

The Servant of India

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OFFICE : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S HOME, POONA 4.

VOL. XV, No. 43. }

POONA—THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1932.

{ INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN 15a.

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Topics of the Week.

Peace Without Victory.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE declared in the House of Commons, in answer to a question from a Labour member, that it was for the Congress to take the initiative in expressing its willingness to co-operate in the work of the third R. T. C. if the Congress had come to that opinion. While public opinion expects the Government to take the first step in making the path of co-operation easy and smooth for the Congress, the Government on its part shifts the responsibility for it on to Mahatma Gandhi. It seems to think that if the Mahatma can write to the authorities on the subjects of communal award and repressive policy and communicate his views to them without reserve, it ought to be similarly possible for him to convey to them any change that may have come about in his views on the need for continuing the civil disobedience movement and holding himself aloof from constitutional discussions. Since no such communication is addressed to the Government directly by him there is no reason for Government to consider suggestions proceeding from neutral quarters. This may be a quite reasonable position to take up in ordinary times, but in the critical months which are before us none of us can have any use for these little punctilios. The situation must be envisaged and tackled in a broad spirit of conciliatory statesmanship.

First of all, a time will never arrive when Mahatma Gandhi will of his own accord approach the Government and say that it is either unwise or unprofitable to go on with his passive resistance campaign, that in any case his resources have been exhausted and that he had now better sue for peace with Government. It would however be quite possible at the psychological moment for neutral persons in the confidence both of the Congress and

Government to persuade each of them to come to terms, provided an indication is afforded that there is an active will to peace on both sides. The complaint against the Government is—and it is a legitimate complaint—that on its own part it gives no such indication, and that it does not help in creating an atmosphere in which such preliminary negotiations can begin with any hope of success. The present struggle between the Congress and Government appears to an outsider like a race between two horses both of which are dead tired. Each of them however wants to put on a brave show, but fails miserably in the attempt. The country at large wants to have done with this mock fight, and the fight can be ended without loss of prestige for either party. For this purpose a suggestion was publicly made—and Mr. N. C. Kelkar was the most prominent in making it—that there should be a simultaneous release of political prisoners and suspension of civil disobedience. Surely, conversations can proceed on this footing without inflicting humiliation on either. The Government must not passively wait for civil disobedience to stop, but actively help in achieving that result by showing in an unmistakable way that they are actuated by a will to peace. While we say this, we must equally urge on the Congress that on its part too it must give an indication that it is now thinking in terms of peace rather than of war. The issues are too big for the country to let notions of prestige weigh either with the Congress or Government. Peace without victory must be the watchword of both.

Indian Christian Conference.

INDIAN Christians, who met in conference last week-end at the Servants of India Society's Home in Poona, took a long step towards having the Premier's communal award amended in respect of them. The general feeling among the community is undoubtedly one of repugnance for the communal electorates which the award has fastened upon them, and it was forcibly displayed at the Conference in the speeches of the prominent delegates, both Roman Catholic and Protestant. But, as always happens in such cases, a small but vociferous minority expressed views to the contrary, and the Conference thought it best, in the interests of solidarity, to refer the final decision of the question to a small committee of distinguished members, among whom is included Mr. Pannirselvam who represented Roman Catholics at the first two sessions of the R.T.C. It would have been easy enough for the Conference to carry a motion in favour of common electorates by a majority vote; but we are glad that they elected instead to wait so that the consensus of opinion among the community may be unmistakably placed behind the Conference in urging for joint electorates. For what will secure a reversal of the Government's communal decision is not merely a resolution passed to this effect by a Conference, albeit fully representative, but unanimity

of opinion (such as is humanly possible in these cases) ascertained by a responsible body of Christians. The committee that the Conference has appointed is just such a body, and we have every confidence that it will achieve the purpose in view. The Conference has recorded the view that "there is a general, though not unanimous, opinion in favour of changing the communal award," and with these terms of reference as it were the committee can be trusted to bring about the desired result with the co-operation of the entire Christian community.

* * *

Late Sir Ali Imam.

NATIONALIST India in general and Muslim Nationalist India in particular has been left distinctly poorer by the death of Sir Ali Imam, which occurred at Ranchi on Saturday last. Sir Ali Imam was one of the most distinguished lawyers India has produced during recent years, but his title to greatness lay not so much in his forensic skill or his ability as an advocate as in his manifold services to the country rendered in an unselfish spirit. It may be remembered that Sir Ali Imam succeeded the late Lord Sinha, or Mr. S. P. Sinha as he then was, in 1910 as the second Indian Law Member to the Government of India and was reputed to have discharged the duties of that high office with the sole eye to the promotion of national interests. It may be recalled that it was during his tenure as a member of the Government of India presided over by Lord Hardinge that Bihar and Orissa, from which he hailed, was constituted into a separate province. It is of course difficult for an outsider to say with certainty to what extent he was responsible for the new arrangement; but it does not need much inside knowledge to infer that he must have thrown all the weight of his influence on the side of enabling his native province to come into its own and to start on an independent career. He was a broad-minded Muslim who was accustomed to place the national interests above those of his community, a fact borne out by his collaboration in the preparation of the Nehru report, and the remarkable speech he delivered at the All-Parties Conference held at Calcutta in the Christmas of 1928. Sir Ali Imam was one of the invitees to the second Round Table Conference in which ill-health prevented his taking a more prominent or vigorous part than he actually did.

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Ordinance Law.

A TEMPERATELY-WORDED statement on the Indian situation addressed to members of Parliament representing Scottish constituencies by an influential group of Scotch missionaries who are at present serving in India but are on furlough or have at one time served here describes the Ordinances as having "created bitter resentment amongst all classes of people, and—most ominous of all—amongst many who were previously consistently friendly in their attitude to Government." Referring to attempts since being made to give legislative shape to the Ordinances, they truthfully warn the authorities that "these steps, although important, are not sufficient to heal the wounds that have been made". We do not think the signatories to the statement are indulging in any exaggeration in their description of the effects of the Ordinances on public opinion, and yet even this consideration—really the most weighty—is not deterring the Government from proceeding to seek the legislature's sanction to the more drastic provisions of the Ordinances. This, as our readers need hardly be reminded, is at present going on both at the Centre and in some of the provinces, the North-West Frontier Legislative Council being the latest among

the provincial legislatures to enact the Ordinances into law.

It is really a mercy that this hated measure will not, as originally intended by Government, remain permanently on the statute book, but has its life limited to five years, thanks to the pressure of public opinion. Seeing that the special powers conferred by the Ordinances on the executive are expressly intended for an emergency, an attempt was made to restrict the operation of the measure to six months, but failed for want of the necessary support. The life of the existing Ordinances is not expected to run out before the end of the year and it was very properly suggested that the new Ordinance law should not take effect before the commencement of the new year. The suggestion might have been accepted by the Government without the least inconvenience to themselves but was not, for reasons none too convincing. The period of imprisonment as a punishment for an offence under the new law was sought by unofficial members to be reduced from two years to one but without success. The Opposition deserves praise for their successful efforts to safeguard the interests of taxi-drivers and others whose vehicles the Government might have occasion to seize. These will now be entitled to some compensation. As a result of the exertions of the oppositionists, the new law casts on Government an obligation to pay rent to house-owners for its use of their premises apparently for the purpose of housing the police and the military. Similarly the opposition was also able to secure for places of worship like mosques, temples, gurudwaras, churches, etc. immunity from searches.

