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Topics of the Week.

More Backsliding ?

WHEN a few weeks ago the London correspondents of some journals in this country mentioned their belief that all this delay in the publication of the report of the Joint Select Committee was not just accidental but was purposely designed with a view to depriving the Indian electorate of an opportunity to give its verdict on the report in connection with the Assembly elections, we were not prepared to give it much credence. Our reasons for taking that view were obvious. There would have been some point, we thought, in delaying the publication of the report if thereby the British Government could have placed itself in a position to mislead the world into believing that their constitutional proposals had the backing of Indian opinion. This was not possible even if the White Paper had been left intact by the Joint Select Committee. Much less so was it when from all accounts the White Paper was going to undergo considerable whittling down at the hands of the Committee. What could then be gained by the British Government, we asked ourselves, timing the publication of the Committee's report after the Assembly elections were over? But we find we were greatly mistaken. What we were then inclined to regard as no better than one of those groundless rumours usually set afloat by press correspondents has unfortunately proved true, as will be seen from what our London correspondent writes this week.

APART from the backsliding which the Joint Select Committee's report is expected to register in

more important matters like e. g. indirect election to the Assembly, the establishment of provincial second chambers, etc. there seems reason to expect some going back on the White Paper proposals even in other respects. According to the London correspondent of the *Pioneer*,

"It is expected that the Committee will suggest the adoption of a number of new safeguards for British trade in India. The possibility of commercial discrimination has been considered, and the view is held that without entrenching upon India's fiscal autonomy, measures can be provided which will ensure that British goods are not subject to penal duties."

"Certain changes will be recommended in the proposals for handing over the administration of law and order to Indian control. These modifications will go a long way to meet the fears of politicians not unfriendly to the reform scheme."

* * *

Mr. Kunzru's Candidature.

THE *Leader* of the 21st inst. writes :—

We are glad to learn from our Agra correspondent that the candidature of Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru 'is receiving excellent support everywhere' in Agra division. We are amused to be told that it has been actually given out 'that he is a creature of Government.' If Mr. Kunzru 'is a creature of Government,' then we can assert that there is no single man in the whole country, not excepting Mahatma Gandhi himself, who is not creature of Government. We have some knowledge of public men all over India and we can affirm without fear of contradiction that we have not come across a more independent man or more unselfish patriot or a keener champion of the cause of India's freedom than Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. United to these qualities is Mr. Kunzru's knowledge of public questions, including the most intricate of them which is equalled by few and surpassed by none among all the public men of all parties in the whole of India. And he has the powers of speech and debate in a remarkable degree. Among all the candidates from all the provinces we write of what we know when we say that Mr. Kunzru will be found among the few completely equipped men for work in the Legislative Assembly. We earnestly hope that voters will refuse to be misled by partizan election cries of the opposite party and will return Mr. Kunzru at the head of the poll. If they do this, the proud satisfaction can be theirs of having done a notable service to the Motherland. They elected him once; had they even a fractional cause of disappointment or dissatisfaction? Nor will they have any this time.

* * *

Discussions in Congress Subjects Committee.

THE Subjects Committee of the Congress on the first day of its sitting endorsed, for submission to the plenary session of the Congress, all the resolutions passed by the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee since May last. Some of these

resolutions have provoked a bitter controversy in the Congress ranks, and naturally an attempt was made by the dissentient groups to except them from the general endorsement which was sought. The attempt was however completely unsuccessful, judging from the overwhelming majority which orthodox Congressmen were able to obtain in each case. But this shows nothing more than that extraordinary care was taken in the election of members to the A.I.C.C. and even as ordinary delegates to the Congress. A fiat had gone forth that none who were not prepared to lend their support to the official programme, whatever their inner convictions, be let in. A few who sought to introduce modifications into the programme still managed to get returned to the Subjects Committee, but their strength in the Congress organisation as a whole must not be assessed from the number of the representatives who found their way into the Committee. It is clear that the dissentients have a very large following in the country.

THE chief dissentient groups that demanded a hearing on the first day were the Socialists and rejecters of the Communal Award. The Congress Socialist Party is, as Mr. Narendra Deo, one of its most prominent leaders put it, a ginger group possessed with all the qualities which such a group requires, of which the most pre-eminent quality is an ideological freshness which is utterly lacking in the older Congressmen. The Party was most effective in its attack when it could convict the Congress of quibbling and a desire to be everything to everybody. For instance, its attack on the so-called "complete independence" which is the Congress goal. The Congress wishes thereby to take to itself the credit of being the most radical party in the country, all other parties stopping short for the present at dominion status. At the same time it avoids defining independence to mean a severance of the British connexion, which alone will lend validity to the claim. On the contrary it interprets the goal to mean precisely what dominion status signifies, viz. a right to sever the British connexion if the country at a future time decides to do so. The Congress Socialist Party demanded, by putting forward very cogent and irrefragable arguments, that the Congress must declare here and now its determination to go out of the British Empire the moment it had the power, if it was true to independence. If the Congress had not yet decided upon separation from the Empire, it had no right to adopt independence as its goal in preference to dominion status, which is the goal of all the other parties. The Congress defence on this point as on others, which were the subjects of attack at the hands of the Socialists, was weak in the extreme. If a subtler brain than Dr. Ansari's had attempted the defence, probably some slightly plausible case might have been made out, but Dr. Ansari could not make even the faintest attempt to defend the position. He relied entirely upon the packed majority in the Committee.

PANDIT MALAVIYA too, in opposing the Congress policy on the Communal Award, convicted the Congress of quibbling, and did so very neatly. He said in effect: "The Congress has declared itself unambiguously for joint electorates. This it considers to be the only solution which on principle can be acceptable to it. It however expresses a readiness to depart from principle and acquiesce in communal electorates which it regards as anti-national provided that this solution meets acceptance on the part of all communities. It says further that it is committed to the policy of rejecting any solution which, being anti-national, is opposed by one or the other communities concerned. Now, the British Government's communal decision is recognised by the Congress to be anti-national and it is now crystal clear that the decision is not approved by at least two communities, Hindus and Sikhs. Ergo, the Congress must reject the Communal Award. Under the rule that it has itself laid down, it has no option in the matter. There is no place for the neither-accept-nor-reject attitude of neutrality which it has adopted. It must in terms reject the Communal Award." Everybody felt that the arguments of Panditji were wholly unanswerable; and the many speeches that were made in opposition were marked by a desire to stir up prejudice rather than a desire to meet the point. Dr. Ansari again evaded the issue altogether, showing conclusively that he is not worth much where logic is concerned. The one argument on the lips of those who opposed Pandit Malaviya was that, right or wrong, the Congress must be supported and its prestige maintained. Mahatma Gandhi is going out of the Congress in order to make room for freedom of expression and independence of thought in the national assembly. The conduct of Congressmen showed however that the evil which he wishes to cure by lifting the dead-weight with which his presence is crushing the Congress has struck deep roots and cannot be easily eradicated.

