the sole object of making impossible in future a repetition of a deadlock between the Government and the people such as has occurred now.

## Reviews.

### AMERICAN CIVIC IMPROVEMENT.

**AMERICAN CIVIC ANNUAL. VOL. III.** Ed By HARLEAN JAMES. (American Civic Association, Washington, D. C.) 1931. 21cm. 350p. \$ 3.00.

THE United States of America is a country which nature has abundantly blessed with natural resources. These gifts have too often been wasted by the greed or thoughtlessness of its inhabitants. Whole regions have been de-forested by the steam saw-mill; rivers and water-falls of great beauty have been despoiled to furnish power for factories; and highways leading through wonderful scenery have been defaced with huge and ugly advertisements. Fortunately a section of the American people has been awakened to the folly of such blind waste, and has banded itself together to save what remains. This volume is the third annual publication of such a group, reporting on the results of the year's efforts to save and restore the natural beauty of America.

During the year under review an effort has been made to concentrate on the extension of the great system of National Parks. Under this system, for some years past the Government of the United States has spent large sums of money in acquiring for the nation vast areas of mountain and forest, and turning them into reserves. The purpose here is not merely what we frequently find in India, viz., to preserve timber and prevent the lessening of rainfall which often follows on de-forestation. While these results will follow automatically the main purpose is to provide extensive playgrounds and holiday resorts for the whole country. Since the coming of the Ford car, many people of moderate means spend their summer holidays in taking extensive camping trips. For this purpose, these parks are provided with shelters which may be occupied at a nominal cost, and with guides, publications describing routes and scenery, and in

some cases with extensive museums. How much this system adds to the health, intelligence and happiness of the American people it is difficult to estimate.

The second section of the book deals with civic-improvement or town-planning. The capital city of Washington is the best example of the planned order and beauty that can result from a systematic use of the best ideas in the laying out of a new city, and from the harmonious planning and placing of beautiful public buildings. The same idea on a small scale can be applied to lesser cities and small towns. How it is being done is described in detail in this volume, which the reviewer recommends to those desirous of seeing India develop and preserve the natural beauty in which she is so rich.

A. B. VANDOREN.

### VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY.

**THE LIFE OF VIVEKANANDA AND THE UNIVERSAL GOSPEL.** By ROMAIN ROLLAND. (Advaita Ashram, Calcutta.) 1931. 21cm. 435p. Rs. 4/8.

THE book is divided into two parts: the first deals with the life of Vivekananda, and the second expounds his philosophy. Both are altogether unlike most of what usually goes by these names. They bear the impress of genius and are creative interpretations of the subject-matter rather than representations.

The volume, we are told, is in continuation of the one on Ramkrishna and it may be said without exaggeration that Ramkrishna and Vivekananda had never been understood so correctly and so objectively as they have been in these two volumes. So much has been written about these two personalities—and most of it by sympathetic and enlightened fellow-workers—that it seems surprising that there was scope and need for R. Rolland's studies of these two masters.

And yet it is so. We feel that we get here something new and fresh about these two, though there are no new facts as such. The narrative is made up of selected incidents and the selection is made after a thorough and objective understanding of the essence of the personality.

The comparison between Ramkrishna and Vivekananda whenever attempted shows an insight into the life of both the personages which has scarcely been equalled and the scattered cross-references to Gandhi are also invariably illuminating.

There was rarely a more difficult task for an author than the one which Rolland here accomplishes. The difference between Vivekananda and Ramkrishna had to be brought out and yet nobody who merely understood the difference could be said to understand the personalities concerned. That there was a Napoleon, a Caesar, inside Vivekananda is certain. But there was much more, and Ramkrishna knew that there was, when he said that it will melt into tears and lend support to the weak and the miserable once Narain comes into touch with misery. In this connection one should also note the lyrical outburst on pp. 175 and 176 in which Vivekananda—his work done—asks to be taken up into the bosom of the Mother to be led wheresoever she liked.

In the part which deals with the philosophy of Vivekananda, the author has all along kept the Western reader in his mind. He is interpreting the thought of the East as represented in Vivekananda to the followers of western science, philosophy and culture.

As one who has a personal interest and deep insight in such matters, Rolland's statement of our philosophy has a unique value and authority. His account of the four Yogas is at once impartial and sympathetic. In fact, the entire treatment is a fine illustration of a real effort to understand a different culture. He knows what the West stands for and what it has achieved; but he also sees as few do what the East did and said and will do and say again. He hopes that the Eastern (Hindu) culture and philosophy as preached and lived by Vivekananda and Ramkrishna will be understood properly by the West and that both the East and the West will realize that they are working for a common end viz. the perfection of man.

