

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Mr. Sastri's Tribute to the Mahatma.

MR. SASTRI was presented with a civic address by the Coimbatore Municipality on the 22nd inst. In his reply he made the following touching reference to Mahatma Gandhi who had started his historic fast two days before. Mr. Sastri said:—"In these days of anxiety no proceeding whether public or private may be begun without the hearts of all who are engaged therein turning towards what is happening within the walls of the Central Prison at Yerawada. The public mind and the hearts of private friends of the Mahatma are alike agitated as they were agitated on few occasions to contemplate the great stake upon which he has placed his life. His life, it would be presumptuous to say, is lived as few lives in history or fable have been lived. It is of supreme consequence to our kind; and he has now risked it in a cause dear to all of us. We follow with trepidation, and after the morning news in the papers, with some hope, what is going on amongst the leaders of India assembled near Poona. It is a great relief and satisfaction to know that the messages received are full of a world of hope." Mr. Sastri has on the 25th inst. sent the following telegram to the Mahatma: "Million homes rejoice and bless your superb service performed in your superb style. I confess I trembled in doubt, but the result vindicates and establishes you indisputably the foremost 'Untouchable' and 'Unapproachable.'"

The Hindu Mahasabha.

THE momentous happenings at Yerawada of last

week engaged public attention so exclusively that the proceedings of the Hindu Mahasabha which met during the week-end at Delhi may be said to have passed almost unnoticed. That, however, does not detract from their importance. As expected, the presidential address of Mr. N. C. Kelkar dealt in the main with the communal award of the British Government. To say that it came in for very strong condemnation at his hands in the first instance and at those of the Conference in the second is to state the obvious. With the attempt made in the award to extend the vicious principle of communal electorates and even to force them on communities who could by no stretch of imagination be said to be unanimous in demanding it, no one desiring to see genuine responsible government set up in India can be its friend. Mr. Kelkar's analysis of the award was designed to bring out this point and to emphasise the palpable injustice which the British Government have thereby done to the Hindu community. The British Government's plea of the absence of a communal agreement amongst Indians themselves as a justification for their intervention does not commend itself to Mr. Kelkar for obvious reasons. He seems to prefer the solution of the communal difficulty in this country on the lines on which the League of Nations has handled the minorities problem in Europe. But even more than his criticism of the award which in spite of all the thought and care bestowed by him on it is like flogging a dead horse in the absence of a more satisfactory substitute, his views on the proposal to boycott the legislatures as a protest against the unsatisfactory nature of the award are to our mind of immediate practical use. Such a course of action he rightly characterised as being not only futile but suicidal. Seats in the legislative councils are to him, as to many others, "generators of political power," which he would like to be used for all they are worth for relieving the injustice which the award inflicts on the Hindus. He cannot understand how matters would be remedied by "boycotting the councils but loyally obeying their laws and decrees outside the councils." We have no doubt that Mr. Kelkar has rendered a very necessary public service by his out-spoken disavowal of the policy of non-co-operation.

Terrorists and Andamans.

SOME interpellations recently asked by non-official members in the Legislative Assembly gave expression to the widespread resentment and anxiety felt at the action of the Government in deporting convicted terrorists to the Andamans. The resentment seems to us to be perfectly natural, seeing that the action is in direct violation of the policy announced by the Government through the then Home Member, Sir William Vincent, as long ago as March 11, 1921. Replying to the debate raised by Dewan Bahadur T. Rangachariar on a motion to reduce the

relevant grant Sir William Vincent informed the House:- "We have now after consultation with the Secretary of State decided, subject of course to any advice from this Assembly, because this is a matter on which the influence of the Legislature may very properly be exercised, to abandon the penal settlement altogether." He also took the opportunity to announce the steps taken to implement the policy he had outlined. He added: "Further I am glad to say that we have issued orders that all political prisoners shall be immediately returned from the Andamans, that female convicts not married locally shall be returned immediately, and we are taking steps to prevent further criminals being sent to the Andamans in so far as the local Governments are able to find accommodation for them here. We shall press local Governments in this matter to restrict the numbers as much as possible." To the Andamans policy thus enunciated, Sir William Vincent with great ostentation sought the Assembly's approval and, needless to say, obtained it. In a comprehensive resolution issued early in 1926, the Government described the steps they were taking towards converting the Andamans into a free and self-supporting community. But there was not the slightest inkling given therein that the Government intended to go back upon the policy of ending Andamans as a penal settlement. Nor even in their memorandum to the Simon Commission submitted in 1929 where the subject was reviewed at some length was any indication given that any backsliding on their part was to be expected in the near or distant future. And yet without even so much as a "by your leave" to the Assembly to which they showed so much consideration and respect in 1921, they have decided eleven years later to transport the Indian terrorists to this "hell on earth," to borrow Col. Wedgwood's very expressive phrase, in order perhaps to quell their spirit. One possible and perhaps plausible justification of this departure from that policy may be the overcrowding in the Indian jails. But a little reflection will show that the justification is without much substance. While the civil disobedience movement has served to swell the prison population out of proportion, nobody can say the same thing about the number of convicted terrorists. It is by no means so large as to necessitate deportation to Andamans. It is difficult to reconcile ourselves to this reversal of a policy approved by public opinion.

* * *

Bombay Council in Session.

THE Bombay Legislative Council which has been in session since the beginning of last week has placed on the Statute book a new law for the control of the cotton market in Bombay. Not that such a measure has been altogether lacking so far; but the one already in force is expected to expire at the end of the next month and had therefore to be substituted by a fresh one. Occasion was taken to include in the new measure provisions empowering Government to deal with the kind of situation in the market which has been in existence for the last eight months or so in consequence of the continuance of the civil disobedience movement. There have been frequent hartals, it is said at the dictation of the Congress, and otherwise too the trade has been subject to "outside" interference. In spite of their repeated attempts to bring pressure to bear on the East India Cotton Association, the body supposed to control the cotton market, with a view to inducing it to take steps to put a stop to the dislocation of trade caused by the frequent closing of the market, the Government found themselves helpless to remedy this state of things. Growing wiser, as they put it, by their experience of the last few months they have taken

powers in the new Act to recognise at their discretion any number of new associations of the cotton trade and to punish the recalcitrant ones by superceding them or by replacing their boards of management by ones consisting of their own nominees, presumably more amenable to them. These provisions naturally raised a storm of protest from non-official members who however were unable to effect any material improvement in the Bill. In fact, the only amendment they seemed to have been able to persuade Government to accept, were one limiting the life of these disciplinary powers to five years and the other providing for an opportunity to a body against which Government intended to act to explain its conduct before such action was taken. Even these changes, comparatively unimportant as they are, would have been impossible without the good will of the Government whose position was so strong that they could well have refused to allow even these slight modifications in their original measure. They had already turned down the very reasonable request of unofficial members for the reference of the bill to a Select Committee. This would doubtless have delayed the passage of the bill; but nothing would have been lost by a few weeks delay and the difficulty anticipated as a result of the expiry of the existing law might well have been got over by bringing in a bill to extend its life which nonofficial members would have supported or by reserving the more controversial clauses of the new bill for later consideration after public opinion had had an opportunity of expressing itself thereon. But why will a Government having a majority of the Council to back it up go out of its way to show deference to the wishes of non-officials? The measure, as was officially stated, had been promoted in the interests of cotton-growers who naturally suffer as a result of falling prices which, it was stated, followed the frequent closing of the market. And yet when non-officials tried to increase their representation on the boards of management of cotton associations; the attempt was frustrated by the obduracy of the Government! In this connection the reflection is also natural that if Government have nothing but the interests of cotton-producers at heart in getting this measure enacted, why do they not take similar action in regard to producers of other raw materials to whom a fall in prices must equally be a source of hardship?