These are no doubt improvements in the Bill; but the one really worthy of the name was one providing for an appeal in certain cases to the Judicial Commissioner against the decision of the tribunal. For the rest the Bill remained practically unamended. This is not to say that its other provisions did not encounter resistance from non-official members or were found completely satisfactory by them. The provision to impose a collective fine, e. g., was stoutly opposed but could not be dislodged or amended. Non-official speeches very often gave pointed expression to the fear in the public mind that the Bill, admittedly very wide in scope and making very serious inroads on personal liberty and placing drastic restrictions on the liberty of the press, would be worked oppressively by the bureaucracy—a fear which all the sweetly worded assurances of the member of Government in its charge could do nothing to allay. If past experience of the working of such measures by the executive is any guide, one cannot say that the opposition was unduly nervous or entertained groundless suspicions as to the manner this law would be worked.

* * *

Abolition of the Agricultural College ?

THE rumoured recommendation by the Administrative Reorganisation Committee appointed by the Bombay Government in favour of the virtual closing of the College of Agriculture at Poona, the only institution of its kind in the presidency, on financial grounds has moved the Agricultural Graduates' Association to put forward an earnest plea for its retention. In a country like India, more than three-fourths of the population of which lives on agriculture and which can by no means be said to be suffering from a surfeit of agricultural colleges, the recommendation, if carried into effect, cannot but prejudicially affect the progress of agriculture. We do not know whether the abolition of the college will mean the stoppage of the valuable research work that is being done by its staff. Very probably it does. In

that case the disappearance of the College will be all the more keenly felt by cultivators, not only in this presidency but in the whole of India. For we find it stated in the note prepared by the Association that the agricultural improvements suggested by the products of the College have resulted in increasing the value of the agricultural yield in this presidency by nearly Rs. 1¼ crores every year. With the closure of the College all hope of further progress in this direction will be dashed to the ground. This would be deplorable at any time but is all the more so when the cultivator, being hard hit by the present fall in prices, needs all the assistance he can get with a view to increasing the value of his produce at comparatively little additional cost. A criticism frequently levelled against agricultural graduates as a class is that they hanker after Government service and do not devote themselves to private farming. From the statistics collected by the Association the charge appears to be devoid of much substance. In no country barring America is the proportion of agricultural graduates engaging themselves in private farming more than 5 per cent. The Association was able to collect information about 480 out of the 800 graduates turned out by the College during the twenty-five years of its existence and its inquiries go to show that while 64 per cent. of these are in Government service or in the service of Indian States, as high a percentage as 36 is engaged in private farming. There is no reason to suppose that this proportion would not hold good in the case of the remaining 320 graduates. Thus all things considered there can be no doubt that the contemplated abolition of the College would be a great public loss which must, if possible, be avoided. It is true the financial situation of the presidency needs heroic action before it can be set right; but action like the abolition of the Agricultural College would strike all right-minded persons as suicidal.

* * *

Indian Students in England.

ONE part of the report of the High Commissioner to the Government of India for 1931-32 published last week deserves more than passing notice, the part where he deals with the difficulties experienced in the matter of the provision of facilities to Indian students for practical training in England. It is observed that during the year 120 such applications were received, a number smaller by 34 than that for the preceding year, and out of them 104 were placed with suitable firms. One of the difficulties referred to by the High Commissioner is the present economic depression. If this has been responsible for the closure of factories which alone provided the particular kind of training desired by our young men, the difficulties which faced the High Commissioner must be said to be unavoidable. It is however not clear from the report whether the difficulties emanated from the disappearance of the factories or whether they had anything to do with the unwillingness of the factory-owners to provide training facilities for our students. Trade Unions have also been mentioned as being opposed to Indian young men being taken up for training. A little reflection will show that their hostility is based on ignorance as to the real purpose for which the young Indian student seeks admission to the factory. His object is not to displace a single Englishman already employed, but merely to acquire a knowledge of the process of manufacture. The action of the Trade Unions is thus quite unmeaning and is to be strongly deprecated. The hesitation on the part of the factory-owner to disclose the special processes of manufacture, which to some extent stands in the way of the Indian student securing the necessary facilities for

training, stands on a different footing and must be recognised to be natural. But we refuse to believe that his unwillingness to take in young Indians as apprentices is so irremediable as is sometimes sought to be made out. It is seen from the report that more than 90 per cent. of the orders for India's requirements placed through the High Commissioner himself went to Great Britain. Can it not be made a condition of the placing of such orders that the firm from which the goods are ordered must be prepared to provide facilities for technical training to Indian students wishing to avail themselves of them? Is the High Commissioner really so helpless in the matter as his report makes him out to be? We wonder.

Articles.

TRAVANCORE REFORMS.

H. H. THE MAHARAJA OF TRAVANCORE has just promulgated constitutional reforms which, without adding materially to the power enjoyed so far by the popular representatives in the State, are intended to remove a glaring anomaly. There are two State assemblies, each independent of the other. The first is the Legislative Council, established as long ago as 1888, which is in specific charge of legislation and is intended in course of time to advance along the line of exercising a check over executive action. The second is the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, which was brought into existence sixteen years later, and to which a much less ambitious sphere of work was assigned, viz. that "of expressing direct to the Government (the people's) wants and wishes and of representing their views regarding the administrative measures taken by the Government from time to time." So long as the Legislative Council is a body devoid of real power, it need not come into violent conflict with the Popular Assembly; the purely advisory character of both would effectually prevent them from creating any political crises or deadlocks. Even so, it would have been possible for authorities less liberal-minded than those whom it is the good fortune of Travancore to possess to play off one against the other. But the position would become sheerly impossible as soon as any measure is contemplated conferring substantial power upon the representatives of the people in the Legislature. In that event the Popular Assembly, however useful it might previously have been, would only result in dispersing the authority and responsibility of the Council. The mutual relation of the two bodies must therefore be defined as a condition precedent to the inauguration of any large reforms in the democratic direction.

The proclamation of His Highness accomplishes this in a manner that would suggest itself to any casual observer as the most natural. The Travancore Legislature is in future to be a bi-cameral body with the present Legislative Council and Popular Assembly transformed into two chambers, the latter being made into the lower house and the former into the upper. The Popular Assembly, as it is constituted at

present, consists exclusively of popular representatives, with no official element in it. But in its new form of a popular chamber of a bi-cameral Legislature, it is to consist not only of a smaller number of members (72 against 100), but of a certain proportion of officials among them. We see really no justification for a reduction of the strength: 100 would by no means have been an excessive number for the lower legislative chamber of a State like Travancore. But a more serious defect in the composition of this body is that the proportion of official members is to be even larger than at present: whereas in the present Council the proportion is 14 per cent., in the new Council it is to be $16\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. If His Highness thought that in the present circumstances as many as twelve officials were necessary to answer criticisms from the non-official benches, he could have reduced their proportion by increasing the total strength of the house and allowing a larger quota of elected members. For, according to the plan now announced, the proportion of nominated non-officials too is to be another $16\frac{2}{3}$ per cent., thus leaving only $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. to be elected, either in territorial or special constituencies. The present Legislative Council will hereafter be metamorphosed into a second chamber and called the State Council. This, too, is to undergo a reduction in numbers, again without adequate grounds. It will consist barely of 37 members, as many as 27 per cent. of whom will be officials, the elected members being $59\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The Travancore Government has definitely come down on the side of joint electorates throughout. It has resolutely set its face against the grant of communal electorates for the purpose of minority representation, as these, in its view,—which of course we enthusiastically endorse,—“tend to create and multiply communal cleavages in the country, a feature which it is the aim of Government to avoid.” But it does not find it possible to adopt the alternative of reservation of seats in mixed electorates. It favours instead the system of “facultative representation” that obtains in Mysore State. It guarantees four seats in the Assembly for the Ezhavas (who are the local Harijans) numbering $8\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. Two of these at least will be filled by the nominees of recognised associations among the community. Similarly, Muslims, who number $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs, will have two seats earmarked for them. Other minority communities will be provided for by nomination. It is made clear that even the system of facultative representation, in the case of Ezhavas and Muslims, is to be a temporary expedient, the ultimate goal being free and open competition in joint electorates. These arrangements would appear to be fairly satisfactory. The franchise is to be lowered, but not very much. It could have been brought down, one would feel, much lower.

