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Topics of the Week.

R. T. C.

WHILE our foremost leaders are quietly beginning to get ready to accept self-government even if it be of a somewhat undemocratic kind, Mr. Joshi, poor man, still keeps on harping on the distinction between self-government and popular government. As will be seen from an R.T.C. speech given elsewhere in this issue, he persists even at this late stage in pressing the claims of the masses, and, what is more, he does not confine his enthusiasm for democracy to the British Indian unit of federation, but, greatly daring, carries it forward into the other unit. In his slapdash manner he continues to ask for the States' representatives too to be elected by popular vote! One may however feel relief that this demand is not going to do any harm, for it is in no danger of being accepted.

Nor has the other demand that he made much sting left in it, viz. that the elementary rights of citizenship be inserted in the federal constitution for the Indian States' people as well as for British Indians. The British Indian claimants for self-government are not too clamorous for it. Mr. Joshi however need not suppose that the States are wholly indifferent to fundamental rights. They are not. Sir Manubhai Mehta himself claimed one for the States: that the States' treaty rights be declared inviolable in the constitution. Mr. Joshi may yet hope for a Charter of People's Rights to follow on this Charter of Princes' Rights.

However, we wonder if he is quite fair in asserting that the British Government has made

central responsibility dependent upon federation. The R.T.C. proceedings were conducted from the outset, both on the side of the British Government's representatives and on the side of British Indian representatives, on the footing that a federation would take place, and all that the Government did was to remind British Indians of that fact when time came to make a note of the agreed conclusions. Nothing that has happened at the Conference will enable Government to say that central responsibility will not be possible without federation, but they will be entitled to say that they have not agreed to it so far on any other basis than federation. If it is now to be on a different basis, it is a separate issue for fresh consideration. Even this last position, however, seems now to be challenged by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar, for in their joint statement issued on arrival in India they say that, in all likelihood, "a vast majority of the States will be ready to join the federation," but that even in the unlikely event of the States making trouble, the functioning of responsible government at the centre must not be postponed beyond 1935. They thus now ask for central responsibility irrespective of federation.

Harijans' Entry into Temples.

WILL the Viceroy give his assent to Dr. Subbarayan's Temple Entry Bill? This question is at present exercising the public mind. It is said that the Government would make up its mind on the point before the Viceroy leaves Calcutta, that is to say, within the next few days. What the decision would be is more than can be foretold. But according to Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastry who contributes to the January number of the *Indian Review* a thoughtful article on the subject of the Harijans' entry into temples, the Viceroy would be taking a very unusual step if he were to withhold his assent to the Bill. In reply to the question put to him by the Editor whether assent can be withheld for the introduction of a Bill, Mr. Sastry says:

"The right to withhold assent is with the Governor-General. But under well-established rules of procedure it is unusual to withhold assent to the introduction of the Bill. This assent does not commit the Governor-General to give his assent when the Bill is passed. He may still refuse assent to the Act as finally passed. The Act may not be passed at all. It seems to me hardly likely that the Governor-General should withhold his sanction at the early stage of introduction of the Bill with a view to eliciting the opinion of the Legislature."

The conference of shastris belonging both to the reformist and sanatani schools which was in progress in Yerawada jail for some days and which ended a few days ago has left Mahatma Gandhi per-

fectly unconvinced as to the position of those who are opposed to the 'untouchables' being admitted to temples. By way of compromise he has suggested the reservation of the Guruswami temple for worship by the Harijans for stated hours every day and has no objection to the daily purification of the temple after its use by the Harijans. Whether this compromise is accepted by the untouchables or not, the Santani Hindus find it difficult to reconcile themselves to it. If they can tolerate the presence within the temple precincts of Harijans who, according to them, surreptitiously smuggle themselves in on the Kartiki Ekadashi day, it is difficult to understand why they should be unwilling openly to concede them the right of worship in the temple for a limited period every day. But prejudices die hard.

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The Future of Berar.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE'S Hyderabad Dinner speech a few weeks ago in London blessing the idea of the rendition of Berar to the Nizam and expressing the hope that the negotiations that would shortly be started in India to that end would be crowned with success has naturally caused much perturbation among the people of Berar. This found strong expression at the recently held meeting of the Berar All-Parties Committee at which all important sections of opinion in that province were fully represented, and over which Mr. Tambe, the ex-Governor of C. P., presided. The resolutions passed by the meeting voice Berar's misgivings about the Secretary of State's speech in question and emphatically affirm the right of the people of Berar to be consulted in all discussions pertaining to their constitutional future. It has also been urged that the contemplated negotiations should not be carried on or concluded unless the people of the sub-province were given an effective opportunity to press their views and agree to any conclusions that might be finally arrived at. All that this demand means is that the constitutional status of Berar should in no way be modified behind the backs of the people concerned. In other words, the Beraris ask for nothing more than that the principle of self-determination should be allowed fair play in the proposed discussions regarding Berar. This is an eminently reasonable request which we hope will be granted. For the last 80 years or so the inhabitants of Berar have been taught to look upon themselves as a part of British India and now when there is the prospect of an improvement in their constitutional status in view of the impending reforms it is sought to make Berar a part of the Nizam's territory which does not enjoy even a semblance of popular government. To say the least, this would be extremely unfair to the people of Berar. If the resolutions passed at this meeting may be taken as an index to their mentality, the people of Berar do not seem to have any intention of transferring their allegiance from the British Government to the Nizam. In fact the meeting expressed their determination to join the proposed Indian federation and to continue a part of British India in the same way and on the same terms as other provinces.

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Indian Christians on the Situation.

WITH Dr. S. K. Datta as President the Indian Christians met in their annual Conference at Nagpur on December 31 and the following day. The work done by the Third R. T. C. did of course engage their attention; but in the absence of fuller information the Conference found itself unable to express a decisive opinion about it. It however made it clear to all concerned that no scheme of constitutional reform would be acceptable to public opinion unless it provided for the transfer of real and effective power

to the people. In common with all sections of Indian opinion, the Indian Christians too recognise the need of safeguards for the period of transition, but insist that they must be proved to be in India's interest. In any case they had no hesitation in characterising the safeguards outlined in Sir Samuel Hoare's speeches at the Conference as being "excessive and unnecessary." It is also of interest to note that the Indian Christians are averse to the idea of investing the Viceroy and Governors with special powers for the protection of minorities, as contemplated by the British Government. With a view to securing the co-operation and good will of the Indian public in the matter of working the coming reforms, the Conference pressed for the release of Mahatma Gandhi and other civil disobedience prisoners. Will their request be heeded by those in authority?

While condemning separate electorates as being inimical to national interests, the Conference once again proclaimed its faith in joint electorates with reservation of seats limited to a period of ten years. To judge from the presidential address, most of those assembled at Nagpur would have been pleased if they had not been required to ask for this special protection. Indeed they would hardly have done so, had the other minorities refrained from making similar demands. But it is necessary to remember that their demand for special treatment does not stop here. They have gone further and asked that their claims to representation in the federal and some provincial Cabinets be also conceded—a demand which the Unity Conference at Allahabad was constrained to accept. The attitude of the minorities may have served the Indian Christians as an excuse for demanding special protection; but the question is: is their present attitude helpful to the promotion of national unity? We fear, not.

