

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Interviews with the Mahatma.

FROM the replies given by Sir Samuel Hoare to questions in the House of Commons it would appear that Mahatma Gandhi is under a restriction at present to discuss the question of untouchability alone with those who are interested in it. But Sir Samuel added that letters advising the Mahatma to give up civil disobedience would also be freely admitted. The question then arises: if letters in this sense are admissible, why not talks and interviews? Surely there are enough leaders in the country whom Government can rely upon to use their influence only in the direction of dissuading him from the movement. If any such expresses a desire to be allowed to have private talks with the Mahatma on the political situation, Government ought in reason to extend permission to him to do so, without the gaol authorities thrusting their presence on the interviewer. The Mahatma will naturally have many things to consider before he can consent to an abandonment of the movement, and a conversation in regard to them must necessarily be of a strictly confidential nature. Will Government then be agreeable to let conversations proceed away from the gaoler? Perhaps Sir Samuel Hoare's reply implies this. In any case a public statement on this subject would be very desirable. If Government will give this facility, they will have removed at least part of the difficulties which now make a search for a way out of the present impasse altogether impossible.

"Independent of Princes and Provinces."

Dr. AMBEDKAR is heartily to be congratulated upon giving the lie to the widely held notion that the minority communities favour provincial autonomy unaccompanied by central responsibility. If the interests of the backward communities are likely to be injured by central responsibility, then the depressed classes would be the first to protest against it. But the leader of these classes, in the interview he gave to the *Times of India* on the eve of his departure from London, was even more insistent than Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru or Mr. Jayakar can be in demanding central responsibility. In the first place real provincial autonomy, he observed, was impossible without central responsibility. But even if it were possible, it would at least in one respect make the position worse. It would increase the difficulties in the way of federation. Every autonomous province would then be, as it is not at present, free to join the federation or stay out. This serious difficulty is fully realized by Sir Tej Bahadur and others, though they never made such an explicit statement about it. But Dr. Ambedkar is so keen on central responsibility that he would not make it dependent upon federation at all, as some British Indian leaders—of the advanced classes—are apparently willing to do. Central responsibility, he says, must come, if possible through federation for the whole of India, or otherwise for British India alone. He would thus put it beyond the hazard of any possible sabotage either by the Provinces or by the Princes, and he thinks that the danger from the latter quarter is no less serious than from the former.

Madras Ministry.

THE reconstitution of the Madras Ministry so dramatically brought about last week conclusively proves that the differences among the Justice Party leaders were due to no other causes than personal rivalries, jealousies and squabbles, which a few weeks ago led to the deplorable exhibition in Tanjore. The Chief Minister, Mr. B. Munuswami Naidu, had lost the allegiance of his two colleagues in the Ministry and they had made up their mind to dismiss him. Ultimately, the two junior Ministers resigned their places and the Chief Minister followed suit. The Governor of Madras sent for the Raja of Bobbili, another leading light of the same Justice Party, to form the Ministry, which he promptly did, with himself as Chief Minister and the two others who had just resigned as the junior Ministers.

The resignation of Mr. Munuswami Naidu is evidently the consequence of the convention of joint responsibility of the Ministers which, only in Madras of all the provinces in India under dyarchy, has tenaciously been upheld. Nevertheless, Madras seems to have set a unique precedent in constitutional history. Instances have often occurred of a Chief Minister demanding the resignations of his

colleagues whom he wished to exclude and filling in the vacancies by others of his choice. There have also been instances, as in South Africa a few years ago, in which the Prime Minister got rid of an unwanted minister, who refused gracefully to resign, by bringing about the formal resignation of the whole Cabinet and its reconstitution with the recalcitrant minister replaced. But the recent experiment in Madras is perhaps the first instance in which the junior ministers, by means of collective resignations, could bring about the dismissal of the Chief Minister and instal in his place one who was not at the time in the Ministry. The case of Mr. Lloyd George dismissing Mr. Asquith from the Prime Ministership of England during the War is a near enough but not an exact parallel.

It was given out that the Tamilians in the Justice Party had got tired of the monopoly of leadership and the Chief Ministership by Telugus. But it is significant that the new Chief Minister is as much a Telugu as his predecessor. The real cause of the opposition to Mr. Munuswami Naidu was the grievance of the landlords, who form a very wealthy and influential class in Madras, particularly in the Telugu districts, that they were not represented in the Cabinet. The Raja of Bobbili is one of the great landed magnates. And Mr. Munuswami Naidu's consideration for the poor tenants, as evidenced, for instance, by his championship of their cause during the Malabar tenancy agitation, was anathema to the landlords. He has now been driven out of office. So much the worse for the unfortunate tenantry of Madras.

Unity Conference.

THE Unity Conference at Allahabad has not yet closed; it is still grappling with its tough job, and at this writing the prospects of a successful issue are not too bright. In fact the latest press report says that it would be a miracle if unity resulted out of the Unity Conference. A couple of days ago the very encouraging news was circulated that the Bengal question had been got out of the way; and that Hindus and Muslims had agreed to the distribution of seats in the Bengal Council. But, unfortunately, the practical value of this agreement is very much reduced inasmuch as the agreement does not merely seek to redistribute in different proportions the number of seats allotted in the communal award to Hindus and Muslims, but impinges very seriously on the proportion of other communities, who are not represented at the Conference. The increase of the Hindu seats from 80 to 112 and the Mahomedan from 119 to 127 is proposed to be secured by abolishing all special constituencies and taking a few seats from the quotas of European and Anglo-Indian communities. There is no doubt that these communities have been given, in the communal award, seats out of all proportion to what is their due; but an agreement for this reduction arrived at between Hindus and Muslims without reference to the communities concerned can obviously have no effect in securing an amendment of the award. If the compromise that has been reached at the Conference can bring no tangible advantage, the matters on which no compromise has yet been reached are not few or unimportant. Amongst such outstanding points are separation of Sind and composition of the Punjab Council. The Moslems ask for Sind being separated from the Bombay presidency even if such separation should throw a permanent annual burden upon the central revenues. Such a demand cannot possibly be entertained. For the question of the distribution of seats in the Punjab Council, too, no agreed solution has been found. And several other questions of no little importance have apparently not even been discussed

as yet. No wonder therefore that there is no one who is at all sanguine about the possibility of a communal accord being reached at the Conference.

British Labour's Non-co-operation.

MUCH regret and not a little surprise will be felt at the decision of the British Labour party to withhold co-operation from the third Round Table Conference. The party as a whole has never favoured non-co-operation in India in any shape or form. In British politics itself it has always believed in taking the fullest advantage of the opportunities that will offer, however slender be such opportunities, and however desperate be the party's position. At the present moment the party is hopelessly weak in Parliament, but still it is valiantly sticking to its guns. True to its tradition, the leader of the party, the venerable Mr. Lansbury, publicly disapproved only recently of the advice given to Indians by Mr. Laski and Mr. Bertrand Russell in favour of a policy of aloofness from the Round Table Conference. It is difficult to believe that the party can so soon have changed its opinion and now come to the conclusion that the absence of Mahatma Gandhi from the Conference necessitates the absence of its own delegates from it. Nor is the other ground adduced more convincing. If the limitation of the discussion to a "fixed agenda" results in any important subjects being excluded from discussion in spite of the assurance given to the contrary, there will be justification for non-co-operation at that stage, but not earlier. If the British Government is foolish enough to keep out e.g. the subject of the army, a threat to withdraw from the Conference unless the subject is admitted will, we think, be enough to make even Sir S. Hoare yield. The Labour Party's decision therefore to abstain from the Conference from the beginning is wholly deplorable.

Mr. James on the situation.

IT is now an open secret that it was Sir Samuel Hoare who was responsible for the omission of some distinguished Indian politicians from the personnel of the miniature Round Table Conference which is shortly to begin in London. It is also well-known that their names figured in the nominations submitted by the Government of India who were apparently overruled by the Secretary of State. His action has naturally caused universal resentment; but if Mr. F. E. James is to be believed, Sir Samuel Hoare appears to have taken similar liberties even with the names proposed by the Government of India to represent the non-official European community. The name most in favour with this community and one which had commended itself to the Central Government was that of Mr. Benthall; instead, however, Sir Samuel Hoare selected Sir Hubert Carr who led the European delegation to the first R. F. C. Sir Hubert Carr, having retired from India some years ago, could not in the nature of the case be in touch with European non-official opinion to the same extent to which Mr. Benthall was, and his selection by the Secretary of State in supersession of that of Mr. Benthall has given rise to widespread dissatisfaction among Europeans in this country, who are now thinking of sending an adviser to London to help Sir Hubert Carr. Whatever the Europeans may feel on the subject, this much can at any rate be claimed for Sir Samuel Hoare that he has been impartial in displeasing both Indians and Europeans.

Another point touched by Mr. James related to the formation of a new Cabinet for Madras. As he was speaking before the resignation of the whole Ministry had been announced, he was pleading for the exit, not of one or two ministers, but of all the

three. In doing so he seemed to imply that while the Government was anxious to see the Ministry bound by a sense of collective responsibility, it was the ministers who were opposing them. We do not for the moment refer to the state of affairs in the southern presidency, where, for aught we know, collective ministerial responsibility has been insisted upon from the very start. But if Mr. James' remarks are intended to have a wider application, as they are apparently intended to have, it may be pointed out to him that in some other provinces at any rate it was not the unwillingness of the ministers to accept office on the basis of joint responsibility that was responsible for keeping ministers holding diverse views on public affairs in office. Those who have followed with any care the working of diarchy in provinces other than Madras need not be told that the public demand for the establishment of a convention of joint responsibility of the ministers was resisted not by the ministers but by the heads of the provinces concerned. In this connection we have no doubt Mr. James will find the evidence tendered before the Muddiman Committee by some ex-ministers very revealing.

