

# The Servant of India

Editor : S. G. VAZE.

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## Topics of the Week.

### Sapience.

"AN Indian correspondent" (save the mark) writes in the *Times of India* of the 16th inst. —

A constitution, however perfectly framed it may be, will not work well, if there is no goodwill behind it. On the other hand, however imperfect a constitution may seem on paper, if a people are determined to get the best out of it, nothing in the world can prevent them from doing so. No Governor-General or Governor, howsoever heavily armed he may be with powers in fulfilment of his "special responsibility," can go often and irrationally against the advice of his Ministers or the expressed will of the legislature in that behalf.

And a good deal more in this strain, intended to show that we need not worry too much about the reservations and safeguards. To this correspondent the form of the constitution does not matter at all; the spirit in which it is worked is all-important.

WELL, if it is so, why does not this correspondent preach this homily to Englishmen and say to them: "Indians ask for power which appears to you to be too sweeping. But why not confer it upon them and then trust them not to use it ill? The Governor or Governor-General under your constitution has wide powers; he can use them ill, if he wants to. But do you expect him to use them in this fashion? Do you not rather think that when a man is placed in such a high position, the sense of responsibility which he acquires makes him use even his excessive powers with restraint?"

"THE same is true of Indians. Give them the excessive powers they want, and it is only then that

they will learn to use them with restraint. They value the powers only because they do not possess them. As soon as these powers are statutorily theirs, they will cease to care for them, and use them very sparingly, if at all. What matters what the form of the constitution is, provided it is worked with good-will?, and the best way of evoking Indian good-will is to concede to them the powers they ask for, though the concession may appear to you to make the constitution defective, looking at it from the academic point of view."

BUT the *Times of India's* "Indian correspondent" will never see this side of the shield. He only sees the British side. An Indian indeed!

### Assembly Elections.

THE Congress has obtained some very striking successes at the Assembly elections. Perhaps the most sensational success obtained so far is that of Mr. Satyamurti over Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar. Mr. Mudaliar is a very prominent leader of the Justice Party and is justly known as a man of great Parliamentary gifts. But the heavy defeat sustained by him at the hands of the Congress candidates is due, first, to his being closely associated with the Round Table Conferences, of which the notorious White Paper is an outcome (few people in England know how great a handicap it is in India to have been mixed up with these ill-fated gatherings), and, secondly, to his downright opposition to the rejection policy.

MR. MUDALIAR is one of the keenest critics of the White Paper proposals going. His denunciation of it was as fierce as that of almost anybody else. That made him quite popular up to a point. But he always used to accompany his condemnation of the White Paper by an equally strong condemnation of the Congress proposal for rejecting it. His position was: Let us point out frankly the defects in the proposed constitution and do our best to remedy them; but if unfortunately, after all our earnest efforts, the constitution be enacted as proposed, then as a last resort we must accept it. For even that constitution, utterly inadequate as it is, registers some advance, and it would not be to the country's interest to forego this advance and go after the mirage of a constituent assembly, the establishment of which is all that we stand to gain by rejecting the White Paper. His defeat shows how unpopular this view is.

IT was very courageous of Mr. Mudaliar to have made known that while he would support every motion which sought the insertion of liberal changes in the White Paper proposals, he would unhesitatingly oppose a motion which could possibly be used

in defeating those proposals. But it is just this courage which cost him his seat. The issue of Acceptance or Rejection could not have been fought out in a more clear-cut manner than in Madras City. Mr. Mudaliar never burked the question as many are found to do; he boldly faced up to it. So did Mr. Satyamurti on the other side. He was for rejection, pure and simple. If the White Paper could be put away, without anything else being put in its place, even then he would regard it as a great national gain. Mr. Satyamurti's victory is indeed clear proof that India does not want the White Paper.

SIR SHANMUGHAM CHETTY'S defeat is similarly an unmistakable indication of the disfavour in which the Ottawa Agreement is held by Indian opinion. The one question in issue in this constituency was that of the Ottawa Agreement, and Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty, the Congress candidate, owed his success mainly to the unpopularity which Sir Shanmugham had earned as a sponsor and as a stout defender of the Agreement. Even the latter's position as President of the Assembly did not save him from defeat in a commercial constituency. In Madras Presidency the Congress has captured all the seats and inflicted heavy defeats upon the Justice Party in all constituencies.

THE Nationalist Party has obtained some successes as against Congress candidates, particularly in the Punjab; but the significance of these successes must be properly appreciated. They do not break the united front in any way in respect of the White Paper. Every Nationalist, being a Congressman, is a rejectionist; only he is a more thorough-going rejectionist than the orthodox Congressman. He not only rejects the White Paper; he rejects the communal award as well. Therefore, in reckoning the strength of the rejectionists all Congressmen, whether Nationalist or other, and all Congress-minded progressives, must be regarded as forming one solid block. It would appear from the results known so far that among the elected members this block may obtain a majority of non-official votes on a rejection motion.

#### Federation and Independence.

THE Congress first tries to show itself as more go-ahead than other parties by declaring Complete Independence to be its goal, and then interprets Complete Independence to mean nothing more than Dominion Status. For, after all, the Congress merely desires that India should have the power to sever the British connexion, which power is implicit in the attainment of Dominion Status, but it has not yet decided that India will necessarily exercise the power when she gets it. However, after the federation comes into being, even the power will disappear, whether there is the will or not, which is to say that India can not only have no Independence of the genuine type, but not even of the type that the Congress aims at. *United India and Indian States*, in its issue of the 10th inst. makes the point crystal clear. It says: "India after all is not all British; there is an Indian India whose unalterable creed is the allegiance of its rulers to His Majesty the King-Emperor. If there is to be no parting of the ways for British and Indian India [and there can be no such parting if federation is brought about—Ed., S. o. I.] the inevitability of the British connexion with the final Indian political creed should be underlined in deliberate and indubitable fashion." No Independence, no Dominion Status for India—after federation!

#### Distribution of the J. S. C. Report.

THE maladroitness of the Bombay Government is hard to beat. Being fully aware of it apparently, the Government of India kept in their own hands the distribution of advance copies of the Joint Select Committee's Report in the Provinces. They informed all newspapers that arrangements would be made for the handing over, locally, of copies at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, whether the newspapers concerned were issued from the capital towns of the Provinces or from any other places like Poona. Since the distributing agency was to be official, and since there were responsible officials enough in capital towns and mofussil towns alike to do the job, the Government of India did not think it necessary to limit the actual distribution to the capital towns.

BUT the Bombay Government was not going to be ordered about in this way. Its Director of Information wrote to us: "In case you have received information in a contrary sense from another source (how very respectful this official is to the Central Government!), I beg to inform you that... copies (of the Report) will not be distributed in Poona," but that we must send our representative to Bombay to receive from the hands of this august official a copy of the Report, if we cared for it.