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Agrarian Trouble in Alwar.

THE agrarian trouble in Alwar State appears to be far more serious than was at one time thought to be the case; and the account of the Meo disorders and of the steps taken to quell them, which is officially published, reads like that of a pitched battle between two warring forces. Great insecurity of life and property is stated to prevail in the disturbed area which now comprises nearly one half of the state. Communications are reported to have been cut off by the insurgents and post offices in the affected area are experiencing considerable difficulty in the discharge of their routine functions. So much is this the case that their temporary closing down is being seriously contemplated by the British postal authorities. Even in spite of its best efforts the Durbar has found itself powerless to stop the disturbances of the peace occasioned by the Meo rebels' activities. The situation was considered by the Durbar grave enough to necessitate its handling by the military before it could be brought under control. The requisite military reinforcements have, on the Durbar's requisition, been already despatched and are in charge of the situation. The engagements between the moving column and the Meos seem to have resulted in some loss of and injury to life the extent of which it has been found impossible to ascertain owing to the unsettled state of affairs in the area. It is to be hoped that it will not be very long before the presence of the troops sent from British India has had a salutary effect on the disturbers of the public peace. In the meanwhile Dr. Moonje has appealed for the celebration of Alwar day on Sunday next, which, it is feared, will make the situation in Alwar still more complicated by needlessly emphasising the communal element in the disturbances.

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Articles.

A NEW VIEW OF PARAMOUNTCY.

CORRESPONDING to the three categories of provincial, federal and central subjects into which powers and functions of the legislative and executive organs of government will be distributed in British India, there will be three separate groups of subjects with which Indian India will deal: local, in which the States' authority will be supreme; federal, which they will agree to cede to the federation; and the remaining, which will be under the control of the Paramount Power. The federal field, which will be common to both halves of India, will be limited in extent, for practically it rests with the States to determine its boundaries, and they seem determined to make it as small as possible. In British India two views compete with each other for mastery as to the division of the non-federal field. Mahomedans generally trying to make the provincial sphere as large as may be, even to the extent of obliterating the central sphere (eventually if not immediately), and Nationalists trying to keep the central sphere reasonably wide. We had thought that the Princes were not afflicted by any such divergence of view in the matter of dividing their non-federal field. It was our belief that they were unanimous in pressing for as narrow a definition of the Paramount Power's rights as might be humanly possible so that the extent of their own sovereign rights might be correspondingly widened. The Harcourt Butler Report had filled them with alarm, for, according to the conception embodied in it, paramountcy was all-pervasive—unlimited in fact and incapable of any limitation in theory. So long as this conception prevailed, their own internal autonomy would be liable to be challenged at any point. The general impression therefore was that the rulers were insistent as much on warding off an encroachment from the side of the Paramount Power as from that of British India, and indeed for some years past a demand was being made in the Chamber of Princes for a precise delimitation of paramountcy, confining the Paramount Power's intervention to personal and dynastic matters of the Princes.

But we now understand that there is a cleavage of opinion among the rulers of States as there is among the politicians of British India on the question of the distribution of the non-federal powers. Some rulers are still inclined to ask for a restriction of the application of paramountcy rights within well-defined limits. But others have now begun to smell danger in it; for, they say, paramountcy rights can be exercised just as much to prevent an inroad on the States' autonomy by British Indians as to extend unduly the scope of interference by the Paramount Power, and if the content of paramountcy is narrowly defined the Crown will be powerless to resist possible infringement of their sovereign powers by British India. So these rulers would rather let well

alone. It would appear from Sir Robert Holland's essay in "Political India" (Oxford University Press, 3/6) that at the conference of the Princes' representatives with the Viceroy in Simla last September, the representatives of the larger States expressed this view: they felt that paramountcy was not an unmixed evil; that, in fact, it might well be their shield; that it might be used to preserve rather than diminish their sovereignty. What is the kind of intrusion that they fear from British India which paramountcy may be invoked to guard against? Says Sir Robert: "It must be expected that federation will stimulate agitation in the States, impelling the rulers in the direction of changes which they may think premature or undesirable, such as the democratization of their systems of government, the grant of federal citizenship and fundamental rights to their subjects, the election by vote of States' representatives in the federal legislature, the linking up of the States' Courts with the federal judiciary, and the abolition of existing regulations as regards the press, freedom of speech, and the exclusion of political agitators. . . . They (the Princes) hold to assurances which they have received from Viceroys in the past, that the time and place and manner of change, if change is to come about in their States, is in their hands."

These rulers have now come to entertain the fear that the effect of a definition of paramountcy which they were seeking so far would only be to deprive the Viceroy of the power of carrying out these assurances and to pull down the barrier which exists at present against the onrush of a democratic wave from British India. They have therefore come to the conclusion that it would be decidedly "against the interests of the States" to have marked out clearly the boundaries of the province within which the Paramount Power's discretion in the matter of intervention should be confined. We are also told that these rulers have now realised that it is equally "impracticable" to set bounds to paramountcy, in such a way that their sovereignty would never suffer impairment. For, however restricted an interpretation may be put upon paramountcy, it must needs include the right of intervention in cases of gross misrule, and Sir Robert Holland asks, how can a ruler "ever hope to place himself beyond the scope of intervention by any other means than through the establishment of a system of government responsible to the people"? It would thus be well, on the whole, in the opinion of these rulers, not to insist upon subjecting the exercise of paramountcy to any precise limitations of the kind they had in mind before. This view of paramountcy being used as a safeguard against agitation for democracy is one which, we must confess, did not lay within our perspective.

If the view of these rulers prevails paramountcy, besides being a subject beyond the jurisdiction of the Government of India, not only in the transitional period, but even thereafter, will be maintained in such a condition as to choke off any possible agitation conducted from British India, the rulers of course being well able to deal with agitation within their borders.

ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANISATION IN BOMBAY.

DURING the last twelve years the expenditure of the Bombay Government came under some sort of scrutiny on four different occasions, twice by mixed committees of officials and non-officials and twice by Government officers told off for that purpose. Yet it could hardly be said that the administrative machine was thoroughly overhauled. It was therefore decided last year "to secure expert advice on the reorganisation of the whole administrative machine." This expert advice is contained in the report, published on Saturday last, of the Committee of which the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Thomas was chairman. This Committee was called upon "to make recommendations for the more efficient organisation of the whole machinery of government and for effecting all possible reductions in the expenditure controlled by the Government of Bombay." It should be understood that the reorganisation which the Committee was expected to propose was not intended to be such as either to make the administration more responsive to public opinion or to remove the administrative inconveniences from which the public had been suffering. The object merely was to promote the efficiency of the administration and at the same time to effect as much reduction in expenditure as possible. The proposals of the Committee designed solely to reorganise the administrative system will naturally have little interest for the general public; for the man in the street it is a matter of little consequence whether his grievances are attended to by a single individual or by a collection of them styling themselves this or that Board, as proposed by this Committee. What is of more immediate concern to him is to what extent the Committee has succeeded in relieving him of his burden of taxation.