The second chamber of the Travancore Legislature is not to be of the normal type that is known to the student of constitutions: it is not to be a revising or

delaying chamber. On the contrary it is to have co-ordinate powers with the first chamber, as has been unanimously demanded by the Princes' delegation at the Round Table Conference in the case of the federal legislature. Even otherwise a second chamber would act as a powerful brake upon the progress of the State in the direction of popular government. As a body possessing co-equal powers with the lower house, it would be intolerable. And, it must be remembered, in order properly to assess the value of the reforms, that the present proclamation of His Highness offers no new power to the Legislature. There is no division of subjects into reserved and transferred as in the British Indian provinces. On every subject the last word is either with the ruler or with the Dewan. The Council can interpellate the Government; consider legislative projects; and vote upon budget proposals. But there is no subject upon which the Council's voice is decisive. If the Council rejects any Bill or refuses a demand for grant, the Government may pass it by certification over the head of the Council, and these overriding powers are capable of being exercised over the whole range of administration. No change is proposed to be made in this state of things. The ruler of Travancore will as before continue to be the repository of all power not merely in form, but in fact. No doubt, the Council will hereafter be permitted to discuss certain specified subjects (eight in number) which were heretofore rigidly excluded from its purview. Railways, sea-ports, and coinage were among these excepted matters. The exception will now be withdrawn. But this only extends the sphere of discussion in the Council; the area over which it will exercise final control will remain the same, that is, nil. While thus the Legislative Council will receive no accession of power, it will have to reckon with a second chamber, and a second chamber which will not content itself with merely interposing delay and thus compelling careful consideration of legislative proposals, but will claim to share with it all the attributes and authority of the democratic chamber. The power conceded by the new reforms is thus unquestionably a minus quantity. It is very much to be regretted that his constitutional advisers have not made it possible for His Highness, who by all accounts promises exceedingly well, to have a more auspicious beginning for his career as a ruler.

Travancore is without doubt the most advanced State in India, so far as popular reforms go, and if even this State under the new dispensation is still to remain essentially autocratic one can well imagine how popular institutions are likely to flourish in other States. It may be, however, that the impulse of federation will succeed in reforming the States as nothing else has done. That at any rate is our hope.

A STUDY IN PRICE REFLATION.

THE British Labour party Conference on October 4 passed at Leicester a resolution recommending that the aim of Great Britain's monetary policy should be to stabilise wholesale prices at a suitable level in the country, without trying to peg the external value of the pound to gold. It would appear that the policy favoured by the Labour party in England is being actually prosecuted very successfully for a year by Sweden. The general impression about Sweden is that she has, like Denmark, joined the Sterling Group, her attempt, since she left the gold standard on 28th September 1931, being to maintain her currency in parity with sterling, and that if the krona has depreciated against the pound it is due to adverse circumstances like the Krueger collapse. In fact it would appear at first sight that there are good reasons for Sweden to link the foreign value of the krona to sterling, the most important being that much of her import trade is carried on in sterling, whether the goods are bought in England or elsewhere. Even so, however, the Swedish Government have decided that it would be to the best interests of the country to "preserve the internal purchasing power of the krona" and not to worry too much about anchoring it to sterling. It so happens that since May last the sterling rate has settled down round kr. 19.50, but this is a purely incidental result and not the objective of a deliberate policy. This rate is $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. above par. If the Government had left the krona to find its own level, the foreign exchange rates would have fallen and the sterling rate would have come back to parity in this period, but the Government's policy was not to maintain parity with sterling but to keep commodity prices stable at a level which would be advantageous to home industry. With this end in view it had to take measures designed to prevent an increase in the gold value of the krona and indeed to lower it.

Sweden's experience in the management of a paper currency for twelve months has much to teach the world. There is talk everywhere now of controlled inflation and stabilisation of prices at an improved level. Sweden has actually put the policy into practice and made a success of it. The Swedish Riksbank still stands relieved of the obligation to redeem its notes with gold, in order that the currency may be so manipulated that a moderate rise in wholesale prices will be brought about and steadily maintained. In the beginning of January of this year the Finance Minister announced his policy in the following words.

"The events of the past months support the view that it should be possible to confine within narrow limits the fluctuations in the internal value of the Swedish krona, especially its purchasing power in the hands of the consumers. Our aim should, in my opinion, still be the same as that we set ourselves last September, viz. to maintain the purchasing power of the krona. This, of course, does not preclude certain modifications of prices, especially wholesale prices. And it goes without saying that a stabilisation of the international value of the krona ought to be attempted as soon as conditions permit."

No immediate return to the gold basis of the currency, but its handling with a view to the maintenance of the purchasing power with certain "modifications" in the price level: this was the Government's policy. The "modifications" obviously meant a "rise." The ambiguity was removed in May, when the Diet and the Government accepted the report of the Banking Committee on the administration of the Riksbank. The Committee recommended that "the efforts to regulate the value of the krona should take as their starting-point the internal price level and the requirements of our own economic life"; also that there should be some recovery in wholesale prices, though there should be "no question of prices reverting to a level too far removed from the present ones." Not merely import and export prices, but also "the prices of home-market goods should obviously be permitted to rise, provided the cost of living is not seriously affected thereby." The Government's monetary programme was thus twofold: "(1) to prevent a fall, and preferably to bring about a limited rise, in wholesale prices; and (2) to minimise exchange fluctuations, without however fixing the external value of the krona." Obviously the ultimate aim was to reflate wholesale prices to the level of 1929, or to raise them by about 30 per cent. But it was realised that concerted international action was required to achieve this result. No single country dare attempt this for its own market without the co-operation of the other countries in the world. The evil consequences of such a course of action are obvious. As the Report of a special committee of the London Chamber of Commerce puts it: "If a nation got out of equilibrium by unduly raising its price level, it would first lose its export trade, since the other nations would not wish to buy from it, and would consequently lose its import trade, as in these circumstances the sellers would be unable to obtain payment. It, too, would be obliged to come back into equilibrium." But a modest rise may well be attempted.