Temple Entry for Untouchables in Madras ?

It is a matter for satisfaction that attempts are being made in different parts of the country to direct into constructive channels the wave of good feeling towards the depressed classes generated by Mahatma Gandhi's historic fast. At the instance of Dr. Subbaroyan, an ex-minister, the Madras Legislative Council recently passed a resolution favouring the opening of places of public worship to the untouchables. Even to some who cannot be described as radical social reformers the resolution might appear as not going far enough; but to Sir A. P. Patro who has been asked by a section of the depressed classes in Madras to safeguard their interests at the Round Table Conference it appeared to be revolutionary. Can anybody blame the depressed classes, if they wish to be saved from their friends like Sir A. P. Patro? But Sir A. P. Patro belongs to that category of public men whose utterances give rise to a crop of misunderstandings, and before the debate had concluded the mover announced that he had been privately assured by Sir A. P. Patro of his friendliness towards his resolution. Cynics might look upon the resolution as a mere counsel of perfection; but whoever else might regard it as such the mover certainly does not wish it to remain as an expression of a pious wish. He means business and would follow up the passage of the resolution by the Council with legislation to implement it, should Government fail to do so. This is far from saying that he would wish to rush the legislation through the Council or would like to coerce the public into accepting the contemplated reform. For, as his promise to circulate his bill for the expression of public opinion shows, he is too firm a believer in the value of public education with regard to the merits of any reform to do any such thing.

As was pointed out in the course of the debate, orthodox Hindus who are opposed to the admission of the depressed classes to Hindu temples cannot have it both ways. If they want the depressed classes to remain within the fold of Hinduism, as they no doubt anxiously do, they must be prepared to extend to them such rights as are enjoyed by the other sections of Hindu society. To claim them as Hindus for purposes of the census and yet to refuse to treat them as such is to be guilty of a glaring inconsistency of conduct. Moreover it does no credit to the sense of humanity of the opponents of this reform that while they

would prevent the depressed classes from getting into temples, they would have no compunction in tolerating the entry of dogs, buffaloes, cows, etc. into them. This is nothing short of assigning to the depressed classes a status even lower than these animals. Do orthodox Hindus want to deny to their fellow-beings what they would not mind dogs and cattle enjoying? There can be only one answer to this question and we hope it will be unanimously given by orthodox Hindu opinion as much on grounds of national interests as on considerations of humanity: it must unequivocally express itself as being in favour of the eminently reasonable concession to the untouchables for which Dr. Subbaroyan pleaded in his motion.

Articles.

ANOTHER FAST I

IT was well that Mahatma Gandhi asked and the Government gave permission for him to carry on propaganda, even from within the walls of the prison, for the removal of untouchability, on which he has set his heart and to which none can contribute so largely and effectively as he can. With characteristic earnestness and promptitude he has already issued several statements to the press in which he has elaborated and emphasised his views on the problem of untouchability and reviewed the criticisms of the policy underlying his recent fast. And he has announced that another fast is impending on the 1st of January next if the Guruvayyur temple is not by that time opened to the depressed classes on precisely the same terms as the higher castes and if Mr. Kelappan should, in consequence, resume his fast.

The Mahatma's decision will be widely regretted notwithstanding that there is greater justification for the impending fast than for the previous one, if fasting for such purposes is justified at all. Mr. Kelappan had entered on a fast to get the Guruvayyur temple opened to the untouchables and he only suspended it at the earnest request of the Mahatma who suggested to him that he should give due notice of his fast before he embarked on it. And if now the Mahatma feels that he should stand by his colleague and comrade in fasting, his sentiments must receive respectful consideration, though the whole procedure and the policy underlying it are unfortunate.

The most important question for consideration now is not whether the Mahatma was right or wrong in threatening another fast unto death but to find ways and means, as he himself suggests, to obviate the calamity. The utmost possible pressure should be brought to bear on the Zamorin of Calicut to persuade him to throw open the Guruvayyur temple to the untouchables. The Madras Legislative Council has, to some extent, facilitated the reform by carrying Dr. Subbaroyan's resolution, and we hope the Government of Madras will not stand in the way of the Religious Endowments Act being amended in the sense of that resolution. We also hope the Governments of Travancore and Cochin will without further loss of time follow the enlightened examples of Baroda.

and other States and throw open their State temples to the untouchables and thereby facilitate a similar reform in the case of Guruvayyur. Apart from all this, the Zamorin himself must realise the responsibility he has in this matter, and do the right thing and that in good time. On the other hand, Mr. Kelappan himself must see that he does not precipitate matters for him and the Mahatma. The Anti-Untouchability League will naturally concentrate its attention for the moment on Guruvayyur.

But in a contingency of the kind it is not enough to be content with the second best. There can be no doubt that the personal intervention and persuasion of the Mahatma himself will be far more effective than any other agency. It is essential, therefore, that the Mahatma himself should visit the Guruvayyur temple and meet the authorities concerned and the people of Malabar, not so much in his own interest as in that of the untouchables. The problem is not for him to die but to get the untouchables in. And that is best promoted by his own presence at Guruvayyur.

So intense is the desire of the Mahatma to get on with the uplift of the untouchables when it is on the crest of the momentum it has received on account of his last fast that he did not hesitate to ask for special permission of the Government to carry on propaganda even from within the prison walls. He will be able to carry on his ameliorative work for the depressed classes far more effectively if he is free to move about and, in particular, to visit Malabar. The depressed class leaders have themselves prayed that he should, for some time to come, devote himself exclusively to their uplift and for that purpose secure the necessary freedom of action. The Mahatma has quoted with approval Dr. Ambedkar's view that in their uplift work the higher classes should be guided by the advice of the depressed classes. Will he not himself set an example by acceding to their request? And if his personal endeavours will accomplish his object more effectively, he may not hesitate to ask for the necessary freedom of action from the Government.

The Government too must recognise their responsibility in the matter. However much the Mahatma's action may be open to criticism—and we have in earlier issues frankly and severely criticised his policy—there cannot be the slightest doubt that he represents a great force in Indian politics, which may be ignored only at great peril. It may be that by his own action he puts his life in danger, but if it be felt that Government did not do all that was possible for them to do to save it and that his death was due to the fetish of prestige and punctilio of the Government, the popular reaction may easily lead to a revolution in India and a permanent alienation between England and India which all well-wishers of peace in India and abroad, and of good relations between England and India will bitterly lament for all time. We hope Government themselves will make it easy for the Mahatma to solve the Guruvayyur problem and offer him all the facilities that he may require.

THE PROBLEM OF CRIMINAL TRIBES.

IV.*

THE CRIMINAL TRIBES ACT.

THE problem of reclaiming the criminal tribes, settling them on honest and peaceful occupations, and curing them of their criminal tendencies seems to have attracted the attention of Government as early as 1871, when the first Criminal Tribes Act was passed. The Act has been subsequently amended in 1876, 1897, 1911, and 1923 and consolidated in 1924. In the Punjab, Oudh and N.-W. F. Province systems of registration of criminal tribes and members of such tribes being required to give roll-call had been adopted before the passing of this Act, but as the executive officers had no power to punish those who broke the rules imposed on them, and as the courts expressly declared such rules to be illegal, these systems broke down entirely and the persons restrained by them were left at full liberty to pursue their habits of systematic criminality, resulting in a most serious and alarming increase in crime.

In the preamble to the Act of 1871 the object of the Act has been stated to be to provide for the registration, surveillance and control of certain criminal tribes and eunuchs. The first step to be taken under the Act by the local Government, having reasons to believe that any tribe, gang or class of persons is addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences, is to report the case to the Governor-General-in-Council and request his permission to declare such tribe, gang or class of persons a criminal tribe. The report must state the reasons why such tribe, gang or class of persons is considered to be addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences, as also the manner in which it shall earn its living when it is interred in a settlement and when its movements are restricted. The report must also specify the place of residence in which such tribe, gang or class of persons is to be settled and the arrangements to be made for enabling it to earn its living therein. When such report is submitted to the Governor-General-in-Council he may, after considering the same, authorise the local Government to declare the tribe, gang or class of persons criminal in the local official Gazette.

In 1911 the Act was so amended as to give the local Governments the power to declare a tribe "criminal" without reference to the Governor-General-in-Council and without taking his sanction for doing the same. After such a tribe, gang or class of persons has been declared to be "criminal" by the local Government the provisions of the Act are made applicable to it. Then the local Government can direct the District Magistrate to make or cause to be made a register of the tribe, gang or class of persons. For this purpose the District Magistrate has to issue a notification calling upon all the members of such criminal tribes to appear before such person as he may appoint at a notified place and time, and to supply him with all such information as he may require for the purpose of making the register. Under the amendment made in 1911 in the Act the members of such criminal tribes can also be required to give their finger prints to the person who is authorised to prepare the register. After the register is made, it is kept in the custody of the District Superintendent of Police and any alterations either by way of addition or erasure can be made by the District Magistrate. Any person who feels aggrieved by any entry made in the register may complain about the same to the District Magis-

* Previous articles in this series appeared in our issues of October 6 and 20 and November 3.

trate and he may retain the name of such person in the register or erase it therefrom as he may see fit. Again, under the Act the local Government with the concurrence of the Governor-General-in-Council may settle in a place of residence any tribe, gang or class of persons which has been declared to be criminal and which has no fixed place of residence or remove it from one place of residence to another. But before settling such a tribe, gang or class of persons in a place of residence or removing it from one place of residence to another, the local Government has to make suitable arrangements for enabling such tribe, gang or class of persons to earn a living in which it is settled. Lately it was found that the process of making a report to the Governor-General-in-Council and taking his permission to settle a criminal tribe in a place of residence or removing it from one place of residence to another caused much delay and therefore in 1923 the Act was so amended as to give the local Government the power to settle a tribe in a place of residence or to move it from one place to another or to restrict its movements to one particular area. Under the Act of 1871 tribes, gangs or classes of persons could not be declared and registered as criminal unless they were first settled and provided with means of living by Government. The application of the Act was thus greatly restricted and the majority of these tribes were left free to wander and commit crimes without any adequate check on their movements or depredations.