Two handicaps seem to have impeded the Committee's work to a considerable extent. One was the prohibition imposed upon it to consider the organisation and conditions of work of the all-India services; and the other, the necessity to submit its report early enough for its recommendations to be given effect to, wherever possible, in the preparation of the next budget. While the second handicap was unavoidable, the same cannot be said about the first. When the terms of reference to the Committee were published in July last, it was widely feared that this restriction on its scope would greatly detract from the value of the Committee's labours. A Committee which had to deal with the reorganisation of the whole administrative machinery could not, it was felt, adequately perform its task if it was not to enjoy completely unfettered discretion to deal with the organisation of all the services under the control of the Bombay Government without regard to the fact whether they were all-India or Provincial. That this apprehension was not quite imaginary can be seen from the fact that the Committee too, in the pursuit of its inquiry, found this limitation on its work a formidable stumbling-block in its way; for the conditions of service of the two services are so inextricably intermixed that it

was setting really an impossible task to the Committee to expect it to deal with the one without touching upon the other. This was in fact what the Committee found by experience. As it says: "Any reorganisation of these departments without to some extent affecting the senior appointments is clearly impossible, and we found, at a very early stage in our deliberations, that too strict an interpretation of this restriction on the scope of our inquiry would have the effect of rendering the remainder of our terms of reference almost meaningless." The Committee therefore did well in avoiding this contingency by not hesitating "to suggest reorganisation merely because such reorganisation would affect individual members of the all-India services."

The deliberate withdrawal of these services from the Committee's consideration made its task, never very easy, more difficult. Even so, the Committee must be said to have done its best to place the provincial finances on a more satisfactory basis. It has tried to reduce the heavy salary bill by proposing scales of pay for members both of the all-India and Provincial services, which clearly bear a closer relation to the state of the provincial treasury and to the Indian standard of living. This is not to say that its proposals in this respect will meet with universal and unqualified approval, a section of the public not regarding them as going far enough in the direction of reduction. However, it is a matter for satisfaction that the economies recommended by the Committee amount to Rs. 2 crores or to nearly 14 per cent. of the local Government's revenue.

This is likely to lead the unwary to the belief that its suggestions exhaust all possibilities of reduction in public expenditure. Nothing can however be farther from the truth. While it is undeniable that the Committee has reviewed the expenditure of all Government departments, it did not look into the Governor's expenses which are generally believed to be susceptible of considerable diminution. Whether the Committee's terms of reference prevented it from undertaking the task or whether it imposed a self-denying ordinance upon itself out of a sense of false delicacy is more than can be said. But there can be no doubt that if the Committee had found it possible to go into the matter with some care, its time would not have been altogether wasted. In that case it would in all likelihood have found the public complaint about the superfluous nature of the bodyguard and band establishments attached to the head of the province fully justified and seen its way to recommend their disbandment.

General disappointment is sure to result from the cavalier way in which the Committee handled the very important question of the permanent location of the Government's head-quarters. Its bearing on the presidency's finances is obvious enough; and if there was any question more than another which merited unbiased consideration at the hands of a Committee out to organise the administration, it was this. But we regret to observe that it was not con-

sidered by it in a spirit free from preconceptions. In considering the relative merits of Bombay and Poona for the permanent capital of this presidency, the Committee strikes one as dismissing, somewhat airily, the claims of the latter as being none other than climatic. The Committee should have known that climatic considerations are among the least important that are urged in favour of the adoption of Poona as the permanent seat of Government, reduced administrative costs being always put forward as the most convincing argument in its favour. There would have been no reason to complain against the committee if it had rejected Poona's claims on financial grounds; but admittedly it failed to look into the financial aspect, "as it is to us inconceivable that if Government are going to remain in one place throughout the year, that place can be other than Bombay." Does this show that the comparative merits of the two places for selection as an all-the-year-round capital received from the Committee that unprejudiced consideration which the vital importance of the question to the provincial revenues unquestionably demanded?

It should be noted that the Committee has found the public criticism about the top-heavy character of the administration well-founded. The retrenchments it has seen fit to suggest in the higher secretariat staff clearly substantiate the complaint, voiced in the Legislative Council on innumerable occasions, about the secretariat being overstaffed. That it did not recommend the total abolition of Divisional Commissionerships as demanded by public opinion, but contented itself by suggesting their reduction only by one is not surprising, having regard to its completely official personnel. Its unreadiness to examine the question of the size of the district charges with the consequent possibility of a considerable reduction in the number of district officers is also intelligible for a like consideration.

On the other hand it must be admitted that the Committee's recommendations in regard to the closure of Government Arts Colleges and High Schools in places where well-conducted private institutions of the corresponding class exist will be heartily welcomed by the public. At the same time it should be remembered that the suggestion has not emanated from this Committee for the first time; the credit for originally putting it forward must go to

the Retrenchment Committee of ten years ago. The case for the closure of these Government institutions is self-evident. The comparatively small number of students that are attracted to them and the prohibitive cost of imparting education to them in these institutions make their continuance at public expense for any length of time out of the question. The total cost per student in the Deccan and Elphinstone Colleges is as high as Rs. 574 and Rs. 365 respectively in comparison to that in private colleges in Poona and Bombay, which is only about Rs. 170 and Rs. 225 respectively. But we are concerned not so much with the total cost as with the financial burden each student in these institutions means to the taxpayer. As is well known, the cost to public revenues of educating a student in the Deccan College is the highest in the presidency, being Rs. 459, while that in the Elphinstone College Rs. 185. On the contrary, a student in any one of the private colleges at Poona does not cost the Government more than Rs. 30 or so, while that in similar institutions in Bombay Rs. 8 more. To persist in maintaining institutions which constitute such a heavy drain on the public purse when the work done by them could be accomplished with much less cost but with equal, if not greater, efficiency, is nothing short of indulging in wanton waste of public funds which must be put a stop to without delay. It is to be hoped that Government will find it possible to carry into effect the policy recommended by the Thomas Committee in regard to these institutions.

Some of the other suggestions of the Committee we should very much have liked to deal with here; but considerations of space forbid such a course of action. From what has been said above, however, it will be seen that many of the points now singled out for retrenchment by the Committee were years ago pressed on the Government by non-officials for similar treatment. If the Government had been in the habit of listening to non-official advice, much useless expenditure of public money which has since taken place would have been avoided. In such matters it is a case of the Government thinking not even tomorrow but the day after tomorrow what non-officials think today. However, let us hope that the expert advice which they have purchased from their own officers at the cost of Rs. 85,600 will not, now at least, be lost upon the Government.