WE were looking forward, by delaying the publication of the paper for a few hours if necessary, to giving our commentary on the recommendations of the Report in this very issue. We could have done it if the Bombay Government had not overridden the Government of India and imposed its veto upon a copy being given to us in Poona by the local Collector on Wednesday, as originally decided upon by the Central Government. But now we are compelled very regretfully to defer our comment to the next issue. We are left wondering what could have been the motive of the Bombay Government in thus queering the pitch for the Government of India? Why must they interfere in things which do not belong to them and mess them all up?

CANNOT they—even they—realise the inconvenience and delay caused by insisting upon the distribution of copies to mofussil papers in Bombay City alone? Suppose the Government of India had asked all Bombay papers to send up their representatives to New Delhi or the India Office had asked all Indian papers to send up their representatives to Whitehall—to receive copies at a stated hour? Will not the Government of India have something to say to the Bombay Government about this?

#### Hyderabad Finances.

THE budget of the Nizam's Government for the next year provides for a total revenue of Rs. 863 lakhs—Rs. 848 lakhs ordinary and Rs. 15 lakhs extraordinary. The ordinary expenditure to be met from current revenues is shown as Rs. 821 lakhs, while the extraordinary expenditure to be defrayed out of current revenues as also from past surpluses is expected to amount to about Rs. 64 lakhs. Though the total expenditure is thus found to be in excess of the year's revenue, it would not be accurate to describe the budget as a deficit one. For H. E. H. the Nizam's Government has a system of triennial contracts under which the different departmental surpluses, if any, are accumulated year after year and distributed among the various departments at the end

of the period of contract together with any savings that may be available.

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SUCH surpluses during the last twelve years amounted to Rs. 849 lakhs, which together with the departmental savings came to Rs. 1,029 lakhs. How this large amount was utilised it is interesting to examine. About one-third or Rs. 311½ lakhs was earmarked for the purchase of the N. G. S. Railway—a splendid investment for the State. About Rs. 67½ was given for starting the Industrial Fund, the object of which is to help forward the industrial development of the State by investing the corpus in debentures, stock etc. of large industrial concerns and utilising the interest that may accrue from such investments in helping smaller industries. Grants exceeding Rs. 2 crores were also made to the Hyderabad City Improvement Board, the District and City Municipalities etc. for the provision of communications, drainage, and water works and a little less than Rs. 2 crores for District Roads and Buildings. The claims of the nation-building departments too like education, public health, co-operative credit, were also not overlooked with the result that these departments secured nearly Rs. 40 lakhs for their own development. Expenditure amounting to nearly Rs. 30½ lakhs on account of the Princes' marriages and tours and nearly Rs. 6 lakhs due to the State's participation in the three R.T.C. and the Joint Parliamentary Committee was also met from this surplus.

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THOUGH the Nizam is noted for his simplicity of life, he appropriates as much as Rs. 50 lakhs for his use, not to mention the Princes' expenses, which are expected to swallow nearly Rs. 9 lakhs next year. This represents an increase of Rs. 2¾ lakhs in one year in the amount allotted to them, for which no explanation seems to be given. So far as the receipts are concerned, land revenue, as in the Indian provinces, is the source of largest revenue and is expected to yield next year nearly Rs. 3¼ crores, excise taking the next place. Receipts from this source are put down at a little over Rs. 1½ crores in the budget. Whatever one may think about the large amount needed for royal expenses, the fact cannot be gainsaid that the finances of the State under the able stewardship of Sir Akbar Hydari are in a sound condition.

#### Problem of Vital Statistics.

IN no province in India can the registration of vital statistics be said to be altogether free from serious defects, but in Madras at any rate it seems to be least unsatisfactory. This is proved by the difference of only 0.5 per cent. between the increase in population as enumerated at the census and that arrived at as a result of calculations made by the Actuary to the Government of India with the help of provincial records, by finding the excess of births over deaths. The difference was the highest viz. 61 per cent. in the case of Assam and even the record of major provinces like Bombay and Bengal, though not as bad as Assam, was anything but creditable, the difference in their case being 35 and 57 per cent. It would thus be seen that the Madras record of vital statistics is vitiated by the smallest proportion of flaws.

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THE improvement is officially ascribed to the compilation of vital statistics in non-municipal areas being entrusted to the Department of Public Health. A portion of the credit must also go to the larger employment of Sanitary Inspectors. Even so

much yet remains to be done to reach the high standard of correctness which obtains in western countries. And it is a matter of hopeful augury for the future that the Local Government instead of resting on their oars by the compliment paid to them by the Actuary to the Government of India has every intention of going ahead with its efforts for reforming the system of registration.

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SOME idea of the perfunctory manner in which this part of their duties is handled by local bodies can be formed by the fact that the departmental staff were able to detect as many as 25,453 births and 8,471 deaths which had escaped registration. In areas in which the Registration of Births and Deaths Act of 1899 operates, registration of births and deaths is of course obligatory; but the report regretfully records the inadequate realisation by the people of their obligations under it with the result that very few vital occurrences are voluntarily reported. But the failure to satisfy the requirements of the law is hardly ever followed by a prosecution and conviction. If the presence of the law is so little felt by the people, it only emphasises the need of vigorous official propaganda in order to bring home to them their duties under the law. It goes without saying that mere prosecutions will be of little avail.

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BUT upon village officials the application of the Act has an effect quite contrary to what is intended. Its application leads them to suppose that their duty begins and ends with the recording of such vital events as are reported to them and that they need not lift their little finger to make their record complete by the incorporation in it of local births and deaths which have remained unreported. Steps were taken by Government to impress upon village officials their responsibilities in the matter; but the action did not apparently lead to any considerable improvement in their conduct.

#### Divide et Impera.

IAN ROSS MACFARLANE, in the New York *Commonweal* of 26th October, suggests that Great Britain is pursuing a policy of divide and rule in governing both Palestine and India. Why does not the British Government give effective protection to the Jews in Palestine? And how does it manage to withhold independence from that country? He answers these questions by saying that it sides with Arabs against the Jews, and this pro-Mahomedan policy serves its purposes in India too. Says he:—

"Going further with the theory, Britain apparently did not care to lose this garden spot of the Mediterranean so close to the Suez and boasting the ideally constructed harbour of Haifa, with its valuable terminus of the practically completed 1,100 kilometer pipe line to the oil fields of Mesopotamia. The fact that the Arab was disgruntled offered a solution; in fact, a double one. So long as the Palestinian Jewry was harassed by Arab threats, independence would remain secondary. Then if the word were gently passed to the Mohammedan Arab executive that atrocities, riots and other forms of guerrilla warfare as practised by them on the unfortunate unarmed Jews, would be winked at by Britain, these Arab Mahomedans would pass the word across those many miles of hot stifling desert and across the mountains to Beluchistan and Afghanistan to the millions of their fellow Indian Mohammedans that the British Lion was friendly to the sons of Allah in Palestine; whereupon these trouble-making Indian followers of the great Prophet would behave. Yes, it's a theory, but in line with Britain's well-known international political policy of playing the weak ones against any momentarily strong rival."