But if Government had had their way in regard to the Cotton Bill, they sustained a bad rebuff at the hands of the Council in their attempt to secure its approval to the granting of powers to sub-inspectors of police and sergeants to disperse unlawful assemblies by force. A similar attempt made by them two years ago fared no better; but they did not seem to have grown wiser by that experience. The justification for the measure was stated to be the necessity of a large number of police officers duly empowered to deal with riotous situations should they arise at the same time; at several places in Bombay city but the Council refused to be taken in by this specious argument and unceremoniously threw out the Bill.

* * *

Miraj State Budget.

THE first meeting of a properly constituted legislative council for Miraj State took place last week. We are by no means oblivious of the fact that the Council did meet in February last; but that meeting was more in the nature of a show got up for the edification of the Davidson Committee which was then on a visit to the States in the Southern Maratha Country than anything else, for the hurry with which it was convened left no time for the elections to take place, as provided in the constitution framed for it. During its session last week the Council devoted

itself mainly to a consideration of the State budget. This showed that the expenses of the ruler and his family take up as much as 20 per cent. of the State revenue. It is amazing that a man of such simple habits as the Chief of Miraj is reputed to be should need such a large slice of the poor taxpayers' money for his personal use; and we heartily join in the demand of his subjects that he must find means of reducing the amount as much as possible. The results of such an unduly large portion of the income of the State being consumed by the ruler and his relatives are to be found in the neglected condition of education whose progress, to judge from the number of

children receiving education, seem to be stationary for years past and the expenditure on which seems to be decreasing year by year. The budget debate was characterised by a vigorous criticism of the State's education policy which, it was pointed out by popular leaders, was marked by want of progress and a demand was made that an earnest attempt should be made to introduce compulsory education at the earliest possible date. The abkari policy which was officially sought to be supported on the usual grounds with which we are so familiar in British India was also strongly criticised. It is to be hoped that these criticisms will be duly noted by the State authorities.

THE POONA PACT

By A. V. THAKKAR

WHETHER one agrees with Mahatma Gandhi or not in the efficiency of "fasting unto death," as a weapon to bring about social change, his most sceptic critic will not doubt that the fast has done incalculable good to the Hindu community as a whole, or to the "federation of Hindu communities" as Dr. Ambedkar recently described it in Bombay. It has done immense good to both parties who were signatories to the historic Poona Agreement of Saturday the 24th September 1932. It has awakened the conscience of the slow-moving and conservative Hindu community in a way in which it could not have done in any other way. The famous temple of Jagannath at Puri, one of the famous impregnable citadels of Hindu orthodoxy, has been thrown open to the erstwhile untouchables. Progressive sons of orthodox Hindu fathers are dining publicly with the so-called depressed classes including Shangis who have been considered the lowest of the low, not only in cosmopolitan Bombay, but also in conservative Benares, in open challenge to their elders and the whole Hindu community, as if to say that they have begun the revolt against the very institution of caste. Scores of temples and public wells are being thrown open to the heretofore suppressed. Social workers, men and women, are giving pledges to devote themselves exclusively to the uplift work of their depressed brethren. And to crown all, Mahatma Gandhi himself has threatened another fast, before his first one was broken—we hope not "fast unto death,"—unless the caste Hindus changed their heart completely and lifted up their down-trodden brethren.

But let us consider the Agreement arrived at in its political aspect. The Communal Award of 4th August last gave the depressed classes in the eight provinces (all except the N.-W. F. P.) 71 seats in provincial councils in their own separate constituencies together with the right of contesting further seats in the Hindu or so-called "general" constituencies. This latter right would have proved shadowy, frankly speaking. We use the word shadowy deliberately, without meaning any offence to the caste Hindus. In place of these 71 seats plus a few more doubtful seats, the Depressed Classes get under the Agreement 148 seats reserved for them. This is a great service that Dr. Ambedkar has done to his own section of the Hindu community, and let us add, to

the whole Hindu community. If the caste Hindu have given away 25 seats, in addition to the 123 seats that Dr. Ambedkar could have fairly demanded on the population basis, i. e. in the ratio of depressed population to total Hindu population, it is but a poor recompense for the disabilities that have been imposed upon the suppressed classes for centuries past. If the whip of the Mahatma's fast has made the comparatively advanced sections of the Hindu community to give away a few more seats in councils, provincial as well as central, to the Depressed Classes, and stirred them to undertake the collection and expenditure of a fund of 25 lakhs of rupees for their uplift, as the venerable Pandit Malaviya proclaimed in the Hindu leaders' conference in Bombay on Sunday last, we cannot say that they have done an over-generous act, but only an act that ought to have been done years ago. But it is better late than never.

Some people are likely to enquire why the proportion of depressed classes seats to Hindu seats in the central legislature was fixed by the Poona Agreement when it did not form part of the Premier's Award, which was sought to be modified. It may also be asked why the franchise matters were discussed and agreed upon before anything in that direction was decided by the R. T. C. or the British Government. The wisdom of going generally into other questions of representation in local bodies and in services, as well as of educational grants may be doubted by others. The reply is that once the questions were raised by Dr. Ambedkar, it would have been very impolitic on the part of Hindu leaders to refuse to consider these questions on the merely technical ground that they were "outside the scope of the Premier's Award." The caste Hindus in order to show their bona-fides and their perfect good-faith had to consider them and meet the wishes of the Depressed Classes. This has been done and the British Government has taken note of these clauses (8 and 9) as definite "pledges of the intention of the caste Hindus towards the depressed classes." This is as it ought to have been.

The Premier has now ratified the Poona Agreement and has agreed to substitute relevant parts thereof for similar parts in his own Award. The Mahatma's fast has been broken, and the whole com-

munity—suppressing and the suppressed sections altogether—are overjoyed at the result achieved so far. Let us in all humility put in a word of warning. The Mahatma is not a man to be easily satisfied with small results obtained at a moment of national crisis and threatened disaster. He will exact strenuous and thorough work of a constructive nature from the Hindu reformers. That "there is more in common between Mahatma Gandhi and me than with any of you gathered here" was said on two occasions by Dr. Ambedkar while addressing the Hindu leaders at Bombay and Poona in recent conferences. This is too true. The Hindu community will now be put on its trial and a very crucial trial by the man of whom Mr. Sastri said at Coimbatore only on Saturday last: "His life, it would be presumptuous to say, is lived as few lives in history or fable have been lived."

RESTRICTION OF BETTING.