Sweden has succeeded eminently in attaining her purpose, first, of bringing about a slight increase in the price level, and secondly of keeping the fluctuations in it within as small a compass as possible. How exactly this was achieved it would be tedious to narrate here; the curious may turn to Svenska Handelsbanken's "Index" for September, in which all the important details of the management of the currency have been set out. But the results of the policy can be gauged from the following table, which gives the trend of wholesale prices in three countries for comparative purposes, the price index for 1913 being taken at 100:—

		Sweden	U. S. A.	England
1931	September	109	104	99
	December	110	101	106
1932	March	109	96	105
	June	108	90	98
	July	108	91	98
	August	109	94	100

The conclusion is: "Swedish wholesale prices have thus been subject to only small variations, and

in July and August, 1932, were on the same level as when the gold standard was abandoned. This also applies to the English wholesale price level, though the fluctuations have been greater. In the United States, on the other hand, as in other gold countries, prices have been falling sharply right up to July when they recovered, and during August the same rallying tendency has been noticeable." The recovery of prices to the level of 1929, which the Swedish authorities had in mind when they formulated their policy has not been even partially achieved, it is true; but in any case she has not permitted the price level of a year ago to fall, as has been the case generally with countries which are still on the gold basis. Professor Bertil Ohlin, the author of the article in the Swedish "Index", gives as his personal opinion that there would have been a chance of some amount of price deflation if the Riksbank had taken energetic measures of credit expansion, like large bond purchases, supplemented by an increased demand for capital for public works. "No such policy", says Professor Ohlin, "was, however, inaugurated." Still, within the limits set to it by the authorities, the policy that was actually followed must be pronounced highly successful.

THE PROBLEM OF CRIMINAL TRIBES.

III*

IN many parts of India there are the wandering and the gypsy-like classes who roam over a great extent of the country and commit crimes whenever opportunity offers. The *Sansis* of the U. P. belong to this category and generally earn their livelihood by house-breaking and making counterfeit coins and wandering from place to place. They frequently disguise themselves as religious mendicants. Their instruments are rough and the counterfeit coins are carried by one or two men of the tribe dressed as coolies. When they arrive at a halting place, they put up in some abandoned house or temple.

The *Mang-Garudis* or the snake charmers are also a wandering class of jugglers having no fixed dwelling. In the Census returns the members of this tribe seem to be mixed up with Mangs or Garudis and therefore are not specified. They are not numerous. They live under a stretched awning tied to pegs fixed in the ground. They keep dogs and use donkeys and buffaloes as pack animals. They earn in the day time by giving a display of their tricks and commit petty thefts in the night. In the Bombay Presidency 1,644 Mang-Garudis are registered under the Criminal Tribes Act and 739 are interned in Settlements.

The *Lamanis* or *Vanjaris* is another well-known wandering tribe of the Bombay Presidency having a population of 651,927 persons. Their tribal occupation has been for centuries the carrying of grain and supplies. Their carrying trade has greatly suffered since the opening of cart roads and railways. The wandering Vanjaris are under police surveillance and in Kanarese districts are often accused of stealing cattle, kidnaping women and children and circulating false coins. Many of the Vanjaris have now settled down as husbandmen and a few find a living by driving carts, spinning coarse *tag* or *hemp*, selling grass and working as labourers. In the Bombay Presidency 2,072 Lamanias are registered as members of Criminal Tribes and 27 are in Settlements.

* Previous articles in this series appeared in our issues of October 6 and 20.

The *Kaikadis* who are found chiefly in the Deccan are also a wandering criminal tribe and were once notorious robbers. Their total population is 26,325. 131 Kaikadis have been registered as members of Criminal Tribes and 536 are in Settlements. They are always under the eye of the police. They make bamboo baskets, snares for catching birds, cages and children's toys. They also carry sand, earth, bricks, tiles, and stones on donkeys, remove sweeping and filth and of late have taken to farming.

Baruars are professional day-thieves and are found in many districts of the U. P. They go to distant places to commit thefts and take their children with them, the latter being regularly trained to steal. They frequent large assemblages, such as fairs and marriage parties, and while the elder men remain at a distance the children are sent to get what they may find. When they manage to obtain an article, they speedily pass it from hand to hand and then disappear. If any of them are caught, the men at once come up and interfere in their behalf saying that it was a childish mistake, thus taking the boy away. They never commit burglary or theft by night. Their distinguishing profession is theft and for this purpose they scatter themselves over the country, especially frequenting the great religious assemblages at Allahabad, Banares, etc., while sometimes they are also found in Jagannath or Bombay. Their depredations are always planned with great skill and are seldom detected. They frequently assume the disguise of a Brahmin or Fakir. They have a peculiar thieves' jargon of their own, in this way following the example of all habitual criminals. Their spoils are divided systematically, special shares being set apart for the gods, the leader of the gang, and the aged or infirm members of the fraternity. The Baruars have long been brought under the operations of the Criminal Tribes Act, but though strict repression and a rigorous system of registration have undoubtedly been instrumental in decreasing the volume of their crime, these have failed to eradicate the criminal instinct amongst them.

The *Nats* are the principal gipsy tribe of the U. P. The men are often acrobats and rope-dancers and the women prostitutes. They practise surgery and medicine in a small way and are adept thieves. Their population is about 115,000.

The *Bihars*, who are found in the U. P., are of aboriginal descent and their history is a matter of great interest, although very little is known with any certainty. There is almost a universal tradition that the Bihars ruled the country before the advent of the Rajputs and Mussalmans. They are now labourers and cultivators and seem to have been regarded for centuries as the mere serfs of the Aryan races. Their total population is 419,796 persons.

The *Harnis* claim descent from a body of Pathans that came to India with Mahomud Ghaznavi, who gave them a village near Delhi where they settled down. They are next heard of in Bhutnair in Bikanir State, where they intermarried with the Hindu Rajputs of the neighbourhood. Being pressed by famine, a number of men belonging to this tribe came into the Punjab and took service under a local chief, who employed them not only as Shikaris or huntsmen but also as mercenary free-booters. Harnis, later on, because of economic distress were driven to committing burglaries and dacoities, which extended almost over the whole of the Punjab. They never commit any offences locally beyond the theft of grain or standing crops or the occasional theft of a goat or cow, which is generally immediately killed and consumed. The Harnis usually set about in gangs of ten or twelve and are disguised as Fakirs or Hakims or travelling merchants. They generally commit robberies and dacoities at night and equally

divide the spoils. The young Harni women sometimes take up their residence in the houses of rich persons as domestic servants. After some time they seize a convenient opportunity to make over all articles such as jewellery or other valuables to some one of their male relatives, who has visited the house in the guise of a Fakir. A Harni will seldom commit any offence single-handed. The principal venues of crime of the Harnis are Deccan, Central Provinces, Gujarat and the City of Bombay. Their total population is 3,646 persons only.

Minas. The home of the Minas is Jodhpur, Jey-pore, Bharatpore, Bikaner and Alwar States and the Gurgaon District of the Punjab. Their sphere of activity extends over the whole of India. Their population is 613,428. It is in pursuit of crime that the Minas leave their homes. Ordinarily they start at the time of Diwali or Dussera after the rains and return home in March at the time of the Holi. They travel about both by rail and road and do not take with them their women or children or cattle. In dress and appearance, they strongly resemble Rajputs. In physique they are strong, well built and medium-

tall. For the purpose of committing crimes, they disguise themselves in various ways. Their favourite crime is burglary and generally they do not take to anything else.

Yanadis or Nakkals are expert in catching jackals which they eat and are found in the Godavari District of the Madras Presidency. They have a total population of 138,426. They are of slight physique, dark of complexion, and very dirty in their habits. On the register of criminal gangs kept by the police there are at the present time 114 men, 121 women, 236 children of this caste. The Nakkals are by nature wanderers and dwellers in the fields and scrub jungle. They make a scanty living by catching jackals, hares, rats, tortoises and by gathering honey, etc. To them the gains of petty pilfering naturally offer a strong temptation. They seldom commit any of the bolder crimes. Of late years most of them have settled down permanently in villages. They do cheap cooly work in the villages and their women are employed as sweepers.