THE INDIAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

THE sixteenth session of the Indian Economic Conference was held at Delhi during the first week of this month. Representatives from most of the Indian Universities and many of the colleges attended the meeting. Among the topics discussed were such important subjects as trade depression, federal finance, economic history of rural India during the 19th century, recent monetary theories and the Ottawa agreement. A notable feature of the proceedings of this session of the Conference was the presence and active participation of members of the

Government of India. As the country at large is vitally interested in at least some of the subjects discussed at Delhi, an attempt is made to review in brief the proceedings of the Conference.

From a practical standpoint the most important decision that emerged from the discussions of the Conference was a plan for organising an economic survey and intelligence service by cooperation between the Governments, commercial bodies, universities and the Economic Association. In the past few years this subject had attracted severally the

attention of the Conference and the Government, but the session at Delhi by bringing the two together proved fruitful in sowing the seeds of a constructive plan. In his inaugural address, the Hon'ble Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain stressed the great need of an economic general staff to study and to plan, and outlined his ideal as "private effort, individual and collective, marching and converging towards a common objective, guided by a general staff to which both Governments and they might contribute". The presidential address of Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee of the University of Lucknow also contained a strong plea for planned economy. But what gave reality to the discussion was a friendly speech from the Finance Member. He confessed that on almost all subjects of national importance in India accurate data were lacking and offered to further any scheme of cooperation in survey and investigation which the Conference would put before him. Leading members of the Conference welcomed Sir George Schuster's suggestion but insisted that the initiative must lie with the Governments. This was not contested on the side of Sir George and the Conference ended by appointing a strong committee to plan a scheme which will in due course be presented to Governments and universities. Judging from the tone of Sir George Schuster's remarks, something tangible may be expected to emerge from this effort.

The economic consequences for India of the present depression was a subject calculated to rouse much interest both within and without the Conference. No less than eight papers were contributed on this topic, and each writer placed before the Conference his own special version of the trade depression. Rationalisation of agriculture and an expanding credit and public works policy; development of non-agricultural pursuits; increase of population and of educated unemployment; the increased real burden of India's public debt; administrative dependence, Gandhi-ism and loose organisation; and the swadeshi-cum-boycott movement were all canvassed as important features of the situation by several writers. Curiously, however, all these were thoroughly ignored by the Conference which settled down to discuss the paper of Prof. Chablan. Sir George Schuster had delivered a speech in the early part of the debate on this subject. He professed ignorance of expert knowledge, but from what he called the ordinary man's viewpoint he enumerated some bright spots which in his opinion favoured the conclusion that India had not on the whole been hit as much by the depression as some other countries in the West had been. Rise of industries, increased savings bank deposits and reduced cost of living were some of the bright spots indicated by Sir George, who incidentally commented very favourably on Prof. Chablan's paper. In characteristic fashion Prof. Chablan had refused to draw any definite conclusions in his paper. He had put forward three contentions which in his opinion ought to have mitigated the Indian situation. These three relieving factors were: 1. virtual non-existence of some world causes such as reparations and war debts,

heavy expenditure on social services, and high tariffs; 2. easier adjustment of retail to wholesale prices as compared with other countries; and 3. greater elasticity of wages in India, which, he alleged, follow prices much more rapidly than in the West. Statistics based on the years 1918 and 1921, and drawn principally from the *Bombay Labour Gazette* were adduced in support of these arguments. The conclusion, arguments and statistics all were subjected to severe criticism. Apart from the arbitrary and misleading choice of the basic year reliability of Bombay Labour Office figures as indications of actual conditions all the country over was seriously questioned. Even the figures that were chosen failed conclusively to prove Prof. Chablan's thesis that the adjustments between wholesale prices and retail prices, and between the cost of living and the rate of wages are brought about with greater rapidity in India than elsewhere. As one speaker put it, that argument was bad induction, and the conclusion based on it, that India has not suffered as much as other countries, was worse deduction.

The finances of a federated India attracted some good papers, including a very able contribution by Prof. Chablan. Inadequacy and inequality are the two objectionable features of the present financial distribution as between the provinces and the Central Government. The most important issue that arose out of the discussion was: Are the recommendations of the Percy Committee and the Third Round Table Conference any solution of this twofold problem? The unanimous and energetic answer to this query was an emphatic negative. Prof. Chablan in his paper marshalled a mass of relevant statistics to prove that none of the bases of distribution suggested, viz. population, income-tax, total revenues, income per capita, could be trusted to work evenly as between province and province. The inadequacy of revenues from which almost all the provincial Governments have been suffering was partly responsible for heated controversies between several provincial economists. The consensus of opinion on this subject was, however, in support of a very just and progressive policy. That a minimum standard of efficient and progressive government should be assured in all provinces and that the richer provinces must be called upon to make a progressive, and not only a proportionate, sacrifice for this purpose was widely accepted. So also the insistence on a clear demarcation between provincial and federal heads, which characterised discussions on this subject in two former Conferences, was no longer in evidence. The need and urgency of a thorough retrenchment in the civil and military expenditure of the Government of India was strongly advocated, and the imposition of fresh taxation as an accompaniment of financial reform was condemned. The position of Indian States in a scheme of federal finance caused much concern, and it was feared that new instances of inequality would be now created which would vitiate the financial structure of the future. In this, as in almost all other aspects of financial adjustment, the

politicians, in particular the British politicians, are so consistently ignoring the canons of finance in framing their administrative reforms that the future governmental structure may well be expected to creak rather audibly.

The Conference, which was held in the old Assembly Hall, attracted a record house when it set itself to a full-dress debate on the Ottawa Agreement. Some had feared that as the issue was practically closed for the moment and as the economists were in a body opposed to the ratification of the pact, the proceedings would contain more of denunciation than of debate. Happily these apprehensions proved unfounded. The proceedings opened with a very halting and unconvincing speech from Prof. P. J. Thomas of Madras. His argument was to this effect: Free Trade is ideally good, but the only practicable policy is trade agreements. England is the biggest single customer of India and therefore a trade agreement with that country is most to be desired. The Ottawa agreement was not faultless, indeed in the matter of preference to raw cotton it was highly defective. But we have to make the best of a bad job, and we had better set about improving our agricultural production so that we might reap the highest possible advantage out of the openings within the Empire created by the agreement. The only other economist who seemed to be on the side of a quiet acceptance of the agreement was Prof. Thomson of Allahabad. His plea was frankly based on political grounds. He was by no means certain about the advantages of the bargain. But he argued that in a disordered world the cementing of the British empire was an advantage, and even at the cost of some immediate economic sacrifice the Ottawa agreement should be welcomed. Both these speeches failed to produce any impression on the Conference, which also refused to take seriously the defence of Government policy put forward by Mr. Burt. The criticism of the agreement was based on very solid and unquestionable ground. Imperial preference as a measure of economic consolidation of the Empire and tariff preferences in the world was discredited. The failure of Government to take informed Indian opinion into confidence before the agreement was entered into and to give timely information to critics after it was ratified was severely dealt with. In view of the invitation of Sir Fazl-i-Husain and Sir George Schuster for expert cooperation from the Conference these criticisms were specially apt. The failure to allow in the agreement for preference already granted by India, the very limited scope for further expansion of Indian business in Great Britain, the real danger of gradual restriction of non-empire markets, the danger to India's rising industries and the sacrifice demanded of the consumer were all trumps which were played with effect. If only this initial attack is followed by regular analysis and criticism of the trade and tariff position in the years to come, it may be hoped that a revision of the agreement will be feasible. For aught one knows events in England itself might move against rather than for Ottawa. For though England has gained in its

agreement with India, there is no doubt that it has lost in respect of the dominions. Stiffening of foreign attitude and dwindling of export trade might conceivably lead England to revise its position in relation to Empire economic consolidation.