## ON THE RAMPAGE.

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD has returned from England full of bitterness in his heart. He is on the rampage against British public opinion for its extremely narrow outlook on the Indian political situation. He believes that the Joint Select Committee's report will be far more retrograde than the White Paper, and by the time these lines are in print our readers will know whether his forecast is borne out by facts or not. But even if it be amiss in some particulars his conclusions will hold good, for, in his opinion, which is shared by all progressives in this country, the White Paper, even if it remains intact, will surrender very little power in any essential respect, and there is no possibility of the Joint Select Committee recommending substantial amplification of the White Paper proposals. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, in the press interview he gave after his return home, was not concerned so much in appraising the precise value of the reform proposals as in suggesting what India should do about them. He is in search for a policy with a kick. What such a policy should be he does not work out in detail, but the fact that he is in search of it is in itself very significant.

A sort of all-parties convention that he suggests in order to make it clear to the British public "that the proposed constitution is not acceptable to any shade of public opinion in the country and to urge the adoption of such changes and amendments as will make India satisfied, at least for some reasonable time, with the transfer of power under the new constitution" does not make any strong appeal to us. The time for making constructive suggestions for improvement is past. It is idle to hope that, after the completion of a lengthy and laborious examination by a Parliamentary Committee, any drastic changes in the structure of the reforms scheme, which alone will make it acceptable to Indian opinion, has any chance of being seriously considered in Parliament. Minor changes in a detail here or a detail there may yet be proposed with advantage; but major changes which affect the essential principles it were bootless to propose. As for demonstrating the country's dissatisfaction with the constitution, a more effective way of doing so than the one suggested by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and one which will be more appreciated by British public opinion, is to get the Legislative Assembly to pass a resolution condemnatory of the scheme. The Assembly elections have been fought on this issue, and the question is going to be brought up early in the next session. All that is now needed is for Indian political parties to urge, with a united voice, that when the resolution comes on for discussion, Government members shall abstain from voting, leaving it to non-official opinion to give a clear and unequivocal verdict on the subject.

The resolution will take the form of rejection of the White Paper proposals and the Joint Select Committee's recommendations. Sir Chimanlal apparently does not like the resolution to take this form. He would rather express his attitude negatively, say-

ing that the constitution is unacceptable to Indians or will not be accepted by them. The difference is easily capable of adjustment, but we cannot understand why Sir Chimanlal should attach to "rejection" a meaning which no one attaches to it and then condemn the policy? He says: "It is quite impractical to suggest that the country should reject the new constitution if by rejection is meant that nobody could touch or work the new constitution. There is no question that it will be and must be worked, however unacceptable it may be." Who has ever proposed the rejection of the new constitution in the sense of non-co-operating with it? On the contrary, the sponsors of this rejection policy are careful to add that rejection does not involve non-co-operation. By rejection the Congress or the Nationalist Party means nothing more than what he himself means by non-acceptance. There may be reasons for preferring the use of the word "non-acceptance" to that of "rejection" in describing the policy which the progressives have in view, but it is entirely wrong to reject the phrase "rejection" on the ground that it carries with it implications which in advance have been repudiated. Does not Sir Chimanlal's condemnation of rejection really proceed from his desire to show himself as suggesting something more modest and less radical than the Congress? If so, there is no point in his asking for the formation of a national front. He should, on his own hypothesis, try to get the Liberal Party to string along with the Congress as far as possible and not to put an imaginary gulf between them.

The real question is whether Sir Chimanlal Setalvad is willing, like the Congress, to urge the country to declare in unmistakable terms that the proposed reforms will not be accepted by any progressive group, even if such a declaration should lead to the scrapping of the reforms. Does he stand for non-acceptance because he hopes thereby to get a larger and a more liberal measure enacted, and will he draw back from that policy if he finds that the effect of pursuing it will be, not a widening of the Government proposals, but an entire abandonment thereof? If it be so, he has nothing in common with the Congress in spite of the excited denunciation which he may let loose on the White Paper scheme. If, on the other hand, he will stick to non-acceptance, even when, largely on account of the adoption of this policy, the scheme is likely to be completely wrecked, with no immediate prospect of any constitutional advance materialising thereafter, he is in substantial agreement with the Congress in spite of the verbal difference in the enunciation of the Congress policy and his own. The Congress deliberately wants to clean the slate of the present proposals in order that a constituent assembly may be set up later for formulating a constitution that the country can honourably accept. Sir Chimanlal may not himself wish for a wholesale rejection of the official scheme, and he may not have an excessive faith,

either, in the practicability of the constituent assembly plan. This is neither necessary nor material. If he would press the non-acceptance policy even to the point of the destruction of the scheme, if it came to that, the net effect of following this policy would be the same as that of following the Congress policy, though differently worded. We are certain that he would not mind, though perhaps he would not actively desire, the withdrawal of the Hoare proposals. He has not said so in express terms, but it can be inferred from what he does say.

He warns the British public that if the White Paper constitution is imposed upon the country, Indians would resort to obstructive tactics for the set purpose of bringing about constitutional deadlocks and to the boycott of British goods for the set purpose of injuring British commercial interests. He had issued the warning before, but the reaffirmation of it on the eve of the publication of the Joint Select Committee's report has a significance all its own. Thereby he will either be compelled hereafter himself to advocate these retaliatory measures or at any rate be powerless to plead against their adoption. It is clear he thinks that such measures are inevitable even if, in his individual judgment (which is doubtful), they are undesirable. If then the forcing of the White Paper constitution upon India is bound to lead, as a necessary and unavoidable consequence, to perpetual friction and strife in this country between the rulers and the ruled, would it not be a more moderate step for Sir Chimanlal and all those who think with him to strive consciously, while there is yet time, to prevent the constitution from being enacted? We ask this question of those who condemn the official scheme with great vehemence and demand sweeping improvements in it, but have a shrinking horror of the policy of non-acceptance or rejection if it involved even a remote possibility of its leading to the withdrawal of the scheme. "Let us try our utmost to better this scheme," they say; "but if we cannot do so, let us have the scheme as it is, hopelessly inadequate as it certainly is, rather than none." Those who argue in this way must be in a position to insure, by using their influence with public opinion, a smooth working of the constitution. If they are powerless to do so and if, on the contrary, they believe, as Sir Chimanlal does, that such a smooth working is impossible and that frequent deadlocks would be purposely engineered, which could be broken only by suspending the constitution, then their present attempt must be to prevent the constitution from being put on the statute book. That would at least give some time for fresh efforts being made to get a more satisfactory constitution passed and delay the outburst of public resentment and discontent which would be certain to follow if the White Paper proposals are put into force. Deliberately to kill these proposals would thus be a more humane proceeding, and more in consonance with moderate politics, than to help pass them by our acquiescence and then to let the country fall into disorder and chaos.

If non-acceptance of the proposed constitution,

as advocated by Sir Chimanlal, is thus the accepted policy of all advanced sections of Indian politicians, then the first practical step that they ought to take is to ask that the vote on the motion to be brought forward in the Assembly on the subject be confined to non-official members and, further, to ask that the constitution to be brought into effect shall be such as these members will approve of.