A YOUTHFUL member of the Congress Socialist Party indulged in a violent attack upon Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney for raising a standard of revolt against the Congress. It is difficult to understand on what ground the attack could be justified. The Nationalist Party is still within the Congress and will try to propagate its views from within, hoping one day to convert the Congress as a whole. In this respect it is in the same position as the Socialist Party itself. The latter wishes to see established a socialist society, an ideal which the Congress is not now willing to subscribe to. Being in a minority, the party will carry on a campaign inside the Congress, hoping to obtain a majority in the future. In what way does it differ from the Nationalist Party? If the latter is in revolt against the Congress, so is the former. For, the Socialist Party is not going to give up its programme if the Congress puts its foot squarely on it. The Party will still remain in the Congress and be busy with its propaganda. Similarly, the Nationalist party, even if now defeated, will still go on with its opposition to the Communal Award and yet be within the Congress. The position of both parties is identical. It will not do for one body of dissidents to throw a stone at the other.

Articles.

ROYAL INDIAN NAVY.

THE second day of this month witnessed the conversion with appropriate ceremonial of the Royal Indian Marine into the Royal Indian Navy. Readers of newspapers need hardly be told that such transformation was authorised by the enactment into law of the Navy Bill by the Indian legislature during the last month. This is not to say that the legislation met with universal approval either in the legislature or in the country generally. As a matter of fact it encountered strong opposition from non-official opinion at every stage and was placed on the statute book in spite of non-official protests.

In a way this legislation is an indirect result of the war. Those who remember the ravages made by the German warship 'Emden' in India will have no difficulty in realising the utter helplessness of this country in the matter of its naval defence. Grown wiser by the bitter experiences of the War the British Government came to the conclusion that every unit of the Empire should be primarily responsible for its own local naval defence in stead of looking up to the British navy for protection on every conceivable occasion. In these circumstances the provision of a navy for the protection of India's vast coastline and her shipping could no longer be postponed. Not that it is intended to make this country completely self-contained from the point of view of naval defence. The object could obviously not be so ambitious, seeing that the total yearly expenditure of the proposed navy would not cover the cost of building even one warship. All that is at present aimed at is to provide the ships and vessels owned by India with a combatant status.

More than eight years have elapsed since an announcement to this effect was made by the Commander-in-Chief in the Legislative Assembly in February 1926. But it was not as if nothing was done in the meanwhile to give practical shape to it. In 1927 the British Parliament passed a law legalising the creation of the proposed Indian navy, leaving it to the Indian legislature to take steps to make the Naval Discipline Act of 1866 applicable to the Indian naval establishment. This was followed in 1928 by the introduction in the Indian legislature of legislation intended to make the British law effective; but thanks to the strong opposition offered to it amongst others by Mr. Shanmukham Chetty as the present president of the Legislative Assembly then was, the Bill could not even reach the stage of consideration by a select committee, the official motion to that effect having been rejected by a majority of one.

For six years more nothing further was heard of the legislation until early this year it was again brought before the Assembly which put off the evil day of its passage by asking for its circulation for

the expression of public opinion on it. If the Assembly ever imagined that the strength of public feeling that may be expressed against the Bill might lead the Government to pause and consider the wisdom of reintroducing it in the Assembly the expectation has been falsified. For such opinions as were expressed about the Bill were mostly in its favour, advanced political opinion being almost exclusively preoccupied with the consideration of the more important question of the constitutional revision. This naturally strengthened the position of the Government which came before the legislature with the Bill during the last August-September session and constituted as the legislature was, had little difficulty in securing its passage. This brief recital of the history of the beginnings of the Indian naval legislation will show any unprejudiced observer that Indian opinion has never been very enthusiastic towards the proposal to endow this country with a navy of its own, as conceived by the authorities.

And how could it be otherwise? This arm of the country's defence, though styled Indian, is that only in name. Its personnel in the higher ranks is almost exclusively non-Indian. Though no bar existed to the grant of commissions to Indians in India's Marine service, not a single Indian was found fit for that responsibility till 1927! It was then laid down that out of every three officers to be thereafter recruited every year, one would be an Indian and two Britishers. In the course of the protracted debates on the Navy Bill, official spokesmen tried to make capital of the fact that the rule of one-third Indian recruitment was in practice very much relaxed. It was pointed out in support of this contention that though so far as the Marine Service was concerned, Indianisation was only six years old and though, if the rule had been strictly adhered to, there could not have been more than six Indian naval officers at the rate of one every year, their number actually was 14 out of a total cadre of 117. Three out of the 14 were full-fledged officers and the remaining eleven cadets were undergoing training. Seeing that it takes five years to train an engineer officer, is there anything, it was asked, in this record of Indianisation with which one need be dissatisfied? All we can say is that this attempt to make things appear more attractive than they really are can deceive none but the most unwary. As a matter of fact, what passes under the name of Indianisation is nothing but "camouflaged Indianisation", as one member of the Assembly put it. In these circumstances it is too much to expect Indians to display any enthusiasm for the so-called Indian navy. When the proposal to create a navy for India was under debate in the Commons in 1927, Col. Wedgwood characterised it as a start in the right direction but, "a pitiful start at that." It will be seen from what has been said above that he was by no means taking an unjustifiably gloomy view.

But there is another and a stronger reason why Indians will find it hard to regard the proposed navy as their own. While by virtue of the recent legisla-

tion passed by the Indian legislature, India is placed in a position to maintain discipline in her naval personnel, over the navy as such she will have no real or effective control. It may be admitted at once that the position in regard to its use for Imperial purposes has been altered somewhat to India's advantage by recent British legislation. Under it the primary function of the Indian navy has been for the first time authoritatively declared by Parliament to be Indian defence. It follows as a corollary that if and when its use is required in Imperial interests, it must be paid for not by India but by the British Government. This has been explicitly laid down by the parliamentary legislation of 1927, which thus constitutes an advance on the existing state of affairs. As things stand at present, it is legally open to the Admiralty to commandeer any portion or even the whole of the Indian navy without being required to pay for it. It is unnecessary for our present purpose to inquire whether any such instances are on record. What is pertinent to note is that if at any time in the past the Admiralty chose to take that line, it could have been perfectly within its rights. Such an anomaly has been placed beyond the bounds of possibility by the 1927 legislation referred to already.

Another feature of our naval legislation which is distasteful to Indian opinion is that it makes the Governor-General the sole authority to offer to the Admiralty the use of the whole or part of the Indian navy in an emergency. This provision is for obvious reasons very galling to Indian sentiment. At a time

when India is earnestly aspiring to the status of a dominion it sounds rather strange that the Imperial authorities should have been so unimaginative as not even to provide for a formal "by your leave" by the Governor-General to the legislature. In the dominions the authority to make such an offer rests in the Government of the day; but the dominions governments are in theory and in fact representative of and responsible to public opinion; and may be trusted not to make themselves responsible for anything not desired by it. It will be many a long year before such a position would be reached in this country. The British Government would have neutralised at least a part of the opposition to their scheme of the Indian navy if they had provided for the association of popular representatives with the head of the Indian Government when making up his mind whether to place ships of the Indian navy at the disposal of the Admiralty. Profuse promises of consultation with unofficial opinion before arriving at such a decision were officially held out; but even in the best of circumstances they can never be a satisfactory substitute for statutory guarantees. And in any case after the light-hearted manner in which the sanctity of the pledge given by Lord Irwin with the authority of the British Government about Dominion Status being India's goal was recently called in question by some responsible persons in British public life Indians cannot be blamed if they insist upon statutory guarantees and refuse to be placated by such promises.

