

# The Servant of India

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## Topics of the Week.

### Shadow without Substance.

WITH commendable frankness Mr. Gavin Jones told the U. P. Branch of the Eupropean Association which held its annual meeting last week in Cawnpore that he had agreed to central responsibility because there was no responsibility in it! He was opposed to central responsibility. His objective had been secured for all "practical purposes" though it would have been more logical if it had been so stated clearly. In effect the executive will be responsible to the Governor-General and not to the legislature. His justification for this undemocratic system was that thereby the danger of administrative discrimination could be effectively eliminated. The Governor-General could check legislative discrimination by the use of powers specially reserved to him. But if the executive was responsible to the legislature and not to him, he would be unable to prevent administrative discrimination. And the only way to safeguard against it was to make the executive responsible to the Governor-General and not to the legislature.

In order to give some respectability to this ill-conceived proposal, he quoted the example of the American constitution, which provided for an irremovable executive not responsible to the legislature for administration, though in matters of legislation it was dependent on the legislature. So too India should control the policy of the government democratically by means of the legislature, but in administrative matters the executive should be independent of the legislature. There would have been some analogy "if the Governor-General of India was an Indian to be elected by the people of India and not a Britisher appointed by the British Cabinet, even as the American President was an American elected by the people of

America and not a foreigner appointed by some foreign authority. If Mr. Gavin Jones would agree to that, it will be worthwhile to consider his suggestion regarding the independence of the executive seriously, though not favourably. If that were accepted, if the Governor-General were elected and the executive were made responsible to him, the same fears that now assail Mr. Gavin Jones will assail him then. He does not want an executive responsible to the electorate in India. He does not care what constitution is good for India or what have been the promises made to India or her hopes and aspirations. He just wants that the discrimination in favour of Britishers which has gone on uninterruptedly all these many decades should be secured for all time, that Englishmen should be permitted to batten on the fat of India for ever and ever and that India should continue to be the milch cow of England. To hide the nakedness of this brutally selfish wish, Mr. Gavin Jones made excursions into the American constitution. He forgot that, whether democratic or not, they are Swaraj governments, which give first place to the interest of their own countries. India wants both a Swaraj and a democratic government.

But whatever be the merits or demerits of Mr. Gavin Jones' proposal from the Indian point of view, the significant thing is that he admitted that his object had been secured for all practical purposes in the White Paper scheme and it was only because of it that he gave his consent to "central responsibility." No further evidence is needed to condemn the White Paper scheme as wholly unsatisfactory from the Indian point of view. If the scheme is so satisfactory to the foreign exploiters of India, it cannot do much good to India.

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### Capitation Award in Parliament.

THE award of the Capitation Tribunal recommending a yearly grant of £ 1,500,000 by the British Government towards India's military expenditure figured last week in the debates held both in Parliament and the Assembly. In order to meet this fresh obligation, the sanction of the House of Commons was sought by the Secretary of State for India to a supplementary demand of a like amount. This gave an opportunity to the die-hards led by Mr. Churchill to vent their hostility even to this belated measure of scant justice to this country. One of them went so far as to insinuate that the proposed assistance to India was intended as a price for India's support to the White Paper policy. In the absence of a full report of the debate it is impossible to divine the real meaning of these remarks. But the speaker in question was apparently in ignorance of how India felt about the disposal of the Capitation matter. If he had taken the least trouble to understand the Indian case, he would have found out that India claimed a much bigger amount from the British Government by way of capitation charges. He would have also seen that

she is firmly persuaded that the proposed yearly contribution by the British Government is entirely disproportionate to the responsibilities of Imperial defence which the Indian army is called upon to shoulder. The remarks of Sir Abdur Rahim who raised the question in the Assembly were directed to instil this view of the matter into the Government both here and in England. He made no secret of the fact that India had been very iniquitably treated in the matter of the capitation charges. It must be admitted that for this, little blame attached to the Government of India who had always pressed the Indian case with unusual vigour. But their representations had failed to produce the desired result. If with all this public dissatisfaction with the British Government's decisions in relation to the capitation payments, there are people who want to make it appear as if India had got more than her due in this matter, all that we can say is that they are purposely blind to facts.

In this connection the point made by Mr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar was noteworthy. Does the acceptance by India of this contribution carry with it an obligation to maintain the army at a particular standard so that it would always be in a fit condition for being employed in western theatres of war? If so, which is the authority to prescribe the standard? And will or will not this mean any addition to the cost of the Indian army? In this case, it goes without saying that the bargain may prove greatly detrimental to India's financial interests.

#### Putting the cart before the horse.

It is difficult to believe that the recent inconclusive discussion in the Assembly on a cut motion to impress on Government the need of expedition in the matter of the reforms can have served any useful purpose. As everybody knows, the whole of the Indian constitutional problem is at present in the hands of the Joint Select Committee and until its report is available, the preparation of the Reforms Bill cannot be undertaken. If the discussion was arranged with a view to making the Committee accelerate the rate of its progress, we do not know that it needed such a stimulant seeing that the last charge that can be brought against it is that of undue or needless procrastination. What was really expected of the Assembly was a clear expression of its opinion on the White Paper and an indication of the improvements it considered essential. An attempt in this direction was for some time in the making but seems to have been abandoned for reason which can be easily imagined. In the absence of such a clearly expressed verdict by the Assembly on the merits of the constitutional proposals, mere insistence on greater despatch in enacting the new Act would generally be regarded as nothing better than an attempt to put the cart before the horse. The debate in question would have been more useful if the public could at the same time have been placed in possession of the sense of value the Assembly attached to the Hoare reforms. That it burked the task cannot of course be regarded as an indication of the fact that it regards the White Paper with any less disfavour than public opinion outside. In this case we fail to see why the Assembly should at all bother about whether the new reforms come early or late.

#### The Services in the Assembly.

If there is one part of the White Paper which has caused greater public resentment than another, it is that relating to the Services. This, as will be remembered, proposes to perpetuate the anomaly, possible only in India, of the servants of so-called au-

tonomous governments being responsible not to their immediate superiors viz. the governments under whom they would be serving but to an outside authority like the Secretary of State situated six thousand miles away. Attention was focussed on this constitutional abnormality by means of a cut motion which Sir Hari Singh Gour moved in the Assembly. No doubt the White Paper provides for an inquiry into the problem of the All-India Services five years after the new constitution is in working order. This may possibly result in a reorganisation of these Services on a new and perhaps more acceptable basis. But what public opinion demands is not their reorganisation at some future date but simultaneously with the translation of the new reforms into effect. It is a matter for satisfaction that this point was forcibly stressed in the course of the debate.

An important aspect of this scheme of reorganisation must necessarily relate to the scales of salaries payable to these Services. Their present rates of pay are, it is generally contended, extortionately high and out of all proportion either to India's financial capacity or to the cost of life in this country. There is of course no question of varying these scales in the case of the present incumbents; but there is no reason why different and more modest scales should not be enforced in the case of the new entrants. The matter has been engaging the attention of the Government now for a number of years; and if, as is reported, their proposals in this behalf have been submitted to the Secretary of State, it is only fair that they should not be carried into effect without public opinion being allowed an opportunity of expressing itself on them.