#### GROSS MISREPRESENTATION.

ONE would have thought that the statement of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, containing as it does a plea for united action to vote, not only the White Paper scheme, but any scheme falling short of the British Indian delegation's Joint Memorandum unacceptable and a warning that an attempt to impose an unsatisfactory constitution will provoke stern reprisals from all sections of the people would be regarded by all British-owned papers in India as alarming in the extreme. The *Times of India*, however, finds this statement rather soothing. The reason for it is this. Sir Chimanlal's programme of action has two sides to it. One is the expression of discontent with the reforms proposals; the other is the formulation of demands for their improvement. What papers like the *Times of India* are afraid of is a policy of blank opposition or "flat rejection" to the white Paper. If opposition or non-acceptance is joined to a plan of effecting detailed improvements in the scheme, then they don't mind at all. Not that these papers are any more hopeful than Indian papers of a demand for detailed improvements leading to actual improvements worth speaking of. On the contrary, they are convinced that at this late stage such improvements will not materialise, but they feel that, after the proposals are given legislative sanction, even those who are now engaged in denouncing them will be reconciled to them and will settle down to an honest working of the constitution, while those whose policy is one of flat rejection will try to secure the withdrawal or defeat of the proposals and may possibly succeed in their object, and that even if they fail, their one aim will be, after the constitution is enacted, to make it unworkable in practice. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, in some parts of his statement, shows himself to belong to the Improvements school rather than to the Rejection or Non-Acceptance school, and this is the source of comfort for papers referred to above.

The *Times of India* concludes its leader on Sir Chimanlal's statement thus:—

Even if a united Indian demand on the lines of the Joint Memorandum submitted by the delegates to the Select Committee makes no impression on Parliament, it will at least show that there exists in this country a body of responsible opinion which does not regard the White Paper as something fit only for the scrap-heap. We in this country know that such a body of opinion exists; what we have to do is to convince Parliament of that fact.

It says in effect: "Howl for improvements, as much as you like. There is of course little possibility that the suggested improvements will be accepted. Nevertheless they will serve a very useful purpose. The howling itself will convince Parliament that a

responsible section of opinion in India is willing, unlike the Congress, to take the official scheme into serious consideration. The British Cabinet will then be able to point to this body of opinion and, on its strength, pull their proposals through Parliament. If, however, Moderates also, like Congressmen, cried 'Rejection, Rejection,' then the diehard element in the Conservative Party will say, 'If there is no one in India who wants the reforms, why pass them at all? Let us stop the whole thing.' The Moderates' duty, therefore, now is to create in India opinion enough to enable Parliament to put the measure on the statute book. If they denounce the measure and press for improvements, the National Government will condone the denunciation and ignore the demand for improvements, but it will exploit the fact of the Moderates worrying so much about the White Paper as to suggest changes in it for the purpose of dishing the Churchill group. It is a very patriotic purpose which the Moderates will serve if they lend themselves to be exploited in this manner. For they will thus save the reforms from shipwreck. What nobler role can they aspire to play in Indian politics?"

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad's statement gives no room whatever for this kind of interpretation. He will decline with thanks the honour, being thrust upon him by the *Times of India*, of being regarded as a saviour of the Hoare constitution. He claims in his statement to be known as its opponent. Sir Samuel Hoare cannot use the statement at all in defence of the White Paper scheme, but Mr. Churchill can use it very effectively to down it, and we shall be surprised if he does not use it for this purpose. Nor will Sir Chimanlal regret its being used in this way. For, the improvements that he desires being out of the question, he will not be sorry if Sir Samuel Hoare, who has all along treated the Liberal Party cavalierly and who has consistently adopted an attitude of *non possumus* to any suggestions for an extension of the scheme, meets with a resounding defeat at the hands of his diehard opponents on the question of the India Bill. He would much prefer of course if the defeat

could be inflicted upon Sir Samuel by the British Liberal and Labour Parties on the definite ground that the White Paper proposals are too conservative. But the parties which stand for progress in Parliament being too feeble, he will not much mind if Sir Samuel Hoare's defeat comes about through tory malcontents; still he would naturally desire the defeat of Sir Samuel rather than his triumph. The *Times of India* has thus no warrant whatever for reading into Sir Chimanlal's statement a meaning which obviously it does not bear.

But it shows the danger to which all those who propose improvements in the White Paper scheme at this stage are exposed. Anyhow the improvements are not going to come; all suggestions in this regard will be summarily brushed aside. But those who put them forward will be made to appear as if they are keen on bringing even an unimproved scheme into execution and that they will help in its execution against any possible opposition from the extremists in India. We know that there is no such politician in any of the advanced groups in this country; that the Liberals propose improvements only in order to give British politicians gifted with a large vision a last chance if they will take it; and that if the improvements are not effected, they just will not care whether the White Paper scheme is saved or lost. But their aims can be so easily misinterpreted, and therefore it is a question for their consideration whether, in view of the *Times of India's* article, they should not adopt a different strategy, viz, of condemning the White Paper without suggesting improvements. In any case they have no new suggestions to make in regard to improvements; they can only repeat those that they have made before. And, in all human probability, their suggestions, even if repeated, will not even receive consideration at this stage. Then would it not be wise for them now, by refraining from making any suggestions and only condemning the White Paper, at least save themselves a lot of gross misinterpretation to which they are now subject at the hands of papers like the *Times of India*?

## DEBTORS AND CREDITORS IN THE PUNJAB.

THE vicissitudes and provisions of the Punjab Relief of Indebtedness Bill, which is now before the Provincial Legislative Council, are of much wider and deeper interest than is realised by the public. The problem of rural indebtedness is by no means unique in the Punjab and both in respect of the development and present position of this problem the whole of India exhibits common features. In its outline the problem may be stated as follows: With the advent of British courts and British revenue system both the borrowing opportunities and needs of the cultivators were increased. As there was no restriction on the control exercised by the creditor on the assets of the debtor, till of course later remedial legislation was undertaken, the rise of debts meant the temporary and permanent alienation of land. Indigence and landlessness were promoted amongst

the socially most important class of agriculturists. The recent sudden fall in prices has accentuated the situation to a desperate extent and official and non-official efforts in all parts of the country are now directed towards finding remedies to meet what is recognised to be a very grave situation.

Owing to their military and political importance the rural population in Punjab exercises very great influence on the policy of its Government and it was only to be expected that when the question of the relief of indebtedness cropped up there it should arouse widespread interest, amounting to a sensation. The position is indeed fraught with great interest. The members from the rural areas who claim to represent the debtors' interests are in a majority among elected members, while the urban members who are alleged to be the representatives of the creditors

are in a minority. The Government of the Province, by its direct and indirect influence on the Council divisions, holds a key position, but is naturally very susceptible to the influence of the rural party. As recent divisions in the Punjab Council have shown, the local Government is hard put to the task of maintaining a balance between the two influences.