OUT-HITLERING HITLER.

THE States' People's Week, ordered to be celebrated by the Deccan States' People's Association, was a great success, judging from the many impediments which such a movement has always to encounter in the States in the present circumstances. About a hundred meetings appear to have been held, in big places and small, in the States and in British India, at which an identical resolution was passed, viz. the resolution recommended for adoption by the Association, urging the Congress to give the same position to the States' people as it has given to British India both in the Congress organisation and in the constituent assembly. The most serious obstacle in the way of the States' people carrying on a vigorous agitation is of course the prohibition of public meetings which is in force in a number of States. But one would have thought that that impediment would not be in operation where the meetings to be held were to discuss, not the internal administration of the States, but the federal scheme which is about to be passed by the British Parliament and accepted by the rulers of the States.

The States' people have not been afforded an opportunity so far of formulating and expressing their opinion on the proposed federation. As a matter of fact they should have been included in the Round Table Conference along with the British people, as the

Princes were included along with the British Government's representatives, but no one pressed for their inclusion, not even Mahatma Gandhi. Now the scheme of federation is in its final stage, and the States' people wish to organise opinion on it in their own States. Officially, this opinion, they know, will be completely ignored and discounted, for, officially, the Princes are spokesmen of the States. But, unofficially, they wish to communicate their opinion to their brethren in British India so that they may take whatever steps they may consider desirable in the light of it. But even such expression of opinion has been prevented in some of the States. What could be the motive of the States' authorities in gagging the people in a matter like this? Do they want that there should be no popular expression of opinion on the question of reforms which concerns them so nearly? Those who organised meetings in the States are not against federation, but they are for federation on certain terms. It may be that the States' people as a whole (who knows?) may be, like the Princes, in favour of unconditional federation, or it may be that, unlike the Princes, they are in favour of conditional federation or against federation altogether. Anyway, what harm can result, from the point of view of the Princes, from any of these views being adopted by the people? If they are of the same view as the Princes, then surely the latter will receive tremendous moral backing in their final decision to enter the

federation. Even if the States' people's opinion is different, the federation will go through, it being the settled principle of the Governments in States and British India not to give any recognition to what the people in the States will have to say on the subject. Official recognition being withheld, why not let the people open out their hearts and give voice to their feelings?

But States like Kolhapur forbid even such harmless expression of opinion. Does British India realise what all this means? Autocratic rulers are of course capable of doing anything, but even autocratic rulers, if wise, ought to forbear to do certain things. Who can be more autocratic in the modern world than Hitler? But even he has not attempted to choke out all public opinion, although it was known to be hostile. The latest instance of such tolerance on his part that has come to hand is in connexion with the Baptist World Congress held in Berlin recently. This Congress meets in quinquennial sessions, and in 1928 it was decided that the next session should be held in Germany, the Republican Germany that was then expected to continue. But when time came to hold the Congress, there had come about a change of regime in Germany. Instead of the Republican State, a totalitarian State of the Nazis had come into power. Would it be possible to hold the Congress in the altered circumstances, was the anxious question asked by the Baptist community all over the world, and the general feeling was that it would be best to shift the venue. But before actually doing so it was thought desirable to sound Hitler's Foreign Office. When asked whether they would be permitted to hold the session, the Foreign office said, "Certainly, go ahead." Then the Foreign Office was warned to reconsider this off-hand answer in the light of certain information which was placed in its possession. It was told that the Congress would not be a purely ecclesiastical gathering concerned with the other world; that, on the contrary it would discuss very mundane things and register its emphatic protest against the policy of racialism and nationalism followed by many Governments including that of Germany. Even then Hitler's Government agreed. They said, "You will not attack the personnel of the German Government in particular. You will discuss world questions. Do so by all means. We shall guarantee perfect freedom of assemblage and perfect freedom of discussion. We shall impose no restrictions upon you." Even this was not enough. The promoters of the Congress further warned the Foreign Office in this way: "Mind you, we cannot and will not give you any pledges as to which speakers will speak or as to what they will say or do. The assembly must have entire freedom of thought and action. We would rather go elsewhere than accept any conditions restrictive of our liberty which we would regard as humiliating." The Foreign Office said, "Yes, we understand all that. You shall have complete freedom in every respect."

Accordingly, the Congress was held in Berlin, and was attended by nearly 3,000 delegates. Of these a majority consisted of Germans themselves, and all the proceedings were held in public, the

voting too being open and not secret. And opinion is unanimous that both the speeches and the voting showed no constraint whatever. Resolutions were passed in opposition to the policy of the German Government, and the German citizens supported them by uplifted hand, "which would definitely have put them on record before anyone who had been watching." "They have evidently not been afraid of voting" even as the speakers in speaking shewed no signs of a sense of censorship. And what were the things that they said and the resolutions that they passed? One of them, with direct mention of Nietzsche, denounced "any power that is of might rather than right.... Races and classes must learn that we must live together if we are to live at all and must discover before it is too late that any nationalist or sectarian movement is self-defeating and will end in disaster." Another said: "Among our principles are these: first, freedom of conscience, uncoerced by any outside power.... The individual conscience must be supreme. We refuse all hierarchies. And second, our highest loyalty is, and must ever be, to God, as revealed in Christ." Likewise strong resolutions were adopted condemning in unequivocal terms the principles of nationalism and racialism; e. g. "The nationalistic point of view.... is quite incompatible with the Baptist conception of the moral principle of love," &c. &c. On the persecution of the Jews in particular, going on apace in the Germany of Hitler, a resolution said: "With our fellow-Christians in all the Churches, we deplore the long record of ill-usage of Jews on the part of professedly Christian nations, and declare such injustice to be a violation of the teaching and spirit of Christ." Thus the Baptists have lived up to their creed, the creed being that

"The tongue must be free to speak whatever the conscience shall decree and that no State, nor ecclesiastical synod, nor any organisation of men, has the moral right to repress nor restrain religious belief and expression."

And the important point is that Hitler, even Hitler, autocrat of autocrats as he is, allowed the Baptists to live out their principles in his State, indicating the advance that the claim which the principle of the freedom of expression has made in public recognition.