(To be continued.)

K. G. SHARANGPANI

SPAIN AND THE CATALAN STATUTE.

IT seems somewhat late now to refer to the Catalan Statute which has been agreed to by the Spanish Government over a month ago. Yet the question is bound to be of interest for Indians since they have to deal with similar problems with regard to their future constitution. The Catalan Statute is an experiment in provincial autonomy (or rather semi-autonomy).

Some months ago the star of the Spanish Premier, Mr. Azana, appeared somewhat pale. Times have changed and the personal prestige of the Spanish leader has regained all its brilliancy; in fact it has been further enhanced by the successful repression of the military sedition which took place in August last. It is this personal prestige which has enabled Mr. Azana to get the Cortes to pass, by a very large majority, two bills of essential importance. The first is the bill on the agrarian reform, the repercussions of which are likely to be most important on the economic life of the country. The second is the Catalan Statute which tends to solve an old problem that has troubled the political life of Spain for centuries.

In the early days of Spanish history Barcelona was one of the most prosperous and important ports. The discovery of America by Columbus and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks had caused a momentary eclipse, but the question of Catalan autonomy always remained latent, and of late all the important political events have had their seat in Barcelona, from the "Tragic Week" in 1909 to the coup d'état of General Primo de Rivera in 1923 and the first proclamation of the Republic in April 1931. The *Generalidad*, the organ of regional administration, was created under the direction of Colonel Macia, at a time when monarchy crumbled down. Senor Macia's chief counsellor was Don Luis Companys, former legal counsel for the Anarcho-Syndicalist Labour Unions. General Primo de Rivera did

much to improve the standard of living of the workers and consequently their political capacity increased while extremism was soothed down, and when the dictatorship collapsed in its turn, the republican regime found a more favourable ground. The fact that Senor Macia had made an alliance with extremist elements won over to him the confidence of the masses. And Barcelona, which had the reputation of being a revolutionary centre, proved to be remarkably quiet when rioting of various kinds was taking place now and again in the rest of Spain.

Meanwhile the statute for local autonomy was quietly being prepared. It was presented to the Cortes on August 18th of last year; that body, however, being very much preoccupied by the drafting of the constitution, relegated the Catalan Statute into the background at first. Nevertheless the first article of the constitution seemed to be in direct reference to Catalonia: "The Republic constitutes itself in an integral State compatible with the autonomy of the municipalities and of the regions." A revised draft of the Statute was presented to the Cortes in the spring of this year. Alterations to the first plan had been introduced by a Parliamentary Commission composed of representatives of all political groups, and they were to undertake the task of passing the measure through the Cortes.

This was the signal of a violent anti-Statute campaign, in which the press naturally took a prominent part, to serve the interests of all kinds of rival sections of opinion. Some business-men, for instance, feared that since Catalonia produced double the amount of taxation per head as compared with other provinces, her financial autonomy might necessitate an increased taxation in the rest of Spain. Some civil servants feared that Madrid would lose its importance as an administrative centre. Others took the Statute as a pretext for protesting against the new regime which had not satisfied their personal

interests. But finally the verdict rested with the Cortes. In that Assembly, the Statute also found some opposition and criticism; Mr. Azana, however, staunchly defended the Catalans and cleverly intervened at critical moments. It is fair to note that the Statute finally voted does not grant entirely all that had been claimed, and one was justified to fear that the Catalans might practise the unwise "everything or nothing" policy. But it has not been the case; the Catalonian deputation has been warmly greeted by the population on its return from Madrid and gratitude has been expressed for the service they have rendered. And it is expected that the rest of Spain will not be slow to accommodate itself to the new situation.

One of the most delicate points has been the definition of the exact status of the new administrative unit. This is how Senor Sanchez Roman interprets it.

"As regards the autonomy in a State which is not federal but integral, the autonomy cannot be that of a member State of a federal regime. Nor is it a case of purely municipal authority which does not exceed the limits of local administration. It is a case of a third character over the definition of which great care must be taken. It is that of a political administrative autonomy which the constitution has granted to the regions. This intermediary autonomy has the characteristics of the whole system of the constitution."

The new Statute proclaims that Catalonia is an autonomous State composed of the Provinces of Barcelona, Tarragona, Lerida and Gerona. In Catalonia, the two official languages are Catalan and Spanish. The Spanish Republic, that is, the central power from Madrid, has the right to legislate concerning the railways, the Press, agriculture, and constitutional problems. Nevertheless the application of the laws is entrusted to the autonomous State. Catalonia must see that social relief is organised and this shall be controlled by the Spanish State. Both the Generalidad and the Spanish Republic can maintain in Catalonia primary and secondary schools. Catalonia maintains police forces on her own territory, but if it is necessary for the safety of the State, the Madrid Government has the right to interfere in matters concerning public order.

The "Generalidad" retains the right to edict laws on purely local questions relative to public works and transports. Catalonia is also entitled to have her own judicial administration. Should a conflict of competence arise between Catalan and other Spanish Tribunals, the decision shall rest with the supreme court of Spain. Relations with foreign countries are reserved to the Madrid Government; treaties and international agreements concluded by Spain will be applied by the Generalidad in Catalonia. The Generalidad is composed of a Parliament, an executive committee and a President elected by Parliament; the President also acts as the representative of the Spanish Republic in Catalonia. Certain sources of revenue are reserved to the Generalidad; the taxes raised by the Spanish Government in Catalonia can be collected by the Generalidad if the Madrid Finance Member has given them permission to do so; but the Generalidad and other Catalan public bodies

cannot raise a foreign loan without permission from the Cortes.

It is hardly possible to hope that this Statute will prove an immediate and perfect solution to the Catalan problem; nevertheless it is a great step forward. In the beginning of the Spanish Republic, Catalan separation was one of the most serious threats lurking behind the scenes against the new regime. To-day one can hope that with goodwill on either side—and it does not seem to be lacking—such an ample measure of agreement will be reached that the previous friction and unrest will be greatly diminished. The prestige of the young Republic will shine brighter for having given this fine example of moderation and political wisdom, all the more admirable in a country where the unitary conception was one of the dogmas of political tradition.

Paris.

L. MORIN.

Our Geneva Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

GENEVA, OCT. 19.

THE LEAGUE ASSEMBLY.

THE thirteenth session of the Assembly has concluded its sittings. In addition to the admission of Iraq into the League its notable achievement has been the establishment of the Slavery Commission, thus making the progressive abolition of slavery part of the regular humanitarian activities of the League. With regard to the nationality of married women, it decided that it was premature at present to recommend a revision of the provisions contained on this subject in the Codification Conference drawn up about two years ago at the Hague. In identifying himself with this view, Sir Prabhshankar Pattani signified to the women's organisations the sympathy with which their claims were viewed and indicated that opportunities would undoubtedly occur in the future for reconsidering the whole question. The Assembly approved the efforts of the technical organisations of the League with regard to penal and penitentiary questions, the opium traffic, the progressive abolition of slavery, child welfare, the protection of young people and the Nansen International Office for Refugees.