The representatives of the rural party, who were in a majority in the Select Committee appointed to consider the original Relief of Indebtedness Bill, are on very strong ground with respect to much of their diagnosis of the evil of rural indebtedness. They are undoubtedly right in declaring that the situation calls for very urgent remedies. As we indicated above, the chief responsibility for having rendered the problem of indebtedness so acute and continuing as at present must be placed on the revenue and judicial system of the British Government in India. It appears that, while recognising the unsuitability of British ideas of contractual justice to Indian conditions, the leaders of the rural party in the Punjab do not consider that the rigidity of the present revenue system has much to do with the present debt situation. Either the revenue administration of the Punjab is more accommodating, or this is only an omission on the part of the rural party.

While agreeing with the leaders of the rural party in the Punjab in much of their diagnosis and description, we fear that they have not been sufficiently careful about the remedies that they have incorporated in the majority report of the Select Committee and that they are now triumphantly getting adopted in the Legislative Council. That the rates of interest and the practices of money-lenders require to be regulated in the interest of the helpless debtors is now generally agreed. It is further agreed that some organised method of debt conciliation free from the purely mechanical and pettifogging atmosphere of the civil courts must be provided. It must, however, be borne in mind that the rates of interest actually allowed must be sufficient to cover the costs and risks of the loan, and no confiscation of an equitable and socially just claim must be effected in the name of conciliation. Further, though, in a desperate situation like the present, some retrospective legislation is well-nigh inevitable, the scope of such legislation ought to be very narrowly limited.

The majority of the Select Committee composed of the rural members state their objective as follows: "to secure that the debtor should be allowed to remain a free agent and an efficient worker." It is most unfortunate that many of the provisions suggested by them will reduce the efficiency of debtors and will not add to the blessings of their freedom. Already the majority in the Punjab Council have transgressed the proper limits of protective legislation by extending to all loans, agricultural and other, the special provisions of the proposed Act. These provide, firstly, that except in the case of organised banking institutions no compound interest will be allowed in any suits at present pending or to be instituted here-

after; that the rate of interest in secured loans shall not exceed 8 p. c. and in unsecured loans 18¼ p. c.; that specially created conciliation boards might adjudicate on equitable grounds claims arising out of these transactions and that the boards might move either at the initiative of the debtor or any of his creditors; no appeal to any other tribunal from the decision of the boards is provided; the *dam dupat* rule is to be established even with retrospective effect; and that the temporary transfer of land from the debtor to the creditor for the satisfaction of a claim is subject to the authority of the Collector who is bound to exempt from transfer any land deemed to be necessary for the maintenance of the agriculturist.

A mere cursory review of these provisions will show that they embody an attempt by a forced legislative measure to write off the slate all the burden of existing debts and the legal sanctions behind them, and to set up a new system of justice altogether. While sympathising with the underlying objects of those who speak in the name of the Punjab peasants, we must ask ourselves two questions: whether the violation of the accrued rights of the present creditors is economically or socially justifiable; and secondly, whether such violent measures will not in the long run defeat their own purpose by rendering the lot of the peasant himself much worse than what it is at present. With respect to the first question it must be remembered that though all money-lenders are not doves of innocence and mercy, a very considerable number of them are engaged in pursuing a business which is at least as useful and as honourable as most other occupations in society. To deprive these by a stroke of the pen of accumulated dues on account of interest and additions of unrealised interest to capital is a step that can be thought of only if the State is taking upon itself the immediate liability of redeeming the existing debts. This latter step the Government of the Punjab is not prepared to take, nor are the leaders of the rural party eager to press such a reform on their Government with the same zeal with which they are running the spear against the creditors. Retrospective legislation, confiscation of just claims and denial of all assistance in actual realisation is a trio of unjudicial acts which cannot be defended even by the best friends of the peasants.

And this is the worst of the proposals of the majority party in the Punjab Council. They aim, so their representatives assure us, at maintaining the freedom and efficiency of the debtor. The physical freedom of the debtor will indeed be safeguarded by the very stringent restrictions against arrest for debts that they have introduced in the proposed measure. But it is absolutely certain that the efficiency of the debtors will not be improved by the kind of legislation at present before the Punjab Council. In so far as high rates of interest, and such practices as compound interest and accumulations beyond double the amount of the original debt are the outcome of the weakness of the debtor and the wickedness of the creditor they

can indeed be checked by restrictive legislation. But if the conditions of the business, the capacity of the borrower and the risks of the creditor are unfavourable, no amount of legislation will prevent the evil of indebtedness from emerging. If no attempt is made to keep it within reasonable limits sanctioned by law it will thrive in extra-legal fields, much in the same way as the Pathan money-lending does in many provinces. All extreme legislation regarding agricultural indebtedness, particularly such as is not accompanied by a positive measure of relief to both parties on the part of the Government itself, is bound to defeat its own purpose. The hardships and discontent among the debtors will not finally abate. If anything, they will be increased and will be augmented by the discontent among the creditors themselves. The Punjab Government, which has already shown much readiness in actively associating itself with the cause of economic reform in the province under its charge, might be trusted to play its role of composing differences and supplying the positive assistance needed both by the creditors and the debtors.

## Our London Letter.

( BY AIR MAIL. )

( From Our Correspondent. )

LONDON, 8th November.

### THE INDIAN OUTLOOK.

**U**NDER the above caption Mr. Andrews has a special article in to-day's *Spectator*. It is most attractively written and deals with circumstances and personalities all of which are ill appreciated in this country. The factor in the Indian situation in which, however, he is most deeply interested is that of the Youth Movement. He says: "I found young India wavering in its mental allegiance. The picture of the future which stands out before them is at present out of focus. But this somewhat hesitant attitude cannot continue for long, and the anxious question arises in the mind—'What direction will the Youth Movement, both within and without the Congress, take? Will it suddenly swerve towards the path of violence, or will it keep strictly to the course of non-violence, which the Congress has laid down?' Much more than the peace of India hangs on the answer to this question. It is bound up with the peace of the world. Mahatma Gandhi said to me, in the course of one of our many conversations, 'The question of the relation between India and Britain is not merely one that is to decide the fate of these two countries; it will settle the destiny of Europe and Asia.'"

### AT FRIENDS HOUSE.

Mr. Andrews is always at home at Friends House, and on Tuesday last, at the lunch-hour meeting, he spoke on "What I saw in India". He stressed the great poverty and the increased destitution of the country, and emphasised that the Government of India were obviously alarmed at the situation, for important economic commissions had been appointed to enquire into the facts and make proposals for remedies. It was clear, however, that the patient peasantry were getting to the end of their slender resources. The poverty of the villages was reflected in the towns, where the unemployed younger genera-

tion was getting restless in its growing misery. Violence was a natural product of misery. He pleaded for the early and unconditional release of Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the most outstanding figure among the leaders of young India. Mr. Andrews denied that Bengal was more peaceful as a result of the present policy of repression. The Mahatma's work for untouchability and other great social questions was enormous and widespread. His influence with the masses was unique and unchallenged. His recent withdrawal from the leadership of the Congress showed a great and fundamental independence of character. Yet for long he had been the great untouchable so far as the Viceroy and the high Government officials were concerned. It was of vital consequence to the welfare of India and the future of its youth that Mr. Gandhi should be taken into consultation by the authorities, the present ban should be removed, and personal contact and human relationships restored.