Now compare with this the action of States like Kolhapur. The States' people submitted to the authorities in advance not only the questions that were to be discussed, but the very terms of the resolution that would be proposed to the meeting. They were prepared to submit lists of speakers; they were prepared to give a summary of the speeches to be made. There was no question of any particular State being attacked, either expressly or implicitly, as the administrative acts of States were outside the programme. The meetings were to discuss only the merits of the White Paper scheme and to suggest certain safeguards in the interests of the States' people. And yet such meetings were forbidden. Measure the use of this autocratic power against the unqualified freedom of opinion allowed by Hitler! This article

is being written, however, not with the object of condemning the autocracies in the States; they stand self-condemned. But it has a lesson for British Indian leaders. These leaders felt themselves unable to press for representation of the States' people at the Round Table Conference. Even Gandhiji, as stated above, was unwilling to press for it. Let that pass. Now the States' people wish in a very quiet way to express their own point of view, and most of the important States prohibit such expression. What is the duty of British Indians in face of these facts? Would it be too much for them, even at this late stage, to say clearly

that until an opportunity is given to the States' people to voice their opinion freely of the proposed constitution, and their opinion is actually ascertained, British Indians will not accept the constitution? They may reserve to themselves the right to take independent action after the opinion of the States' people is ascertained, but do they not at least owe so much to the States' people as to take up the position that a free expression of opinion by the States' people is a condition precedent to their giving a final judgment on the federal scheme?

A. V. PATVARDHAN.

REGULATION OF MONEY-LENDERS IN BOMBAY.

MR. SYED MUNAWAR has recently introduced in the Bombay Legislative Council a Bill to regulate the business of money-lending in the Bombay Presidency. It is well-known that the average rural and urban borrower in India is extremely ignorant and needy. This opportunity has bred in the class of Indian money-lenders a crop of undesirable practices which are reprehensible on economic as well as moral grounds. It is the duty of the state as representing the collective interests and conscience of the community to protect the helpless clients of money-lenders from the frequently sharp practices of the latter. The same principle that justifies labour and tenancy legislation ought to justify measures aimed at preserving the interests of the needy and ignorant borrowers from the tyranny of unchecked and unregulated money-lending.

The case for state regulation of the business of money-lending is even stronger than that for the protection of labour. In the field of the relations between lenders and borrowers the present system of law and justice in India must be held responsible for having created a very unjust and unsocial situation. It is well-known that in pre-British days though the economic condition of the average borrower was not perhaps much better than what it is now, the hold of the Savkar on the client and the assistance that he could muster from the organised power of the state in support of his contractual claims was distinctly feebler. As a general rule the earlier governments never helped the creditor to get possession of the borrowers' immovable property, except in very few cases of specific and bona fide mortgages and sales. Even in respect of the immovable property of the client the attitude of the community was not to countenance any action on the part of the Savkar which would leave the borrower in an indigent and crippled position. Under these circumstances if the 'real credit' of the borrower was meagre the temptation to borrow was also reduced, and both lender and borrower were extremely cautious about their transactions.

The British system of justice is based on the most doubtful assumption about the sanctity of contract. It is assumed that individuals know full well the results of their own actions and that if they willingly enter into a debt transaction it is the duty of the state to enforce its terms. This is a travesty of legal as

well as moral justice when applied to conditions in India. The average borrower in rural as well as urban areas is so very ignorant, weak and helpless that it is unjustifiable to assume that any contract entered into by him with the money-lender is a free contract in the correct sense of the term. Even if such a transaction is technically free, as indeed is the wage contract, in the interest of justice and social stability, the law must regulate and check its operation if it proves detrimental to important interests such as the cultivators and workers. The law in India has been unmindful of this wider social aspect of credit transactions and has on the whole allowed the unscrupulous money-lender far more indulgence than he deserves.

It must be admitted that several remedial measures have been passed to counteract the evil effects of the prevailing system of unchecked freedom to the money-lender. The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act and the Usurious Loans Act are indicative of a realisation on the part of the legislators of their wider responsibilities in this matter. By common consent, however, both these measures, and especially the latter which is of wider application, have failed to achieve their object. A very important explanation of this apparent failure of remedial legislation is of course the ignorance and weakness of the borrowers themselves. Anything that secures the intellectual, moral and economic progress of the average borrower is a desirable ally of all the protective action planned by the state. The ignorance and weakness of the borrower must not, however, serve as an excuse for a complacent or apologetic attitude with respect to the law as it stands. It is clear that at least in two important respects the present arrangements for the protection of the just interests of the borrower require to be improved.

It is the peculiar merit of Mr. Munawar's bill that it is based on the realisation of this twofold need. In the first place it is necessary that so important a profession as that of money-lending should be required to follow certain well recognised forms of book records, accounts and procedure. This is desirable not only because the average client is not in a position to insist upon regularity in the practices of the creditor but also because the latter invokes the supreme power of the state in execution of what he claims to be his just dues. Excepting a few provin-

cial measures no attempt has been made hitherto to regulate the accounts and procedure of the money-lenders. Bombay has lagged behind in this respect in spite of the admonitions of such bodies as the Royal Commission on Agriculture and the Banking Enquiry Committees. Mr. Munawar proposes in his Bill several clauses for this much needed regulation.

This brings us to the second, and in one sense the more important, drawback of the present machinery of law for the protection of the borrower's interests. In the absence of any clear lead either in the terms of the law or in the policy of the state the judges have generally been unwilling to give full effect to the intentions of protective legislation. As the Central Banking Enquiry Committee observes: "... if the Act (Usurious Loans Act 1918) were fully utilised it would go far to relieve the country of some of the worst evils of uncontrolled usury... a special report on the working of the Act should be included in the annual reports on the administration of civil justice." The Royal Commission on Labour, which had occasion to investigate the problem of indebtedness among the industrial workers, is more specific on the point of judicial inactivity in this matter. While recognising certain inherent defects in the Usurious Loans Act of 1918 the Commission observes: "But the reluctance of civil courts to deal with issues not raised by the pleadings seems to have been the main obstacle." If in pre-British regimes the money-lenders were less unchecked in their transactions and claims it was so chiefly on account of the fact that the governmental authorities of the day refused to be instrumental in enforcing what they did not believe to be just claims—measuring justice not according to the letter of the law and the contract but interpreting it according to well-recognised canons of social justice. Such a positiveness and elasticity must characterise the role of a judge in dealings between a Savkar and his average client. To break the unwillingness of the ordinary judges to assume this role is no simple task, but we are convinced that Mr. Munawar's bill is a move in the right direction inasmuch as it specifically requires the judges to go into the history of transactions coming before them in a prescribed manner.

The provisions of the bill are simple. The Governor in Council has been given the authority to extend by notification any or all of the provisions to such places or areas as he deems fit. The special procedure to be sanctioned by the Act is to apply only in such cases as concern debtors whose aggregate income in one year does not exceed Rs. 2,000 and who have borrowed a loan not exceeding Rs. 1,000. It is provided that suits should be instituted and tried in a court within whose jurisdiction the debtor lives. In disputed claims it is sought to be made obligatory on the court to examine both plaintiff and defendant as witnesses and to trace and ascertain the whole history of the transaction. Even in cases of admitted claims the court is expected to go into the detailed history of the transaction. In effect both for disputed and undisputed claims the rule will be for the judges to go by

themselves into the character of the whole transaction unless for reasons to be stated in writing they decide that such a course is unnecessary. Detailed rules are provided regarding the manner in which the court shall trace the history of each transaction, distinguishing between interest and principal payments. The addition of accumulated interest to the principal sum after the commencement of a transaction is proposed to be disallowed except for special reasons acceptable to the Court. The *damdupat* rule is also specifically stated.