In defence of the status quo it was pointed out on behalf of the Government that the continued vesting of control over the services in the Secretary of State would hardly interfere with the working of the new reforms. In this connection the experience of the present ministers was appealed to. This, it was said, showed that barring exceptions they had received loyal co-operation from the Services. It was therefore argued that the Services would similarly not obstruct the working even of the new experiment. It need hardly be pointed out that this reasoning fails to take account of the psychological factor involved in the transference of the full control over the Services to the Governments under which they work. Till this is done, it is futile to expect them to look upon themselves as autonomous except in name.

#### Anti-Terrorist Law.

AN instance of how the Government is exploiting the present unrepresentative and reactionary legislatures in order to pile up on the country a series of repressive laws is afforded by what is happening in Bengal at the present day. There the legislature is engaged in considering an extraordinarily harsh legislative measure intended to fight terrorism. Some idea of the stringent nature of its provisions may be gathered from the fact that it seeks to prescribe the death penalty even for an offence against the Arms Act or the Explosive Substance Act, the penalty for which did not originally exceed a few years' imprisonment. Rigid restrictions on the liberty of the press are also suggested and absolute power given to the executive to prohibit publication of matter which it may consider likely to promote terrorism. The provisions relating to the press seem to be specially uncalled-for, seeing that hardly any newspaper has so far gone the length of preaching terrorism or resort to violence. And the official defence at any rate of this part of the measure will strike any unprejudiced observer as particularly halting and unconvincing. The whole measure can

really be described as a consistent attempt to substitute executive action for the usual judicial processes and repeated attempts by the progressive elements in the Council to lessen the rigours of its provisions or to limit its life were uniformly unsuccessful, thanks to the subservient majority which the Government is able to command in the Council.

We hope we cannot by any stretch of the imagination be suspected of pro-terrorist sympathy. But we find it difficult to reconcile ourselves to a measure which in the name of fighting terrorism hopelessly restricts personal liberty. A law of limited durability should really have satisfied all reasonable needs of the situation; but the Government realising the weakness of the progressive parties in the Council and their own strength had persuaded themselves beforehand that nothing short of a measure with an unlimited life would do. And why should they not, when they know that such a favourable opportunity of placing such a draconian law on the statute book would be very long in coming their way? All that now remains to do is to hope that its provisions would be administered not only moderately but somewhat leniently.

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#### Mr. Bakhale's Suggestions About Labour.

MR. R. R. BAKHALE'S speech in the Bombay Legislative Council last week in connection with the Labour Office vote is studded with constructive suggestions, which deserve earnest consideration at the hands of well-wishers of Indian labour. In the first place, he would like to see a separate Labour department created, as in the Central Government, to deal with labour questions. In the second place, he wants machinery for conciliation in industrial disputes set up at industrial centres in the presidency. It is general knowledge that the Whitley Commission which went exhaustively into Indian labour problems attached considerable importance to this means of preventing strikes. But nothing is yet done to carry its recommendation into effect and Mr. Bakhale cannot be charged with either impatience or hurry if he took occasion to press that suggestion for favourable consideration by Government.

He welcomed the idea of the industrial wage census on which the Labour Office is at present engaged but insisted upon the results of the inquiry being made available to the public as soon as possible after its completion and not a very long time after that, as happens in the case of many Government inquiries. The contemplated departmental investigation into the cotton mill industry is good in its own way. But it may be doubted whether its results will be sufficiently authoritative and reliable, unless both the employers and the employed extend to it their co-operation. There is at present no law under which this can be ensured, which greatly strengthens the case for the kind of the statistics legislation which the local Government contemplated some years ago. It is to be hoped they will now lose no time in again placing similar legislation before the Council. Mr. Bakhale complained about the faulty nature of the cost of living index numbers which are published month by month under the authority of the Government and pleaded for their improvement.

But far the most noteworthy point in his speech was the strong criticism he passed on the Government's general attitude towards strikes. On the appearance of the least sign of trouble preventive action under sec. 144, Cr. P. C. is taken, making concerted thought or action on the part of the workers impossible. He even instanced a case in which the executive had clearly misused the provisions of the Ordinance Acts in order to stop industrial picketing. Steps such

as these serve, pointed out Mr. Bakhale, to weaken the moderate elements in the labour movement who discourage the use of strikes as the normal method of labour agitation and strengthening the more extreme ones led by the communists. Mr. Bakhale pleaded for a reconsideration of this attitude by Government and asked that they should look at labour disputes from a wider standpoint than that of mere policemen. If instead of resorting freely to section 144, Cr. P. C., a freer use is made of the conciliation machinery to which reference has already been made, a considerable improvement in the labour situation may legitimately be looked forward to.

After emphasising the need of correct statistics of industrial unemployment, he tried to impress on the Government the desirability of provision for unemployment relief and social insurance. One of the means of securing the former objective is by reducing the hours of work which seems to have been tried in America with success. Other means of relieving unemployment to which Mr. Bakhale referred included the development of public works and a system of unemployment insurance. Mr. Bakhale does not apparently labour under the illusion that some of his suggestions, specially the last one, are immediately feasible.

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#### Canada's Experience.

CANADA'S experience of federation and second chambers cannot but be of interest to India, specially at the present moment. In its February issue the *Canadian Forum* refers to a significant change in the opinion of even pronounced Conservative leaders with regard to the inter-relations between the federal and the provincial governments. It says:—

One of the most surprising and gratifying developments of the past month was the public pronouncement by Premier Henry that changes must be made in the British North America Act in order to give wider and more effective powers to the Federal Government. The fact that all competent authorities have been saying this for years does not lessen the shock of such language from the lips of a Conservative leader, for most public men seem to have adopted a consistent policy (whether sincere or not) of treating the B. N. A. Act as though it ranked with the Ten Commandments. A breach of this tradition by the Premier of Ontario is all the more significant when one recalls the policy of the late G. Howard Ferguson and his insistence that not one jot or tittle should pass from the law without the unanimous consent of the provinces—an obvious indication that Ontario was ready to drive the hardest of bargains before giving up the smallest shadow of any rights she could possibly claim...

With regard to second chambers, the *Canadian Forum* says:—

In any consideration of the means whereby the power of the Federal Government may be strengthened, close attention must be paid to the Senate. If any new evidence were needed of the desirability of abolishing that effete institution, it may be found in a recent news article in the *Mail and Empire*. That devoted organ notes with gratification the prospect that by the next election, whatever happens to the House of Commons, the Senate will have a majority of twenty-five Conservatives, with the consequent happy prospect of being able to hold up any objectionable legislation for at least the next ten years. Since almost any constructive legislation is certain to be objectionable to the Senate, the prospect of an early

advance for this fair Dominion is hardly encouraging. It is true that this is our chronic state under our present constitution. Ever since Confederation, with one or two brief exceptions, the Senate majority has been Conservative and what use has it been? The Conservative party, of course, has under these conditions complete freedom in the field of Federal legislation while it retains power in the Commons. It can do anything it wants within constitutional limits, provided it can think of anything to do. But the position of any other party, and especially any radical party, may be completely stultified. It may have overwhelming support of the country and an overwhelming majority in the Commons, and yet be doomed to sterility by this phalanx of ancient Tory warhorses who are usually an unconscionably long time in dying. How to get rid of this incubus will be one of the first and most ticklish problems of any such party upon the attainment of power.

#### Some Propaganda That.

THE *Canadian Forum* of February last revealed some of the methods of British propaganda against India and Russia and how sometimes the best plans go astray.