A short but important letter signed by Mr. Henry Nevinson, Dr. George P. Gooch, and Mr. C. F. Andrews, urging the immediate and unconditional release of Jawaharlal Nehru, appeared in this week's *Manchester Guardian*.

### CONGRESS AND THE MAHATMA.

Detailed information of the proceedings of the Congress meetings in Bombay has now begun to reach here, and the circumstances in which the Mahatma has finally decided to leave the Congress and devote himself to the problem of rural uplift are beginning to be understood. It would appear to those watching the distant scene that the Mahatma has realised the overwhelming importance of the urban intelligentsia in the conduct and policy of Congress hitherto, and that he recognises that for the healthy growth of the political and economic life of the country, it has become urgently necessary to concentrate largely upon the development of village life and its economic self-sufficiency. Quite a number of other people have of course done so before him, and have recognised the necessity of the work of rural uplift much earlier, but their labours were bound to be comparatively ineffective, first because many of the workers were foreigners, and secondly because the movement did not have behind it the driving force of a powerful personality and an India-wide reputation. Whilst the Mahatma's discovery is thus by no means original, it is highly significant that his enthusiasm for the cause of village India has resulted in the beginnings of a new and nation-wide drive, in which he may succeed in attracting the energetic collaboration of a large proportion of young India, who will have enough in this constructive programme to occupy their active and self-sacrificing energies for many years to come, if they are indeed willing to throw themselves into the task. In view of the fact that the Mahatma regards this as a non-political activity, and yet having in itself a special political significance, of a self-satisfying kind, it would appear to those who are not obsessed by the fetish of official prestige, that it would be an act of wise statesmanship on the part of the higher authorities to take the Mahatma into friendly and human consultation. So much of the present bitterness in the country is obviously, as Mr. Andrews rightly points out, the product of this absence of human contact on the part of the authorities with the Indian national leaders. The collaboration in works of reconstruction that has been one of the most marked features of the post-earthquake period in Behar is worthy of reproduction throughout the country.

It is not often that Dr. N. Gangulsee makes a contribution to the Press that would be acceptable to



self-respecting Indian opinion. In to-day's *Times*, however, he has an important letter on "Mr. Gandhi and the Indian Village", in which he makes a really valuable contribution to the understanding of the Mahatma. I quote the final paragraph:

"Mr. Gandhi's nominal retirement from Congress politics is necessary for the success of his village work. If he can relieve the deadening despair of Indian village life and succeed in overcoming the 'inertia of centuries' he will certainly strengthen the position of the Congress in the country. Those who prophesied that with the collapse of civil disobedience Mr. Gandhi's influence would fast wane did not fully grasp what his leadership in rural uplift might achieve. On many occasions I have seen Mr. Gandhi among the village folks, and I think Boswell's remark about Wilberforce may truly be applied to him: 'I saw what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table; but, as I listened, he grew, and grew, until the shrimp became a whale.'"

#### THE REFORMS AND THE FUTURE.

General Smuts's Dundee speech, in which he made a friendly reference to the necessity for progressive Indian constitutional reform, in a non-party spirit, has been repeated in other words by another distinguished Dominion statesman, Mr. S. M. Bruce, ex-Prime Minister of Australia and presently the Australian High Commissioner in England. It is extremely important that India should realise that in her aspirations towards Dominionhood she has the strong sympathy of the self-governing Dominions. In view of the forthcoming General Election in Canada, when the Liberals are expected to come into office, it would not be surprising if Mr. King, the Liberal leader, presently makes a similar appeal for generous and sensible treatment of the subject.

I remember that years ago Mr. Lionel Curtis told me that this sympathy of the Dominions with Indian aspirations towards responsible government, was very real and genuine, and that the Dominions would very much sooner deal with an India enjoying such responsible government than with an India whose destinies were controlled, not by her own statesmen, but guided by British statesmen. Curiously enough, this week this view was confirmed to me by a distinguished Indian friend, who has had numerous opportunities of meeting Dominion statesmen, in various places, and of collaborating with them in matters of far-reaching Imperial importance. How very different this attitude is from the narrow wrangling of Mr. Winston Churchill, who, in publicly recognising that age is creeping upon him (he will shortly be sixty years old), again turns to the Conservative Party which he deserted in his youth, and to whom he has returned in later years like a penitent prodigal son to save the country from the Socialists and the Empire from disruption by a policy of surrender in India. In denouncing and trying to wreck the projected reforms scheme, he will doubtless be counting upon whatever allies he can find, and will of course not disdain even the support of certain sections of Indian nationalists, including the Congress. It is interesting to note that Miss Slade met him just before her departure. Whether she was able to give him any hint of the real Congress attitude towards the legislatures and the reforms, I am unable to say. The great Tory meeting is now expected to be held on the 4th December, and I shall be astonished if Mr. Baldwin does not carry by far the greater part of his Party with him. The Government's support among Conservative members of the House is likely to be very much greater than might be supposed from the Bristol demonstration last month.

#### OF INTEREST TO INDIA.

Mr. John Payton, the Secretary of the National

Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, has protested in the *Manchester Guardian* against the Secretary of State's approbation of the public executions recently held in Sind. He condemns the new practice as being a futile and savage survival and contrasts the action of the Secretary of State for India with that of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who has twice recently issued instructions that the practice should not be repeated in the territories over which he holds sway.

Mr. Edward Villiers, of the Union of Britain and India, writes approvingly of Sir Frederick Sykes's appeal in the *Times* for a realistic and constructive policy regarding India on the part of the political parties here and for closer personal contacts between India and Britain to be brought about by something in the nature of imperial conferences between duly authorised representatives of the two countries.

## Reviews.

### HISTORY OF PUNJABI LITERATURE.

A HISTORY OF PUNJABI LITERATURE, 1110-1932. By MOHAN SINGH. (Author, Professor in the Punjab University.) 22cm. 139p. Rs. 15.

DR. MOHAN SINGH had already made a name for writing an excellent thesis on Modern Urdu Poetry, for which he got the degree of Ph. D. from the Calcutta University. The book under review is a similar thesis on the History of Punjabi Literature, which has won for him the degree of Doctorate from the Punjab University. This book, however, though more ambitious in its scope, is not so successful as the first. The period treated is more lengthy and the material available for help so scanty. Yet the author has been successful in turning out something which will, effectively and for ever, stop a certain type of the classicist from sneering priggishly at the mere mention of Punjabi literature and from poohpooing the very idea of there existing any useful or authentic Punjabi MSS."