IT is not a little significant that even in these days of acute economic depression the race-courses in Bombay and Poona continue to attract large crowds and the railway companies still have to run special trains for them. This is clearly due to the many cheap facilities for betting provided by the Turf Club to the public generally, besides its own members, and it is now reported that the totalisators are kept open to all customers without any fee for entrance to the enclosures upto a certain hour. It is safe to say that most of the public have no notion of horses or racing practices, but are tempted to go in and try their luck as into any common gaming-house. Mr. L. R. Gokhale's Bill, which now comes before the Legislative Council for its first reading, is calculated to save such persons from their folly by confining this form of legalised gambling to the members of Turf Clubs, who may be supposed to be better able to look after their own interests. Besides, most of these members are Englishmen who hail from a country where betting (like drink) has already taken such a hold on all classes that, in spite of its costing the whole community five hundred million pounds a year according to the calculation of *the Times*, the eyes of the people cannot be opened to the evil and to the mischief caused by it. But there is time yet to check the growth of this evil in our poor country. We, therefore, hope that at any rate all the Indian members of the Legislative Council will, whatever their party interests, support Mr. Gokhale in his fight to save the Indian public. Their religion forbids Mahomedans, Hindus and Parsis alike from indulging in gambling in any form, while the Mahabharata points the moral of the propensity for gambling of the noble Yudhisthira and Nala. The Bombay Municipal Corporation passed a resolution last year deploring the havoc caused to the citizens by the increase of betting and calling upon Government to amend the law so as to restrict betting to members of the Turf Club. A similar resolution has been adopted by the Calcutta Corporation and forwarded to the Government of Bengal. Surely local governments must heed such

expressions of public opinion in matters concerning the social life of Indians.

Is it, then, too much to ask the Government of Bombay not to oppose the present limited attempt to check the spread of gambling, even though it must reduce the proceeds of the Betting Tax—besides the income of the Turf Club? The support given by the Bombay Government last year with all the strength of their official and nominated members to Mr. Humfrey's Bill for the reinstatement of bookmakers alone saved that measure from being thrown out and even as it was it could only pass by seven votes. This "backsliding" on the part of Government in the face of the solemn assurances given to the Council in 1912 by the then Governor (Lord Sydenham) personally, has already given such a rude shock to the public that if Government fail to support Mr. Gokhale's Bill, or at least to remain neutral along with their official members, the public would conclude that a paltry revenue of two or three lakhs, however obtained, counts more with the present Government than the losses of the unsophisticated public and the prevention and limitation of gambling, which is the most important purpose of Bombay Act IV of 1887. If this impression is strengthened by the attitude of the Government towards Mr. Gokhale's Bill, the next step would be for the new Government under the revised constitution to put a ban altogether on the racing license of the Turf Club, especially as this body of sportsmen has, we understand, refused even to consider any further checks on the operations of bookmakers and totalisators or measures for their proper supervision.

J. K. N. KABRAJI.

ARE DANDASIS A CRIMINAL TRIBE?

THE Ganjam District Dandasi Committee of Berhampore have rendered a distinct public service by its championship of the cause of Dandasis, who, by a stroke of ill fortune, have been, quite unnecessarily, subjected to the infamy of being classed a criminal tribe. The Criminal Tribes Act which has been in operation in the Ganjam District since 1923 aims at "segregating such of the nomadic tribes living in hills and forests, having for their profession stealing." Now, let us apply this definition to the Dandasis. Are the Dandasis nomadic? No. Do they live in forests and hills? No. They have homes and home-stead lands.

The report published by the Dandasi Committee of Berhampore gives a short history of the Dandasis. According to them, the word "Dandasi" consists of two words—Danda and Asi. Danda means a stick and Asi means a sword. This shows that the Dandasis were a functional caste. It is said about Dandasis that they were taken to the Ganjam District by the Gajapati King of Orissa, who after his return from Kanohi (Conjeevaram) left them there in order to keep order and peace among the people. Be it also remembered that these Dandasis are found only in the Ganjam district. The report further states that these Dandasis number about half a lakh.

"These people" the report says "have houses to dwell in; they have cultivation as their profession; every village has a Dandasi as a watchman; invariably every Government Taliari is a Dandasi. Stealing was never their profession. But owing to the misfortune of the Dandasis several cases of house-breaking could not be detected, hence the Act was enforced on them in a sweeping manner."

Further:—

"As soon as the C.T. Act came into force, about five thousand adult Dandasis were registered throughout the District without any discrimination. These registered adult male members were asked to report themselves at Police stations, twice every night." In some cases a registered Dandasi had to walk about three to four miles to report to the Police or to a village munsiff, lest he should make himself liable at least to two months' rigorous imprisonment.

It is a matter for satisfaction that as a result of the efforts of the Dandasi Committee these rules have been recently somewhat slackened. Mr. Skinner, the then Superintendent of Police, introduced the Panchayat system among the Dandasis by means of which the registered Dandasis were kept under the supervision of the unregistered and their better-behaved castemen.

As a result, out of about five thousand registered Dandasis a good many were brought under the Panchayat system. In the Berhampore circle alone, out of 813 C. T. men 333 were at once exempted from the operation of the Act and the rest gradually; and to-day there is but a negligible number who have to report themselves to the police. All the same they are still supposed to be subject to the operation of the Act and may be brought within its meshes any day. It is therefore necessary that the Government should release them from the operation of the Criminal Tribes Act.

The constitution of the District Dandasi Committee has otherwise also been a great boon to the Dandasis. It has made itself useful by its constant care of and unflagging devotion to the work of reclamation of the Dandasis, who are easily amenable to good influences. They pay annas two as membership fee and four thousand of them have come within the ambit of the organisation. Out of the two-anna subscription one goes to the Taluka Committee and the other remains with the District Committee. The committees—both district and taluka—have made themselves responsible for the good behaviour of the Dandasis, who have hardly ever let them down. Thus it can be easily seen how harmless it would be to release the Dandasis from the operation of the C. T. Act. They have pledged their good behaviour to their own castemen as well as to the public. This is a great social movement.

I shall conclude this article by quoting a few opinions of the authorities regarding the work of the Dandasis District Committee. In the administration report of the Police Department of Madras for 1930 at p. 23 it is stated that "The Dandasi Panchayats are functioning well. There has been no room for complaint."

In the administration report of the same department for 1927 it is also remarked that "The communal Panchayet system is reported to be working well among the Dandasis... which shows a tendency to reform within."

L. N. SAHU.

THE DELINQUENT CHILD IN BOMBAY.

(Concluded from our issue of Sept. 15.)

II.

IT will be interesting to examine the work of institutions for delinquents in Bombay in the light of the principles already enunciated. The David Sassoon Industrial and Reformatory Institution and the Junior School of the Children's Aid Society are among the more important institutions in Bombay having for their aim the reformation of the juvenile offender. It is also intended to examine the work of the Society for the Protection of Children in Western India, a Society which has as its main object "the rescue of children from the streets of Bombay." It is necessary to do so, because the law makes destitution a crime and the children under the care of this Society are mostly destitutes. In this connection it is interesting to note that a half or more than a half of the cases dealt with by the other two institutions last year were declared to be destitutes.

In so far as two of the above institutions are more than semi Government bodies and all three of them are in receipt of grants from the Government which go to make up more than half their yearly income, it can be said that the State has at least partially realised its duty towards delinquent children. There is still very large scope for active and effective State aid. It is not contended that non-official organisations working in the field should be interfered with. Indeed, there does exist a necessity for a more systematic co-ordination of official and non-official effort and a more liberal state policy in regard to financial help to the latter.