Among the many organizations which exist to feed lectures to an omnivorous Canadian public is one of irreproachable respectability. Its advisory council is a solid phalanx of superlatively best citizens. Its name is the National Council of Education. Until very recently the activities of this organization were like Caesar's wife—before she was found out. It is true that some evilly-disposed persons seemed to sense a certain vague purpose in the National Council's activities. They were wont to point out that

when pro-Gandhi sentiment was at its height in this country the National Council came to the rescue of the British Raj with a steady stream of suave and extremely plausible peers from across the Atlantic. Canadian audiences were given 'correct' information about India and the 'Hindu fanatic' was put in his place. But probably nobody would have paid any attention to these doubting Thomases had it not been for the explosion of last December. The bomb in this explosion was Mr. Carl J. Ketchum, a Canadian journalist of some reputation, who revisited the Soviet Union last autumn at the express wish of the National Council and then came out to this country at their invitation to give Canadian lecture-goers 'correct' information about Russia. Along with the invitation there seem to have been some rather curious instructions. Mr. Ketchum was to stress the civil war and the famine in Russia, Mr. Ketchum was to submit his slides to censorship, Mr. Ketchum was, above all, to avoid giving pain to Mr. Bennett by any reference to the possibilities of Soviet trade. But Mr. Ketchum, not being an imported peer, but merely a Canadian newspaper man, was not as pliable as he might have been. In fact, half way through his lecture tour he blew up and 'spilled the beans.' Hardly have the reverberations of the *affaire Ketchum* died down when the National Council drops the mask a little further this time by importing a whole three ringed circus of perfectly delightful Italian ladies and gentlemen to tell Canadians how sweet and clean and beautiful Fascism is. One wonders if they, too, received instructions as to what they were to say about *Mateotti* and the dagger and castor-oil days. National Council of Education? Surely a misnomer.

## THE JOINT MEMORANDUM.

PUBLIC opinion, here as well as in England, has latterly evinced an unmistakable hardening against the White Paper. This feeling now extends to almost all the groups outside the ever narrowing circle of pledged supporters of Government's constitutional proposals. Even in these groups, as for instance the communalists, the support of the White Paper is more in the nature of an acquiescence than of advocacy. Judging from press reports, which, it must be admitted, are not always an infallible guide to the actual state of things, the India policy of the National Government is causing appreciable defections in the Tory party. The anxiety shown by Government spokesmen in both countries to secure active support for the White Paper is significant in this respect. The growing coolness and hostility of public opinion in this matter is principally to be attributed to the inherent defects of Government's India policy. In substance that policy might be described as an attempt to secure the maximum advantage to the British vested interests in India at the cost of the least sacrifice of governmental authority. Such a course of grudging concession has naturally produced most unfavourable reactions on all the parties concerned.

The nationalist parties in India are opposed to any scheme which does not confer full responsi-

bility upon the central and the provincial legislatures. Even the communal parties whose 'acceptance' of the new constitutional proposals is confidently predicted by some politicians are far from dependable. As it is interest, not conviction, that attracts them to the new constitution their support is likely to be withdrawn at any moment. In Great Britain itself the pretentious yet grudging attitude of Government has produced a justifiable feeling of irritation and impatience. Though the vocal portion of the electorate led by Mr. Churchill is comparatively small there is no denying of the fact that their propaganda has created a considerable amount of public and parliamentary uneasiness over the Indian issue.

In effect the Churchill group argues that the Government proposals must either contemplate a 'surrender' of parliamentary control to Indian legislatures or they must have been designed to prevent the necessity of doing so. In the former event,—which appears to be plausible from assurances and declarations addressed to the Indian people—there is a sacrifice of British vested interests which many Englishmen belonging to all parties will very likely combine to resist. If, however, it is not contemplated under the proposed scheme to yield any substantial powers of independent administration to responsible Indian authorities,—Government

assurances to the effect that all safeguards that are humanly possible have been incorporated in the White Paper proposals and that there can be no question 'our surrender in India' create passable evidence of this construction of their attitude,—it is foredoomed to a vigorous and unanimous opposition in India. The White Paper proposals have produced the maximum of uneasiness and hostility in an attempt to provide the minimum of responsibility.

Close observers of the Indian and British political fields must have noticed that every day the ranks of the supporters of the White Paper are being thinned. Paradoxically enough the British Indian members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee have done more to produce this result than any other single factor. In the Joint Memorandum that they have submitted to the Committee they have outlined their views on the various issues raised in the White Paper. The signatories to this statement include five Mahomedan members led by the Aga Khan, four Hindus led by Mr. Jayakar, and one each from the Parsi, Sikh and Anglo-Indian communities. All these twelve members belonging to communities whose claims are alleged to be irreconcilable and who hold different shades of political opinion have united to present to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, and through it to the British nation, what appear to them to be the minimum necessary improvements in the White Paper scheme. The contents of the memorandum supply a valuable yardstick by which to measure the constitutional advance contemplated in the White Paper.

The Joint Memorandum is divided into two sections. "In the first section we have stated the principal modifications that should in our opinion be made in the scheme in order to satisfy moderate public opinion in India. In the second section we have attempted to answer the chief criticisms directed against the basic principles of the White Paper proposals." The latter section is aimed at the O'Dwyer-Churchill group and sets out to prove the hollowness of the criticisms offered by that group before the Joint Committee. The principal criticisms were, first, that the proposed all-India federation is an artificial creation which the princes accepted in the uncertain atmosphere created in 1929 by Lord Irwin's declaration about Dominion Status; second, that the provinces must become free entities before a federal constitution can be brought into existence; third, that the deterioration in the transferred departments justifies a further period of probation before law and order in the provinces, and powers in the Central Government are vested in the Indian legislatures. The signatories of the Joint Memorandum have submitted these criticisms to a searching examination.

With regard to the first two criticisms the Memorandum, after an exhaustive historical and documented survey, concludes as follows:—"The federal idea, i.e., the desire of the Princes for a closer association with British India for the determination of a common policy in respect of matters of common concern is thus not of recent origin. It is the logical and inevitable result of forces which have been at work for over 70 years. If we rid our mind of notions

and analogies suggested by the evolution of federations elsewhere, it will be clear that the White Paper scheme provides for little more than the formal association of the Indian States, in an administration which has already been almost completely federalised, but has been influenced predominantly by British India. The scheme is, therefore, not an artificial creation but is a natural development of the policy announced in the Declaration of 1917." This is as neat an answer to the O'Dwyer-Churchill criticism as was necessary, but it is difficult to understand why the course of federal evolution in other countries has to be ignored to see the naturalness of Indian federalism. On the contrary all federal experience would suggest that the intense desire on the part of both the Indian states and the British Indian provinces for local autonomy coupled with national union unmistakably points towards the federal solution. The combined experience of the United States and Canada will be found to corroborate the genuineness of the Indian movement for a federation. Mr. Churchill's criticism that the Princes were influenced by certain measures of the British and Indian Governments to accede to the federal proposal is misleading. The withdrawal of the leading strings of British authority is essential for the emergence of a responsible federation both in British India and the States. The sympathetic assurances and measures of the Government, alluded to by the Churchill group, made it possible for the bigger and more enlightened states to express their support to an idea which has long been canvassed. This does not prove that the federal idea is artificial or that the support of the Indian States has been secured in an abnormal atmosphere.