It is "a brief survey of Punjabi literature from the earliest days known down to the year of grace 1932, with special attention to the reactions between Punjabi life and letters." Indeed, his observations on historical or religious matters, as apart from purely literary, are very interesting and original. There is nothing like his characterization of Punjabi life, individual and national; his psychological study of the Bhakti movement; and his analysis of the forces making for change in the Punjab and Punjabis under British rule. The way he outgels the protagonists of the theory that Guru Nanak was influenced by Kabir is also very heartening. He disposes of this entirely baseless and most mischievous canard with convincing proofs drawn from history and literature. This is the first successful attempt made in English to refute the allegation, though S. Nihal Singh Suri had already done so in Punjabi, with perhaps greater authenticity, in his 'Life of Kabir.' It was, however, not quite necessary for Dr. Mohan Singh to dub the consummate writings of Kabir as "insipid repetitions in second-rate poetry," or to say that the *Kabir Biiak* was not the composition of Kabir himself but of a follower of his, writing in the 17th century or earlier on the lines of *Pran Sangit*, a composition of Guru Nanak. This is doing injustice to the memory of one who is held in highest esteem for the excellence of his life and poetry.

Indeed the writer shows this want of mental balance in many other places where his spirit is roused to anger against those who differ from him or is pleased with himself for unearthing something extraordinary. In his zeal for the new he becomes quite uncritical and accepts all old MSS. as genuine and includes even non-Punjabi matter into the scope of his study.

Many of the extra-Granth works attributed to Nanak are clearly spurious compositions of later growth. The style of language and thought clearly shows that they are not from the master mind of Nanak. Many of them are old enough to be considered on their own merit as specimens of Punjabi, but they should not be ascribed to wrong authors or wrong dates. He mentions Kabir, Namdev, Miran Bai, Hamir Rasau, Chand Bardai, Raidas, and Shah Burhan-ud-Din among Punjabi writers, while if we look at the passages quoted from them, they appear to be anything but Punjabi. In fact he nowhere shows any sense of distinction between Hindi and Punjabi, and his four-fold division of Punjabi—including Hindi—is based upon this confusion. How could Kabir write anything in Punjabi, when he had no contact or concern with the Punjab? At least his language shows no trace of Punjabi in it. The same could be said about other authors named above. Guru Govind Singh did write Punjabi as well as Hindi or Brij Bhasha, but Dr. Mohan Singh, when giving minute details of the *Dasam Granth*, does not take up the only relevant question, that is, how much of it is Punjabi and how much non-Punjabi. And then he calls *Prem Prabodh* a "pure Punjabi work," while really it has no purity or impurity of Punjabi in it. The poem called *Chandi-di-Var* is arbitrarily dubbed by him as a work in Lahndi, while according to his own division of Punjabi it should be classified as a work of pure Central Punjabi. Santokh Singh, the author of *Nanak Prakash*, is included among Punjabi writers, while he really wrote nothing but what the author calls Braji. The passage quoted by him on p. 74 is written in the same language, only a few words of Lahndi being incorporated as a quotation from the Punjabi speaker. I don't know what principle is followed by the author for distinguishing Punjabi from non-Punjabi works. He seems to include all that was ever written in the land of the five rivers, or perhaps all that is found written in Gurmukhi characters. I have got a better reason for saying that the Vedas were composed in Punjabi, because they are the work of Punjabis who composed them on the banks of five rivers, and the present Punjabi-speaking people are their direct descendants. Punjabi remotely began with the Vedas, which were composed not in Sanskrit but in Punjabi—old, very old and archaic, but Punjabi all the same—as the language of King Alfred was English though very archaic and far removed from the modern idiom of English. It went through several changes as the result of its contact influences from the east and west. Two main divisions have always been observed in its composition. They are the result of historical connections. The first batch of Aryans coming from the west settled in the centre and the west of the Punjab, while the second stream came wandering through the north and settled in the east. Thus our vernacular, descended from the Vedic language, came to have two distinct features even from the start. Since Asoka's rule, which had brought our language under Pali influences, the Punjab proper remained connected more with Qabul and other Asiatic provinces than with India. The eastern portion up to the Satluj, however, was often connected with India; and its speech, emerging from the Saurseini Prakrit, has always been under the influence of

Sanskrit and Brij Bhasha; while the spoken dialect of the west, called Apbhransh in olden days, has been more free and flexible.

The Mohammedans who entered from the west introduced a further division into the western dialect, which came to have two forms: Lahori and Lahndi. A real modern literature in Punjabi began with the advent of Islam. The Muslim preachers, especially the Sufis, approach the masses through their vernacular, and poured Arabic and Persian thoughts and words into its mould. Where their influence prevailed, the language became what is called Lahndi.

The Hindu writers' appeal was not to the masses of each locality but to the classes scattered all over the country. Their literary language, called Gatha or Sanskriti, crossed over the provincial barriers and was so fashioned as to be understood by all thinkers and writers, wherever they might be. The form thus evolved was highly artificial, as all such intellectual attempts are bound to be. The different inflections were so framed as to abolish the peculiar distinctions of different vernaculars and to give a sort of uniformity to them. The result was a kind of hybrid language which may be compared to the following macaroni:

Patres conscripti took a boat and went to Philippi.  
Trumpeter unus era qui coatum scarlet habebat.  
Stormum surgebat, et boatum oversetebat.  
Omnes drownerunt, quae swim-away non potuerunt,  
Excoipe John Periwing tied up to the tail of a dead pig.

Midway between the Gatha and the Lahndi was the Lahori, which was used by people in the central districts. The specimens of all the three are found in Guru Arjun's *Jaisri-di-Var*. Each *Pauri* has got two *Shlokas* attached to it. The first *Shloka* is in Gatha or Sanskriti; the second gives the same idea in Lahndi; and then the *Pauri* which follows gives the same idea in a more developed form in the central idiom, which is the Guru's own.

Lahori or Punjabi proper came into prominence with the rise of Sikhism. It developed enormously in the hands of the Sikh Gurus and their followers, and by the time of Guru Gobind Singh it had acquired a standard prestige which gave it a vogue not only in the central districts but also in the west and the east, abolishing the dialectical forms at least from the expression of standard authors. As there were no schools for teaching composition in Punjabi or drilling young students in its idiom and grammar, the writers—even the best of them—showed backsliding now and then from the standard language into their local dialects. But, taken as a whole, the work of Guru Gobind Singh (of Hoshiarpur District), Buleh Shah (of Kasur), Waris Shah (of Sheikhpura Dist.), Hashim (of Amritsar Dist.), Qadir Yar (of Sialkot Dist.), Ali Haider (of Multan), and Gharib Chand (of Rawalpindi) shows a sufficient uniformity of standard. The same standard is kept up in the British period, and the frequent slips into dialectical forms complained of before are vanishing from the idiom of writers, as a result of a more regular teaching of Punjabi in schools and as intercommunication between different parts of the country increases.