Children in the three institutions referred to are being taught useful subjects. There is an endeavour to impart literary education along with the training in several arts and crafts with a view to providing the inmates, when they go out into the world, with a profession and honourable means of livelihood. Fourth vernacular is the standard to which any boy or girl may reach. A great deal of attention is being paid to drawing and painting and in the case of the David Sassoon Reformatory and the Junior School the instruction is being correlated to various crafts like carpentry, furniture-making, etc. Among the industrial crafts taught are carpentry, cane-work, motor mechanics, and iron and brass work; there is also a bit of vegetable gardening done. For girls there are some useful arts like drawing, music, sewing, cooking and laundry work. The arts and crafts taught, however, are too hackneyed and tend to send out young persons into professions that are already over-crowded. A bolder and more radical policy in this behalf needs to be followed. This will necessitate a survey of present-day requirements of society and industry, and any amount of money spent on such an undertaking will more than repay itself.

It is now an established tenet of institutional care for juvenile delinquents that the fruits of the work turned out by the children should rightly go to

the children themselves, and should not be considered a gain accruing to the institution that trains them. Once the duty of the State to train and maintain its delinquent children is recognised, there should be no room for the exploitation of the labour of the children for the financial gain of the institution. It is, therefore, very unfortunate that in none of the institutions mentioned above is this important principle being observed. A glance at the accounts of these institutions is enough to prove this. We must, however, leave the Junior School out of account, for very little of industrial education is imparted thereat. The worst sinner in this respect is the David Sassoon Institution. Its report for the year 1930-31 reveals the startling fact that about Rs. 7,800 were credited to the Institution by way of hire of boys working in a textile mill in Bombay, and nearly Rs. 6,400 were realised by way of the sale of articles, produced by them. It is really regrettable that as much as Rs. 14,000 representing the labour of boys committed to its care should go to the coffers of an institution that depends almost entirely upon the Government for its finances. The result is that the boys, when they go out into the wide world, are absolutely without financial support, endeavours to find work for them and an after-care home notwithstanding. It is, therefore, no wonder that very often they relapse into delinquency. It is not intended to belittle the utility of its work by denying that most of the boys who have left the institution are well settled in life. It is the principle that is wrong. Surely, a Government which contributes more than Rs. 75,000 towards the upkeep of the D. S. I. & R. Institution, can well afford to forego the moneys earned by its inmates. All that is meant to be brought out is the fact that there should be no exploitation of the labour of the children. The sooner this principle is generally accepted the better.

Two of the institutions whose work is referred to here are located in the suburbs of Bombay, and the third, which has got a remand home connected with it, is in the city itself. The D. S. Reformatory situated at Matunga can be said to be in a quiet spot. It has a grim and forbidding look from the outside, but once within its walls one notices a very large piece of land dotted over with two or three big buildings and workshops, with a playing field in the centre. The B. J. Home of the Society for the Protection of Children in Western India is also situated at Matunga amidst a quiet colony of middle class families, and one feels there a distinctly suburban touch. The grounds are not large. The home consists of three separate one-storied buildings pleasant to look at. The home of the Children's Aid Society is at Dongri, and housed as it is in the old Umar-khadi jail, it is completely cut off from the world outside by high walls. It also has lots of open space. The children in these institutions are housed separately according to sex—in the D. S. Reformatory there are no girls—although in the B. J. Home boys under eight are allowed to stay in the building set apart for girls.

Nowhere, however, is the cottage plan adopted. The children are engaged for a very large portion of their time in the schools and workshops and later in the day on the play-grounds. They, therefore, require only dormitories to sleep in; and the dormitories provided for them are long rooms bare of furniture except for the trunks and rolled-up beddings of the children neatly arranged against the walls. In the D. S. Reformatory the boys are divided into batches according to ages and each batch is made to sleep separately with a view to preventing acts of homo-sexuality amongst them. In all cases venereally-affected children are segregated from their

fellows. Perhaps the reason why the institutions are not run on the cottage plan may be that in two cases the buildings were acquired, and in the third the buildings were built when different ideas about juvenile "crime" and "punishment" prevailed. Or perhaps it may be that during the day-time children are so divided as to afford effective supervision over them.

Care is taken with regard to the medical examination of the children. In some cases, there is periodical medical examination, and provision has been made for a dispensary and a sick-room in the case of all. In institutions having competent executives and committees composed of eminent and responsible men and women, this is only to be expected. Very little, however, is done as regards the mentally deficient children. The children who are trained in these institutions come from diverse parts of the country and generally from the lower strata of society. Some are mentally deficient or have abnormal mental tendencies. Psychiatric examination and treatment of such children is therefore an urgent necessity. In America psychiatric clinics for the diagnosis and treatment of behaviour problems of children are a development of the last twenty years. But even there "there are few places where specific training is given for psychiatric work with children" and "the qualified persons are far from sufficient to meet the demand." It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that in our parts we have yet nothing of the kind.

In spite of the somewhat forbidding appearance of the buildings of two of the institutions, the quality of superintendence is high. All the homes are under the care of the persons who take a live interest in their charges, and who have won their confidence and love by kindly, humane and almost parental treatment. The confidence so gained is almost in an equal measure reciprocated, and methods have been developed which leave room for individual development. There is, of course, nothing of the "military or self-government" type of organisation in them. But sports and recreation and scouting organisations take a large share in the development of all those traits which go to build up character and which see a child through the pitfalls and tribulations of life.

In the course of these articles, an attempt has been made to explain the principles underlying this kind of work, and to see how far institutions for children in Bombay conform to them. References to figures have been avoided, for in this case figures would not convey much by way of information. Child welfare is a big problem and juvenile delinquency and destitution are but two phases of it, though correlated to and inseparable from the other phases. Much can be done by way of legislation to tackle this problem, but mere legislation can never go far. Along with an increasing realisation of its responsibilities towards the problem by the State, there needs to be an effort on the part of the public to extend its sympathy and friendliness towards the erring child expressed not only in words but very substantially in money. In the words of an experienced institution chief, "Legislative enactments are not enough... Administration... depends largely upon the human factor, as it is in the ranks of humanity that the donors of the necessary funds will be found and from the same ranks that the necessary workers will be drawn. Extension of legislation is insufficient; machinery is required as it is through money and trained workers that theoretical progress becomes a real fact."

K. D. AGA.

Our Geneva Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

GENEVA, 17th September.

AN IMPASSE ALL ROUND

THERE is an addition, this week, to the uncertainties of the present time due to the news of the United States presidential elections. The American saying is said to be, "As Maine votes in September, the nation votes in November." Maine has voted Democrat. The Governor and two Senators are Democrats, a result which has startled the Republicans over the whole continent. It might appear at first sight that the change from Hoover and the Republican isolationists would be most welcome. But the prospect, in the first place, would certainly have the effect of rendering the Republicans zealous for action and redoubling their efforts and, in the second place, it could hardly be said to be helpful in the present very delicate financial situation of the world. If there should be some sort of panic in Wall Street on that account, the repercussions thereof would be felt through all the Capitals of Europe. Capitalist countries can find security in times of trouble only when representatives of financial interests are in power. Consequently, however tempting it may be for European Governments to pause over the spectacle of the American Giant straining his muscle, it is very likely that they will go more than half way to humour him. An element of bargaining will, however, enter into the process of adjustment, whose only effect can be to shake further the battered edifice of political security.