The administration of transferred departments during the last decade is then reviewed and statistical and other evidence is presented to prove the untruthfulness of the alleged incompetence of Indian ministers. The principal departments transferred to ministerial control in the provinces under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms are communications, education, medical relief and sanitation, agriculture and industries, and local self-government. Under all these headings considerable, nay startling, progress has been registered in almost all provinces. In answering the charge of corruption and inefficiency brought against local self-governing bodies the memorandum quotes with appreciation the following extract from a letter of Sir Alfred Watson which appeared in the *Times* of 3rd June 1933. "Much is being made by those who oppose advance in India of extracts from the report of the Provincial Governments on Local Self-government in India. These are held to be the condemnation of Indian control of Indian affairs. The point seems to be ignored that local self-government is one of the transferred subjects in the hands of the Indian Ministers and that all these censures are those of Indians upon administration of their own people; that does not support the contention that Indians are indifferent to inefficiency or corruption in Government. The level of municipal government in India is low, and has never been anything else,

but it is certainly improving under the watchful criticism of the Indians in whose hands its central control has been placed."

While the signatories of the Joint Memorandum have thus vindicated the policy of advance underlying the White Paper they have, in the first section, exposed the utter inadequacy of the scheme to meet even moderate public opinion in India. It is true that the memorandum does not offer any criticism against either the Communal Award of the British Government or the position allotted to the states in the future Indian constitution. Many eminent critics in India find in these two respects the vital condemnation of the White Paper. So long as the constitution is based on a statutory recognition of separate communal interests it can hardly claim to be even a beginning towards a real parliamentary democracy. Unless the union between provinces and states is one of their respective peoples, and not only of their governments, and unless there is complete equality of political status between States and provinces *vis-a-vis* the federal government the essential requirements of a Federal Indian Constitution will not be secured. Mr. Jinnah who is no friend of the White Paper has condemned British policy in this respect as an attempt to induce India to 'take the wrong' bus'. The description fits both the communal and Indian States policy of the British Government.

The signatories of the Memorandum had to exclude reference to these two vital features of the White Paper scheme, for they numbered amongst their ranks several communalists and 'federation-nists'. But within the limits of the essential framework of the White Paper the Memorandum suggests far-reaching, though by no means radical, improvements. Army, Finance, Fiscal Policy, Commercial Discrimination, Safeguards, Public Services, Special Powers of the Governor and the Governor General are some of the important heads under which really important proposals are made in the Memorandum. These will merit a detailed examination. But it is useful to note here that there is not the slightest probability of these proposals securing support at the hands of the Parliamentary Committee or in the two Houses of Parliament. As the authors of the Memorandum claim that their proposals are the minimum that must be conceded if moderate public opinion in India, presumably represented by the signatories themselves, is to be satisfied, it is pertinent to inquire what steps the signatories will take to mark their dissatisfaction if the improvements suggested by them are not incorporated in the Constitution Act. Whatever method they choose, the feeling of opposition will be there. Well might Mr. Churchill inquire, whom is the White Paper designed to please? Not the Congressmen, as these will have no truck with anything short of an immediate attainment of the substance of independence. Not the nationalists, as they are opposed both to the communal award and the safeguards. Not to the democrats, because they object to the special powers of the Governors and the Governor General, and to the complete suppression of the subjects of Indian States. If then even the sup-

port of the moderate sections is withdrawn what are the chances of success before a constitution that has the enthusiastic support of none and the essential dissatisfaction of all of the important political parties in India. Unless the British Government agrees to introduce such reforms as would make it worth while for nationalist and progressive sections in India to support the new constitution, the White Paper policy is bound to be universally condemned both in this country and in Great Britain.

#### FROM ONE ILLUSION TO ANOTHER

A "CONGRESSMAN" who has proved his credentials by going to jail, has on his release indited a pamphlet in which he reviewed the recent history of Congress policy under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, discussed the present deadlock in the country and suggested a way out. His references to the Mahatma, at whose behest he went to jail, are by no means flattering. If anything characterises the pamphlet, it is strong language. Perhaps it is no fault of the writer. During the last decade and over the Congress politicians had indulged in increasingly strong and denunciatory language to such an extent that it is impossible now to make any perceptible impression without the use of language much stronger still, even as an opium-eater wants ever increasing doses of the drug to give him the same sense of somnolent comfort. In the present instance, the strong language may well be an indication of the extent and intensity of the reaction following on the disillusionment. The reaction may be said to be equal to the action. It is a swing from one extreme to the other, from a blind and unquestioning faith in the political leadership of the Mahatma to the very opposite. "But at last the spell of Gandhism is broken" he exults in relief.

At the same time, he has profound contempt for the Liberals, the Swarajists, the Responsivists, and the Democratic Swarajists. Pandit Jawaharlal inspired hope for a time, particularly at Lahore, but he too has since succumbed to Gandhism and has become a lost leader.

"Congressman's" review of the policies of the various parties in the past is interesting. "The tactics of the Council-entry were under any circumstances preferable to the inactivity of no-changers. The boycott of the Councils was a mistake from the very beginning. That does not mean we believe in responsive co-operation; but it should always be remembered that the Councils offer a fruitful field for the fight against the established order, as a platform for agitation. It would also serve the purpose of keeping the 'jo-hookum-wallas' "out". He no longer believes that "to fill the jail was the way to freedom. He accuses the Congress that, though it coquetted with the idea at Lahore, it shirked and ran away from its economic programme based on class-war and mass action. The civil disobedience movement had only brought the ordinance raj and not "complete independence." And while the Ordinances lasted, no political activity was possible. The civil disobedience movement had utterly failed and it was not formally

abandoned only to humour the prestige of the Mahatma.

"Congressman" is not content to indulge merely in destructive criticism; he suggests a way out of the *impasse*. His "programme of action" consists of (1) suspension of civil disobedience; (2) reaffirmation of the goal of complete national independence; (3) an energetic agitation against the White Paper Scheme; (4) organisation of a new political party, the National Democratic Bloc, to contest the next elections, with (5) a broad platform of economic reforms in the interest of the masses as against the capitalists.

The very first requisite was to "secure freedom for some political activity." This could be secured only by "throwing overboard the ballast of the discredited weapon" of civil disobedience. But he fears that this will not be sufficient. He would accept the reforms, however inadequate! For, "there is no chance of an end of the Ordinance Raj before the introduction of the new constitution. Therefore, the least sense of practical politics should persuade every one with a grain of realism to hasten the process. This has to be done irrespective of the inadequacy of the contemplated reforms." He would submit to the "infamous" Communal Award. For the "rejection of the Award would be another portent to postpone the reforms indefinitely. The deadlock would continue in the meantime—the Ordinance rule effectively making all political activity impossible." "The Macdonald Award is thoroughly bad; but we should not allow ourselves to be provoked by it to a purely negative attitude which would put us at the mercy of the Government." While thoroughly disapproving the Communal Award and the White Paper constitution, and even repudiating the right of the British Government to any share in the shaping of the Indian constitution, he would nevertheless accept the Communal Award and the forthcoming reforms and work them to achieve his ends. "Skilful leadership should be able to find a way of fighting it (the new constitution) within the limitations set by itself and eventually burst the limitations." This looks remarkably like what the Liberals have been maintaining right through. It is also the policy of the Democratic Swaraj party. But "Congressman" has nothing but contempt for them.

But perhaps "Congressman" would distinguish his policy from that of the Liberals by his adherence to the ideal of complete independence and his insistence on a country-wide agitation against the White Paper. Nonetheless, as has been stated above, he would accept the reforms, which do not take India anywhere near independence, not even dominion status. "Congressman" confesses that India has at present no power to enforce her demands. "By the end of 1932 it was obvious that, under given conditions, India had absolutely no power to secure more than her rulers would be pleased to grant. The Government had definitely made up its mind as to how much should be granted. There was no hope even to have some of the most obnoxious details of the White Paper scheme improved within the limits of the 'agreed principles' of the R. T. C."