With a view, therefore, to exercise useful control over the movements of criminal tribes without unduly restricting them, as also, to provide for the registration of their members irrespective of the Government's ability to settle them or provide them with means of living, the Act was amended in 1911, and a new section added. This provides that the local Government can by notification in the local Official Gazette direct in respect of any criminal tribe that every registered member thereof shall in the prescribed manner (a) report himself at fixed intervals or (b) notify his place of residence and any change or intended change of residence and any absence or intended absence from his residence. Under the Act the local Governments have been given the power to place any tribe, gang or class of persons declared "criminal" in a reformatory, industrial, or agricultural settlement. In 1897 the amended Act made a new provision with regard to the establishing and maintaining of a reformatory, industrial and agricultural settlements for children of criminal tribes, and separating and removing such children from their parents or guardians. The term "children" was to include all persons under the age of 18 and above the age of 4. But in 1911 by an amendment the age limit was raised from 4 to 6. The local Governments have been empowered to appoint a Superintendent for such settlements for children. The Superintendent is to be the guardian of every child detained in the settlement, and is also given the power to apprentice him to any trade or profession. This provision has been specially made for the youths of criminal tribes who are trained from their earliest years in habits of thefts and violence. Members of criminal tribes or their children can be discharged or transferred from a reformatory, agricultural, or industrial settlements or schools by the orders of the local Government or any officer authorised by it in this behalf.

The local Government can make rules to carry out generally the purposes and objects of the Act and particularly with regard to (1) the form of the register to be made by the District Magistrate, (2) limits within which persons whose names have been registered shall reside, (3) conditions of holding passes

under which such persons may be permitted to leave the said limits, (4) conditions to be inserted in the pass with regard to the place where the holder of the pass may go and reside, the officers before whom he shall present himself and the time during which he may absent himself, (5) conditions as to the answering of roll-calls, (6) the terms upon which registered persons may be discharged from the operation of the Act, (7) the mode in which criminal tribes shall be settled or removed, (8) the control and supervision of agricultural, industrial and reformatory settlements, (9) the hours of work, rates of pay etc. of persons kept in settlements, (10) the discipline to which persons violating the rules shall be subject and the punishment to be inflicted on persons trying to escape from settlements and such other matters. Under the Act if any member of a criminal tribe who, without lawful excuse, fails to appear before the District Magistrate or such person authorised by him to make a register of such tribe, or omits to furnish the required information, or refuses to allow his finger prints to be taken, he can be arrested without warrant and punished with imprisonment for a term which may be extended to six months or with fine to the extent of Rs. 200 or both. If any registered member of a criminal tribe violates the rules made by the local Government under the Act, he can be punished on a first conviction with imprisonment for a term extending to six months or with fine to the extent of Rs. 200 or with both. On any subsequent conviction he can be punished with imprisonment to a term which may extend to one year and a fine up to Rs. 500. In the cases of the breach of certain important rules the punishment mentioned above can be enhanced and doubled.

Two sections of the Act which were added in 1897, as also the schedule which specifies certain offences under the Indian Penal Code lay down that, if any member of a criminal tribe, having been convicted of any of the offences specified in the schedule, shall thereafter be convicted of the same offence or any other offence mentioned in the schedule, he shall be punished on such second conviction with rigorous imprisonment for a term of not less than seven years, and on a third conviction to transportation for life. And if a member of a criminal tribe is found in any place under such circumstances as to satisfy the Court that he was about to commit or aid in the commission of theft or robbery or that he was waiting for an opportunity to commit theft or robbery he shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine. Moreover, under the Act, if a person who is registered as a member of a criminal tribe is found beyond the limits prescribed for his residence without such permission as is required under the rules, or at a place or time not permitted by the pass issued to him, or who escapes from a settlement, he can be arrested without warrant by any police officer or village watchman or headman, or removed to the District in which he ought to have resided, or to the reformatory settlement from which he escaped. The Act imposes a duty on every village headman and watchman in a village in which any person belonging to a criminal tribe resides and on every owner, occupier of land or the agents of such land-owners or occupiers on which such a person resides, to give the earliest information to the nearest police station of the failure of any such person to appear and give information with regard to the registration of such persons as members of criminal tribes, or the arrival or departure of any member of a criminal tribe, or any person suspected to be a member of criminal tribe to or from the village or land.

In 1923 by an amendment a new section with regard to the transfer of members of criminal tribes

to Indian States was added to the Act. It lays down that the local Government, if it is satisfied that adequate provisions have been made by the law of any State in India for the restriction of the movements of the settlement in a place of residence of persons belonging to the criminal tribes, and for securing the welfare of persons so restricted or settled, it may direct the removal to that State of any criminal tribe or part thereof, provided that no person who is a British subject shall be transferred to any Indian State even though he may belong to a criminal tribe. In the same year the provisions of the Act were extended to the Presidency Towns and the City of Rangoon.

K. G. SHARANGPANI.

(To be continued.)

INDIANS IN MALAYA.

FEW people in this country are eager to study the conditions of their countrymen abroad. The Government reports, issued every year, give detailed information about the Indian settlers in different colonies, but such reports do not generally excite much public interest. That is because the information given therein is presented in an unattractive form. The booklet "Our Countrymen in Malaya" by Mr. A. Varkey Moothedan who lived in Malaya for some time and studied firsthand the conditions of life of Indian labourers there, is largely free from this defect and, moreover, contains suggestions conducive to the welfare of the Indian population.

India's connection with Malaya dates back to very old times. As early as 300 B. C., a prince of Pataliputra had established a kingdom there and brisk trade was carried on between India and Malaya for many centuries. During the 18th and 19th centuries down to 1873 Singapore, Penang and Malacca were used as convict settlements; and buildings and roads were constructed with convict labour. Gradually these places became beautiful towns and the convicts merged into the local population through the ticket of leave system. Several estates for the cultivation of rubber were taken up by European capitalists and coolies were recruited from India in very large numbers by their agents called Kanganies, who till quite recently were in the habit of using all sorts of methods in order to persuade the unsophisticated coolies to leave their homes and sail off to Malaya. The number of Indian labourers in Malaya consequently increased year by year. In 1930, the total Indian population there was nearly 6 lakhs, i.e. 14% of the total population there and one-fifth of the total number of Indians abroad. They were distributed on the various estates, which numbered nearly 2500. Owing to the present economic depression Indian labour is not in demand with the result that not only has its recruitment been stopped but large numbers of labourers are being repatriated.

All the immigrants into Malaya are labourers except a small number who are engaged in independent professions like law, medicine, trade, &c. The economic condition of the labourers during normal times was satisfactory. However, recently conditions changed. But thanks mainly to the Indian Government Agent's efforts, wages have been standardised, and the labourers are now able to make some savings out of their income. Thus we find from the report of the Controller of Labour of Malaya for 1931 that in the Straits Settlements alone Rs. 6,12,550 were deposited in the Savings Bank by Indian labourers and an amount of Rs. 44,54,698 was sent by money-orders for payment in India, making an average of Rs. 37 per head. In the Federated Malay States the amount remitted

to Madras in 1931 by labourers averaged Rs. 80-8-7 per head as compared with Rs. 79-1-10 during the previous year. It is necessary to add that these savings had been effected in spite of the fact that most of the labourers were very much addicted to drink. The death rate was high in estates where arrangements for medical relief were meagre. In spite of legislation in 1926 for establishing Health Boards very few estates have well-equipped hospitals or dispensaries—a point to which the Agent to the Government of India had drawn pointed attention in his report for the year 1930. While in the Government Settlement of Singapore the death-rate was only 1.6 per mille in 1931, in the estates it was 8.73! Infant mortality was also high, being 25% in some estates.

Educational facilities for the children of Indian labourers need to be improved to a great extent. In the Straits Settlements there are only 55 schools for 292 estates and in F. M. S. only 367 schools for 1800 estates. The position in the Unfederated Malay States is still worse. But apart from the small number of schools, the schools do not seem to be conducted properly. In many schools there is very poor attendance and strength, the average enrolment being less than 10 pupils! Needless to say that such schools cannot be very helpful in the spread of education. Nor is the quality of instruction very high. Most of the teachers are unqualified and unless trained men are put in charge of them it is futile to expect any considerable improvement in quality.

Out of the Immigration Fund collected from the employers by the Government, two homes are maintained for decrepit and unemployed Indians, one in Penang and the other in Kuala Lumpur. These homes are serving a very useful purpose by giving relief to a large number of afflicted and unemployed labourers.

Although there are some Indians in Malaya who are rich and influential, it is to be regretted that no efforts are being made on an organised scale to make the lives of the labourers happy by helping them to settle down permanently and improve their economic and moral condition. These labourers are completely at the mercy of their employers with nothing to fall back upon, during times of economic depression and slump in trade. The legislative bodies contain no representatives elected by them. If some constructive scheme of colonization had been undertaken the problem of repatriation would not have been as acute as it is at present. This view is expressed by the Controller of Labour in his circular of August 14th to the managers of estates. In this circular he stresses the need of encouragement of cultivation of food-stuffs by labourers and their dependants and draws the attention of the employers to their duty of parcelling out lands to them which, he points out, is imposed upon them by law. On this point he says:

In the present stage of affairs where a reduction in earnings has brought with it a limitation of the amount of work provided for dependants, the provision of allotments and grazing grounds has become vitally important. The possession of crops and stock tends to stabilise labour on estates. Where such allotments had been provided and worked, the exodus has not been as great as in cases where no such allotments had been made for labourers. If such allotments had been bigger in area and larger in number the heavy expense incurred in repatriation in 1930 and 1931 would have been considerably reduced. Allotments and live-stock provide a healthy occupation for labourers and their dependants and thus aid in securing a settled and contented labour force while reconciling immigrants to the difference between conditions in their native villages and those prevailing in estates where life tends to become one monotonous round.