Money-lenders are required to maintain their accounts in a form sanctioned by the local Government. They are further required to furnish each debtor with quarterly statements of detailed accounts of their transactions. Entries made by creditors and statements supplied by them under these provisions will be treated as valid evidence, but the failure of a debtor to deny the correctness of statements supplied to him shall not be treated as an admission on his part of the correctness of the account. If the Court finds that a creditor has not discharged any of the obligations placed on him in these respects it shall exclude amounts due as interest for the period for which no statement has been supplied.

The difficulties in the way of a private member who intends to move an important legislative measure are so great that we must be prepared for many doubtful points in a bill like this. In fact it was the clear duty of the Government itself, which alone is endowed with all the information and technical assistance needed, to initiate a measure of this type which has been long recommended by public opinion and authoritative bodies. Failing any activity on the part of Government a bill like that of Mr. Munawar should attract sympathetic and helpful attention at the hands of officials and non-officials.

In view of the importance of a measure like this it may be desirable to expand the preamble so as to state more fully the aims and objects of the bill. Whether Rs. 2,000 per year is a suitable limit for indicating the class of debtors needing special protection is doubtful. In this as in several other provisions the mover has the urban borrower more prominently in view. The limit here proposed is indeed much lower than the one that the Royal Commission on Labour had in view, but we feel that even for urban areas a figure of Rs. 1,200 per year should suffice. For the rural areas the extent of landholding or some other similar criterion might be more suitable.

It appears that in certain respects the bill throws on the judge unjustifiable responsibility. For instance the inclusion of accumulated interest in the principal during the currency of a transaction is too important a matter to be left to the discretion of the Court. Specific rules of guidance must be supplied by the law itself. Thus it might be proposed that unrecovered interest for a period, say, of three years, should be justifiably added to the principal. Though the provisions regarding the maintenance and supply of accounts are generally sound it is doubtful whether a detailed time-table such as that provided

in Section 7 (b) of the bill will be found convenient. It will be better to time the issue of these statements in greater accord with indigenous and local events or festivals. Further, there is no provision in the bill for securing a proof to the effect that the creditor has supplied a statement of account to the debtor. Perhaps this is a matter to be regulated by rules. But it is best that the statement should be served through state officials and, if practicable, copies should be supplied for record with the latter.

The most significant omission in the bill is, however, with regard to the rate of interest. Though the *damdupat* rule is some check on the uncontrolled operation of heavy interest rates it is desirable that if the full benefit of the measure is to be derived the Government should provide maximum rates in several localities for the guidance of the courts. The rates of co-operative societies might in some measure be used as indicative in this respect. In view of the fact that the benefit of the measure is to accrue to persons of comparatively small means there appears to be no justification for the limit of Rs. 1000 as the maximum amount in dispute. Quite conceivably the debtor may have a smaller amount in dispute in one suit but his general position might be involved to a greater extent.

It is well-known that full legislative relief will not be given to debtors of small means only by regulation of money-lenders' accounts and procedure of courts connected with their claims. As several Commissions and Committees have pointed out, civil laws like that of bankruptcy and limitation and criminal laws like the one bearing on besetting and harassment require to be suitably altered. Besides there are people who have no faith whatsoever in law being able to protect those who cannot protect themselves on account of their ignorance and weakness. It appears to us that such people are unduly pessimistic and if their views were to prevail half the social legislation in civilised countries might have to be removed from the statute book. There is a clear case for legislation regarding the position of small rural and urban debtors in India. In the absence of a more comprehensive official measure it is in some such way as Mr. Munawar proposes that we must advance. Regulation of accounts and equitable inquiry by Courts must be cardinal features of any remedial scheme in this field. If the Government of Bombay feel that in other respects the bill is defective let them help to improve it, or let them come out with a promise for initiating more elaborate legislation. The inaction of our Government in matters of social and economic legislation is no longer justifiable.

D. G. KARVE.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

(From Our Correspondent.)

LONDON, 12th October.

THE REFORMS.

I have it on good authority that for all practical purposes, the further consideration by the Joint Select Committee of the Report as drafted by the

Chairman is almost complete. The Committee, which began to sit again on Monday, has been very assiduous in its work, and what remains to be done, I understand, is little more than technical and verbal revision. That is a very different thing, however, from the early publication of the Report. The Committee is required to present its Report before the termination of the present session of Parliament, which will be almost immediately succeeded by the new session.

I understand that there are special reasons which, in any case, are likely to delay publication, which the authorities desire to take place simultaneously in India and here, and that these reasons are added to by the wish not to add to the complications of the new Assembly elections in November, by earlier publication. I should very much doubt, therefore, whether the Report will be available before about the middle or the third week of November, and it will probably then be found that with certain adjustments, modifications, and omissions it covers substantially the ground of the White Paper, but something less than that formidable scheme. The main alterations that may be anticipated have already been indicated in previous dispatches, and it is very unlikely that the Report will contain anything calculated to be of good cheer to Indian Moderates.

The diehards are greatly elated with the result of their attack at Bristol last week. They had not expected so close a vote on the resolution. I think there is a great deal to be said for the suggestion made in the London Correspondence of the *Manchester Guardian* that the result would have probably been very different had the Conference been held in the Midland or in the North. The South of England is predominantly diehard Tory, and the local Associations have been largely under the influence of retired Anglo-Indians (old style) who have nothing particular to do, whose term of service in India expired many years ago, who have had little recent contact with India and with the working of the reforms and who have sought to inoculate the local organisations with their own ignorance and prejudice. It was therefore comparatively easy to capture these organisations, and to beat up the maximum of opposition at the Bristol Conference. It is significant that, on the following day, when they might have followed up their relative success by another resounding vote, they allowed the amendment to be adopted without challenge as a substantive motion. Whilst the diehard faction considers that it is quite free and entitled to carry on the most unscrupulous agitation in the constituencies by a bold ignoring or denial of elementary facts, and of the validity of accumulated wisdom or more recent Indian experience, they strongly resent and vehemently protest against anything in the shape of organisation and propaganda on the Government side, or on that of the Party managers, though goodness knows there have been previously few signs of any such effective activities, to judge from the manner in which the amendment was put to the Conference last week. Naturally, with this latest advance, the diehards have become very cock-a-hoop, and are trying hard to convince themselves that they really have a majority of the Tory Party behind them. That remains to be seen, but the best opinion is that when the Report appears and has been considered in cold-blood so to speak the great majority of the Tory Party will be found to be at the back of the Government, if, as is expected, Mr. Baldwin takes a firm stand at the meeting of the General Council of the Party that is to be convened soon after the publication of the Report. It is possible, of course, that for further security the General Council may recommend the summoning of a special

conference, Tory members of Government and of the Joint Select Committee will be far freer to take an active part in such a Conference after the publication of the Report, and, notwithstanding the doubts presently expressed, I am more inclined to believe that wiser considerations will prevail and the Government will receive proper backing from the Party. Undoubtedly the concessions to cautious opinion that are likely to be embodied in the Report will be emphasised as a measure of tactics. In the long run the Tories do not wish to face the next General Election a divided Party. They cannot afford to run away from the only positive reforms scheme now before the country, and this consideration will weigh most heavily with that large bulk of middle-minded Conservatives who have not yet committed themselves but are awaiting the Report of the Committee, and a definite lead from the Government.