In the economic sphere, the League's policy of the reorganisation of the world's commerce on an international basis to bring the present crisis to an end and restore prosperity to the various countries has been reiterated and the Assembly has been quick to realise that in the preparation for the World Economic and Financial Conference, the League has again to be provided with an opportunity to put this policy into effect. In this connexion, the efforts of Sir Jehangir Coyajee to emphasise the importance of co-operation as a means of economic reform are noteworthy. His resolution found ready acceptance among all the Delegations from Eastern countries. The Assembly also renewed the term of office of its Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The greater part of the attention of this year's Assembly was, however, as the President pointed out in his concluding speech, centered in matters of routine and internal organisation. A determined effort was made, principally by Great Britain, to cut down the League budget in view of the economic

depression and the financial position of the League, affected by the inability or failure of nearly one-third of the member states to pay their contributions, undoubtedly warranted such an attempt. Consequently by far the most important discussions took place in the Fourth Committee. If this initiative has not resulted in any very considerable reduction of expenditure, it is not because there has been unwillingness in any quarter to face the consequences of the present position, and it is rather illustrative of the practical difficulties of carrying on the League's activities at a diminished cost. The out which the British Government proposed, for instance, in the salary of the League officials could not be exercised in all cases as it was found on legal advice that the Assembly was not entitled to effect any such unilateral change in existing contracts. The cost of living in Geneva, unlike European cities, showed little or no diminution and considering the circumstances in which the League officials are placed, it was found that it would be unjustifiable to describe their emoluments as too high.

The reduction in expenditure sought to be made by the suppression of the higher posts in the League Secretariat was also rendered difficult for political reasons. Not only have all the existing posts of Under-Secretaries had to be retained, owing to the unwillingness of the Great Powers to be unrepresented in the higher counsels of the League Secretariat, but a new Deputy Secretary General's post has had to be created to give satisfaction to the smaller Powers and to enable them to have one of their men in a position of authority. This compromise was reached only as a result of continuous negotiations conducted in the Committee as well as privately.

The Assembly accepted Sir Eric Drummond's resignation and paid a tribute to his work as the first Secretary-General. The Council has nominated M. Avenol, who, as Sir Eric's second in command, already possesses considerable experience of League affairs, as the successor. The Special Assembly which will be held next month to consider the Lytton Report, will ratify the appointment. The Secretary-General, as well as all the higher officials of the League, will henceforth be called upon to take a special oath of loyalty to the League on entering office, and in all future contracts there will be a reduction of ten per cent. in salaries.

In conclusion, it may be noted that the warning administered to the Assembly by Prof. Rappard, the Swiss Delegate, in presenting the League budget, found an echo in the thought of many of those who took part in this year's proceedings.

"How was it to be explained," he said, "that, whereas the Covenant offered immeasurable benefits for the States Members of the League, they grudged payment for those benefits? The answer to that question showed the real interest and true character of the discussions which had taken place in the Fourth Committee. The budget must be regarded as a barometer of the health of the League, and its present position indicated that the health of the League was below normal. Governments and Parliaments had the impression that the promises of the Covenant were not being fulfilled. The Council and the Assembly of the League had been reduced to noting the various phases of war-like operations in the Far East; for six months, the delegations of the Disarmament Conference had deplored the weight of armaments but had not succeeded in reducing them; in the economic field, activities were confined to analysing and commenting upon the development of the present crisis without finding an effective remedy. Thirty-three million francs might be a trifle to pay for effective action, but it was too much to pay for vain discussions."

Nevertheless, as the President has said,

"to speak of the decline of the League is to assert

that it is weaker than it was. It has not lost a single atom of its strength. Events have merely proved that it is not strong enough. Had those events taken place a few years earlier, we should have been obliged to the same conclusion then, and to consider the desirability of strengthening our organisation. . . . The League is not a super-State. It has no will of its own that it can impose on the Governments. It is nothing but the Assembly of the Governments themselves. It is nothing but the mirror of the world, in which every aspect of life is reflected, but in which the darkest aspects are the most clearly seen. Its only merit—but an inestimable one—is that it creates a diplomatic atmosphere propitious to negotiations, and offers the Governments a series of procedures by the help of which, with good will on both sides, any agreement can be attained."

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, 21st October.

INDIAN NEWS.

NEWS from India during the week has been of a mixed character. Today the murderous assault upon a Bombay officer is announced and there will be considerable anxiety to know how far, if at all, Bengal methods are being extended to the Western Presidency. News too has come that Dr. Tagore in a lengthy and eloquent communication charged with high emotion has urged a settlement with Mahatmaji and the Congress on the basis of Indian self-determination and friendly relationship between the two countries. From what I learn of the contents of the document it would, if published in extenso in this country, be productive of a great deal of controversy and whilst it would make clear to many people here the direction of political opinion, even among those who in India have largely held themselves aloof from the political arena, it would probably alienate a number of people here to whom the Poet mainly appealed as a seer and a prophet, rather than a worker in the ordinary affairs of men.

The fact that Dr. Ambedkar has had a long and useful interview at Yerawda Jail with Mahatmaji, apart altogether from the official denial, finally disposes of the ridiculous "canard" for which the *Daily Herald* made itself responsible earlier in the week to the effect that intimate friends of Gandhiji here had received secret intimation that the true reason for the termination of the conversations on general political affairs carried on "by Mr. Jayakar and others" with Mahatmaji, was that he had a further stroke and that the authorities in India were deliberately concealing the fact from the public in India. It is incomprehensible how the *Herald* became guilty of such an absurdity in view of the fact that they took the trouble to inquire of responsible persons here who are really intimate with Mahatmaji, and who not only would have been aware from one source or another, had any such tragedy occurred, but were in a position both directly and indirectly to deny authoritatively that it had occurred. One had hoped that the *Daily Herald* would not have degenerated to the methods of the yellow press and it is, indeed, disappointing to find it using tactics with which the latter has only too sadly familiarised us. One wonders whether the real motive of publishing this fabrication (for so it must be regarded) was to recall attention to Gandhiji's existence as a State prisoner. It is understood both from private sources and otherwise that among those that have had access to Gandhiji since the sudden stoppage of the conversations is Mr.

G. D. Birla. It is to be presumed that these new conversations did not go beyond questions relating to the depressed classes about whose treatment the news during the week has not been so encouraging as it was immediately following Mahatmaji's fast. It is hoped, however, that means may be found of enlarging the scope of such conversations so that the situation may be more thoroughly discussed with Gandhiji in the hope that a means to peace with honour may be found. The more the situation here is investigated the stronger grows the suspicion that the India Office is to be exonerated from any responsibility for the sudden termination of the Gandhi-Jayakar talk. It would not at all be surprising indeed to learn that the Government of India's action in closing the doors of Yerawda Jail came in as a great surprise and embarrassment to the Cabinet as it did to the participants in the conversations.

THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE.

Latest enquiries reveal the fact that an announcement will be made probably early next week of the personnel and the date of the third Round Table Conference. I believe that the present delay is due to the necessity of awaiting definite replies from some of the States' representatives. It is rumoured that one very distinguished British-Indian who played an eloquent and noble part in the earlier Conferences has been unable to accept for reasons of serious ill-health the invitation to London next month. If the rumour proves to be well-founded there would be cause for the gravest disappointment and anxiety, for he is a patriot of such distinguished ability and splendour of character that his absence from the scene here will be felt as a loss of the first importance. It is to be hoped that in that event his compulsory stay in India will have so far restored his health as to make his services doubly available in the difficult period that will follow the proceedings of the Round Table Conference.