WAR ON UNTOUCHABILITY.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S STATEMENTS.

I.

FOR reasons over which I had no control I have not been able to deal with the question of untouchability, as I had fully intended to, after the breaking of the fast. The Government having now granted me permission to carry on public propaganda in connection with the work, I am able to deal with the numerous correspondents who have been writing to me either in criticism of the Yeravda Pact, or to seek guidance, or to know my views about the different questions that arise in the course of the campaign against untouchability. In this preliminary statement I propose to confine myself to the salient questions only, deferring for the time being other questions which do not call for immediate disposal.

I take up first the question of the possibility of my resuming the fast. Some correspondents contend that the fast savours of coercion and should not have been undertaken at all and that therefore it should never be resumed. Some others have argued that there is no warrant in Hindu religion, or any religion for that matter, for a fast like mine. I do not propose to deal with the religious aspect. Suffice it to say that it was at God's call that I embarked upon the last fast and it would be at His call that it would be resumed, if it ever is. But when it was first undertaken, it was undoubtedly for removal of untouchability, root and branch. That it took the form it did was no choice of mine. The Cabinet decision precipitated the crisis of my life, but I knew that the revocation of the British Cabinet's decision was to be but the beginning of the end. A tremendous force could not be set in motion merely in order to alter a political decision unless it had behind it a much deeper meaning, even unknown to its authors. The people affected instinctively recognised that meaning and responded.

Perhaps no man within living memory has travelled so often from one end of India to the other or has penetrated so many villages and come in contact with so many millions as I have. They have all known my life. They have known that I have recognised no barriers between "untouchables" and "touchables" or caste and caste. They have heard me speak often in their own tongues denouncing untouchability in unmeasured terms describing it as a curse and a blot upon Hinduism. With rare exceptions, at hundreds of these mass meetings or at private meetings in all parts of India, there has been no protest against my presentation of the case against untouchability. Crowds have passed resolutions denouncing untouchability and pledging themselves to remove it from their midst and they have on innumerable occasions called God as witness to their pledge and asked for His blessing that He may give them strength to carry out their pledge. It was against these millions that my fast was

undertaken and it was their spontaneous love that brought about a transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. And it will be against them that the fast will be resumed if that Pact is not carried out by them in its fullness. The Government are now practically out of it. Their part of the obligation they fulfilled promptly. The major part of the resolutions of the Yeravda Pact has to be fulfilled by these millions, the so-called caste-Hindus who have flocked to the meetings I have described. It is they who have to embrace the suppressed brethren and sisters as their very own, whom they have to invite to their temples, to their homes, to their schools. The untouchables in the villages should be made to feel that their shackles have been broken, that they are in no way inferior to their fellow-villagers, that they are worshippers of the same God as other villagers and are entitled to the same rights and privileges that the latter enjoy. But if these vital conditions of the Pact are not carried out by caste-Hindus, could I possibly live to face God and man? I ventured even to tell Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Raja and other friends belonging to the suppressed group that they should regard me as a hostage for the due fulfilment by caste-Hindus of the conditions of the Pact. The fast, if it has to come, will not be for the coercion of those who are opponents of the reform, but it will be intended to sting into action those who have been my comrades or who have taken pledges for the removal of untouchability. If they belie their pledges or if they never meant to abide by them and their Hinduism was a mere camouflage, I should have no interest left in life. My fast therefore ought not to affect the opponents of reform, nor even fellow-workers and the millions who have led me to believe that they were with me and the Congress in the campaign against untouchability, if the latter have on second thoughts come to the conclusion that untouchability is not after all a crime against God and humanity. In my opinion, fasting for purification of self and others is an age-long institution and it will subsist so long as man believes in God. It is the prayer to the Almighty from an anguished heart. But whether my argument is wise or foolish, I cannot be dislodged from my position so long as I do not see the folly or the error of it. It will be resumed only in obedience to the inner voice, and only if there is a manifest breakdown of the Yeravda Pact, owing to the criminal neglect of caste-Hindus to implement its conditions. Such neglect would mean a betrayal of Hinduism. I should not care to remain its living witness.

There is another fast which is a near possibility and that is in connection with the opening of the Guruvayur Temple in Kerala. It was at my urgent request that Sjt. Kelappan suspended his fast for three months, a fast that had well-nigh brought

him to death's door. I would be in honour bound to fast with him if on or before the first of January next that temple is not opened to the untouchables precisely on the same terms as the touchables and if it becomes necessary for Sjt. Kelappan to resume his fast. I have been obliged to dwell at some length upon these possible fasts because of the receipt of hot correspondence from two or three quarters. Co-workers, however, should not be agitated over the possibility. To become unnerved over a prospect one would not like to face, very often results in its materialising. The best way of averting it is for all affected by it to put forth their whole strength into the work that would render the occurrence impossible.

Correspondents have asked whether interdining and inter-marriage are part of the movement against untouchability. In my opinion they are not. They touch the castemen equally with the outcastes. It is therefore not obligatory on an anti-untouchability worker to devote himself or herself to interdining and intermarriage reform. Personally, I am of opinion that this reform is coming sooner than we expect. Restriction on intercaste dining and intercaste marriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline, and was then meant perhaps to be a temporary protection against disintegration of Hindu society. To-day these two prohibitions are weakening Hindu society and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth. Wherever therefore people voluntarily take part in functions where touchables and untouchables, Hindus and non-Hindus are invited to join dinner parties, I welcome them as a healthy sign. But I should never dream of making this reform, however desirable in itself it may be, part of an all-India reform which has been long overdue. Untouchability in the form we all know it is a canker eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society. I think the distinction is fundamental. It would be unwise in a hurricane campaign to overweight and thus endanger the main issue. It may even amount to a breach of faith with the masses to call upon them suddenly to view the removal of untouchability in a light different from what they have been taught to believe it to be. On the one hand, therefore, whilst interdining may go on where the public is itself ready for it, it should not be part of the India-wide campaign.

I have letters, some of them angrily worded, from those who style themselves *Sanatanists*. For them untouchability is the essence of Hinduism. Some of them regard me as a renegade. Some others consider that I have imbibed notions against untouchability and the like from Christianity and Islam. Some again quote scriptures in defence of untouchability. To these I have promised a reply through this statement. I would venture, therefore, to tell these correspondents that I claim myself to be a *Sanatanist*. Their definition of a *Sanatanist* is obviously different from mine. For me *Sanatana-Dharma* is the vital faith handed down from generations belonging even to pre-historic period and based upon the

Vedas and the writings that followed them. For me the Vedas are as indefinable as God and Hinduism. It would be only partially true to say that the Vedas are the four books which one finds in print. These books are themselves remnants of the discourses left by the unknown seers. Those of later generations added to these original treasures according to their lights. There then arose a great and lofty-minded man, the composer of the Gita. He gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu Religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker. It is the one open book to every Hindu who will care to study it and if all the other scriptures were reduced to ashes, the seven hundred verses of this imperishable book let are quite enough to tell one what Hinduism is and how one can live up to it. And I claim to be a *Sanatanist* because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book. Whatever is contrary to its main theme I reject as un-Hindu. It excludes no faith and no teacher. It gives me great joy to be able to say that I have studied the Bible, the Koran, Zend Avesta and the other scriptures of the world with the same reverence that I have given to the Gita. This reverent reading has strengthened my faith in the Gita. They have broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism. Lives of Zoroaster, Jesus and Mohamad, as I have understood them, have illumined many a passage in the Gita. What therefore these Sanatani friends have hurled against me as a taunt has been to me a source of consolation. I take pride in calling myself a Hindu because I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth. I find no warrant for untouchability in this Book of Life. On the contrary it compels me, by an appeal to my reason and a more penetrating appeal to my heart in language that has a magnetic touch about it, to believe that all life is one and that it is through God and must return to him. According to *Sanatani Dharm* taught by that venerable Mother, life does not consist in outward rites and ceremonial, but it consists in the uttermost inward purification and merging oneself, body, soul and mind, in the divine essence. I have gone to masses in their millions with this message of the Gita burnt into my life. And they have listened to me, I am quite sure, not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognised me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith. And as days have gone by, my belief has grown stronger and stronger that I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to *Sanatana Dharm* and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death.

November 4, 1932.

Yeravda Central Prison.

M. K. GANDHI.

II.

A CORRESPONDENT, in spite of having received a liberal education, suggests that before *Harijans* are put on a level with caste-Hindus, they should become

fit for such reception, shed their dirty habits, give up eating carrion; and another goes the length of saying that Bhangis and Chamars who are engaged in what he considers are "dirty occupations" should give them up. These critics forget that castemen are responsible for whatever bad habits are to be observed amongst the *Harijans*. The so-called higher castes have deprived them of facilities for keeping themselves clean and also the incentive for doing so. As for the occupations of scavenging and tanning, they are no more dirty than many other occupations I can name. What may be admitted is that these occupations like several others are carried on in a dirty manner. That again is due to the high-handed indifference and criminal neglect of the "high castes." I can say from personal experience that both scavenging and tanning can be done in a perfectly healthy and clean manner. Every mother is a scavenger in regard to her own children and every student of modern medicine is a tanner inasmuch as he has to dissect and skin human carcasses. But we consider theirs to be sacred occupations. I submit that the ordinary scavenger's and the tanner's occupations are no less sacred and no less useful than those of mothers and medical men. We shall go wrong if castemen regard themselves as patrons distributing favours to the *Harijans*. Whatever is done now by the caste Hindus for the *Harijans* will be but a tardy reparation for the wrongs done to them for generations, and if now they have to be received in their existing state, as they must be received, it is a well deserved punishment for the past guilt. But there is this certain satisfaction that the very act of receiving them with open hearts would be a sufficient incentive to cleanliness and the castemen will for their own comfort and convenience provide *Harijans* with facilities for keeping themselves clean.