M. Rolland believes in the unity of the East and the West. He believes that they are working for each other and only in their union can man achieve his full possibilities. It is needless to say that in this book as elsewhere he has succeeded as much as the powers of human intellect, imagination and emotion can, in showing that such a union is possible and useful. There is no doubt whatsoever that whether the East and the West can or do unite or not, such works as Rolland's have immense value for the depth and enrichment of his own culture. As books of genius, of extraordinary penetration and impartiality their place is secure for ever, though there may be a difference of opinion as to their prophetic character and their direct message. For, after all, there are likely to be more facts and higher laws in God's world than any man, howsoever great, can fathom.

P. R. DAMLE.

## Miscellaneous.

### MANDATES AT THE R. T. C.

The January number of the INDIAN REVIEW contains an article on the above subject from the pen of Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. He writes:

ONE of the important differences between the first and second sessions of the Round Table Conference was the greater prominence in the latter of mandates by which some members were bound to certain courses of action. The effect on the final work of the Conference was not beneficial. The issues before the Conference were of the utmost gravity and complexity. They went to the roots of national life and touched the fundamentals of the British connection. Many, various, and conflicting interests had to be reconciled: several communities, long at variance in public life, came together with the avowed object of seeking mutual agreement. If ever the art of compromise was needed in human affairs, it was when British and Indian, Hindu, Musalman, Sikh, Christian and Untouchable met one another in St. James Palace in the closing months of 1931. It was essential that the delegates should not only talk frankly to one another but be free to negotiate, both on the questions bearing on the general politics of India and on the particular matters in which they were separately interested. In point of fact, however, several representatives came tied down to certain definite views and to the end remained so. Mahatma Gandhi himself was the most remarkable example; he was heard again and again expounding the Resolutions of the Indian National Congress and avowing that he had no authority to depart from them except in small details, and that, if any considerable change was proved necessary to his satisfaction, he would have to cable to India and await the sanction of the Congress Working Committee. If this was

the case with one who was sole representative and had formerly been dictator, that of other mandatories can well be imagined. The Sikh spokesmen repeated their instructions so often and with so little change that we all knew them by heart. Dr. Ambedkar changed, it is true, but in the direction of stiffening his demands. The Mussalmans were led ably and skilfully. Last year, when the informal discussion was in progress, they were willing to accept compromises; but as the negotiations went on, they showed less adaptability, largely because the mandates from India hardened. The British representatives, both those that came from India and those that represented Parliament here, evinced throughout the keen political sense of their race and felt themselves free to be influenced by the necessities of the situation and to give and take as seemed best from time to time. Let us think for a moment of the various bodies or associations from which members of the Round Table received their mandates: The Indian National Congress, the All-India Muslim League, the Hindu Maha Sabha, the European, Indian Christian and other organisations. Each of these has its own definite aims, programmes and watchwords. They appeal to communities and interests which are distinct and which mean to be distinct for ever. It is not conceivable that they would ever abandon their separate existence and merge together for a common line of action. If on momentous occasions like the present, their representatives were mere instruments of speech of their executives, how is the business of the country to be carried on? The phrase, the greatest common measure of agreement, would be meaningless. A treaty or pact to which the parties are many, postulates that the various negotiators should have power to yield some points in the programme of those whom they represent in order to secure other points. The Mahatma came prepared for separate electorates for the Muhammadans and the Sikhs, and unwilling to continue that privilege to other communities, or grant it for the first time to the Depressed Classes. From this position he did not budge an inch to the end. He started by asking for complete popular control over defence and external affairs. No argument from any quarter could prevail on him to moderate this demand. On minor matters, like the examination of public debts, his attitude was equally firm. It is difficult to say of him that during these fourteen weeks of incessant discussion and negotiation, he allowed himself to be moved in any important particular in order to make a common understanding possible. True, it was stated here on his behalf that, if his views on any head of discussion did not prevail, he would not necessarily break away but wait till the end to see how the picture shaped and might even acquiesce, if, on the whole, it was satisfactory to him. Surely that contingent promise, assuming that it was made, would have been but poor encouragement to those who wished to come to terms with him on specific issues. If he had only been a little more of a realist on the claims of the Minorities and on the reservations, what could he not have accomplished? To speculate is to be unhappy. He might have been the leader of a united Nationalist Party. But he preferred to be a mere Congress mandatory. To enunciate principles, to fight for ideals, to make propaganda—these are high duties and require rare ability. But when agitation has come to a head, it is no ignoble part to make the most of the occasion and get the people some return for their sufferings. Col. Wedgwood's recent letter to the present leader of the Opposition raises a question of the first importance in public life. One hopes it will be quoted widely in the Indian Press. We talked at the Round Table with glib tongues about the united responsibility of a future Indian