It is significant in this connection that earlier in the week the *Daily Herald* reminded its readers of the sharp remark of the *New York Times* about Great Britain pursuing at Geneva a policy aimed at thwarting the intentions of the United States as regards Manchuria, while apparently hopeful of arriving at a satisfactory solution of the war debts question. There has been a mysterious visit of the Governor of the Bank of England to the United States followed by secret conferences of Senator Reed and the American Ambassador in London with Mr. MacDonald. Varying reports are in circulation about the contents of the Lytton Commission's survey of the situation in Manchuria from which it would seem that, while the Commission has carefully catalogued facts damaging to Japan, its recommendations are rather elastic in character. Japan, while urging the postponement of the publication of the report, has proceeded with her arrangements for Manchuria. The territorial integrity of China no longer remains unaffected and there is no more any doubt about Japan's deliberate violation of a long series of international obligations, the Nine-Power Treaty, the League Covenant and the Pact of Paris. The present impasse can be covered up so long as the Lytton Commission's report remains unpublished. Whatever may be the nature of the contents of that document, it can hardly make Japan's irregular acts legal. And when that report appears, what is the League going to do about it? Will Great Britain persist in her present attitude of letting Japan alone? In that case, what will be the reactions towards Europe, towards Geneva and towards Great Britain in the United States? What will be Japan's position in the League after this refusal to submit to its authority? And if Japan withdraws from the League, will that put an end to the Manchurian problem? So many questions which no one here would care to answer and yet the Assembly is to meet within a little more than a week from now.

Nor is the situation which Germany represents at all more helpful. The Nazis, who only a year ago threatened to bring Germany under Fascism, have apparently fled before the Junkers. They reached the crest of their influence but missed the final step to power. The Junkers, who threatened to wipe out the name of Weimar from recent German history, have decided to bring about another election, the third within a year. The only certain thing about Germany seems to be her determination to vindicate her national dignity to the world outside and her capacity to carry it out is not in doubt.

Her plea for equality of armaments, or equal disarmament, has the enthusiastic support of Italy and the Duce has in an unmistakable manner identified himself with the German demand. The French Government has sent a cautious reply to the note from Berlin, referring the whole question to Geneva, while scanning the horizon, across the channel, in London, for signs of guidance. The British Government, in obvious embarrassment, is marking time. Meanwhile, there is no doubt or illusion in Geneva about the consequences involved. The Disarmament Conference, which was barely successful in avoiding a collapse in its first phase, is now called upon to deal with almost insuperable difficulties. The German claim concerns not only France and Germany, which in itself would make it a grave issue, but nearly as much Great Britain and the United States, for given equality, Germany would rearm on sea as well as land. If the Disarmament Conference cannot find a solution to this problem, both Germany and Italy apparently intend to have little to do with Geneva.

Was ever the absolute need for international order and leadership more tragically apparent? And yet Great Britain's only answer is Ottawa!

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, 16th September.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S DECISION.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S determination to fast unto death unless the Cabinet modifies its award regarding the depressed classes to the extent necessary to satisfy Gandhiji's scruples came as a bolt from the blue upon the publication of the correspondence between him and the Prime Minister and Sir Samuel Hoare on Tuesday morning. No slightest whisper of what had been communicated to the Secretary of State for India six months earlier had got abroad. It is the best kept secret of modern times, and after this it is impossible to say that there is no such thing as an official secret as it is bound to get abroad prematurely by one channel or another. Apparently the only two persons in India amongst Gandhiji's associates who knew of his decision were Messrs. Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai. It speaks volumes for their leader and their power of self-restraint that they appear not to have breathed a word to any one. It is inconceivable, too, that the great secret was not revealed by the Secretary of State to the Viceroy, and by him presumably to the Governor of Bombay. Yet until Tuesday no word reached the public of what has for so long been in Mahatma's mind. I can state it as a fact that even so close a friend as Mr. C. F. Andrews was taken completely by surprise when he learnt on Tuesday morning of Gandhiji's decision, as were other close friends.

It would appear from the correspondence that he had expected it to conclude with his letter to Mr. MacDonald dated the 18th August, and that notice to the public of his intention would be given somewhere about the end of the month, for he arranged for a delay in taking the fast until the 20th September. In fact, no such publication took place for a fortnight later, with the result that the public has been deprived, both here and in India, of most valuable time in which steps might have been taken to clear away Mr. Gandhi's difficulties, and if possible, avoid his putting upon himself the obligation of fulfilling his vow.

BRITISH OPINION.

British opinion is frankly bewildered. Whilst it recalls with interest the case of Lord Mayor McSweeney of Cork, it also recalls that the public opinion of the day, almost without reserve, supported the Government in refusing to allow itself to be coerced by a threat of suicide, and whilst a considerable amount of admiration was expressed for the courage and fortitude of the Irish leader in the ordeal to which he subjected himself, it was generally felt that no Government could allow itself to be intimidated into a course of action to which it would not otherwise assent. Mr. McSweeney's case even then was regarded as an eccentric and un-Western method of endeavouring to secure the result desired by the sufferer.

In Mr. Gandhi's case the matter is much more complicated by the many irrelevant circumstances associated with his incomparable status, not only in India, but in the world at large. The actual merits of the question which would appear to be adequately set forth in the Prime Minister's reply of the 8th September are likely to be overlooked if the worst should happen and Mr. Gandhi should feel that he is driven to carry out his undertaking to its ultimate end. In so far, however, as those merits have been under discussion, as indeed they have been, in the British Press, opinion has been almost solidly on the side of the Government. Even the *Daily Herald*, whilst condemning the Government generally for obvious reasons in not having taken earlier steps to conciliate the Congress and come to an agreement with Mr. Gandhi upon the basis of its demands, does not pretend to understand his psychology in this particular matter. Almost alone to express understanding, and possibly even, appreciation of the Mahatma's methods of announcing his intention and the intention itself is the *New Statesman*, which uses unusual imagination in endeavouring to place itself in his shoes. At the same time the general view that will be expressed by the average Britisher is that, apart from the weapon itself, there is insufficient justification for its use in the circumstances analysed by the Prime Minister, and there is, indeed, a certain degree of resentment that the Mahatma should use his prospective death by starvation as an anti-British weapon when, according to all the laws of reason, equity, and good conscience, he should have directed all his armoury of weapons, not excluding this, long ago at his fellow caste-Hindus for the iniquity that he has long recognised they have perpetrated against the depressed classes. In most quarters the attitude is taken that it is a supreme misfortune that Mr. Gandhi should have thought fit to terminate his career in the manner now selected and in the circumstances set forth in the Prime Minister's letter, and, whilst paying a tribute to his sincerity and honesty of purpose and the courage that he has shown, the view is held that he should be set free to carry out his purpose in peace if he still should so determine. A very small proportion of opinion represented by the "gutter Press" is that Mr. Gandhi is an unmitigated nuisance of which the British Empire will be well rid if he decides to commit *harakiri*. That, unfortu-

nately, would not, as the stupid critics suppose, end the matter, for Mahatma Gandhi is likely to be far more intensely real as a cause of Indo-British enmity when dead than whilst alive.