It is well to remind ourselves of what wrongs we have heaped upon the devoted heads of the *Harijans*. Socially they are lepers. Economically they are worse than slaves. Religiously they are denied entrance to places we miscall "houses of God." They are denied the use, on the same terms as the castemen, of public roads, public schools, public hospitals, public wells, public taps, public parks and the like, and in some cases their approach within a measured distance is a social crime and in some other rare enough cases their very sight is an offence. They are relegated for their residence to the worst quarters of cities or villages where they practically get no social services. Caste Hindu lawyers, and doctors will not serve them as they do other members of society. Brahmins will not officiate at their religious functions. The wonder is that they are at all able to eke out an existence or that they still remain within the Hindu fold. They are too downtrodden to rise in revolt against their suppressors.

I have recalled these tragic and shameful facts in order to make the workers vividly realise the implications of the Yeravda Pact. It is only ceaseless effort that can raise these downtrodden fellow beings from degradation, purify Hinduism and raise the whole Hindu society and with it the whole of India.

Let us not be stunned by this simple recital of the wrongs. If the demonstration during the Fast week was a genuine expression of repentance on the part of caste-Hindus all will be well, and every *Harijan* will soon feel the glow of freedom. But before this much-desired end can be achieved the message of freedom will have to be carried to the remotest village. Indeed the work in the village is far more difficult than in the big cities where it is possible quickly to mobilise public opinion. Now that there is the All-India Anti-Untouchability League workers should work in coordination with that League. And here I would like to recall what Dr. Ambedkar told me. He said, "Let there be no repetition of the old method when the reformer claimed to know more of the requirements of his victims than the victims themselves," and therefore, he added, "tell your workers to ascertain from the representatives of the *Harijans* what their first need is and how they would like it to be satisfied. Joint refreshments are good enough by way of demonstration, but they may be overdone. There is a flavour of patronage about them. I would not attend them myself. The more dignified procedure would be to invite us to ordinary social functions without any fuss. Even temple entry, good and necessary as it is, may wait. The crying need is the raising of the economic status and decent behaviour in the daily contact." I must not repeat here some of the harrowing details given by him from his own bitter experiences. I felt the force of his remarks. I hope every one of my readers will do likewise.

Many suggestions have been sent to me for adoption by the reformers. One is a repetition of what Swami Shradhanandji used to repeat so often, namely, that every Hindu should have in his home a *Harijan* who would be for all practical purposes a member of the family. The second comes from a non-Hindu friend deeply interested in India's welfare. He says that every well-to-do Hindu should bear the expense of giving, if possible under his own observation, higher education to a *Harijan* young man or girl so that these after finishing their education might work for the uplift of fellow-*Harijans*. Both the suggestions are worthy of consideration and adoption. I would ask all who have fruitful suggestions to make to pass them on to the newly established League. Correspondents should recognise my limitations. From behind the prison gates, I can only tender advice to the League and the people. I can take no part in the real execution of plans. They should also recognise that my opinions, based as they must be on insufficient data, and often on secondhand information, are liable to revision in the light of new facts and should therefore be received with caution.

Though it is now past history I would devote a paragraph to the objection raised by a correspondent and even voiced in suppressed tones in the press. Referring to the political part of the Pact they ask, 'What have you gained by it? The *Harijans* have surely got much more than the Prime Minister gave'. Well, that is exactly the gain. My opposition to the decision was that it gave stone instead

of bread. This Pact has given bits of bread. I personally would have rejoiced with Dr. Moonje if the *Harijans* had got all the seats allotted to the Hindus. That would have been the greatest gain to caste-Hindus and Hinduism. What I wanted and what I still want is their complete merger in the caste-Hindus and the latter's in the former. It is my deliberate opinion, not likely to be altered by any fresh Pact that may come to light, that the more the suppressors give to the suppressed the more they gain. They gain *pro tanto* discharge from overdue debts. Unless the caste Hindus approach the question in that humble, penitent, religious and right spirit, the remaining part of the Pact will never be observed in the spirit that seemed to pervade Hindu society during the Fast week.

I would like to tender my congratulations to those Princes who have opened their State temples to the *Harijans* and have otherwise proclaimed banishment of untouchability from their States. If I may say it, they have thereby done some penance on their own behalf and their people. I hope that the Hindus residing in these States will carry out the terms of these proclamations and so fraternize with them as to make the *Harijans* feel that they never were the despised outcastes of Hindu humanity. We are too near the scene of tragedy to realise that this canker of untouchability has travelled far beyond its prescribed limits and has sapped the foundations of the whole nation. The touch-me-not spirit pervades the atmosphere. If therefore this white ant is touched at its source, I feel sure that we shall soon forget the differences with regard to caste and caste and religion and religion and begin to believe that even as all Hindus are one and indivisible, so are all Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsees, Jews and Christians, branches of the same parent tree. Though religions are many, Religion is one. That is the lesson I would have us learn from the campaign against untouchability. And we will learn it, if we prosecute it in the religious spirit with a determination that will not be resisted.

Yeravda Central Prison,
November 5, 1932.

M. K. GANDHI.

III.

A CORRESPONDENT whom I know well and who is in sympathy with the movement against untouchability, though he does not accept the whole of the programme, writes a long letter in Hindi from which I condense the following:

"I fear that the campaign is not being kept within bounds in all parts of the country. I understand that in some cases those who claim to be workers in the cause are making use of questionable methods such as resorting to abuse of the adherents of the old order and pouring ridicule on sacred names. Anyone who dares to analyse your sayings or writings or who demurs to the extreme forms that the campaign is taking immediately becomes the butt of ridicule, is labelled a traitor to his religion and even threatened with dire consequences. They do not seem to care for the material or moral welfare of the outcastes.

They think that their effort begins and ends with promiscuous dinners and marching crowds of *Harijans* to temples, even in defiance of the wishes to the contrary of the trustees. I am sure you do not want the movement to degenerate into mere spectacular demonstrations calculated merely to wound the feelings of the orthodox without doing the least service to the *Harijans*."

Out of nearly a hundred letters on untouchability received by me during the past month this is the first letter complaining of the workers' conduct bordering on violence. I, however, felt the necessity of giving publicity to the complaint, if only out of regard for my correspondent, as a warning to the workers. I know that he will not indulge in wilful exaggeration. There can be no compulsion in matters of religion. I should say in any matter. The public know my very strong views against violence in any shape or form against anyone, no matter what his caste or creed or nationality may be. Let those in charge of the movement therefore understand that even in their impatience to save me from the prospective fast they may not force the pace by adopting questionable methods. If they do, they will merely hasten my end. It would be a living death for me to witness the degeneration of a movement in whose behalf, as I believe, God had prompted that little fast. The cause of *Harijans* and Hinduism will not be served by the methods of the rabble. This is perhaps the biggest religious reform movement in India, if not in the world, involving as it does the well-being of nearly sixty million human beings living in serfdom. The orthodox section that disapproves of it is entitled to every courtesy and consideration. We have to win them by love, by self-sacrifice by perfect self-restraint, by letting the purity of our lives produce its own silent effect upon their hearts. We must have faith in our truth and love converting the opponents to our way. There is no doubt whatsoever that deliverance of sixty million human beings from age-long suppression will not be brought about by mere showy demonstrations. There has to be a solid constructive programme contemplating attack on all fronts. This enterprise requires the concentrated energy of thousands of men, women, boys and girls, who are actuated by the loftiest religious motives. I would therefore respectfully urge those who do not appreciate the purely religious character of the movement to retire from it. Let those who have that faith and fervour, be they few or many, work the movement. Removal of untouchability may produce, indeed it will produce, great political consequences; but it is not a political movement. It is a movement purely and simply of purification of Hinduism, and that purification can only come through the purest instruments. Thanks be to God that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of such instruments working in all parts of India. Let the impatient sceptics watch, wait and see. But let them not mar the movement by hasty, ill-conceived interference, even though it may be prompted by laudable motives.

Yeravda Central Prison,
November 7, 1932.

M. K. GANDHI.

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It is also mentioned in the circular that the officers of the Labour department have seen examples of successful cultivation, especially by Telugu labourers.

With the restoration of normal conditions of trade and with the advent of a more representative system of government in Malaya it is expected that the lot of labourers will improve. This hope finds support in the utterance of Dr. T. Drummond Shiels, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Colonies, at the Colonial Office Conference held in 1930. "One important principle held strongly by this Government was that the subject people should be given every opportunity to develop to their fullest capacity in all directions and particularly in that of ultimate self-government." It is the duty of the leaders of the Indian community in Malaya to enable their uneducated and disorganised fellow-countrymen to better their condition in life and to realise the advantages of self-government so that at no distant date Malaya is raised to the status of a free and self-governing colony.

V. R. NAYANAR.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, 28th October.

THE R. T. C. LIST.