"Congressman" could not have done worse if he had been one of the despised Liberals. But the chief distinguishing feature of his scheme is the emphasis on class-war and mass action. If the masses are roused on economic issues, the Communal Award will lose its sting, and the White Paper constitution can be replaced by a constitution framed by a constituent assembly in India, which alone can be binding on Indians. The lowering of land assessment, tenancy legislation, relief of agricultural indebtedness, social insurances, universal suffrage, free and compulsory education, exemption of uneconomic holdings from land assessment, abolition of indirect taxation and several other reforms of the kind are among those suggested by "Congressman" which would appeal to the masses and rouse them against the capitalists. Similiar reforms suggested by the Democratic Swaraj Party he runs down as insincere claptrap meant to catch votes of the masses. They are serious and sincere proposals when they emanate from him.

Of the desirability of many of these reforms there can be no doubt. But how to secure them? "Congressman" does not advocate the use of force. The only other course is persuasion and the power of the vote of the masses. But is he not banking too much on mass action? The condition of the masses in self-governing and democratic countries, say England, is certainly better than that of the masses in India, but it is not as good as the masses in England desire. Yet they have the vote under the system of universal franchise. It is open to them by the mere exercise of their votes to secure what they want by the right royal road of parliamentary action. The masses in England form the overwhelming majority in the electorate; the capitalists form a microscopic minority. Nevertheless, since the introduction of the universal franchise the Labour Party, which stands for the masses and is anti-capitalist, was never really in power, though twice in office on sufferance. If only the masses willed it, the socialists would have been perpetually in power to the exclusion of the Conservatives. But so far it has not happened. Why? Perhaps because the masses themselves are not socialists but unsuccessful capitalists. They aspire to be capitalists, if they can. They are not so much opposed to capitalism as they regret the misfortune that they are not themselves capitalists. Socialism is the creed of a few high-minded intellectuals; it is not yet popular.

The worst feature of "Congressman's" programme is his cynical adjuration with which he concludes his pamphlet:—"Let us not have scruple against the means to attain that stage of mass consciousness." He lays himself open to the accusation that he does not believe in the economic programme he advocated. He must know that several of his proposals are impracticable for a long, long time to come. To provoke the masses to a class-war by slogans of that kind and then leave them in the lurch is not good service. It is dangerous cynicism.

## TRADE DEPRESSION AND THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY—I.

**I**NDIA is in the grip of trade depression which has affected practically the whole world.

Those in possession and control of trade and industry in the country are busily engaged in transferring their burden to the shoulders of the toiling millions, by effecting wage cuts, ruthlessly attacking their standards of life and conditions of work, and casting them away in large numbers on the streets to starve and at the same time by securing protection to the industries. It has, therefore, become of vital importance to ponder over this phenomenon of trade depression, to know its real nature, to find out its causes and to examine the measures suggested by them to overcome it. This article is confined to the narrow issue of the nature of the depression affecting the cotton textile industry and will focus attention mainly on the fundamental factor responsible for it, assuming all the while that the Cotton Capital has been unable to collect its toll of profit.

Various causes of trade depression are suggested. Sometimes they are conflicting, often they differ widely. We are told that paralysis has completely crept over the textile industry. Mr. H. P. Mody, the spokesman of the Bombay Millowners, stated in the Legislative Assembly in March 1933 that Japanese inundation of our market had reduced our industry more or less to a stand-still. He also suggested that protection to the textile industry was necessary so that it could stand on its own legs and could not be crippled by the inroads of foreign manufacturers. The reason why Japan is able to dump its goods in the Indian market is, we are told, that the cost of production in Japan is much lower than what it is in India. Indian Cotton Capital is trying to overcome its crisis by increasing its competitive capacity by lowering the cost of production of cloth. The measures adopted for the attainment of this objective are: (i) lowering the standard of life of workers, (ii) speeding them up and (iii) raising tariff walls. The talons of Cotton Capital are already stretched out to seize the working class all over India. There is no textile centre in India which has not reduced wages and there is a competition among the millowners in effecting drastic wage-cuts.

To suggest a sure remedy that would cure the disease of trade depression essentially requires a critical examination of the data on which a correct diagnosis can be based. It is, therefore, necessary first of all to examine and discover what is happening to the home market. Let us take a comparative review of the figures of the home consumption of cotton cloth in the year 1913-14 and 1931-32. In the year 1913-14 the total production of the Indian cotton mill industry was 1,164 million yards of cloth. The total imports in that year were 3,197 million yards of cloth. India exported 285 million yards of cloth to other countries during that period. Thus it will be seen that in that year India retained for home consumption 4,076 million yards of cloth. The position was altered materially in 1931-32. India produced 2,990 million yards and imported 776 million yards in that year. 299 million yards of cloth were exported to other countries and the total amount of cloth left for home consumption in 1931-32 was 3,467 million yards. It will be evident that the home consumption of cotton cloth had decreased by 600 million yards in 1931-32.

The comparative figures of home consumption in 1913-14 and 1931-32 are sufficient to establish beyond doubt that the chief contributory factor res-

ponsible for trade depression in 1931-32 was the decrease of the consumption of cotton cloth in India. The question why there should be a decrease in consumption in the home market naturally crops up. It is inconceivable that any body can dare to suggest that the needs of our people for cotton cloth in 1931-32 were not as acute as they were in the year 1913-14. That position would be utterly untenable and highly ridiculous in face of the glaring fact that even in the year 1913-14 when the maximum amount of cloth had been retained for home consumption in India since 1900, the consumption of mill-made cloth per head of the population was only 13 yards. Even after adding to it the share from the hand-loom cloth the average production of which is 1100 million yards per year, it will be found that the figure of consumption per head hardly rises to 17 yards. Arguments are superfluous to point out that millions of persons in this country must necessarily be living almost naked, millions scantily clad, shivering in cold with hardly a spare piece of rag to enable them to change their wet piece of covering when they are soaked in rain. It would be unnecessary to stretch our imagination in order to picture the hideous condition of even that vast mass of population which is fortunate enough to enjoy the share of 17 yards of pieces of rough rag per year when we remember that that quantity of cloth is meant to constitute the bed, the bed-sheet, to serve the purpose of the blanket, the clothes to cover their bodies, the garments to wear on occasions of ceremony, etc. The figure of population in India stands at 352 millions. It will be readily admitted by all that the figure is stupendous and India's potential capacity for cloth consumption is so immense that the mind fails to grasp its real extent.

The only reason for the decrease in consumption was, not that the masses did not want to purchase cloth but that they could not afford to purchase it. Not only were the needs of our people as acute in 1931-32 as, if not more than, they were in 1913-14. But if they had bought cloth as much as they needed, it would not have been possible for the textile industry, even with its production increased ten-fold, to meet the demand for the teeming millions of the population. They were compelled to limit their clothing requirements in 1931-32 as a consequence of reduced purchasing power. A cursory glance over the table showing the approximate yardage of piece-goods available for consumption in India will suffice to show that the purchasing power of the people has been gradually decreasing since 1914 (Appendix A).