To-day's *Manchester Guardian* contains a very interesting editorial, in which it analyses, so far as any intelligent and well-informed observer can do so, the chaotic political position in India and the somewhat obscure situation here, in the light of last week's proceedings at the Tory Conference. It points to three approaching critical factors. First, the publication of the Select Committee's Report in November; second, the pending elections for the Assembly, and third, the result of the Congress meeting and the prospective relations to it of Mahatma Gandhi. The paper points out that if it is found that the British Indian delegates' Memorandum has been virtually ignored, the natural consequence will be for Moderate Nationalists to be driven closer to the Congress, and for the latter to be forced further to the left. The *Daily Herald* has been significantly quiet lately about Indian affairs and has expressed no opinion on the prospects, but with a characteristic ignorance of the facts it came out this week, with a message purporting to emanate from Bombay, that Mahatma Gandhi had irrevocably retired from the Congress. The *Daily Herald* at the present time is not very well served as regards its Indian news-service.

OF INTEREST TO INDIA.

Mr. N. M. Joshi arrived here from Geneva via Paris on Sunday, and has been busy ever since resuming old contacts. He looks well and in good spirits, showing that he has already begun to recover from the shock of his recent domestic loss. His many friends in Europe have welcomed his return here, and have assured him, in a variety of ways, of their sympathy and encouragement.

In Tuesday's *Manchester Guardian* Mr. Polak adds his voice to Mr. Horace Alexander's plea last week for the early release of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, on the grounds of public policy and wise statesmanship. I am informed that the urgency of the need for his release has increased owing to the very serious report of the state of Mrs. Kamala Nehru's health.

The Friends' Service Council announces that Miss Hilda Cashmore and another lady are about to proceed to the Central Provinces, where Friends have already been working for over sixty years in order to establish a settlement or Ashram there. An appeal is being made throughout for funds to help the enterprise.

Review.

AMERICAN WOMAN LABOUR PROBLEM.

WOMEN WHO WORK. By GRACE HUTCHINS.
(International Publishers, New York.) 1934.
20cm. 285p. \$ 2-00.

NEVER is measurement of the strength of labour

possible unless the statistical record relating to the problem is exhaustive. To fan class-consciousness to flame is easy and it is easier still to good labour to make and unmake the administrative system but it is patient and painstaking research alone that creates confidence. All admirable is the statistical mind which Grace Hutchins brings to her task of marshalling facts necessary to prove the case for fair play for labour. Throughout there runs a sharp current of communist frenzy which along with stray anti-Imperialistic unwisdom makes the book slightly less responsible than otherwise. In the realm of pure survey of the woman labour problem in the United States, the treatment is at once masterly and all-embracing. However strong the emphasis Grace Hutchins lays on the element of sex consciousness of the woman worker, it is only making class consciousness worse complicated by other disruptive forces from within. The conflict between man and woman is as old as humanity itself and the slavery of woman, that is responsible for it, is more imaginary than real. At any rate with the advent of the woman wage-earner woman has become less a home bird and far more unmanageable than before. It is therefore immaterial what definition is attached to woman, "the female of man," so long as man is in reality no better than a mere male of woman. As Grace Hutchins relevantly says, "Modern capitalism itself has created the conditions for women's final freedom." For the information of Grace Hutchins, it must be said that other than in U. S. S. R. it is possible to make the woman as free and irresponsible an agent as the wind, by establishing "not only the most complete system of social insurance, but also co-operative kitchens and dining rooms, co-operative laundries, and day nurseries which are freeing the women from the impossible task of caring for home and children while working outside the home."

But Grace Hutchins forgets that woman cannot be relieved of the function of child-bearing which imposes upon her certain limitations as well as responsibilities. Freedom from household slavery is easily achieved for women, not so their release from slavery to the machine. If there are "23 million unpaid housewives in the United States," they are so many who are happily unacquainted with machine toil. It is within their rights to claim freedom from overwork and enslavement to household operations but anything more than that means "getting lost." Mechanisation of services is already doing what union agitation cannot do, and militant sex consciousness will only banish happiness from life by working itself into "a superiority complex." Colour is one perplexing factor which is responsible for unequal standards of labour, and the free woman interferes to underbid men in the labour market. At present the economic depression is driving more and more women "to find work and thus replace the men breadwinners". Jobless persons, over 17 millions of them, and the low-paid women, "exist in shanty towns on the city dumps feeding themselves only from garbage pails."

The Census Bureau of the United States calculates that there are 10,750,000 girls and women who are "gainfully occupied" besides millions of unrecognised workers who are not qualified for affiliation. The tendency, as Grace Hutchins observes, is in favour of increase in their numbers especially in these days when "the myth that a husband's or father's wage is sufficient to feed a family has blown away like an advertisement written in smoke." Their presence is felt in all manly occupations and more so in the domestic and farm service. "Negro women outnumber white women in agriculture. In domestic service more

than a third of the women (1,138,000 out of 3,180,000) are Negroes." Grace Hutchins quotes figures to prove that in the blessed land of the free Yankee, youthful members under 25 constitute the bulk of the workers and "nearly three quarters of a million (720,723) are children between 10 and 17." To make matters unpardonable "more than 260,000 women beyond the age of 65 are working on paid jobs and 40,000 of these are even over 75." Other painful features associated with the large army of women workers are that "of the 10,700,000 women at work, over 3,000,000 or 28 % are married as compared with 23 per cent. in 1920. An additional 1,800,000 are listed as "widowed or divorced" and many of this group also undoubtedly have children or other dependents to support."

The Anti-Birth Control law in America operates so as to bleed the life out of women workers. "Ten thousand mothers die needlessly each year in child birth." For some time now by means of further average wage-cuts of 25 per cent, the very food of the workers has been taken out of their mouths. Among farmers there prevails pauperism so acute that "four out of ten farms in the United States are under a burden of mortgage debt. The total mortgage indebtedness on farms was \$ 9,200,000,000, in 1930 as against \$ 3,500,000,000, in 1910 and \$ 7,000,000,000, in 1920." In a single day in April 1932, 40,000 farm houses in the State of Mississippi went under the hammer for taxes. A review of the factors bearing upon farming makes it evident that millions of these homes are doomed." To an Indian farmer who reconciles himself to less than bare necessities of life, it will read like a fairy tale if he hears that the chief grievances of American farmers include "the lack of electricity for lighting and other use; the lack of a water-supply that would give plumbing conveniences and the lack of sewage disposal." Long is their list of elementary demands, so much so that if those demands are made by an Indian farmer it would involve banishment from his country. "Immediate cash emergency relief; exemption of impoverished farmers from taxes and no forced collection of rents and debts; no foreclosures; cancellation of the debts of the small and middle class farmers; reduction in railroad and other transportation rates on farmer's products and purchases; better prices for farmers; and the right to organise."