I have reason to know, however, that in high official circles the deepest distress has been caused by the facts now published in the correspondence. The view is still held that the Government cannot alter its award except upon conditions named, that is to say, the substitution of an agreement among the parties themselves, but I have reason to believe that it would gladly welcome such an agreement, if it were possible, in order to relieve it of this very alarming embarrassment. The announcement that Mr. Gandhi is to be liberated from prison detention from the moment that he begins the fast is one small indication of its desire to wash its hands of all responsibility in the matter. But, of course, it has grave responsibility in trying to bring the proper parties together and to facilitate access to Mr. Gandhi himself. Indeed, from to-day's telegrams Sir Frederick Sykes would appear to have realised the urgency of this responsibility. Mrs. Pethwick Lawrence has written suggesting that the Mahatma should be released in order to take part in to-morrow's conference of Hindu leaders. Perhaps that would be unnecessary as it is up to them to make suggestions to the Mahatma after they have sufficiently disputed amongst themselves. But unless he extends the time within which he will refrain from taking the fast there will be little enough time available for those leaders before it becomes next to impossible to confer with an exhausted and emaciated man.

In the meanwhile, at this end, all possible steps are being taken to pursue avenues that may lead to some acceptable compromise that will either avoid or terminate, at an early date, the threatened fast. Certain suggestions have been put forward by competent and friendly persons, which I am not at liberty to reveal. One very important decision is to issue over the signatures of the Church leaders an appeal to the Churches to use Sunday as a day of prayer of wisdom and guidance in the present emergency and crisis in India.

Reviews.

THE CURSE OF RELIGION.

THE CHURCHES AND MODERN THOUGHT.

BY VIVIAN PHELIPS. (Watts & Co., London.)

1931. 20 cm. 306p. 1/-

HERE is a book that will warm the heart of a rationalist. Closely packed in its 300 pages is a veritable army of arguments against the Christian Church in particular and religion in general. A man must be either a fool or one with "the will to believe" if, after carefully reading the book, he retains his faith in a personal god. We in India have such a bitter experience of the way religion has opposed every attempt to eliminate "man's inhumanity to man", that we are sometimes forgetful of the sinister role the Christian Church has played in other countries in opposing every advance in knowledge and liberty. The Church which still opposes the throwing open of playgrounds and theaters on Sundays, which opposes spreading of the knowledge about birth-control and prevention of venereal diseases, which opposes the rationalising of marriages and divorces, cannot boast of being very far ahead of the religions which advocate child marriages and caste systems. In fact the state of things has reached such a pass in India that but for religion, the

political problem would have been amicably solved. The very fact that there are thousands of deeply religious people adhering to at least a dozen different religions which are in most cases quite antagonistic to each other, would be enough to show to a sincere inquirer that all the religions could not possibly be true. After all, as the atheist said, "the religious man believes in no religion but his own, while I believe in none at all." Phelps' attack on those apologists who consider religion as a necessity for maintaining a high standard of morality is equally effective. Christianity (and it is not very much different from other religions) which supported slavery, which fought and encouraged wars, which never said a word against inhuman labour conditions, which upholds the doctrine of eternal damnation, which has always sided with the rich and the powerful, has not the least claim to stand up as a moral force. Nearer home, those religions which are "in danger" as soon as a girl remains unmarried after puberty, as soon as young girls are not dedicated to the service of temples, as soon as husbands and wives, who do not want to live with each other, are allowed to separate, as soon as an "untouchable" is allowed to enter a temple, as soon as a person eats the flesh of a certain animal—are they to be considered as moral forces? The days are gone by when people could implicitly believe in an omnipotent and kind God, who still allows evil to happen in this world. To make man responsible for the evil, attributing the good to god, does not also serve the purpose, as god must be supposed to know in his omniscience that man is occasionally going to be evil. To propose god as a solution of the mystery of the creation of the universe is simply to propose one mystery for another. For who created god, and what was god doing before creating the universe? To suggest some purpose in god's creation and management of the universe is to admit that he wants to achieve something, that therefore he lacks something. A first cause is, to the human mind as absurd as a last effect. The author's summing up of the whole situation and the attitude of the rationalists is a masterly piece of work and one can only wish that the book continues to sell in hundreds of thousands of copies and is also translated into other languages. In India we want more a systematic attack on orthodoxy in all religions, not only the Christian in particular. Dr. Paranjpye has gone ahead with his book. Is it too much to expect that others will follow?

D. D. KARVE.

MEDIAEVAL INDIA.

MEDIAEVAL INDIA: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. By A. YUSUF ALI. (Oxford University Press, Bombay.) 1932. 20cm. 55 p. 5/-

THIS little monograph comprises the substance of four lectures delivered by the author originally in Urdu at the Hindustan Academy of Allahabad. They attracted some notice in their native garb and now being published in English are sure to appeal to a wider public. Within a very narrow compass, the author has undertaken to give us a panoramic survey of the social and economic conditions of mediaeval India as gleaned through the vast material that lies embedded in scattered inscriptions, in traveller's accounts, in dramatic and romantic literature, in monuments of graphic arts, &c. It is indeed a stupendous task to set in the right perspective all the numerous details of historic interest beginning from the days of Shri Harsha down to the establishment of the Moghal Empire, without losing the sense of continuity that runs through them. The author has fairly succeeded in this.

The whole period of about nine centuries has for convenience been divided into three sub-divisions, each of which forms the subject of one chapter. The days of King Harsha, the most accomplished Prince of the seventh century and the hero of Bānā's famous panygeric, are the subject of a chapter. We are herein introduced to the royal household, the King and his minister Kautilya, the Queen and her paraphernalia of noble damsels versed in all fine arts and Vidushaka, too greedy and covetous, and an unfailing butt of laughter. The great opulence of the citizens of Ujjain, the horrid camp of the Chandalas, the ascetic Shiva, the god of eternal worship and the great excitements among the citizens on occasions like the birth of the King's son are the next to attract our attention. Life in rural areas, the manners and customs of the people, and the prevailing system of government find stray references to fill up the canvas of the dim era of middle ages.

The tenth and eleventh centuries form the second period of Middle Ages. We miss herein the graphic word pictures of the great romancists like Bana but have to study the more realistic phases of social life as gathered from the writings of Rajshekhar and others and those of Al Biruni, the Muslim philosopher and mathematician. Numerous other inscriptions throw greater light on the social customs and manners of those days.

The last chapter deals with the period beginning from the fourteenth century which is marked by widespread Muslim influence all over India. Mediaeval theism has been stamped with the preachings of Muslim saints and sufis who spread all over India. The Hindu thinkers seems to have receded back for a time and the indirect influence of Muslim culture is seen in their propagation of Bhakti doctrines both in the North and South of India. Those were also the days of Rajput chivalry and the tale of how Prithviraj won his bride by the strength of his sword creates a romantic interest amidst sordid facts of internecine feuds.

The book is an admirable attempt to sketch a pen-picture of the socio-economic conditions of mediaeval times and is sure to excite greater interest in the numerous sources of information and other references quoted by the author.

S. G. PURANIK.

SHIVAJI

SHIVAJI: THE FOUNDER OF MARATHA SWARAJ. By C. V. VAIDYA. (Author, 314 Sadashiv Peth, Poona 2.) 1931. 20cm. 410 p. Rs. 3.

SHIVAJI THE GREAT. By Bal KRISHNA. VOL. I PART I (Taraporewalla, Bombay.) 1932. 22cm. 224p.