The population of the country in 1913-14 was about 315 millions and it increased to 352 millions in 1931-32. But the fact that in spite of an increase in our population by 34 millions, our home consumption of cloth had decreased by 600 millions, clearly reflects the deterioration in the standard of living among the masses. It may also be stated that there was no material difference in the prices of cloth in the year 1913-14 and in 1931-32. The average price of mill-made cloth in the year 1912-13 and in 1913-14 was in the neighbourhood of 2.80 while the price of the same was 2.81 in 1931-32. These facts render the inference inevitable that the primary contributory factor responsible for trade depression is the reduction in the purchasing power of the people. Where can commodities go if they cannot go into the homes of the masses of the people which are the only engines of consumption, the only market for goods? Consumption is the governing condition of production. No industrialist would like to produce commodities for being tossed into the sea. We are often led to lose sight of the vital truth that there can be no full production unless there is full consumption. The barrier to full production is the poverty



of the masses. Increase in the quantity of goods that go directly into consumption or are exchanged for goods of other countries required to satisfy the needs of the people is the primary condition of the economic welfare of the community which alone sustains the industry. Though commodities are being produced incidentally for consumption it must be admitted by all industrialists and their economists that consumption of commodities is a condition precedent to the yield of profits. If full production is to be maintained, the production must go into the homes of the masses of people. Production can go nowhere else, need go nowhere else and is wanted nowhere else. It is therefore fallacious and absurd to trace the causes of trade depression in the textile industry to some extraneous circumstance and naively echo what the industrialists lay down as the cause of the trade depression—a cause that suits their interest and not the interest of the industry. In short, the Indian textile industry is in the grip of trade depression because its production cannot be consumed by the people of the country and the reason of their inability to consume is that they are poor and getting poorer every day. I may for the benefit of the readers quote what has been stated in the latest volume of the review of trade in India. "The lower purchasing power of the consumer in India was still an important factor for discouraging the consumption of cotton piece-goods on as large a scale as would have been justified by the low prices ruling in the market."

The statement of Mr. H. P. Mody, the spokesman of the textile industrialists in India, in the Legislative Assembly that if there was any country which then (even now) threatened the prosperity of the industries and the trade of this country it was Japan, can quite appropriately be described as incorrect and misleading. The readers have only to take a bird's-eye-view of the figures of production of the Indian industry since 1903-4 to be convinced that the cause of trade depression is not foreign competition (vide Appendix A). When the number of looms and spindles worked in India has been gradually and continuously increasing, the production of cloth has been incessantly growing and the imports of cloth are fast falling, to state that the production of the textile industry has been affected seriously by foreign competition is senseless talk. For, if anything can be said of the textile industry at all, it must be stated that it is progressing fairly well and is thriving. The number of spindles and looms which in 1913-14 were 67,78,895 and 1,04,179 respectively had risen to 95,06,083 and 1,86,341 respectively in 1932-33. The import of cloth which in 1913-14 was 3,197 million yards of cloth, the highest figure since cloth began to be imported into this country, had dropped down to the low figure of 776 million yards in 1931-32! And even in 1932-33 when the slogan of boycott of foreign goods had died down the imports only stood at the figure of 1,225 million yards which was lower than that of any of the previous years excepting the two years of political agitation in the country viz. 1930-31 and 1931-32. The total production of the Indian industry had increased from 1,164 million yards in 1913-14 to 2,990 million yards in 1931-32. In face of these astonishing facts and figures, to seriously maintain that the Indian textile industry has been dragged into dire distress by Japanese competition would surely strike anyone as preposterous to all but those who occupy the ranks of the industrialists and who credulously believe in whatever is told by them.

S. V. PARULEKAR.

(To be continued.)

## Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

London, March 1.

### INDIA LEAGUE DELEGATION'S REPORT.

AT long last the report of the delegation sent out to India in the latter part of 1932 by the India League has made its appearance. It is a volume extending to over 500 pages, every one of which ought to be read, whether with approval and acceptance or otherwise. As the report appears in book-form instead of as a more slender pamphlet, there is the chance that it may be adequately reviewed in the British Press. Mr. Bertrand Russell supplies an important preface that will be read with interest. Apart altogether from the political and highly controversial questions dealt with, the report draws a picture well worthy of consideration of police and prison conditions and also of the economic problem that faces starkly all observers with any sensitiveness, and with any capacity for intelligent investigation. There is every probability, however, that the report will be condemned in officially inspired circles because of the obvious bias shown by the delegation towards the Indian administration with the result that the constructive proposals that may be deduced from, and are implicit in the report, in favour of administrative reform of any important character, will be overlooked or ignored. It is to be hoped that the Indian Press will see that these matters apart from questions of political controversy, which fall in a category by themselves, will not be allowed to sink into oblivion. Questions, for example, of penal reform, apart altogether from their relationship to the satyagraha movement, ought to occupy public attention in India, in an increasing degree, as they are already doing here in the case of the Howard League for Penal Reform.

### CHILD MARRIAGES IN INDIA.

The other book is of an entirely different character, and is published by Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., and comes from the pen of Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M. P. Its title is "Child Marriage—the Indian Minotaur" The book is bound to cause a great stir in India, where it is to be feared that it will be placed upon a level with Miss Mayo's series of books, but Miss Rathbone is not a Miss Mayo. She is not a scavenger in India's cesspools, and she has not sought dishonestly to gather together everything that she can find to the discredit of India. The present writer began his acquaintance with Miss Rathbone with a strong feeling of prejudice against her. He has moved from that position to a recognition of her intrinsic honesty of purpose and of the generosity of her enthusiasm for all kinds of social reform, especially those affecting the welfare of women and children, whether in Britain or in India. Miss Rathbone is amongst those enthusiasts who, when pursuing an adventure of the spirit, do so wholeheartedly, single-mindedly, and one-pointedly. For them no other object for the moment exists. They wear blinkers and in the very nature and pursuit of their enterprise they see and introduce a scene divorced from its proper background, and frequently distorted in its perspective. For them the object of their enthusiasm exists in itself and to the exclusion of anything else that may have a bearing upon it whether by way of enlightenment, modification or alternative explanation. In the result they often give so much offence that

the real good that they set out to achieve is often obscured and overburdened by the cloud of prejudice, irritation, and hostility that they arouse by their blunt, downright, and only too frequently unimaginative efforts. Their inspiration to reform is often thwarted by their insensitiveness to the sentiments of those whom they seek to serve. They insist upon telling the truth as they see it, though the Heavens fall, and without regard to time or occasion. It is to be feared that Miss Rathbone renders herself liable to criticism on all these grounds notwithstanding her good intention, and the real need for the urgent reform upon which she is intent. And it will be forgotten in the annoyance that her book will arouse, that it is written as much as anything else in order to provide one more good and valid reason for a wide and generous extension of the franchise for women under the new Constitution. Another criticism to which Miss Rathbone opens herself, however, is that her exposure of an admitted evil, at a time like this, may have exactly the opposite effect in this country to that for which she hopes, in that the book will provide fresh material for attack against proposals for Indian constitutional reform by the diehard side, whilst undoubtedly the diehards will tear Miss Rathbone's exposure from its context. I very much doubt whether, on the whole, the diehards will succeed in adding any useful weapon to their armoury. On the other hand, it is far from certain that her book will succeed in achieving the end that she has in view so far as the Indian women's franchise is concerned.