CONTRARY to the expectation of my informant last week, it was found necessary, but too late for reference in my last letter, to make an immediate announcement of the date, place, and personnel of the third Round Table Conference. My anticipation that the place of meeting would be found to be not far away from Big Ben and that the earlier rather than the later date would be preferred, has been speedily verified. As to the personnel it is in many respects disappointing, and in others significant, both for its exclusions and its inclusions. The most notable absentee is, of course, Mr. Sastri. It would be interesting to discover upon what authority the Government of India decided that the state of his health was such that it would not be fair to him to ask him to undertake the arduous responsibilities of membership of this Conference. The most authentic news available here was that Mr. Sastri had been religiously conserving his health, in order to enable him to participate in the Conference, and his friends here have been alarmed at the serious deterioration in his health that must have occurred to justify his omission. It may perhaps be that the Government of India have assumed more than the circumstances warrant and that upon further enquiry it will be found that the state of Mr. Sastri's health had improved sufficiently to warrant an urgent request to him to undertake, to the extent of his powers, the duties of membership of the Conference. Another very significant omission is that of any representation of the poor. Mahatma Gandhi on the last occasion claimed preeminently to be their champion. Unfortunately circumstances have combined to prevent the Government to honour him with an invitation to join the Conference, and also to prevent his accepting such an invitation. That, however, does not exonerate the Government for the omission of some qualified representative of Labour. If landlordism is fully and competently represented, if Capital has its qualified agents and spokesmen, if the possessing classes are duly represented, is it seriously contended

that Labour was not interested in the new constitution for India, and if not, the omission of Mr. Jinnah's name is inexplicable.

Another significant omission from the list as published, which admittedly is incomplete, is a representative of the women of India. Obviously half the population of India is entitled to at least one representative. Fortunately these two important omissions may be rectified at an early date; thanks to the interpellation of the Secretary of State on Monday by Major Milner and Mr. Morgan Jones. [This has since happened.] Three other notable omissions are Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani and Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. The two former are associated with a particular attitude on the Federal question, and it would be natural for the public to assume that the Government regard themselves as being precluded by the course of events at the two last Conferences from the necessity of having that particular point of view specially represented. It is nevertheless strange that Mr. Jinnah's name at least is not to be found in the present list, an omission that Mr. Jinnah himself takes with his accustomed fortitude and philosophy.

The Justice party seems to be over represented in so small a Conference, and one is almost impelled to ask why "injustice" in Madras has no spokesman. The Bengal Musalmans, who are recently understood to have voted against separate electorates, are apparently to be represented by a communalist stalwart, whilst the Bengal Hindus are not to be represented at all, though there should be at least one public-spirited man among them. [Here too a change has been effected.] The communal situation in the Punjab speaks for itself in the composition of the Punjab delegation. Pundit Narak Chand, however, would probably be regarded with greater favour by moderate people than Raja Narendra Nath. Of the rest the most important addition is that of N. C. Kelkar in the place of Dr. Moonje, in his capacity presumably of President of the Hindu Maha Sabha. The change is for the good, and Mr. Kelkar who made many friends upon his previous visits to this country is sure of a warm welcome from them. The inclusion of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar was almost a foregone matter if the Conference were to achieve anything like success. On the other hand, the omission from the States' representation of Sir K. N. Haksar is a distinct loss, and his absence will be regretted by many close friends who had acquired a high regard for his character, ability and charm. Sir Mirza Ismail is a distinct asset in a group that is otherwise somewhat pedestrian. It is evident, however, that the Ministers representing the States have none of the powers of plenipotentiaries and any decision to which they may tentatively agree must of necessity be liable to frustration upon reference to their respective Princes. Presumably the majority of the delegates will be leaving for England by tomorrow's steamer and in about a fortnight we shall be welcoming them here. It is of course probable that, as much of the work of the Conference will be done in camera, communications to the Press will be fewer and of a more general and less explicit character than on the two previous occasions. Pressmen, however, have a peculiar faculty for sensing a situation, and securing effective publicity for the occurrences of the day, and on the whole I do not anticipate any great difficulty in providing authentic news of the events that may happen during the sitting of the Conference.

I understand that invitations have been sent to the Non-Government parties to select their representatives upon the British delegation to the Conference. I understand that at any rate for the present the Labour Party does not intend to avail itself of the

privilege. If that is true it will be a matter of great disappointment, and I am inclined to think that the Labour Party will be committing a serious error, both of principle and of tactics. The Party cannot get away from its responsibility in trying to secure the best possible constitution for India with a maximum transfer of power to the people. Their absence from the scene will deprive the relatively small progressive elements on the Indian side of valuable allies. I suppose that to some extent the Party attitude has been decided by the nature of the invitation. If the British delegation is to include only Members of Parliament, then obviously the Labour Party would find itself deprived of some of its best experts on Indian affairs, neither Mr. Wedgwood Benn nor Professor Lees-Smith nor Mr. Pethick Lawrence being available. Moreover the Party membership in the House is not so large but that it would be embarrassed by the absorption, at a critical period in domestic history, of Parliamentarians who can ill be spared.

IN PARLIAMENT.

So far India has not loomed large in Parliament, but one has to remember that this special extension of the Parliamentary session has been convened primarily to deal with the Ottawa agreements, the second reading of the Bill in connection with which went through with a large majority yesterday. In many respects the discussion on the agreements has been unreal. We have seen far more of the clash of personalities than of ideas, but at the same time there must have been among the opponents of the measures a certain feeling of self-stultification in view of, to corrupt a phrase of Mr. Sidney Webb's, the immense of inevitability. The Government Party are wholly committed to the agreements and the policy of tariffs, and there is an overwhelming majority for these in both Houses. Sir Walter Layton's resignation from the Economic Conference following upon the Samuelite deflection must have come as a sad disappointment to the Prime Minister.

Nevertheless India did intrude into the discussion on the Ottawa agreements at least twice, and in two different ways. In the course of the debate last Monday, Mr. Wallace had charged Mr. Lansbury, when speaking earlier in the debate, with almost hoping that the Indian Government would not confirm the agreements made by its delegation at Ottawa, and he expressed regret that Mr. Lansbury should have offered encouragement to the Indian people to reject it. Mr. Lansbury promptly denied that he had directly or indirectly advised the Indian people on this subject. His protest, he said, had been made against an agreement being made in their name by people who were totally unrepresentative of the people of India. That was an entirely different matter, he declared, from his having the impudence to advise Indian business men how they should carry on their business.

In the course of the second reading debate on the Ottawa Agreements Bill, Sir Robert Hamilton referred to the case of India in another connection altogether. The Opposition have made a very strong point that these agreements bind this country not to lower tariffs, i. e. indirect taxation, for a period of five years, the effect of which would be to deprive successive Governments and Parliaments during that period from exercising their constitutional right to reduce taxation. By contrast Sir Robert Hamilton pointed out that the Government of India, under the Indian agreement, could denounce it at six months' notice, and the Opposition demanded that the same privilege should be extended to this country.

There is an excellent satirical power in the current "New Statesman", the theme of which is that we lost the American Colonies by insisting upon taxing them against their will. Recently the Dominions have

threatened to leave the Empire unless we in Great Britain adopted a tariff policy in conformity with their desires, and that the time would not be far distant when we should threaten to leave the Empire ourselves unless our right to our own fiscal policy was conceded by the Dominions.

THE VICEROY AND MR. GANDHI.

To-day's cables convey the substance of the correspondence between the Viceroy and Maulana Shoukat Ali, in which the former declined once again to contemplate the release of Mr. Gandhi until the latter disavows the civil disobedience movement. It is a point of view that would cause great disappointment in sensitive quarters in this country. But apart altogether from the merits of the question of whether this is the proper attitude to adopt towards the Mahatma, one would have supposed that if there had been any real desire on the part of the Government of India to secure the effective abandonment of civil disobedience by Gandhiji, they would at least have left the door ajar to enable promoters of peace to convince him of the desirability, in the interest of the country and of his own great purpose of removing untouchability and the elevation of the depressed classes, of abandoning the movement and then of affording him the means of persuading his colleagues in the Congress to collaborate with him in giving effect to that conviction. These ideas, however, still seem to be far from the minds of the bureaucracy at New Delhi, with the result that, instead of civil disobedience being brought to a speedy end, it will continue to drag on miserably for an indefinite period, embitterment and disillusionment will continue to spread, and the work of the Conference will be undertaken in an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility. It all seems to be very poor statesmanship. My enquiries at this end show very clearly that the authorities have been considerably embarrassed by the way in which the Indian bureaucracy have closed down all conversations with Gandhiji making for peace on the larger scale.

KENYA LAND COMMISSION.

My attention has been specially called to the Commission which is now sitting in Kenya under the chairmanship of Sir William Morris Carter, which, I am reminded, is not concerned only with African land claims. Among the terms of reference appears the following: "To define the area generally known as the Highlands, within which persons of European descent are to have a privileged position in accordance with the White Paper of 1923." I wonder how many people have kept in mind a very important declaration of neutrality made by Mr. Jackson, Deputy Commissioner in British East Africa, as it was then called, on the 28th February, 1902, and quoted as follows in Mr. W. McGregor Ross's "Kenya from within": "You are in error in supposing that the Government has any intention of drawing a distinction between Europeans and Indians as far as rights of mining, settling, and acquiring land are concerned." Are the Government of India taking note of what the Morris Carter Commission is doing, and are they taking any steps to see that the Indian case is effectively put before it?

Reviews.

A POLITICAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

VACANT THRONES. A VOLUME OF POLITICAL PORTRAITS. By SIR IAN MALCOLM. (Macmillan, London.) 1931. 22cm. 204p. 10/6. THAT there is no theatre comparable to the House of Commons nor any comedies more instinct with

human interest than those performed within its walls has been the experience of several Members of Parliament. But very few Members of Parliament take pains to record their impressions of the achievements of the great actors in the theatre of the House of Commons. Historical biography will certainly be very interesting and valuable if biographers give publicity to the intimate details of their heroes, for it is from such details that the reader draws his individual conception of the historical personages. The book before us is valuable and interesting, for it contains pen-sketches of the great historical personages by one who was associated with them during his long Parliamentary career. These political portraits from the pen of Sir Ian Malcolm appear to be not so much chips from the learned workshop of a historian engaged in any special study, as biographical sketches based upon association with the great statesmen in work or play. They certainly make no claim to depth of research or to originality of view, but they are bound to be of great interest even to the scholar or the student, for the scholar can discover in these personal memories of vanished friends and acquaintances qualities that have not hitherto been brought out and details not known before. The book is sure to be of enduring value, for these portraits are a contribution to the understanding of some historical personages by throwing more light on them, and the author has seen a good deal further into them than other people.