In other professions, particularly those which are regarded as attractive and meant for women such as nursing and teaching, the wages have, as in other directions, fallen by 30 per cent. The National Industrial Recovery Act which is hailed in certain quarters as the saviour of American manufacture and worker does more to benefit the former at the expense of the latter. "Whole groups of workers including most of those in domestic service, the cleaners and "outside help" who are especially excluded from many of the N. R. A. Codes, the young girls classed as learners and many others in greatest need of protection are simply not covered by any Code under the Recovery Act. Since the down-pour of the N. R. A. boons from a doubtful heaven, keener edged weapons have cut large slices out of the wages by curtailing the hours of work. But curtailment of the hours of work besides being inoperative in the case of non-cognizable workers has meant intensification of labour effort which is known to the workers as "speed-up" in its various forms. "Much of the night work still continues under the N. R. A. Following immediately upon the reaction against long hours and the resulting attempts to limit the working day by law comes the effort of employers to squeeze more out of labour by means of "intensification," "speed-up" or stretch-out called by the employers "labour extension." The aim is of course to get as much production

and more in a shorter time and with reduced labour-costs." Under the N. R. A. blessings "there is no guarantee of a full week's work and violations are widespread." "Perhaps the most common is to employ workers of many years' experience in the mills as "learners" on wages far below even the low minimum established by the Code." The feverish "speed-up" of work that has become the fashion among factory-owners and other employers of labour, has introduced not only worse sweat-shop conditions than before but also given rise to inhuman methods of treatment of the worker. Here you see women working under the most inhuman conditions, and on top of it all they must suffer pains from not being allowed to attend natural functions." There is thus loss of health all around among the workers. There is also what is known as the technological unemployment caused by shorter hours of work, and reduced wages on the top of real and extensive unemployment. "Despite the Recovery 15,000,000 persons in this country are still dependent on public relief." Whatever dole that is thus meted out to the unemployed is not only far less than the needs of bare subsistence but it also involves inordinate delay in payment. "Mrs. Cologera, mother of seven children testified that for seven months she had waited action on an application for relief." For all the good that the N. R. A. is doing "150,000 or more homeless women are wandering over the United States without homes or shelter. The Young Women's Christian Association reported that the number was decidedly on the increase.

Like the Revolutionary Women of Russia but without going to their bitter extreme, the women workers of United States have fought sturdy battles in the interests of more food and necessary comforts. As Grace Hutchins puts it, these women martyrs have endured hardships and yet continued the fight undeterred by gains and losses. By their heroism in direct action they have demonstrated "the efficacy of trade unions." From 1824 which saw the first strike in American labour history, down to 1933, it has been one long unbroken struggle against the oppression of the employer. This period gave birth to the insincere American Federation of labour and "at the 1868 Congress of the National Labour Union, the need of organizing women was officially recognised. With the rapid growth of the knights of labour, there arose what has been called the first large organisation to systematically encourage the admission of women to membership on an equal footing with men." Women workers like their men comrades have also had their outstanding leaders of whom Grace Hutchins makes honourable mention of Mother Bloor now happily alive and energetic enough to make further wars. Powerful is the National Women's Trade Union League organised in 1903 and "its platform includes seven points; organisation of all workers into trade unions; equal pay for equal work regardless of sex or race; 8-hour day and 44-hour week; an American standard of living; full citizenship for women; the outlawry of war; and closer affiliation of women workers of all countries."

The book is a treasure-house of indispensable information relating to the woman worker in the United States.

K. VENUGOPAL RAO.

SHORT NOTICE.

THE NEXT TEN YEARS. By various authors. (The Spectator Booklets Series.) (Methuen.) 1934. 18cm. 58pp. 1/-

THIS is a series of discussions by experts. The Master

of Sempill in the first essay discusses the future of aviation. After carefully considering the commercial possibilities of Trans-Atlantic flights over the North Pole route, the Ireland New Foundland route, the Azores Bermuda route, the possibilities of sea dromes and re-fuelling in the air, and taking into consideration Prof. Picard's exploration into stratosphere, he comes to the conclusion that the future development would be over Iceland through stratosphere flying. Prof. J. B. S. Haldane predicts that in the field of biology, bio-chemistry, and bio-physics, huge strides would be made in discovering the relation between molecules and bacteria. But advance in this field depends upon the economic stability of the countries that are now engaged in research work. The essay on medicine and surgery by Prof. W. Langdon Brown deals with preventive medicine, control of epidemics, the advance in vitamin theory, and the power of the mind over the body, as fields of research during the next ten years. The prediction on town and country planning by Prof. Abercrombie deal primarily with conditions in England and hence are useless to Indian readers. Captain Liddel Hart, dealing with war, predicts that future wars would be a series of trials calculated to paralyse the enemy combined with motor guerilla warfare. Lord Conway of Allington foresees that in the field of exploration it will be a detailed study of the lesser known parts of the earth, like the mountain peaks, the Kara Koram ranges, Hindu Kush, the Kuen-lun, etc. These expeditions will be on a scientific basis by a group of men, well-equipped and well financed. Talking of the future of journalism, St. John Ervine says the newspaper has deteriorated since 1914, but it has again started towards serious articles. The future reviews will be less highbrow and within reach—both in money and matter—of industrial workers. The book on the whole is thought-provoking.

E. ASIRVATHAM.

Miscellaneous.

CONGRESS AND THE STATES.

The All-India States' People's Conference has for several months been bringing to the notice of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress authorities what attitude the Congress should take towards (1) the Indian States' people's struggle for political freedom in the States and (2) their position in the federation. The Working Committee of the Conference passed a number of resolutions on the subject on 12th August 1934 but withheld them from publication with a view the better to carry on negotiations with Mahatma Gandhi. The Working Committee met again

on 20th October and reaffirmed the following resolutions, also releasing them for publication at the same time:—

1. This Committee wishes to reiterate the minimum demands of the States' people with reference to the new constitution and prays that the Congress will adopt them in its own programme as essential in the common interests of British India and the Indian States:

- (i) that the people of the states be directly represented through their chosen representatives in the federal legislature; and
- (ii) that the fundamental rights of the States' people be guaranteed in the future constitution.

The Committee hopes that the Congress, like the Conference, will make these the indispensable conditions of an All-India federation.

2. (a) The conception of the Indian States' People's Conference is that the Indian nation, whether it lives in British India or the Indian States, is one and an indivisible whole; that the national fight for freedom must be carried on simultaneously on both fronts by the combined forces of the people in British India and the Indian States; and that Swaraj will be won for India only when popular government is established in the Indian States as well as in British India.

(b) This Committee believes that this is the conception of the Congress also; but in order that the matter may be placed beyond the possibility of doubt or controversy, the Committee begs to suggest a small alteration in the Congress creed making an explicit declaration that the Congress stands both for British and Indian India. Article 1 of the Congress Constitution, when amended in the sense desired by this Committee, would read thus:—

"The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India, including the people of Indian States, by all peaceful and legitimate means."