THOUGH these books deal with the same subject they differ in scope and design. While Mr. C. V. Vaidya gives a connected account of Shivaji's life and exploits from reliable sources, both Indian and foreign, he relegates controversial matter to notes in small type 'which the reader may pass over.' In fact, his volume is primarily designed to include up-to-date information and the conclusions of research workers in the field; and it explains the mission of the Maratha hero while answering the aspersions and charges levelled against him by previous writers.

The scope of Dr. Bal Krishna's effort on the other hand is comprehensive and detailed. His work is to be completed in two volumes covering 1400 pages with 130 illustrations and it promises to be rather a history of the times than a mere biography. He quotes, in full, relevant portions from historical

documents, publishes new firmans of the Bahamani period and offers detailed criticism. While Mr. Vaidya avoids the specific mention of names and makes general allusions to opinions and views that he wants to counteract, Dr. Bal Krishna does not hesitate to challenge the accuracy of statements made by previous writers. Regarding Sir J. Sarkar, for example, Dr. Bal Krishna rightly observes that "he has surely overstated the claim of both the sources (viz. Persian and English)," since "Contemporary records are also in Dutch, French and Portuguese." In another place he has devoted several pages to quotations from the Rairi Bakhar and Tarikh-i-Shivaji and "shown their unreliability" by full discussions in parallel columns. In short, the general reader will prefer Mr. Vaidya's handy volume for acquainting himself with up-to-date information regarding Shivaji. But a critical scholar will not fail to supplement his stock by the addition of "Shivaji the Great" which includes the documents on which conclusions are to be based and which discusses controversial points in detail, so that he can form his own opinions on several points and is even at liberty to differ from Dr. Bal Krishna. His cards are all on the table and his methodical treatment of the subject is certainly a boon to English readers of Maratha history.

D. V. APTE.

INDIAN LABOUR PROBLEM.

THE INDIAN PEASANT UPROOTED. A STUDY OF THE HUMAN MACHINE. By

MARGARET READ. (Longmans, London.) 1931. 20cm. 256p. 5/-

THE report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India is bound to be treated for several years to come as the most authoritative book on Indian labour questions; but as observed by the Right Hon. J. H. Whitley in his foreword to the book under review, a blue-book is necessarily dull and dry. Very few people may have gone through the five hundred and odd pages of that report, and still fewer persons can have the patience to read the formidable eighteen volumes of evidence. Miss Read has in her book retranslated the material contained in the report as well as in the volumes of evidence, into 'terms of individual life.' She has brought industry, patience, sympathy and insight to the task. She has utilized a good deal of the material that was available on Indian labour questions before the Royal Commission was appointed and her own experiences gained during a period of residence in this country. Miss Read has introduced several characters in her book for the purpose of illustrating the matter-of-fact information given in the Royal Commission's report from which copious extracts are also taken. The characters in the book under review are, as stated by Miss Read in her preface, with one or two exceptions, men and women interviewed by the Commission during their visits to factories, mines and plantations. There are also a few pictorial illustrations which are simple but none-the-less telling. The author's object in writing this book is to describe, as is clear from the title of the book, the effect of modern industrialism on the Indian peasant who driven by economic necessity exchanges the village for the slum. The author has well succeeded in presenting the various problems arising out of the maladjustment between agricultural life and industrial life and between the old world and the new.

Miss Read has done her best to make the subject as interesting as possible. The field covered in the book is so vast and varied that the narrative tone of the book could not be sustained and the characters

introduced for the purpose of illustrating the points of enquiry could not be dealt with in a story-like fashion. The selection of the salient points and striking passages in the Royal Commission's report is, however, very good. Some of Miss Read's own remarks are quite outspoken. For instance, she says: "In the Bengal Nagpur Railway strike of 1927, the Auxiliary Force were called out, many of them being Anglo-Indian railway workers, officered by railway officials. To repudiate racial discrimination, and at the same time to tolerate a situation in which members of one community in a service are under arms to coerce their fellow-workers of another community, is to invite the charge of hypocrisy." The chapter on 'Mothers and Babies' is very well written, the subject lying nearest to the writer's heart. It graphically describes the toll of women and children exacted by the terrible god of the machine, and should prove an eye-opener to those who suppose that the peasants leave the countryside simply lured by the luxurious life in the cities.

'The Indian Peasant Uprooted' is an excellent companion volume to the report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India. Those who have no patience to read that report but desire to have a glimpse of the revelations contained in that authoritative work cannot do better than read this book. Miss Read's literary efforts deserve to be gratefully appreciated by all students of the Indian labour problems.

P. G. KANEKAR.

CASTE AND CREDIT.

CASTE AND CREDIT IN THE RURAL AREA: A SURVEY. By S. S. NEHRU. (Longmans, Calcutta.) 1932. 20 cm. 174p. Rs. 3.

DR. NEHRU'S research into the inter-connection of caste and credit in the rural area is indeed illuminating. Facile reiteration of time-honoured *ex cathedra* assertions has been too much the bane of Indian economics and it is refreshing to come across a well authenticated thesis upon this subject. If the study has not wiped out of existence the old charge of being too caste-ridden levelled against the Indian it has placed in proper perspective the role which religion and caste play in rural economy.

One striking fact which has been well brought out by Dr. Nehru is that the higher the caste the higher the credit of the individual. But securities of different kinds have their proper value. Land, jewellery, crops, houses, labour, etc., come in their serial order, while, of course, the variations due to individual character have their due weight. But out of all this maze there is the outstanding fact that caste *does* have an influence on credit—an influence which, if it does not overbear more solid considerations, is certainly not the least in weight.

A flood of light has been thrown upon the present-day dynamics in the Hindu social system. As Prof. Mukherjee observes in his erudite introduction,

We here come across another paradox in the social situation. Castes which have risen higher in the economic scale now appear to be sacrificing better living and comfort to social position and importance. Indeed, if this tendency continues, the Indian village will find itself groping in a vicious circle of wealth, social prestige, extravagance and consequent indebtedness which will dissipate the hardwon acquisitions of decades.

This is surely a warning which it is proper to emphasise in South India. Indications are not wanting to prove that Prof. Mukherjee's conjecture is only too true.

There is also brought out by Dr. Nehru the other pathetic feature of money being dear in the rural

areas, particularly to those who need it most, while, on the other hand, it is wasted like water on others who least deserve it. That this paradox is not going to continue for long is of course a foregone conclusion. Even in South India where the full blast of modernisation has blown like wind upon the hearth, it is a very common and disconcerting problem. Only time and education can rectify customs which have flourished for centuries and the poor economist must wait with patience before his theories of the class-room square with the facts of the world around him.

We cannot but expect that South Indian rural economy must also present the same features as those of Ras Bareilly. Only the Brahmin has become more urbanised while caste, especially among the educated strata, has lost much of its ossifying tendency. Populations lower down in the social scale however preserve a semblance of caste discipline. The conclusions of Dr. Nehru may be very true concerning the latter; but it is too much to expect that caste has any influence on credit with regard to the former.

S. NARASIMHAN.

CIVILISATION AS SPIRITUAL FORCE.

CIVILIZATION AS DIVINE SUPERMAN. A SUPERORGANIC PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. By ALEXANDER RAVEN. (Williams & Norgate.) 1932. 22cm. 240p. 12/6.