To all careful students of public questions the proceedings of the last session of the Indian Economic Conference hold out a promise of much useful reading.

D. G. KARVE.

FRANCO-AMERICAN TRADE.

AT a time when serious difficulties are dividing the two countries, a short survey of their commercial relations may throw valuable light upon some aspects of the question.

The United States market is the largest and richest market in the world at the present day. Consequently many countries compete for a privileged place in it. (Other countries which are almost as large or even larger in area, and much more densely populated have less commercial importance. This is due on the one hand to the fact that their natural resources are only exploited on a very small scale and with imperfect means, and on the other hand to the very low standard of living of their population; the consequence of this standard of living being a very feeble buying capacity of the masses in general. India and China are very good instances of this.)

UNITED STATES TRADE IN GENERAL.

United States commerce had gone since the war through a period of continual and increasing prosperity, but this has changed of late and figures show very clearly that the United States have suffered acutely from the world economic depression. If we compare the year 1931 with 1930 we see a more important fall in the exports than in the imports.* This trade depression is certainly due in a great measure to the tariff barriers and also to the stability of the dollar at a time when a great many currencies have lost a good deal of their buying capacity. The commercial balance is still favourable to the United States but to a much lesser extent. In 1931 the favourable balance was \$ 334,000,000 against \$ 782,000,000 in 1930. It was therefore even below the figure of the year 1923 (\$ 375,000,000), which is the lowest since the war.

Another important factor in the trade depression is the general fall in prices. This explains to a great extent the fall both in exports and imports when evaluated in prices. To form an accurate idea of commercial transactions, one must therefore study imports and exports not only from the point of view of money value but consider the actual volume of trade. For instance, if we consider the export trade of raw cotton and unrefined petrol we notice a fall of more than 40% in money value compared with the year 1930; yet in volume, cotton exports have increased by 50% and petrol exports by 8%. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the tobacco trade (9% decrease in value). We quote these products because raw cotton, unrefined petrol and tobacco constitute four-fifths of American exports. In exports of raw material in general there is a fall of 32%, and this is evidently due essentially to the fall in prices.

*Comparative fall in exports:

- 11% - Asia (India, China, Japan).
- 3% - Europe.
- 35% - Africa.
- 40% - North America.
- 60% - Oceania.

On the contrary, if we consider manufactured or semi-manufactured goods there is a decrease not only in the value but also in the volume of exports. There is however an exception in favour of special products such as radio-telegraphic and cinematographic material (the exports of which are growing in volume). But the exports in motor cars, for instance, have decreased by 130 million dollars. In the case of many of these finished products the cause of trade stagnation is over-production, but another cause can be found in the fact that young countries have been severely hit by the economic depression and also sometimes are endeavouring to manufacture these goods of their own accord.

It must be pointed out that the United States suffer from the present depression all the more because their *home market* has also lost part of its buying capacity. The salaries have gone down, and when we hear there are 11,000,000 unemployed, that means, on a basis of 3 people per worker's family, 33 million people whose buying and consuming capacity is automatically lowered. This is a large figure for a population of 123 millions. The following figures are eloquent enough :

ANNUAL CONSUMPTION PER HEAD IN
UNITED STATES (IN ENGLISH POUNDS.)

	1923-25	1926-28	1931.
Wood	1,350	1,190	530
Cement	495	550	390
Stones	1,900	2,220	1,670
Steel	810	880	450
Cast-Iron	720	720	300
Brass	12	14	9
Aluminium	1.4	1.9	0.8
Coal	1,360	1,270	940
Beef	64	57	48
Pork	73	69	70
Sugar	106	111	101
Tea	0.8 6	0.76	0.69
Coffee	11	12	14
Leather	11	10	8
Cotton	30	32	24
Wool	5	5	4
Silk	0.5	0.7	0.7
Artificial Silk	0.4	0.7	1.2

Although complete figures for 1932 are not available as yet, it is well known that depression has only increased further. It is interesting to note an exception in favour of artificial silk, a recent industry, and in general, the privileged positions of food-products.

TRADE OF THE UNITED STATES WITH FRANCE.

If we consider now the trade of United States with France we also see the effect of the world economic depression. The principal articles imported by France from the United States are: cotton, petrol, oils, copper, tin, zinc, manufactured and leaf-tobacco, cereals (irregular) dependent upon the importance of the French harvest, raw materials of different kinds, textiles, rubber, timber, wood pulp, phosphates, tropical fruit, etc. The principal articles exported by France to the United States are: textiles, silk goods, articles of clothing, leather goods, all art and luxury articles, objects for collections, underclothing, metal, chemicals, perfumery, paper, laces, jewellery, knick-knacks and fancy goods, toys, etc.

If we examine the statistics of the imports and exports between France and America during the years 1929-30-31 and for the first nine months of the years 1930-31-32, it will show that trade has gone down by half, on the average.

MONTHLY STATISTICS OF FRENCH FOREIGN TRADE.
FIGURES IN THOUSAND FRANCS.

Year.	U. S. Imports into France.	U. S. Exports from France.
1929	7,159,550	3,334,636
1930	6,148,131	2,434,915
1931	3,803,403	1,543,937
1930*	4,398,581	1,858,865
1931*	3,074,047	1,158,339
1932*	2,166,587	684,256

The trade balance between France and the United States is and always has been in favour of the latter (except during three years around 1926-27 at the time of the rapid fall in the franc).

One word must be said also about *invisible trade*. This of course can hardly be estimated exactly. It consists essentially in: (a) tourist trade, (b) interests on foreign investments, and (c) freight (commercial transport of goods, etc.) Tourist trade is the most important item as far as Franco-American relations are concerned; it has been roughly estimated at 5 milliards per year, and even to 6 or 7 milliards by some people. Needless to say the world depression has been felt in that domain perhaps more than in any other. The importance of the decrease in Franco-American trade will be seen from the following passage which we quote from *Foreign Trade*, the journal of the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris (1932, Vol. 7, No. 10).

"In the past year and a half, trade between the United States and France has dropped to less than half the volume of the years immediately preceding. American exports to France averaged over 244 million dollars annually during the five-year period 1926-30, compared with an average of 119 millions since that time. French exports to the United States have fallen from a five-year annual average of 153 million dollars to a present level of 71 millions. Though each country still represents a leading market for the other's goods we have to turn back more than twenty years ago to find Franco-American trade at a level so low as the present."

Let us also quote some figures from a report consulted in the Ministry of Commerce :

FRANCO-AMERICAN TRADE.