**Cabinet.** What would happen when several groups had to combine to form the Government of the day, and each Minister was bound by a mandate from his group and could not accommodate himself to the views of his colleagues? The persons who issue the mandate sit in their own club rooms and have no need to test the validity of their views by placing them in juxtaposition with the views of other organisations. A cabinet minister, whether at the federal centre or in a provincial capital in India, would find himself at every turn compelled to choose between loyalty to his party caucus and loyalty to his cabinet colleagues. All government would become impossible if he was not free, whenever he thought fit, to prefer the latter to the former. Well-established and strong organisations like their spokesmen to be independent; it is the weak ones that prefer dummies. An experienced Parliamentarian writes:

"It will be a bad day for the Labour Party when its parliamentary discipline is so rigid as to exclude a Jos. Wedgwood. No party can afford to exclude all sincere and erratic heretics. The Conservative Party has never banned its Cecil and its Henry Bentincks and has gained in strength thereby, and the Labour Party is going to weaken itself seriously if it tries to goose-step its Wedgwoods and Maxtons into the division lobby by means of these signed pledges."

## Correspondence.

### "WITHDRAW FROM R. T. C."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SERVANT OF INDIA.

SIR,—I hope you will allow a little space to an old co-worker of yours to dissociate himself from the advice offered to non-Congressmen in your issue of last week. In my opinion, yours is a counsel born of weakness and despair, and as such should be unacceptable to all who have faith in the inherent capacity of the country to resist any curbing of the passion for national freedom and who have hopes about the urge for self-government securing for India a glorious place among the great nations of the world.

The events of the past few weeks have taken us back to the state we were in about a year ago when on their return the most prominent among non-Congressmen in India set about the task of securing the co-operation of the Congress in the work of framing the constitution. For reasons which—with that clarity of political vision that so distinguishes him in public life—Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru has recently analysed in your columns, the blunders of the Government of India have led to a snapping of the link between Government and the largest and most active political organization in the country and I for one do not appreciate how those who strove so hard last year for the Congress to be represented in future constitutional discussions reconcile themselves to carrying on without it now, when the picture (to borrow the language of the Round Table Conference itself) is nearly as incomplete as it was last year. In fact, if the committees now appointed had been

constituted last year, their personnel would have been much more acceptable and less reactionary than it is today. That, however, is an accident and is not the main ground on which I base my opposition to non-Congressmen associating themselves with the work of the committees.

The principal reason why such association is harmful to the interests of the country is that it represents—and is being actually interpreted as such—an acquiescence in the present official policy of crushing the Congress and all activities associated with it which the Government of India have now inaugurated. Liberty of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association—these should be the watchwords of all true Liberals, and can any non-Congressman lay his hands on his heart and say whether public safety really demands the fetters which are now imposed in the name of law and order on the freedom of speech, writing and association under the regime of the Ordinances promulgated by the Governor-General? If the answer, as I understand your views, is that the policy is unjustifiable how can he offer co-operation? The legislatures today are powerless in securing a reversal of the policy, but a protest on the part of those called upon to work on the committees may be effective.—Yours, etc.

Bombay, 19th January,

AN ASSOCIATE.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, 1930. By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. (Oxford University Press.) 1931. 25cm. 605p. 21/-
- RISE OF THE CHRISTIAN POWER IN INDIA. (2nd Edn.) By B. D. BASU. (R. Chatterjee, 120/2 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.) 1931. 24cm. 1011p. Rs. 15.
- THE ROMANCE OF THE INDIAN FRONTIERS. By GEORGE MACMUNN. (Cape, London.) 1931. 22cm. 352p. 16/-
- SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY. By L. BRETTE. (Pitman.) 1931. 22cm. 469p. 10/6
- THE DISCOUNT MARKET IN LONDON. Its Organisation and Recent Development. (2nd Edn.) By H. W. GREENGRASS. (Pitman.) 1931. 22cm. 198p. 6/-
- THE GOLD STANDARD IN THEORY AND PRACTICE. (2nd Edn.) By R. G. HAWTREY. (Longmans, London.) 1931. 20cm. 168p. 2/6.
- CAUSES AND CURES OF UNEMPLOYMENT. By WILLIAM H. BEVERIDGE. (Longmans, London.) 1931. 20cm. 70p. 2/6.
- HOW TO READ THE MONEY ARTICLE. (6th Edn.) By CHARLES DUGUID. (Effingham Wilson, London.) 1931. 20cm. 142p. 5/-
- THE SEX FACTOR IN MARRIAGE. By HELENA WRIGHT. (The Vanguard Press, New York.) 1931. 20cm. 122p. \$2.00.
- CO-OPERATION IN INDIA AND ABROAD. By S. S. TALMAKI. (Basel Mission Press, Mangalore.) 1931. 20cm. 502p. Rs. 3/8.
- THE LAND-SYSTEM OF THE HOLKAR STATE. By G. I. WILLS. (Oxford University Press.) 1931. 22cm. 136p. Rs. 6.
- LETTERS TO JOHN BULL AND OTHERS. By ROBERT THE PEELER. (Williams & Norgate, London.) 1931. 22cm. 139p. 3/6.