3. This Committee trusts that the Constituent Assembly plan, put forward by the Congress with the object of implementing the principle of self-determination of the Indian people, will apply to the people of the Indian States as much as to the people of British India; that the Assembly will be composed of representatives of both chosen in the same manner; that a federal constitution will be adopted only if agreed to by the representatives of both; and that when agreed to, the people of British India and the Indian States will pledge themselves to carry on a united campaign for its being accepted by the Governments in British India and the Indian States.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR 1933-34.

(Continued from our issue of September 20, 1934.)

Education.

Mr. Devadhar was the Chairman of the Aryan Education Society, Bombay. Mr. Kunzru was a member of the executive of the Allahabad and Benares Universities. Mr. Dube was a member of the Board of Christian Higher Education in the U. P. and was elected to the Court of the Lucknow University by the Graduates' constituency. Mr. Naynar was nominated to the Secondary Education Board in Calicut.

Libraries.

The Society maintains, primarily for the use of its members, libraries in Poona, Bombay, Madras,

Allahabad and Cuttack but they have been thrown open to the public under certain conditions. The principal Library is situated at the headquarters in Poona and consists of more than 24,000 books and reports, exclusive of periodicals. The Library forms the mainstay of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics. Over Rs. 2,500 were spent on the Library during the year. Books are added partly by purchase and partly by transfer to the Library of books received for review in the *Servant of India* after they are reviewed. The grateful thanks of the Society are due to the reviewers who have been generous enough to return the books to the Library

after reviewing them. The Library has over 60 readers and borrowers, most of them students of the local post-graduate institutions, including the G. I. P. E. The Library continues to be a depository library of the publications of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, Geneva, and contains a fairly full set of these publications. The Society's thanks are due to the League and the I. L. O. for the much valued gift.

Mr Kaul was Secretary of the Ganga Prasad Varma Memorial Library at Lucknow.

Gokhale Memorial Library, Nagpur.

The Gokhale Memorial Library, Nagpur, was transferred to the Society last year. Since then, the Society has spent over Rs. 2500 over the repairs of the building. A new building has been put up estimated to cost Rs. 11,000, into which it is proposed to shift the library. The charges incurred on account of books and reports as well as on equipment, taxes, etc. was Rs. 549 in 1933-34. A few books and important periodicals have been added during the year.

Mr. Kunzru was the Chief Scout Commissioner of the Association and Mr. Dube its District Scout Commissioner for Lucknow. During his South Indian tour, Mr. Kunzru spoke on scouting at Madras and Pondicherry. Mr. Venkatasubbaiya was the President of the Madras District Association of the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts' Association, and Mr. Venkataraman its Chief Organising Commissioner. The latter received scout training at Nirmal Vana at the beginning of the year under report. He organised two scout troops in Madras, one of which consisted of Harijan boys. He trained the troops and gave opportunities for camping. The scouts rendered service as volunteers during the solar eclipse day, organised sports for Harijans on Harijan Days, helped in the Swadeshi propaganda on Deepavali Day, and raised funds for leper relief by selling flags on the Leper Day in Madras. Mr. Nayanar was elected Joint Secretary of the District Boy Scouts' Association in Calicut.

Co-operative Movement.

Mr. Devadhar's illness prevented for some months his active participation in the work of the Travancore Co-operative Enquiry Committee as its President. He returned to that work in December last and has been at it since. The task of the Committee is to review the progress of co-operation in the Travancore State and make recommendations thereon. Mr. Devadhar has been invited by the Cochin Government to review the co-operative movement in that State after finishing his work in Travancore. He has toured the State in this connection.

He was a director of the Bombay Provincial Co-operative Bank and President of the Hindu Co-operative Housing Society in Bombay. He delivered the inaugural address at the All-Cochin Co-operative Conference at Irinjalkuda in the Cochin State and presided over the Co-operator's Day meeting in Poona. Mr. Venkatasubbaiya was the Joint Secretary of the Madras Provincial Co-operative Union and was in charge of its office. He was also the Secretary of its rural reconstruction and education committees. He was the editor of the Telugu Journal of Co-operation published by the Union.

Rural Reconstruction.

Mr. Devadhar was Chairman of the Deccan Agricultural Association, and supervised the rural centre at Khed-Shivapur. He presided over a conference of rural workers called by the Association in

September last and submitted a memorandum on the rural uplift scheme of the then Governor, Sir Frederick Sykes. He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. Mr. Sahu continued rural reconstruction work in Chaudwar near Cuttack, and arranged classes to train rural youths in scouting, first aid and civics.

During the year Mr. Dravid inaugurated a new scheme in the rural centre at Bhambora in the Amraoti District in Berar. The Centre was opened by the Minister of Agriculture and Co-operation in the C. P. Government on the 18th February last. Mr. Dravid has been nominated by the C. P. Government to the C. P. Rural Uplift Board. The programme of work for the Bhambora Centre includes education, agriculture, co-operation, debt conciliation, sanitation and medical relief. An elementary school of the indigenous type was started with about 20 boys and girls. A private demonstration farm was opened and all possible help secured from the Agricultural Department, which included a cinema show of agricultural interest, a four-year cropping programme for the farm and the supply of improved seeds. A co-operative society is being promoted. Mr. Dravid's presence in the village has been taken advantage of by the villagers in the matter of debt conciliation. Two cases have been settled and three more are on the file. The villagers have so far preferred arbitration by Mr. Dravid to that by a panchayat of their own. As regards sanitation, the villagers have been persuaded to agree to stock manure at a distance and in specially dug pits, so as to preserve it well for use in the field. Two Ayurvedic physicians visit the village in alternate weeks. The influence of the Centre is not confined to the village of Bhambora but has radiated to the surrounding villages. Mr. Dravid was also arranging to collect certain village statistics relating to the economic condition of Bhambora.

Mr. Sivaswami with the assistance of Mr. Sivasubramanyam, when he was a Probationer, was engaged primarily in rural work in the Trichinopoly district with headquarters at Mayanur. The bulk of his time was however given to the raising of funds for his scheme for establishing a residential higher elementary school for the children of agriculturists. The idea is to provide cheap education in rural surroundings, free from the temptations of urban life, for the children of agriculturists, in the hope that thereby those who receive the benefits of education will remain in the villages and not migrate to the towns. The scheme is to construct a school building, hostels and quarters for the school staff together with the necessary appurtenances. The whole scheme is estimated to cost about Rs. 25,000. So far about Rs. 10,000 have been collected from generous donors, to whom the Society's cordial thanks are due.

The work of the Devadhar Malabar Reconstruction Trust is of the nature of rural reconstruction work. In addition to this, Mr. Suryanarayana Rao was appointed Hon. Secretary of the Rural Reconstruction Committee of the Coimbatore District Urban Bank which maintains two Rural Reconstruction Centres in the district. The work in these Centres consists mainly in organising and conducting panchayats and co-operative societies on right lines and also in running night classes for adults.

(To be continued.)