#### DIEHARD TACTICS.

Nothing could have been more dignified and appropriate than the protest entered by the *Times of India* against the malicious attacks made upon the Governor of Bombay by the diehard Tories in Parliament. It was almost inevitable that His Excellency's reference to the White Paper proposals, in his address to the Bombay Legislative Council, should have infuriated Mr. Churchill and his cohorts, who do not appear to understand the difference between the Government's right to put forward and advocate a policy and Parliament's right to deal differently with that policy, if it so chooses, and the acceptance of the natural consequence of a defeat of the Government. Mr. Churchill himself, if not the directing mind of the attack, is certainly the tactician of the Parliamentary diehards, and if the hand was the hand of Mr. Somerville, the voice was the authentic voice of the descendant of the victor of Blenheim, whose biography Mr. Churchill has just written.

It fell to Mr. R. A. Butler, the Under Secretary of State for India, in the absence from the House of Sir Samuel Hoare, who is temporarily laid up with influenza, to reply to the diehard attack upon Lord Brabourne, and he did so with such effectiveness as to draw the ire of Mr. Churchill, who is now urging on his followers to still greater extremities of folly. They cannot in any case have greatly appreciated the views expressed this week in general favour of the White Paper proposals by the two retired Governors, Sir Frederick Sykes and Sir Stanley Jackson. Still less are they likely to appreciate the recantation of Captain Victor Cazalet, M. P., who, like Ballam, went out to curse and who had remained to bless. Unfortunately most of his colleagues have a natural tendency to behave like the animal that Ballam bestrode, save upon the one occasion when that inspired ass spoke words of wisdom. Captain Cazalet went to India, he tells us, a convinced opponent of the White Paper scheme, and after a long tour in India he has returned equally convinced of its merits in general. He believes that the Government policy is the only way by which Britain could maintain and improve her trade and keep India free from political disturbance, and

willing to continue to be a partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations. Any other policy would, he believes, destroy our trade, create internal disturbances, infinitely greater than those of 1929-30, and finally lead to the loss of India from the British Empire. He also believes that the majority of people in India hold the view that in the White Paper proposals Britain is giving them a very fair and reasonable deal. In this he is no doubt unintentionally exaggerating the appreciation by Indian public men of those proposals shorn of the improvements recommended with great authority and moderation of language by the British Indian delegation and by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and his colleagues. Anyhow Captain Cazalet's defection must come as a nasty blow to the diehard faction in the House, and it would have been a great advantage if his noble fellow-member, who has recently resigned his seat partly on the India question, with a view to finding out for himself the true situation in India, had followed Captain Cazalet's example before committing himself to somewhat fatuous views upon Indian reforms proposals.

## Our Parliamentary Letter.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

New Delhi, March 11.

### DEFENCE EXPENDITURE.

THE whole of the last week was devoted to the consideration of the demands for grants, the first three days being allotted to specific questions of policy, raised by various parties in the Legislative Assembly. Sir Abdur Rahim raised the question of defence expenditure and military policy on behalf of the Independents. Although Government took credit for bringing down military expenditure from Rs. 55 to Rs. 44 crores in recent years, Sir Abdur maintained that India could not afford it. The army expenditure, being non-votable, might rise any moment and the utmost vigilance was necessary in that respect. He claimed that India had not received full justice in regard to capitulation charges, and showed that even the Simon Commission had admitted that British garrisons have been maintained in India for Imperial purposes. Sir Henry Gidney complained that although he had advocated economy in military Medical Services, India had continued to foot the heavy bill, because the War Office dictated the policy and insisted on the costly British Service. He maintained there was much scope for reduction in overhead charges. Diwan Bahadur Mudaliyar showed that taking into account the ratio, savings on exchange and fall in prices, the military budget really stood at Rs. 53 crores and thus even the Inchcape recommendation had not been acted upon. Mr. Tottenham, the Army Secretary, replied that in the official articles that are being published about the working of the army, members would find replies to their criticism. He claimed that the percentage of Indian revenue, as compared to the pre-war level, spent on the Indian Army had been reduced from 34 to 27 whereas it had gone up from 66 to 73 on the civil side. As for the question of employment of troops outside India, "it had always been assumed that so long as defence or external relations were reserved subjects, it would be constitutionally impossible to give this or the Federal Legislature or the Federal Minister final voice in the reserved matter." However, he explained, the matter could be taken up with the Secretary of State with a view to getting the position cleared. Sir George Schuster in replying to the debate maintained.

that the military forces in India were not more than what were required for India's defence; and even a National Government in India would not find that they were maintaining even one man more than necessary. The reply of the Government being unacceptable to the mover, the motion was pressed to a division and lost.

#### REORGANISATION OF SERVICES.

Sir Hari Singh Gour raised the question of re-organisation of the All-India Services, in view of the inauguration of the new constitution. He showed at the outset that even the Lee Commission had admitted the constitutional anomaly of services working in the transferred departments being responsible to an outside agency. The Indian Delegates to the Joint Committee had been unanimous that for provincial autonomy to be real, it was urgently necessary to provincialise the services. Under the White Paper, the enquiry into the future of the services was to be instituted after the new constitution had worked for a period of five years, which meant that the country was asked to bear the existing and accruing rights of from four to five hundred extra officers. It was absolutely necessary to reorganise the services to be in a line with the new requirements. Mr. Bhupat Singh thought the constitutional advance would not be worth much, if India was not to have control over the services. Sir Henry Gidney's opinion was that during the transitional period recruitment to the L. C. S., L. M. S., and I. P. S. should be made by the Government of India with the right of appeal to the Secretary of State. He thought that so long as there were troubles in India, she did require the presence of British Officers in the services. Speakers who followed maintained that they had no objection to the British element in the services, but that it should be under Indian control; the fact that the control lay somewhere else had made the position of ministers very weak. The Home Member, Sir Harry Haig, in reply to the debate said that the matter had passed out of their hands and rested with the Joint Select Committee. To him the real question was whether time had come for any fundamental change in the present system, when efficient service was particularly required during the first stages of the new constitution. He promised to send the debate for the information of the Secretary of State. The motion was pressed to a division and lost.

#### EXPEDITING THE REFORMS.

The Centre Party through its leader Raja Bahadur Krishnamachari raised the question of expediting the reforms, as all the prerequisites of the new constitution were ready through the reports of the various committees, conferences and commissions. Bhai Parmanand opposed the motion, as the White Paper had proposed mediaeval institutions dividing India into so many classes and communities. So long as the communal award remained the basis of the White Paper, he would rather not have the new reforms. Sir Cawasji Jehangir made it clear that nobody was satisfied with the White Paper and if it was modified according to the suggestions of the British Indian Delegation's joint memorandum, it would find large support in the country, and the new reforms could not require much change in the immediate future. Everybody wanted reforms to be introduced immediately and delay would be dangerous. Mr. C. Ranga Iyer sounded a note of warning that Government would delay reforms if they would play into the hands of the extreme section of the Congress, who were merely waiting for another chance of a revolutionary movement against the Government. Mr. B. L. Mitter in reply to the debate said that the Secretary of State and the Government of India were doing all they could to expedite the final framing

of the new constitution but the matter had been now in the hands of the Joint Committee. He promised that a report of this debate too would be sent to the Secretary of State. The motion was withdrawn.