The fact that other well-known Moderate leaders are likely to come entitles one to assume that the difficulties felt by some of them regarding the adequacy and flexibility of the agenda have been satisfactorily overcome. For some time the Government have been hovering between the choice of the 15th and the 22nd November for convening the Conference. It is understood that they have now definitely settled on the earlier date which is all to the good, considering the strenuous nature of the work in hand and the large area to be covered by the Conference before the framing of final proposals for a Bill can be undertaken. I am informed that St. James's Palace will not be available this time for the delegates, comparatively few though they may be, owing to the fact that the Palace will be already in use for other public purposes. In the circumstances it would not be surprising if accommodation were found for the delegates, not many yards from the Clock Tower of Parliament. Steps are already being inaugurated by private and influential groups to provide the delegates with such unofficial facilities as may serve to render their task here easier of accomplishment.

Reviews.

"SASTRI SPEAKS."

SASTRI SPEAKS. BEING A COLLECTION OF THE SPEECHES AND WRITINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA. Ed. by S. R. NAIDOO & DHANE BRAMDAW. (The Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, S. Africa.) 1931. 22cm. 307p. 8/-

"GOVERNMENTS as a rule, and least of all British

Governments, do not do inspired things. Yet the choice of Mr. Sastri as the first Agent in the Union was as nearly a stroke of genius as anything may be"—so wrote *The Natal Advertiser* on the eve of Mr. Sastri's departure to India after laying down the office of Agent General. But if the choice was a stroke of genius the acceptance of the office was an act of self-sacrificing heroism on the part of the recipient. For it was in face of considerations which all but an iron sense of duty would have allowed to prevail that Mr. Sastri, largely the creator of the Cape Town Agreement, agreed to become "its creature" and accept a task bristling with difficulties of an opposing character—shattered health, the prospect of separation from dear ones from whom, ever since the day of his self-dedication to the motherland, he had been schooled to long spells of absence, the brood of misgivings as to the chances of success in a mission of such doubtful promise. Acclaiming the choice with a chorus of approbation, India sent her ambassador forth with myriad-voiced blessings, while South Africa received him with an unparalleled ovation. The telegrams of welcome received by the Agent on his arrival in Pretoria included messages from His Excellency the Governor General of South Africa, from the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Union, from the Right Hon'ble General Smuts, from His Grace the Archbishop of Cape Town and from societies representative of the Indian community throughout the Union. The Union Government proposed an amnesty for Indians illegally present in the Union as "an act of grace to mark the appointment of the Right Honourable V. S. S. Sastri as the first Agent of Government of India in South Africa." The white population in places notoriously anti-Asiatic flocked to the Agent's meetings to "hear the other side." More than two thousand Europeans attended a meeting held on the 11th August in the City Hall of Pietermaritzburg to hear the Agent plead the cause of Empire citizenship with special reference to the place of the Indian in the Empire. Educational, literary and social service societies volunteered to place their platforms at the Agent's disposal for addresses and lectures on topics connected with India and Indian thought. In honour of Mr. Sastri's birthday (22nd Sept.) the Natal Administrator announced a commission on Indian Education in 1928. Universities, schools and colleges, literary and Rotary clubs vied with one another in inviting Mr. Sastri to discourse on aspects of Indian philosophy, literature and culture. The Universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town listened spell-bound to the Agent's expositions of Hindu philosophy and Sanskrit literature, while in the Cathedral in Johannesburg, in response to the Dean's request, he spoke on "Christianity as it impresses an Indian." By a whirlwind campaign carried on in English and in Tamil, Mr. Sastri sought to promote Indian unity in upholding and carrying out the Agreement, to rouse Indians to a better sense of self-help in the matter of education and sanitation and to woo them to a better standard of living; and he disabused the Whites of the lurking fears they had of Indians seeking covertly for equality of political supremacy, while disturbing their self-complacency in respect of what they owed to their Indian fellowmen. In words whose echo will be heard through the corridors of time rang out from him like a reveille, the stirring exhortation:

"If God gave you a feeling of sympathy for the down-trodden, you are betraying God's trust, if you do not straightaway give expression to the idea and get it out in the light; if you do not do something to redress wrong or incur some sacrifice, however small, to put matters right. If you let the Indian community be unjustly traduced and ill-treated, if

you allow the natives in this country to be despised and confined to the tasks of hewers of wood and drawers of water, then depend on it the politicians will not save you from the responsibility."

Mr. Sastri raised India in the estimation of Europeans of South Africa as he had raised her in the estimation of Great Britain and the other Dominions in previous years. And this spiritual orientation effected by him in their attitude towards India and Indians finds magnificent expression in *The Natal Advertiser*:

"He showed us all and first of all that the graces of a scholar, a gentleman and what we are pleased to call a Christian, are not the exclusive prerogative of our own white race. He showed us that India can breed, train and attach to its service men who not only have nothing whatsoever to learn from the Western world, but, on the contrary, can teach the Western world a very great deal that it never expected."

To promote a better understanding of races and cultures, to afford opportunities for the better and more catholic minds in the two communities, Indian and European, Mr. Sastri founded Indo-European Councils. On the Indian side, Mr. Sastri's all too brief tenure of office is starred with even more brilliant achievements. Touring from town to town, Mr. Sastri appealed for funds in behalf of what is now known as the "Sastri College"—a high school and training college in one; and the response of £20,000, and from persons who had not till then realized the importance of endowing modern educational institutions, was but a humble tribute to Mr. Sastri's greatness. The fighting evidence he gave before the Education Commission was responsible for the raising of the grant for Indian education from £23,000 to £56,000. The Social Service Committee and the Child Welfare Society founded at his instance have since functioned creditably. His exhortations to European trade unionists to cast aside their racial exclusiveness and foster the international solidarity of labour resulted in the Typographical Union of Durban throwing open its doors to Indians. Of these and other achievements of the first Indian Ambassador to Africa the reader will, in face of his all-pervading modesty bordering on self-betittlement, form a clearer picture from the speeches and reports comprised in this volume.

Extracts from the tributes to Mr. Sastri's work and genius appended to the volume reconstruct for us the image that we have known so well, of the 'internationalist' who thinks and talks in terms of humanity transcending race, colour and creed, the passionate lover of world-peace and brotherhood, the idealist who regards compromise, moderation and commonsense as means of realizing the ideal, the portrait of the orator, the statesman, the thinker, the tireless student, the sage whose vision amidst the myriad distractions of the Cave of all the Winds that politics are, is centred on the unseen foundations and the grand verities of life, and more than all, of the kindly, human-hearted friend. "The great tradition, the profound culture, the deep serenity and the unself-conscious dignity of India have all been personified in him"—that is the refrain in these South African papers when they have exhausted other sides of a personality of marvellous richness, range, power and subtlety of grain. They hail him as the greatest of living statesmen and as one of the greatest men of the day, which is but an echo of the estimate that had been already formed of him by statesmen and publicists in other parts of the British Commonwealth.

A word about the character of the speeches themselves. The world has now come to think of Mr.