Sir Ian Malcolm has had a brilliant Parliamentary career. Though a Tory himself, his sketches of Conservative and Liberal statesmen are free from bias. We shall give a few examples. The author draws our attention to the exceptionally brilliant way in which Lord Salisbury handled the foreign policy of Great Britain, and how his leadership of the Conservative Party both within and without Parliament was incomparable. At the same time the author admits that he was not "popular" in the sense which we give to that word to-day. He was too reserved to be popular in that sense. Speaking about Lord Rosebery, the author says that in spite of his splendid gifts Lord Rosebery's premiership was unsuccessful because of incompatibility of temper between him and his colleagues and his inability to disguise his feelings. The portrait of Lord Balfour, the philosopher-statesman, is very interesting. Balfour was a politician but he had other interests. He was a great philosopher and wrote several philosophic works. His interest in scientific subjects was no less unflagging, and he was a good shot and a persistent tennis player. Though not gifted with good health he overcame the weakness of the flesh by the absorption of self in the execution of public duty. About Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who rose from "the humdrum administrator, a politician *malgré lui*, to the triumphant Generalissimo of a consolidated Liberal army," he says thus:

"It is not for me to judge whether history will ultimately grade C. B. as a Prime Minister of the first or of lesser rank. But of this I am sure, that he came from the same rock out of which great Prime Ministers, perhaps with happier opportunities, are hewn. He had conviction and courage; he had patience and perseverance; he had kindness, dignity, and honour."

Dealing with Lord Oxford and Asquith, the author says that his record as a barrister was not a very brilliant one in spite of the fact that he was endowed with a brain which C. B. once described as a "faultless piece of machinery." "Perhaps it may be," says the author, "that he just lacked something of the fire of imagination, the self-revealing power, which brings conviction to the mind of a jury; that, as someone wrote of him, "he requires more blood;

iron he has in plenty and of excellent quality and that this deficiency together with an economy of missionary fervour explains the matter." About Asquith's leadership, the author has something effective:

"That he failed to satisfy his opponents goes of course without saying in an assembly where private judgment is often obscured by party loyalty, but it may perhaps be said that he did not always completely satisfy his supporters, to whom he brought little of the joy of battle, so dear to the rank and file of every political party, nor any of the fire of a consuming faith, but only the calm contribution of a great intellect as hard as flint and as cold as steel."

We may give many more illustrations of the impartial judgment of the learned author on the great historical figures, but space forbids us from so doing.

These political portraits not merely enable us to picture before ourselves what these great men might have been, but also refresh our memory in regard to the great movements of the time. The Home Rule issue, the Liberal split, the Tariff Reform controversy, and the House of Lords' Veto—these first-rate political questions are treated in relation to the great persons who were in the thick of the fight.

We have no hesitation in saying that these delightful sketches are a valuable contribution to historical biography.

M. V. SUBRAHMANYAM.

STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT.

INTERNATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT. A STUDY OF FLUCTUATIONS IN EMPLOYMENT IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES, 1910-1930. Ed. by M. L. FLEDDERUS. (I. I. Relations Institute, The Hague, Holland.) 1932. 25cm. 496p.

THE paradox of recurrent economic distress and increasing unemployment in a period of growing use of the world's natural resources has become a chronic feature of the post-war world industrial situation. But though the bitter facts of experience have driven home the basic truth that violent fluctuations in employment constitute essentially a menace to standards of living, there has been as yet only an imperfect appreciation of the causes that contribute to periodic and violent oscillations in the figures of the employed. The result is that despite clamorous protests and vociferous demonstrations by the unfortunate unemployed, so far as their active thought processes are concerned the people affected have almost resigned themselves to passive acceptance of unemployment as an inexplicable and inevitable concomitant of the existing industrial system. Yet if trade and industry are to be rehabilitated, economic chaos to be avoided and confidence restored, and our heritage of a common civilisation is to be salvaged, instead of passive acceptance of unemployment, a policy of vigorous practical preventive action on concerted international lines has to be inaugurated. One of the few international bodies working in this field is the International Industrial Relations Association and the volume under review is a collection of eight papers giving a picture of the recurrence of unemployment in different parts of the world—Australia, Canada, China, Germany, France, Great Britain and Soviet Russia, being the eight countries selected for treatment—during the two decades 1910-1930, submitted to that body as a starting point for discussion of the international aspects of unemployment at the Social Economic Congress held under the Association's auspices in August 1931.

These analysis of fluctuations in employment during the crucial years of the war and the post-war period almost right up to the present furnish what might be called an admirable index of the 'weather conditions' prevailing in this particular sphere. The selection of the eight countries the reports for which are included in the volume, was determined, in part, as stated in the Introduction, by the availability of trained investigators; but as due consideration was given in the selection to the illustrative character of these countries and the industrial importance of their present status in world economy, valuable results of universal applicability have been obtained as the result of these studies. From the viewpoint of industrial development, one may divide the countries of the world into three broad categories:—regions of surplus resources and production, regions of incomplete resources and restricted markets, and regions newly entering upon industrialisation. In all these three categories alike today there is crying need for social economic planning—that is for a planned adjustment of productive capacity and standards of living. A careful study of the reports show that even in the period before the war unemployment was growing; that the first rude impact of unemployment on world consciousness synchronised with the year of the start of the Great War—1914; that a temporary increase followed the War, and that 1921–22 was marked by depression; and that the current period beginning in 1930, registers the lowest point in earnings and employment in the years for which comparative statistics are available. It would not be too venturesome to hazard the guess, though accurate figures are not available, that today the number of the unemployed in the world, together with their dependents, would be in the neighbourhood of 80 millions. The immensity of the figure may stagger the imagination and give a rude jolt to complacent optimists who would like to lull themselves into a sense of false security by unquestioning acceptance of the poetic concept: "God is in his high Heaven and all is well with the world;" but facts, as those given in the report under review, would show that unemployment today is a universal *malaise*, and that social economic planning on an international scale is the only effective remedy for it.

It is unfortunate that the volume under review does not contain a section on unemployment conditions in India. While the adage that a "Nation without history is a happy nation" is generally true, the almost complete absence of statistics with regard to unemployment conditions in this country does not unfortunately indicate the immunity of India from the unemployment virus. The conspiracy of silence maintained hitherto by the authorities in this respect has been frustrated to a certain extent by the revelations made in the Whitley Report to the effect that unemployment among factory workers and in specific categories of workers like railway employees, seamen and dock-workers has become a matter of serious concern. Some recent figures emanating from authoritative quarters go to show that in Indian railways alone over 40,000 men have been discharged due to retrenchment, that roughly 50 per cent. of Indian seamen are on the unemployed list, that in the textile industry of Bombay alone over 30,000 operatives are out of work, that the jute industry of Bengal is at its lowest ebb and that even possibilities of agricultural employment have shrunk owing to reduction in the cultivated area because of the progressive collapse in prices registered by the principal agricultural products of the country. These facts indubitably show that the problems of unemployment and the devising of efficient remedial measures for it are of vital interest to India and in this respect the

volume under review should engage the earnest attention of all those interested in the economic well-being of India.

In the stages preparatory to presenting the series of reports included in the present volume in book-form, the International Industrial Relations Association has worked in close collaboration with the I. L. O., one of the main preoccupations of which body, as is well known, is exhaustive research into all the various aspects of unemployment. Research students and others who feel that the range of countries dealt within the present volume is rather limited and who desire to study the problems of unemployment in their widest aspects, would, therefore, do well to act on the suggestion given in the book under review and supplement their investigations by a careful study of the several valuable monographs on "Unemployment" that have been issued by the I. L. O. in its Studies and Reports Series.

K. E. MATTHEW.

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF VIJAYANAGAR.

STUDIES IN VIJAYANAGAR POLITY. BY K.

ISWAR DUTT. (The Author, Local Fund Audit Dept., Coconada.) 1931. 25cm. 59p. Re. 1.

A SCHOLARLY description of the administrative system of the Empire of Vijayanagar is given in this publication under suitable topical heads. References to epigraphs, inscriptions and historical records upon which the picture is based are extensively quoted in the footnotes. The general outline may be given in some such way.

The Empire owed its motive power to the presence of a lively fear in the minds of the people of the South of India that if they did not unite against the common danger of a Mahomedan occupation, there would be an end of all their civilization and culture. The emergence of a strong central political power was therefore a necessity. This explains the almost unlimited despotism of the Kings of Vijayanagar, the large powers delegated to their Ministers, who were capable organisers as well as military commanders and the supreme efforts made to concentrate all their resources for purposes of defence. Although most of the revenue was derived from irrigation and commerce, the amount had to be supplemented by heavy taxation, which included taxes on professions like those of the weavers, washermen and barbers and did not even exclude a tax on marriages (pp. 10–11). The villagers were further made to pay for the celebration of the festivals of Gods and for 'making provision of dancing girls to the God' and one need not wonder if at times they declared a policy of non-payment of taxes and even 'put to death' those who paid taxes against their will. Generally, however, a large amount of village autonomy was allowed and Provincial Governors had a free hand in the management of their provinces, provided, of course, that they supplied the necessary quota of men and money for defence. The picture is therefore one of a centralised mediaeval monarchy, limited perhaps by a number of ministers. The duties of kings and of ministers are described from sources of the period and this reminds one of a similar description given in the work on Maharashtra Polity by Amartya Ramchandrapant in Maratha history. The kings and ministers however ruled successfully and saved the Empire from destruction for more than two hundred years.