#### PLANNED ECONOMY.

The European Group moved for planned economy in the working of the Government. Mr. James, who initiated the discussion, suggested the following four specific ways:—(1) Redistribution of portfolios of the members of the Executive Council of the Government of India as promoting efficiency and economy, (2) Reorganisation of the Tariff Board, making it a permanent body and enlarging its personnel to enable it to undertake more than one enquiry at a time; (3) Formation of an Economic Advisory Council and (4) Overhauling of Commercial Treaties and Trade Agreements, which have in some cases been over a hundred years old. Dr. Ziauddin suggested the establishment of a Ministry of Transport or Department of Communications for solving the problem of co-ordination of different forms of communication. Mr. Joshi thought that the economic machinery of the world had become complex owing to rationalisation of industry and no haphazard methods could enable a country to restore economic prosperity. Any industrial plan of production must also take account of a methodic plan of distribution. He then suggested the establishment of an Industrial Council as recommended by the Royal Commission on Labour to consider labour matters. Mr. Mody characterised the present distribution of portfolios of the Government of India as 'comic' and thought a time would soon come when they would have to organise ministries outside the cabinet, on the lines followed in England. The extra expenditure would certainly be justified by the results. Raja Bahadur Krishnamachari reminded the House that Sir Malcolm Hailey had already estimated that the new reforms would cost the country about ten crores or more and if the new department, as suggested in the plan, were to be established he wanted to know the huge bill the country would be called upon to foot. To him no economic plan would be of any use, unless it improved the condition of Indian agriculturists. Sir Joseph Bhoré explained that Government were constantly keeping a watch on the treaties and would immediately take the matter in hand, whenever any revision was necessary. He disclosed to the House that they were already in communication with the Irish Free State and Canada, negotiations with which would shortly begin. Sir Abdur Rahim criticised the plan as involving extra expenditure. Sir George Schuster admitted the need for change, but for him, the main difficulty, in economic planning, was the division of authority between central and provincial Governments in industrial matters. Government had a plan of establishing a Central Transport Advisory Council and putting it in charge of one member—a plan which would be worked out when a convenient opportunity offered. As for the Central Economic Advisory Council, he pointed out the difficulties in the way and how it had failed to function in England. A more feasible plan would be to set up Provincial Councils as in Bengal and later on out of the personnel of these Councils they could select men for the Central Council. The motion was withdrawn.

## Reviews.

### THE SHI'ITE RELIGION.

**THE SHI'ITE RELIGION. A HISTORY OF ISLAM IN PERSIA AND IRAK.**  
By DWIGHT M. DONALDSON. (Luzac.) 1933.  
25cm. 393p. 15/-

THE origin of the Shi'ite faith and the early history of its adherents is so enveloped in mystery that it seems impossible now to distinguish between fact and legend, and between sober historical truth and the partial accounts of partisans. The general outline seems tolerably clear. But for the factions after the Prophet's death and the difference of opinion regarding the leadership of the Muslims after him, the Shi'ite "heresy" would never have come into existence. Nevertheless several other questions arise. What part did Persia play in Shi'ism? How many types of philosophy came within the domains of Islam through its gates? Why does their law differ on so many points from that of the Sunnites? What are the main elements of Shi'ite (as apart from Sunnite) culture? We do not know whether these and allied questions will ever be fully answered. Probably not for many years to come. Under these circumstances Rev. Donaldson's work, being the first comprehensive account of the Shi'ite faith, is very welcome.

The book begins with the purely Shi'itic accounts of the last years of the prophet's life, and then deals fully with the lives of the Twelve Imams. A large part of the book is devoted to Shi'itic shrines. Chap. v deals with Ali's shrine at Najaf; chap. viii with Kerbela; chap. xiii with Medina; chap. xvi with Mashhad; chap. xviii with Kazimain at Baghdad; chap. xxii with Samarra. In the latter part of the book the author deals with Shi'ite traditionists and theologians, and some very informing and interesting chapters are devoted to the doctrines of the Imamate, the dogma of infallibility (*isma*) of the Imams, and their role as mediators between man and God. There is a classified bibliography and index at the end.

As no other work gives a comprehensive account of Shi'ism, we must undoubtedly express our gratitude to the author for this labour. But this gratitude must be tempered with the criticism that there are many imperfections in the book which could easily have been avoided. The author in giving the lives of the Imams either deliberately mixes up fact with legend, or seems to be incapable of distinguishing between them. It is no small task to do the latter, but the attempt would at any rate have been productive of good results. Too much space seems to be devoted to the Shi'ite shrines. The bibliography at the end is unconvincing. If the author had only consulted the leading Mujtahids, and carefully classified the information, in the light of such works as Kanturi's *Kashf al-Hujub wa'l-Astar* and Tusi's *List*, the results would have been very valuable. And finally, the transliteration. It is possible to write a good book without any attempt at transliteration; it is also quite easy to adopt a scientific system like that of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* or of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. But the trouble starts in right earnest when we begin to compromise. Here for example, the letter *ain* is confused with the letter *alif*, cf. p. xxv, *isma* and *ijma* (both with a dot under the *i*). The well-known work *Bihar al-Anwar*, correctly

spelt on p. 304, is repeatedly spelt *Bihar al-Anwar* (pp. 152, 160, 190, 191 et seq.) *Tuhfat az-Za'irin* is normally spelt *Tofat ruz-Za'irin*, and on p. 171 it becomes *Tafat-uz-Za'irin*. Examples of this nature can easily be multiplied. But it is enough to say that the system of transliteration adopted is annoying to the specialist, confusing to the beginner, and meaningless to the layman.

We must not however conclude in this strain. Until superseded, the book will remain the standard work on the subject and a mine of valuable information. It is indispensable to everyone interested in Shi'ism.

ASAF A. A. FYZEE.

### SHORT NOTICE.

**THE A. B. C. OF CIVICS.** By BENI PRASAD. (The Indian Press, Allahabad.) 1933. 23cm. 157p. Re. 1/8.

THIS is a very welcome publication on the subject of civics by the well-known historian of Jehangir and author of such Indian historical studies as the "State in Ancient India" and "Theory of Government in Ancient India". After indicating the scope and method of civics in the opening chapter the learned author takes the reader through enlightening dissertations on Society and the Individual, Duties and Rights, Citizenship, Education, Family, Associations, State, Neighbourhood, Public Opinion and the Civic Life, and presents in the end a brief and useful bibliography. Though the subjects appear to be of wide and general import, the author has very skilfully applied scientific deductions to Indian conditions, which is no common merit. Refreshingly free from obtrusive quotations and repetitions, the main topics are analysed and presented in a succinct and intelligent manner by a master hand, crisp and concise sentences succeeding one another like links forged on a chain. The book is uniformly well-written and eminently suited to the College student.

One wishes, however, that more examples from life had been interspersed, and that quotations and references such as have been allowed had been Eastern rather than Western, but it does not by any means constitute a defect. What remains more questionable is of deeper import. The book does not lead to a proper appreciation or even understanding of Indian social phenomena. Exception may easily be taken to the unfortunate misleading remarks on the Joint Family on p. 63, which are in contrast with the author's careful, though meagre, treatment of Caste on p. 69. These two dominant features of Indian life deserved more importance than they have been assigned.

The get-up of the book leaves nothing to be desired. It is a creditable achievement, though a few printers' devils have escaped detection.

K. KRISHNA IYENGAR.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- ECONOMIC EQUALITY IN THE CO-OPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH. By H. STANLEY JEVONS. (Methuen.) 1933. 24cm. 355p. 10/6.  
THE INDIAN THEATRE. By R. K. YAJNIK. (Allen & Unwin.) 1933. 23cm. 284p. 10/-  
THE CONFLICT OF VALUES. By J. R. BELLERBY. (Richard Clay.) 23cm. 204p. 6/-  
THE SPANISH ARMADA. By LORNA REA. (Peter Davies.) 1933. 22cm. 175p. 5/-