(Figures are in million dollars.)

	1931	1930	Difference.
Imports from France ...	79.8	113.8	30%
Exports to France ...	121.8	224.0	46%

If we study the details of the exports and imports on the double basis of the money value and the volume of trade we notice :

(a) Concerning *Exports of United States* :

For iron and steel an increase of 20,000 metric quintals and 2 million francs.

For cereals, an increase of 1,700,000 quintals and more than 92 million francs.

For fruit an increase of 400,000 quintals and 97 million francs.

For preserved and salted vegetables an increase of 8,300 quintals and 4 million francs.

For cotton a decrease of 900,000 quintals and 1 milliard francs.

For mineral oils, refined and unrefined, and essences a decrease by 1,500,000 quintals, and over 660 million francs.

(* First nine months only.)

(b) Concerning Imports of United States from France :

For mineral and gaseous waters an increase of 9,000 quintals and 2 million francs.

For fine underclothing (lingerie) a decrease of 1,500 quintals and 94 million francs.

For manufactured leather goods a decrease of 3,300 quintals and 97 million francs.

For goldsmithery a decrease of 700 quintals and 3,200,000 francs.

"Ramie", hemp, flax, jute, cotton, woollen textiles, deserve a special mention for showing *simultaneously* an increase of 1,400 quintals and a decrease of 140 million francs.

It is easy to see the effects of trade depression, but more difficult to establish its causes and advocate efficient remedies.

The general world economic depression is evidently responsible for the present state of things to a great extent, but *high tariff walls* have also had their part to play on every side.

The Hawley-Smoot Tariff, 17th June, 1930, and the systems of quotas* established by France later on, in the way of retaliation, have certainly created many difficulties and unnecessary bitterness between the two countries. Other countries of the world have also raised tariff walls against American goods, and there, we believe that our American friends have suffered from the consequences of the proud isolation which their Government has always imposed upon them as regards foreign politics and economic relations. No common agreement was allowed to restrict American liberty. In that way tariffs could be established by each country individually irrespective of common negotiations which might have moderated their excess. In Europe agreements have at least endeavoured a progressive adaptation of traditional principles to immediate necessities. There is much talk about a prospective commercial agreement between France and United States, but it is not concluded yet. It is certain that the acute crisis of Franco-American trade is due in great part to the particular character of the exports of United States and to that country's particular policy.

Great hopes are encouraged by the coming World Economic and Monetary Conference. It is only through agreement, good will, confidence and collaboration that these questions can be solved. But it cannot be denied that the recent notes exchanged about the debt-payment due on December 15th have somewhat thwarted these hopes. Trade depression, deficit budgets, unemployment, political, social and economic insecurity, have engendered, in all countries, discontent, suffering, dilemmas, suspicions and apprehensions, which not unoften border upon fear. At such difficult moments, mutual understanding and generosity are rarely forthcoming. Yet they never have been so indispensable as at the present day. Only people who are in close contact with public opinion in both countries appear to realise it and their advice is rarely carried out by the people in power, since the latter have to reckon with the reactions and the fluctuations of a prejudiced public.

Looking through some documents at the Ministère du Commerce, we came across two instances, one more strictly akin to the commercial, and the other to the diplomatic field. The first was a very interesting and well planned study for the creation of a wholesale office for French products. There is no doubt that French trade in the United States would have gained through its realisation. The competitors

* These consist in regulating the quantity of certain imports which compete with French products in the national market.

of France in the American market have strong commercial and financial organisations and a powerful propaganda is at work on their behalf. The stabilisation of the franc has deprived France of an automatic advantage and proved a hindrance to trade by increasing the price of French products. Nevertheless, other countries, like England for instance, still sell their goods at a higher price than France, simply because their commercial connections with the United States are more efficiently organised. French products are at present often introduced by foreign agents who also sell their own goods and have no interest in enhancing the value of the French. A great improvement could be reached through the creation of a Commercial Office for wholesale dealing with French goods only. This would avoid confusion with similar foreign products or imitations, eliminate the cost of inefficient intermediaries and ensure greater stability in sales prices, as well as a permanent contact between French manufacturers and the American market. It would maintain also the reputation of France and French taste.

The second document was a note sent on November 17 by the French Commercial Attaché in the United States to the Minister for Commerce and Industry. It points to the fact that American opinion is absolutely hostile to any moratorium. The situation, says this note, might not have been so serious if a Franco-American commercial agreement had been concluded earlier, or if we had only taken Senator Reed's advice when he last visited France. He then assured us that a few tariff concessions granted before the elections would prove a valuable asset in our favour later on. In future, America will try to deal separately with each debtor. England will find an argument through the fall in the pound, while our gold reserves will hide our real weakness. Whether she pays or not on the 15th December, France will be in a dangerous and difficult situation vis-a-vis the United States, the developments of which are hard to foresee. Some people think that it is just as well that a definite Franco-American agreement has not been concluded as yet, and the opinion may be justified. The argument is that the tariff question had better be left in suspense until the phase of reciprocal concessions, when it can be used as a kind of trump card. Nevertheless partial concessions might have been granted, such as, for instance, the assurance that France would import from America large quantities of cotton which our industries cannot do without. These imports could have been financed by several French banks, with or without the guarantee of the State.

All that precedes may appear to have no other than a retrospective interest, but it helps one to understand the genesis of the present difficulties in a certain measure. Considering the question of the debt by itself, it cannot be too much emphasised that in French opinion the question is one of principle far more than one of payment. France would never consent to earn 480 million francs by refusing to honour her signature; this would be against her political traditions. The refusal (which in fact all French people do not approve of) was really meant as a protest. The French have always understood that they had pledged themselves to pay only to the extent they were themselves paid by their debtors. President Hoover imposed a moratorium for the purpose of exempting Germany from her pledge and thereby indirectly "thawing" the American credits invested and "frozen" in German concerns. Now France is asked to pay the expenses and she does not consider it fair play.

Commercially speaking, the fact that our own debt was contracted to a great extent through pur-

chasing American goods ought to entitle us to repay in the same way, that is, by goods. And the high tariffs raised by the United States appear evidently to be intended to prevent, or at least to considerably hamper, this normal mode of payment. The situation between the two countries is certainly confused at present; passions have been aroused on either side. They will cool down as time goes on and issues will be seen more clearly; facts will, sooner or later, compel France and America to understand each other's needs better.

L. MORIN.

Reviews.

GANDHIJ'S SPIRITUAL MILITARISM.

THE EPIC FAST. By PYARELAL. (Navajivan Karyalaya, Bombay.) 1932. 20cm. 325p. Re. 1-4-0. WE should all be grateful to Mr. Pyarelal for having given us a very graphic, vivid and loving description of Mahatmaj's fast, appropriately called "The Epic Fast." The book forms fascinating reading.

Regarding the subject-matter of the book itself, the best way to look at it would be to analyze the whole situation under the following heads: (1) The predisposing causes of the fast; (2) The fast itself; and (3) Are such fasts coercive in their effect or not?