Sastri as the Chrysostom of our age, rousing the nations with tongue of gold to justice and fair-play, to the healing of wounds inflicted on each other, to search for the things that ennoble the life of men on earth. Mr. Sastri's words have been cherished and prized by many as models of faultless phrasing and metaphor, of unsought euphony and other stylistic graces, as patterns of well-forged reasoning and lucid exposition. The more discerning have seen in them the mirror of a fragile grace and delicate purity—as of snow flowers—that are the attributes of a mind, highly sensitized and capable of the finest moral and intellectual perceptions. To our mind the ultimate value of Mr. Sastri's speeches—especially these latter-day ones delivered in South Africa—lies in their being the wonted language of a soul possessing the lordly simplicity of mountain peaks, the native stride of a mind poised and cultured and questing after the things of the Spirit. He does not seek words, they seek him. The most difficult thing—like the Vedanta philosophy—becomes the easiest when expounded by him; and, likewise, the deepest truths shine in their pristine beauty and lustre because they come from one who has meditated them long and made them a vital part of his being. That is why, when flows from his pen the Vedic quotation: "May every one cross the difficult places of life, may every one behold happiness, may every one attain true wisdom, may everyone rejoice everywhere," we feel that the words thrill with a power and an alchemy that belong to original inspiration. Quotations are rare, however, in Mr. Sastri's speeches. They have little need to clog utterances that lift us out of our meaner selves and pour into us the ichor of far-reaching thoughts, fortify, chasten and befriend men in the dark and difficult places of public endeavour. And for those who would seek, here are sentences scattered that reveal the light beyond the storm and sustain drooping spirits like a far-sought nepenthes, for they emanate from one of the loftiest minds of the modern world.

The publication of these speeches is a great act of patriotism and a fitting offering to the Motherland.

R. SADASIVA AIYAR.

ADULT EDUCATION IN DENMARK.

EDUCATION FOR LIFE: A DANISH PIONEER.

By NOELLE DAVIES. (Williams, & Norgate, London.) 20cm. 207p. 7/6.

THIS book has a special appeal to educationists in India, where even the making of primary education compulsory will not solve the question of fitting the rural population to tackle the problems of life. The European countries, and especially the Scandinavian countries towards the end of the 18th century were not very much ahead of India in the matter of education. If they had confined their attention to educating the little children, without considering the adult population at all, they would not have made the rapid progress during the 19th century that they actually did. The present book is an account of what Grundtvig, the great Danish reformer and educationist, did for the movement of adult education (the so-called Folk High Schools) in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and in Finland. Some of the ideas of Grundtvig certainly appear rather extraordinary in the light of modern thought; but the one thing that one is perfectly sure of when reading this account by Mrs. Davies is the deep sincerity of the man. He attached such a great importance to the spoken word, "the living word" as he called it, that he even went the length of deprecating the value of books. In fact he gave more importance to the words spoken at the time of baptism than to the Bible

itself. It was therefore quite natural that in his project of the Folk High Schools he gave the place of honour to the spoken word—discussions, lectures, questions and answers. The second place was taken up by the study of the mother tongue and history ("taught from an organic standpoint and not as a mere jumble of names and dates") of the mother country as well that of the world. The third place was taken by singing, especially of folk songs, national songs and hymns. Geography, "national statistics" etc. all find their places along with mythology in the curriculum and there are to be no examinations. Attendance at lectures and discussions is to be voluntary. In spite of the religious and national background, these Folk High Schools have proved eminently successful and have been copied in most northern European countries. The post-war development of the Volkshochschulen in Germany is also due to the Danish movement. Grundtvig's original idea was to start a "learned High School," a kind of free University with no examinations, no lectures and no regulations. The professors and students were to have friendly personal contact, discussions and mutual benefit. Although this dream was not fulfilled in Grundtvig's life-time, the World Association for Adult Education and the Elsinor Institutions may be said to be a move in that direction. These Folk High Schools have now been recognised by the Danish Government as a vital part of the education of the people and receive substantial help from the national revenues. Most of these are private owned or belong to specially formed associations. Altogether the book is one which is both instructive and interesting to every educationist who wants to tackle the problem of adult education in this country.

I. KARVE.

LAW & POLITICAL SCIENCE.

STUDIES IN LAW AND POLITICS. By HAROLD J. LASKI. (Allen & Unwin, London.) 1932. 22cm. 299p. 10/6.

AS an exponent of Political Pluralism and as a social philosopher, Prof. Harold Laski enjoys an international reputation. To India he is also known as a leading member of the India League, an energetic and eloquent advocate of freedom for India. His latest book is a reprint of essays on important topics of law and political science published in the last seven years. The volume is addressed mainly to the serious student, in fact partly to the expert, but the general reader may also find a deep interest in four of the essays, viz. those on the problem of a Second Chamber, the State in the New Social Order, Law and the State, and Justice and the Law. Like other advanced thinkers, Prof. Laski does not set much store by a second chamber; in fact, he goes further and openly declares for single-chamber government. But tradition dies hard and if there must be a second chamber in England Prof. Laski recommends a modified form of the Norwegian senate which is elected by the Lower House and which is, for the most part, restricted to revisory functions. "Ultimately, the only true safeguard against legislative error lies in the quality of the national mind."

Prof. Laski's discussion of the role which the state should play in the new social order will amply repay perusal in India where the Government still

represents an antiquated type of administrative machinery. Every citizen is entitled to a minimum of equal opportunity of creative self-realisation. Property should give way to function as the basis of social organization and the state must regard education as in no way less imperative than military or naval equipment. In the course of another essay or rather lecture, the author subjects the relation of justice to the law to a searching analysis. Legal institutions "take their main character from the economic society; where, therefore, this operates unequally, the law operates unequally also." Law should not be static and should not aim at mere stability. It must keep step with the changing spirit of the times, with the transformation that is coming over the economic and political life of peoples. Mr. Laski's discussion of "Procedure for Constructive Contempt" reveals the danger of placing the judiciary above criticism and conferring unusually wide powers on judges in cases of contempt of court.

One of the most interesting studies is that of the personnel of the British Cabinet, 1801-1924, which analyses the class, the percentage, the type of education and the vocation of the 306 men who held Cabinet offices during that period. It is only latterly that the predominance of sons of nobility, of the products of Eton and Harrow, Oxford and Cambridge has diminished and humbler rank has had a chance of high political preferment. Mr. Laski's first two studies—"The Age of Reason" and "Diderot"—relate to eighteenth century France and may not appeal to the layman but they are remarkable for acute interpretation.

BENI PRASAD.

SHORT NOTICE.

HISTORICAL TRIALS (A SELECTION). By SIR GEORGE MACDONELL. (Watts & Co. London.) 1931. 16cm. 142p. 1/-

THIS small volume contains some of the most important and interesting trials handed down to us by history. The author was an eminent member of the English Bar and as such he has dealt with these cases from the point of view of a clever jurist. He lucidly analyses the evidence in these trials and lays bare the glaring defects in their procedure. The author tells us how some of these prosecutions were the result of greed as in the case of "The trial of the knight templars." The wealth of this order constituted their real crime. Then again political hatred was responsible for bringing Jeanne D' Arc to trial. All sense of justice was thrown to the winds in this trial. The same may be said of the prosecutions of Bruno and Galileo. The author seems to believe that the people of the Middle Ages lacked all sense of justice. The victims of prejudice and hatred were in those days not given a fair chance to defend themselves and the harshest punishment was a foregone conclusion. Perhaps public opinion or whatever existed of it then had to be taken note of. We learn from this little book as to how many crimes have been committed even in the name of law and justice.

This book certainly deserves a place in all law libraries.

M. S. CHEEMA.