Among other subjects the administration of temples is likely to give much valuable information on social and economic aspects of the life of those days.

But this is not completed in this volume. We should certainly learn much from a study of the working of the corporations of management of these public trusts, the records that they kept of all happenings in the temple and the method of keeping their registers and their treasury accounts.

The book is worthy of being closely studied by students of Indian history, especially by research students, who will find in it a lot of useful information regarding the character and methods of the Vijayanagar administration.

V. N. KUMBHARE.

GANDHI IN BRUSH AND PENCIL.

MAHATMA GANDHI. SKETCH IN PENCIL AND BRUSH. By KANU DESAI (Taraporewalla, Bombay.) 25cm. 29p. Rs. 3.

MAHATMA GANDHI is revered in India as an avatar or God-sent architect of the nation. But to many in England his performances, whether in politics or religion, are highly confounding, bordering on those of a crank. To take but the latest instance, his recent fast in Yerawada, which stirred the nation to the very depths of its being, was not understood at all by a large section of thinking England, some of the leading organs of English public opinion not hesitating even to pour ridicule on the soul-stirring phenomenon. This obtuseness of the English mind, its arrogant scorn of what it has grossly failed to understand, must be removed before Indo-British relations could be built up on a sound basis. This task is best achieved by Englishmen themselves who combine proper understanding of Indian life and ideals with genuine sympathy for the nation's struggle to realise those aspirations.

But such qualified evangelists of Indo-British peace and amity are not many. Of the few rare souls who have dedicated their lives with true missionary zeal to the self-imposed task of interpreting India to England and bridging the gulf between the two nations Father Verrier Elwin occupies a highly respected place. In the book before us he has succeeded in expounding in very brief compass—the whole sketch covering less than 30 pages—the many different sides of Mahatma's personality and his teachings. In the prelude to the essay the author tells us that he has tried to portray Gandhiji only in the forms in which he has touched the author's heart and helped him. "The explorer," "the ascetic," "the labourer," "the poet and artist," "the rebel," "the devotee," "the lover of men," and "the universal soul" are the headlines of some of the chapters in the book and serve to indicate the sides of Mahatma's personality which have won for him such a worthy exponent and disciple as the author. Father Elwin wields a facile pen and is able to impart to the reader not only a clear intellectual grasp of the main tenets of the Gandhian gospel but also something of the emotional glow, the infectious enthusiasm of the spirit that an ardent follower feels for his Master. We strongly commend the book to all those interested in modern Indian nationalism and the fragile figure which, though confined within prison-walls, is able to move into sudden action, as a mighty dynamo of power, the hearts of countless millions steeped in lethargic indifference outside.

Of Kanu Desai's sketches in pencil and brush only artists or expert art-critics can speak with authority. We are competent only to express the experience of the lay observer that the pictures have something striking in them which attracts the eyes and repeatedly rivets them on the intensely expressive features portrayed. The sketches number 13 in all and in the words of Father Elwin give "a bril-

liantly imaginative interpretation of the Mahatma's character." The get-up of the volume is excellent.

M. R. RAMASWAMI.

RURAL ECONOMY IN THE PUNJAB.

AN ECONOMIC SURVEY OF TEHONG, A VILLAGE IN THE JULLUNDUR DIST. OF THE PUNJAB. Inquiry conducted by ANCHAL DASS & H. CALVERT. (The Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab.) 1931. 25cm. 345p. Rs. 4.

A COMMENDABLE enterprise on the part of the Board and the two gentlemen connected with this work. The study is exhaustive, and its accuracy may be accepted. The scheme of the Board to have one such survey for each district is by itself praiseworthy. But a village, however typical, cannot be expected to be a miniature district. The conclusions which the facts in this volume may lead to, may most surprisingly be quite unsuitable to its neighbouring village, say Shahpur. Tehong has a population of 2,303, with a total area of 2,475 acres of which 137 acres are not under cultivation. The village has a fixed assessment of Rs. 7,000 together with many other cesses. There are no irrigation canals, and the irrigation is from wells and by country lifts. The average holding is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The holdings are divided and scattered. Fragmentation has assumed enormous dimensions and the efforts of the co-operative consolidation movement have not so far achieved striking results. The smallest plot is .005 acres and the largest is 3.611 acres. A small holding of 36 Kanals 16 Mavlas (about $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres) consists of 23 scattered plots. With every succeeding generation, fragmentation tends to increase in geometric progression. It is this fragmentation that is at the root of slackness and backwardness in agriculture. Landholders are better off than tenants who get a bare living. The co-operative society has not so far given facilities for tenants to join it and this explains the flourishing trade of usurers, agricultural and non-agricultural. Indebtedness caused by the usual causes is another crying evil. Land revenue has been increased for every settlement as a matter of routine. The taccavi loans obtainable from Government are not popular in the village. The marketing of produce and the purchase of commodities are done in a most uneconomical way, and the co-operative society has not come forward to take up this work. The yield of the lands and the expenses of cultivation are given in detail. An elaborate ostle survey, the cost of construction of wells and the average food consumption for different classes and other instructive facts about the village are given. The tabular statements and the three maps add to the usefulness of the book. The questionnaire at the end is a model one for rural economists to work on.

N. S. S.

SHORT NOTICES.

RUSSIA.

WHAT WE SAW IN RUSSIA. By ANEURIN BEVAN, E. J. STRACHEY and GEORGE STRAUSS. (The Hogarth Press, London.) 1931. 20cm. 30p. 1/-

THESE three members of Parliament visited Russia in September 1931 and spent a few weeks there in order to see things for themselves. This pamphlet embodies the results of their observations and may be expected to do a good deal to educate public opinion about the real state of affairs in Russia.

The five-year plan, they state, is "an attempt to turn Russia into an up-to-date industrial country in five years." They explain the conflicting reports about food being plentiful in some parts and food shortage in others thus: "The production of food-stuffs has been interfered with by the scheme for radically revolutionising agricultural production which has been ruthlessly applied. And its effect is aggravated by an inefficient system of distribution." It is to be hoped that conditions of life there have improved since these visitors left Russia. Partly as a remedy for food shortage new forms of communal eating places are, we are told, being established in Leningrad. Almost every factory has a workers' canteen and the visitors found several "factory kitchens" or mass restaurants in Leningrad, in some of which as many as 40,000 meals are prepared daily—meals which are wholesome and moderate in price.

The visitors found conditions of labour "fairly good." "There is," say they, "a seven-hour day which has not yet come everywhere into force; frequently an extra hour is worked at time and half rates. Every worker gets a minimum of fourteen days' annual holiday with pay, which he often spends at T. U. rest houses free of charge. Women workers get two months' holiday with pay before and after child-birth."

The general impression left on one's mind as a result of the perusal of this firsthand study of Russian conditions is that life in that country is certainly not as unbearable as it is sometimes made out to be in some interested quarters. Any way the authors deserve praise for their unselfish labours in the cause of truth.

D. V. A.

THE OTTAWA TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND GREAT BRITAIN.

By C. N. VAKIL and M. C. MUNSHI. 1932. 40p. As. 10.

CONSIDERABLE interest has been aroused throughout this country in the Ottawa Trade Agreement and its implications are being examined very critically in press and on platform. The man in the street who is not acquainted with the intricacies of Imperial Preference and international trade relations asks a very simple question: "What will India gain by accepting the agreement?" Messrs. C. N. Vakil and M. C. Munshi have succeeded to a great extent in answering this question in a direct and convincing manner in their thought-provoking pamphlet. The conclusion they have arrived at after the analysis of the problem and with the help of relevant statistical sources, are briefly as follows:—If the agreement is ratified the United Kingdom will be able to capture an additional market in India to the value of nearly Rs. 33 crores, and consequently production in the U. K. will receive impetus, while India will get an additional market of Rs. 13 crores in the U. K. with the disheartening prospects of further increase of the burden on the Indian taxpayer and at the same time earning the ill-will of other countries due to the displacement of the Indian import trade with them and the consequent unwillingness on their part to take the exports of India. In the event of non-acceptance of the agreement India will lose only a market of Rs. 8 crores in the U. K., i. e., 2.86 per cent. of the total exports and that loss can be easily compensated by trade with other countries. Moreover India will be quite free to develop her own industries if she is not bound hand and foot by the agreement which presupposes that she

will be a regular supplier of raw materials to the U. K.

The conclusions ably reasoned out are enough to warn Indians against the blind acceptance of the agreement and to give an impetus for further enquiry into the effects of the agreement on each article of trade.

V. R. N.

BUDDHISM AND ITS PLACE IN THE MENTAL LIFE OF MANKIND. BY PAUL DAHLKE. (Macmillan, London.) 24cm. 254p. 10/6.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF BUDDHISM. BY JAMES PRATT. (Macmillan, London.) 25cm. 758p. 18/-
DR. PAUL DAHLKE offers thoughts to the ordinary thinker. Unfortunately, they are quite meaningless to the ordinary thinker. For instance, he says: "Truth is to serve life or in a hitherto unheard-of new order of things, life is to do service to truth." It is a beautiful statement if only we have definite views on Truth and Service. The Buddhistic Truth is no dynamic enough for life nor is there much of radiance of joy in service. But in spite of it, one of the greatest lives lived on this earth was that of Gautama Buddha.

James Pratt, in his psychological survey, is struck by the impact of Buddhism on the religions of China and Japan and their reaction to it. To the western mind it is incomprehensible—that impassivity, that other-worldliness, that utter tranquillity. It impresses him abundantly. For he has only the background of the western form of Christianity. To him comes Buddhism as a sense of repose to a turbulent heart.

Fr. YESUDAS, C. S. S.

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