(1) Nobody disputes that during the last 25 to 30 years Mahatma Gandhi has been preaching the removal of untouchability which he has vehemently described as the curse of Hinduism. He was doing by precept and example a good deal of propaganda whenever he had any chance of appearing in the public and it is no exaggeration to say that he had profoundly changed the angle of public vision towards Harijans all over India. Mahatma Gandhi categorically states the reasons which led him to give an ultimatum to the British Government. He sincerely felt that a crisis had come and he had to have his voice heard. But he chose the pseudo-spiritual weapon of fasting unto death. There is a good deal of reasoned and enlightened opinion in the country, which, alas, our nationalist press will not give publicity to, which believes that this method was a wrong one. Prominent people in the country have alluded to it as "shock tactics."

(2) The 'shock tactics' succeeded. In other words, in our anxiety to save Mahatmaj's life we did not care what price we paid and we talked, we argued, and we quibbled and we even quarrelled while life was fast ebbing away from Mahatmaj's frail body. We were in a hurry to come to some compromise, some agreed solution, something which at least for the time being seemed to satisfy us and the expected miracle happened. Mahatmaj's life was saved and the British Government accepted, with some reservations, the Yeravda Pact.

(3) Coming now to the important question whether such fasts are coercive or not, a battle is still raging in the columns of the daily press on the subject. People were simply dumb-founded when they first heard of Mahatmaj's resolve; and reason, logic, and clear thinking gave way to sentiment and one and all amongst the leaders of India, whether he was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi or his political opponent, was simply overwhelmed by the one idea of saving the great man. When people began to think calmly over what had been done a certain amount of strength was gathering round the idea that the method adopted was certainly coercive. When this process was going along, Mahatmaj chose to

stampede the public into another situation by threatening another fast. With the approval of the Government he has issued a series of public statements, a careful reading of which shows that he was clarifying the issue in his own mind and trying to justify his action, which he of course sincerely believes is right, but which the public had no time to ponder over and judge calmly while the fast itself was in progress.

Inferentially, he assumes that he is the one and the only man who is competent to give the infallible lead as to what should or should not be done in the case of Harijans and that if his opinion is not acted upon then and there, he is going to dragoon the public into accepting his views by threatening to fast himself unto death once again. He is such a past-master in the use of the English language that he always wriggles out of any situation with the speed of "greased lightning" and he will be a bold man who can say that Mahatmaj has taken a definite position regarding some of his explanations, because it looks as though he has always some mental reservation or other, which in his characteristic and able manner he exhibits before the public in his own inimitable and forcible style. Nonetheless, the question to be answered is: is he or is he not taking upon himself the exclusive responsibility of being the one wise man of India in a given situation?

While these lines are being penned, there is a certain amount of gloom overhanging the public life of India because Mahatmaj has tried to make of Guruvayur temple entry a test case as to the change of heart he expects amongst caste Hindus. Even here he does not want to give enough time for people to think and take stock of their position, but he must put his own limit of time and his spiritual militarism is very disconcerting indeed. Many of his admirers, who can be credited with as much sincerity in their own views as Mahatmaj claims for himself, are getting a little impatient about the attitude taken up by Mahatmaj. A sort of helplessness is creeping into this aspect of public life in that many people have begun to exclaim in private: "What can we do if the Mahatmaj is determined to make a martyr of himself? We are helpless and may probably be powerless to prevent it."

It were a calamity indeed if he should start on another fast, but here again all his followers follow him with such unquestionable and implicit faith in his opinions that they will not pause and think. Perhaps they feel that the cause is so big, and the leader of the cause is also so big, that it is of no consequence whatsoever if the hearts of a handful of orthodox Hindus are broken and if the opinion of others, who hold different views to Mahatmaj's are unheeded. Great things are never done without sacrifices. Here the balance of advantage will have to be struck by weighing Mahatmaj's opinions and Mahatmaj's life against the cherished faith and belief of perhaps lakhs of caste Hindus. It is after all a matter of opinion when such moral issues are to be decided as to which is a bigger sacrifice. All these arguments clearly indicate that the fast is unequivocally coercive in conception and execution.

Whether Mahatmaj dies a natural death or a self-inflicted violent death, his great work endures; his name will be uttered in grateful reverence in millions of homes in India; historians are sure to describe him as one of the outstanding figures of the world; religiously-minded people may even consider him an 'Avatar.' But God, having chosen a human form, seems to have also left some human traits in Mahatmaj. It is this touch of ordinary human nature in Mahatmaj that makes him take up the

attitude he has unfortunately taken in this great work of uplift of Harijans.

While on this subject, it may be doubted whether it is permissible to make use of the resources of a well-organized political institution like the Indian National Congress for goading the public into a course of action *not* by reasoned persuasion, but with the ultimatum of the greatest soul of India threatening otherwise to pass away from our midst.

G.

RELIEF OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

EMERGENCY WORK RELIEF. By JOANNA COLCORD, WILLIAM O. KOPLOVITZ AND RUSSELL H. KURTZ. (Russell Sage Foundation.) 1932. 24cm. 286p. \$ 1.50.

DURING the winter of 1930-31 an extraordinary amount of unemployment prevailed in the United States of America, and relief in the shape of work to the unemployed was organised in over 200 cities which had a population exceeding 25,000 persons, and in some rural communes. Information by means of a questionnaire was collected from most of them and some thirty selected communities were visited by the authors. The present volume, which contains the results of the enquiry, is in three parts. Part I, dealing with the development of work relief, may be said to be an introductory chapter; Part II contains the report of 26 communities including New York, Chicago and Philadelphia; and Part III contains the recommendations of the authors regarding the setting up of a programme of work relief.

The U. S. A. did not adopt the English dole system of relief but adopted that of providing work. It was organised, supervised and financed by local authorities, assisted in many cases by committees of voluntary helpers. Relief was confined in some cases to citizens, but in all cases to residents in the respective local areas. The work given was generally heavy out-door work such as road-making, the improvement of parks and the repairs of public buildings. Wages were calculated on an hourly or daily basis and were generally not much below the usual wage of the kind of work that was given. But as the local authorities surely did not have unlimited funds at their disposal, they elected to give intermittent employment—such as for only two or three days in the week or two or three hours a day—on the normal wage in preference to continuous work on a greatly reduced wage. The wages were mostly paid in cash (in coin or by cheques) but in some cases they were paid in kind by means of orders on grocers. The authors of the enquiry uphold the normal wage, with, if necessary, intermittent employment, as it avoids conflict with labour unions which are more touchy about the daily rate of pay than the weekly earnings. Though payment of wages in kind is intended to help the wage-earner in spending his wage on the more essential things of life, the authors of the present volume are not in favour of its adoption, because it imposes an unhealthy control over the wage-earner and also leads to favouritism in the selection of grocers and to other abuses.