THE author of this interesting volume attempts to re-establish the old thesis that civilisation moves in the form of a cycle. "Social revolutions," he observes, "follow one another in rhythmic sequence." The real superman is, according to him, civilisation itself and not the superman over whom Nietzsche and, to some extent, Spencer have grown eloquent. The author contends that it is futile to seek a superman in personal individual development at some distant future date, when the real superman, civilisation, is already engaged in doing mighty deeds.

Civilisation is defined as "the attribute of a community, which, after meeting the absolute needs of its members, accumulates a surplus of production, and co-operates on a large scale to supply this surplus to the realisation of wider, higher aims than the mere justification of immediate individual wants." When a civilisation perishes it reproduces itself in the form of an off-shoot like a physical organism. Civilisation, the writer notes, is a spiritual force, which is not confined to one particular race or nation, but may pass from race to race and from nation to nation.

After elaborating this view of civilisation, the writer takes up one by one the political, the economic, the social, the religious, the moral, the linguistic, and the artistic spheres and shows that progress in each one of them is in the form of a cycle. In the political sphere, the cycle begins with original anarchy and successively passes through autocracy, nationalism, imperialism, democracy and plutocracy till it comes back to anarchy once again. The average duration of the autocratic phase which the author calculates from a comparative study of various civilisations is 450 years; of the oligarchic phase which roughly coincides with nationalism and imperialism is 800 years; of the democratic phase 500 years; and of the inter-cultural period of barbarism is 250 years, making a total of 2,000 years. From this survey the author comes to the conclusion that "Approximately 2000 years is the average duration of the cultural cycle, when all due allowance is made for the individual development of each civilisation as a separate

super-organism." Friends of democracy will be much perturbed when they are told that the development of plutocracy out of democracy is an inevitable process and that the authority of plutocracy is so firmly established on the very foundations of democratic society that it can only be overturned by the complete destruction of material civilisation in its entirety. "The democratic era in civilisation is equivalent to old age in man" and "soon after the state of plutocracy is fully established with its grave inequalities of individual wealth, civilisation begins to decline."

The successive phases of the economic cycle are destruction, tribute, trade and production; those of the social cycle are degenerate populace and barbarian invasion, bureaucracy and common people, oligarchic caste and lower classes, and democracy and plutocracy. Those of the religious cycle are primitive church and heathenism, temporal power, polytheism, materialism and spiritual revulsion. Those of the language cycle are classical learning, popular speech and barbarian dialects; language of bureaucracy and vulgar speech, national tongue, and standard language; and those of the artistic cycle are main artistic sequence and vandalism, culminating epoch, local schools, experimental stage and new style. Definite periods of artistic cycle coincide very largely with the great religions and are obviously inspired by them. Each one of these cycles roughly covers 2000 years. The stage in which we are living at present seems to be one of "anarchic barbarism" and, if the conclusions of the writer are to be trusted, there is no doubt that "a new rejuvenated culture will emerge" out of this chaos.

All this will undoubtedly be read with utmost interest, but the amount of conviction it will carry will vary according to the strength of one's belief in the dictum that history repeats itself.

The conclusions of the book are illustrated by means of carefully prepared diagrams.

E. ASIRVATHAM.

ASCETICS RAIDERS.

SANNYASI AND FAKIR RAIDERS IN BENGAL.

By JAMINI MOHAN GHOSH. (Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, Calcutta.) 1930. 27cm. 160p. Re.1/8.

THE Sannyasi and the Fakir, as we come across them in the overcrowded railway trains or noisy, dusty streets, are quite innocuous creatures (would you believe it?) when looked at side by side with their forbears of the latter eighteenth century, especially as so interestingly revealed in this racy compilation from the official records of a harassed East India Company in Bengal. Let the worried householder of today console himself by reading the following—

The excursions throughout the provinces by Burhana Fakirs were sanctioned by the Muhammadan Government, as will appear from the following extracts from the Sanad granted to the Burhana Fakir, Janab Khan Sultan Hassan Muria Burhana in 1659; by Prince Shah Suja: *Clause 4.* You will be entitled within the countries of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to confiscate as you like properties to which there is no heir... *Clause 5.* When you pass through any tract of the country, the landlords and tenants will supply you with provisions...

In 1809 Broughton wrote in his *Letters from the Maratta Camp*:

The numbers of Faquirs in this camp is enormous;... Mohamedans and Hindus, men and women, boys and girls... The Muhammadans are the worst; many of them going about on horseback and asking for rupees with as much assurance as others ask for pie...

Will the time come, one wonders, when richly dressed "men of God" would go about, not on horseback, but on high-power Rolls-Royce cars, "demanding alms", as some of our brethren are doing it in the lands of the west? Perhaps the only difference will be, that in India they will be always "sannyasis" or "fakirs", while elsewhere banditti will be recognised as banditti and gangsters as gangsters, however respectable.

But the Sannyasis and Fakirs whose activities are set forth here were not mere treasure-hunters or beggars: it would appear they played a very large and sinister part in the disastrous and dastardly intrigues that besmirch the political history of Northern India in the early days of the Company and the last stages of the dissolution of the petty "maharajaships" were hastened by the treacheries and jealousies of kings and sannyasis.

The author, however, concludes with an optimistic note —

Their incursions and depredations and the great havoc they committed in terrorising the people present only a chapter of the history of the period of which so little is known. It should not, however, be supposed for a moment that these Sannyasi and Fakir raiders, although belonging to the same sect, by any means represent that glorious band of real ascetics who will always be held in reverence and worship. There may be a falling off in attainments from their great predecessors, but the ideals remain the same to this day.

A. MADHAVA MENON.

SHORT NOTICES.

MODERN INDIA THINKS. By KESHAVJI R. LUCKMIDAS. (Taraporevala, 1932, 20 cm., 289 p. Rs. 6.

HERE is a symposium of suggestions on problems of Modern India. It deals with about a dozen subjects from aesthetics down to wisdom. It is a laudable effort, and the compiler appears to have taken great pains to collect the sayings of eminent Indians of all walks of life which are here collected. It is, however, rather intriguing to find the late Lord Birkenhead figuring on p. 271 as a thinking modern Indian. The section devoted to social service has been very niggardly treated, and contains, besides, two quite irrelevant extracts entitled, "Control the palate" and "Fasting." And one is surprised to note the absence of the name of such an eminent social worker as Mr. G. K. Devadhar from that section. All the same, it is a helpful little book.

K. D. A.

THE SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE OF ST. PAUL. By FRANK H. BALLARD. (S. C. M. Press, London.) 1931, 21 cm., 158p., 4/-

THIS book has the modest aim of popularising the work of scholars on the subject, and, in doing so, it presents us with a picture that is at once intensely human and lovable, and one that everybody can understand and admire, no matter whether he is a student of Pauline theology or not. In the first part of the book, the author, accepting the three-stage scheme of Hegel—the natural, the negative and the reconstructive—deals with the Apostle of the Gentiles respectively as the Jew of Tarsus, the Christian convert and the zealous Missionary of the Christian Faith. The second part

discusses, with considerable insight, the various practical problems and difficulties which confronted him in the cause of his labours. The author has tried to see the Apostle for himself, and has sometimes come to conclusions that may not command general assent.

Mr. Ballard has such an easy and pleasant style and is so full of delightful quotations that we shall be surprised if he does not whet the appetite of his readers and lead them to such authorities as Ramsay, Glover and Schweitzer.

DAVID CHELLAPPA, C. S. S.

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