To the kind of relief dealt with here, a parallel in our country is famine relief. But we have had so much famine experience in the past that we have drawn up a Famine Code which meets almost every point that is likely to arise in administering relief. Our Code was drawn up some thirty years ago, when real old-time famines used to occur. But now communications in the whole world have so much improved that no actual shortage of foodstuffs is likely to occur in any country or even part of a

country. When the monsoon fails in any part of India now-a-days, what we are faced with is unemployment of agriculturists on a large scale and not actual shortage of foodstuffs in the markets. Our Famine Code therefore needs to be revised to suit the changed conditions, but the experience of the U. S. A. as recorded in the present volume and of other countries, is not likely to be of much help to us as our conditions are so different from theirs. But in industrial cities like Bombay, Ahmedabad and Calcutta the conditions are nearer to those of the American cities and the present volume will be found suggestive by them.

V. VENKATASUBBAIYA.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN RUSSIA.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION. By NICHOLAS BERDYAEV. (Sheed & Ward, London.) 1931. 20cm. 95p. 2/6.

THE author of this book is a Russian philosopher, who has seen the vicissitudes of modern Russian life. A man of profound Christian faith, a frank critic of institutions, Nicholas Berdyaev suffered like many of his compeers for his views during the reign of the Tsar as well as during Bolshevik rule. Before he was expelled by the Bolsheviks from Russia along with the other intellectuals, he had filled with distinction the chair of philosophy in the University of Moscow.

The book under review contains translations in English of his two illuminating essays: one on Russian Religious Psychology and the other on the Religion of Communism. In his chapter on the Russian Religious Psychology the author traces the evolution of religious thought, and the motives and the deeper currents that ran through the religious life of Russia during the last two or three centuries. For long past Catholicism was the professed faith of the Russians. Later with the growth of enlightenment and reason among a small section of Russians, differences arose creating among the people religious schisms. They can be classified under two heads. One of the schismatic belonged to the orthodox section which believed Russia to be the depository of true orthodox Christianity; the other was a reforming sect which wanted to do away with priests and the Catholic hierarchy and the Church as well. The latter school was nihilistic in its character not only in religious matters but in social, political and economic matters too. This had its repercussions on the thought and life of a large section of Russians in the last century. The Russian intelligentsia in particular, by its persistent propaganda, gathered a following which was nihilistic and militant in its attitude towards the then existing order of things in Russia, which enslaved the large mass of the proletariat. In the long list of such eminent Russian nihilists the author mentions the name of one Beelinsky. "If I were Tsar," he is said to have declared, "I would be a tyrant." He had for his motto "socialism or death." His conviction was "Every one must be happy and suffering has no right to exist."

This teaching combined with those of Karl Marx paved the way for Communism which has for its motto "God must be denied in order that the Kingdom of God may come on earth." Karl Marx declared that religion was the "opium of the people" and that religious faith was the greatest obstacle to the emancipation of the proletariat. The learned author, who is a strong believer in the saving grace of Christianity, admits that Communism is the logical outcome of the narrow outlook, bigotry, superstitious and irreligious life of the Russian Church and its priests.

The second essay deals with Communism as a religion and pleads that "the proletariat should be adored as the chosen people of God." The author's description of Communism as a social force and his own criticisms of it as an anti-religious movement is very stimulating reading. The author, who is a pious Christian, evidently entertains no sympathy for Communism. He finds cause for such new anti-religious movements like Communism in the fact that "Christianity has not put its truth in full living practice." He gives a warning to his coreligionists that unless there is a "Christian revival in the world, a rebirth not only among the elite, but also among the great masses of people, the atheistic Communism will conquer the whole world."

Though the book suffers from repetitions of thought and ideas one is bound to say that it affords interesting reading and a perusal of the book will enable the reader to understand the deeper currents in Russian life that finally culminated in Communism.

S. R. VENKATARAMAN.

Miscellaneous.

MR. N. M. JOSHI'S SPEECH.

On the last day of the Round Table Conference, Mr. N. M. Joshi made the following speech summing up the results of the Conference:—

MR. Secretary of State, the greatest achievement of the three sessions of the Round Table Conference has undoubtedly been the bringing of an All-India Federation into the sphere of practical politics. For this result credit is due to the Indian States for their readiness to make a common cause with British India; to British India for its readiness to make sacrifices for the sake of the whole country; and to the British Government for their acceptance of the inevitability of responsible central government as the immediate next step. Although we rejoice at this result, we cannot shut our eyes to the difficulties and deficiencies that still remain to be overcome in order to avoid disappointment. By making the entry of the Indian States into the Federation an essential condition of central responsibility, the British Government has placed British India at the mercy of the Indian States, with the result that the Indian States refuse even to say by what method they would select their representatives to the Chambers of the Legislature, as if it is not a matter of common concern. The mutual distrust between the British Government and the Indian people has led to a meticulous definition of safeguards and reservations by the British Government, keeping dissatisfaction and apprehension alive in the minds of the British Indian representatives. As a representative of Labour, I am keenly disappointed that the need for the constitutional protection of the Indian masses and the workers has almost altogether receded into the background by the absorption of interest and attention in the protection of the racial and religious minorities. While representation was readily given to the small communities like the Sikhs, the Europeans and the Anglo-Indians, the right of representation of more than fifty millions of Indian workers was tardily recognised and the aboriginal and hill tribes, who number in British India more than ten millions, were entirely forgotten.

Self-government has no meaning to the Indian masses, the workers and the aborigines, unless the constitution is fully democratised, and the classes who are the backbone of the nation receive their due share of influence and power. Franchise has been extended, but property still remains its basis. The Indian industrial workers have been given some representation, but it is inadequate; the representation given to the aboriginal and hill tribes is insignificant. In the Central Provinces, where their population is more than one-sixth of the whole, they are given one seat out of 112. In the Central Legislature no representation is given to these classes. I am glad that at least some members of the Conference expressed themselves in favour of increasing the Labour representation in the popular Chamber. Fundamental rights have been claimed for the protection of property, race, religion, caste, creed and language, so that India may become an open field for the exploitation of the masses, a battle-field for religious feuds, and a Tower of Babel. I hope they will at least give to the masses the right to work and live. In the delimitation of the federal field for legislation the Indian workers' claim for common protective legislation for the whole of the Federation is not yet conceded. Without this right the Indian workers would even lose the small protection which the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations affords to them. The workers of India want no barriers against their movement from one unit of Federation into another. But if emigration from and immigration into British India only is made a federal subject, leaving emigration from and immigration into Indian States solely under the control of the States, the workers of British India are placed in a disadvantageous position. I make an appeal that, in the future stages of the constitutional discussions, the interests of the Indian workers and of the helpless aboriginal tribes will not be neglected, but will receive their due recognition. Let me give a warning regarding the danger of not leaving adequate constitutional scope for the protection of the interests of those who are poor and illiterate.

In conclusion, I wish to support wholeheartedly the powerful appeal made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for the unconditional release of Congressmen from jail. Let there be no huckstering spirit displayed; generosity alone will lead to peace and reconciliation.

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- THE EPIC FAST. By PYARELAL. (Navajivan Karyalaya, Bombay.) 1932. 20cm. 325p. Re. 1-4.
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