Dr. Mohan Singh traces the rise of Punjabi from the 8th century, and divides the whole range of its literature into five periods: the Pre-Nanak Age (8th to 15th centuries), the Age of Nanak (16th to the end of 17th), the Later Mughal Period (18th cent.), the Age of Ranjit Singh (1799 to 1864), and the British Period. The Punjabi literature in a recognisable form began with the Mohammedan Sufi faqirs of the south and west, like Farid, and the Hindu Yogi faqirs of the east, like Gorakh and Charpat. The literature

coming down from them is very meagre—containing no prose—and the pieces quoted by Dr. Mohan Singh, especially from the Yogis, are very poor specimens of Punjabi. The incubus of Gatha does not seem to allow any freedom to the language of the monks whose minds too were not yet free from the old influences. The coming of the Mohammedans loosened the bonds of the Punjabi spirit, and a glow of romance spread over the pale face of mere religiosity or imitative philosophy. The religio-romantic stories of Bhartri Hari, Rasalu, Puran, Iohbran, Kokilan, Sorath Bija, etc., began to be written in native measures, as also the romantic tales brought but Mohammedans from the west—the stories of Laila Majnu, Shirin, Amir Hamza, etc. Then the religious veneer was also removed, and the native-born tales and songs of true romance, like those of Hir-Ranjha, Sohni-Mahiwal, Mirza-Sahiban, Sassi-Punnu, etc. came into vogue. The writers who made them popular were Damodhar, Hafiz-Barkhurdar, etc. This happened in the second period, called the Age of Nanak. The more prominent part of literature was produced by the Sikh Gurus, who preserved their own compositions as well as those of other religious writers—Hindu and Mohammedan—in their Book called the Holy Granth. None of the Bhagats, except Farid, wrote in Punjabi, and even Guru Tegh Bahadar should have been omitted from the list of Punjabi writers. On the poetry of the Sardars or Bhattas, the author has made no study of the latest researches of Prof. Sahib Singh; therefore he blunders about their number and identity. Bhai Gurdas, whose *Vars* show a great advance in the purification and unification of Punjabi idiom, was another great author. The Dasam Granth, which besides much that is Hindi, contains a few Punjabi pieces like *Chandi-di-Var* of Guru Gobind Singh, was put together in about 1738. Prose also began in the Guru period, but the quantity was not large. The only specimens worth mentioning are the chronicles of Guru Nanak, the oldest of which is the India Office copy of the *Janam-Sakhi*.

The next period, of the later Mughals, though a period of political confusion, gave the chance of life to the genius of Punjabi writers, as the incubus of Mughal rule was lifting and the people of the land were coming to their own after long centuries of foreign subjection. The foreign taste of liberty gave rise to such stalwarts as Buleh Shah, Waris Shah, Najabat, Ali Haider, Bihari, Vijid, Agra, etc., who in spite of Dr. Mohan Singh's tendency to belittle them are some of the greatest glories of our literature. It is they whose utterances have entered the life of our people and have fixed the standard of their language. Dr. Mohan Singh, therefore, will have to give some substantial reasons before the Punjabi scholars would consent to his estimate of Waris as a poet inferior to Hamid or even to Kali Das of Gujranwala. In prose too this period was responsible for such works as the *Sakhis* and *Parachis* of Mani Singh and others, translations from Gita, Bhagwat, etc., and such books as *Pakki Roti* and *Singhasan Batisi*.

He, however, does more justice to the next period, the Age of Ranjit Singh, which saw the great romantic and lyrical poetry of Hashim, Ahmad Yar, Imam Bakhsh, and Qadir Yar, and religious and historical poetry of Gopal Singh, Shah Mohammed, etc.

The British period was too recent and too vast for the author to do full justice to. He gives mere lists of books with a few remarks here and there according to his predilections, which are often very queer, e. g., when he praises the anglicised Carlylean Punjabi of Puran Singh as "our best prose." The lists were bound to be incomplete, as he has had no time to read the enormous mass of production which has been crowded into a short period of

recent development. He has got in most of the prominent authors, like Bhai Vir Singh, Dit Singh, Puran Singh, Dhani Ram, Firoz Din, Nanda, Kirpa Sagar, Charan Singh, Karam Singh, Prem Singh, Budh Singh, Miran Bakhsh. But the classification is very defective. *Lakhdata Singh*, a drama, is put under prose fiction; *Var Nadir Shah*, a book of poetry by Najabat, is put down as a prose work by Bawa Kartar Singh, who is only its editor; *Bhartri Hari* by Bhai Vir Singh is a versified rendering of Bhartri Hari's Shatake, but it is put down among historical works in prose; *Guru Gobind Singh* by Daulat Ram is a work in Urdu, but the author, who has seen perhaps its Punjabi translation, mentions it among Punjabi works. Narain Singh's *Lal Badshah* is a translation of *King Lear*, but is here shown as of Othello. *Chathian di Var*, by Q. Fazal Haq, is shown under prose as *Chithian di Var*.

The method of presenting facts is hurried and confusing, and the confusion is made worse by lengthy involved sentences and such queer words as economicality, Pirized, uniformizing, picturization, plentitude, idiomaticalness.

The book breaks the ground well for other writers on the same subject, but coming from a scholar of Dr. Mohan Singh's calibre, it is not a little disappointing.

TEJA SINGH.

#### GERMAN VIEW OF AMERICAN LIFE.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT. By M. J. BONN. (Allen & Unwin.) 1933. 21cm. 308p. 10/6.

AMERICAN life is here presented as the supreme example of social experimentation on a nation-wide scale—an experiment extending in time from the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers upon the bleak New England shores up to the launching of the N. R. A. by Roosevelt II. The author is a German, who has spent many years in America, so that he combines an intimate firsthand knowledge of things American with the detached and impersonal view-point of a foreigner.

Beginning with the geographical features of the vast continent, and a bird's-eye-view of the motley peoples who have formed the "melting pot" of its civilization, the book goes on to deal with its political development, foreign relations, economic successes and failures, and spiritual ideals, and in conclusion attempts to sum up its successes and failures and its net contributions to the world at large.

The author has dealt with the involved and complex web of American life in a style that is always readable, and sometimes arresting. Whether the reader agrees or disagrees, he realises that the presentation is made with insight as well as detachment and is worthy of careful study. The pioneer spirit of the settler, the influence of the ever moving "frontier," the equality of opportunity which has departed with the vanishing of the frontier, the land hunger of the old-world immigrant, the vaunted spirit of democracy that existed within the fold of nordic nations but stopped short of the Jew, the Oriental, and the Negro—these are some of the vivid elements entering into the pageant of America's life. Fear of European politics, the Monroe Doctrine, the growth of imperialism, the policy of "splendid isolation," the final entrance into the Great War and the subsequent refusal to become entangled with European politics—these topics form another sequence explaining events that seem difficult of understanding to the non-American observer.

The chapter on the "Puritan Twilight" is one of the most interesting, though to the mind of the

reviewer one of the least satisfying, in the book. Prof. Bonn, who writes as a humanist rather than a Christian, follows the prevailing attitude of seeing much to blame and little to commend in the stern regime that Puritan New England imposed upon the thought and conduct of a nation. These assertions probably seem harder to one looking upon them from the outside than to one who knows from easy experience the more human amenities seen only from within. The writer looks with no sympathy upon the great prohibition experiment; and perhaps it is his German tradition which lays upon the freedom of women the blame for most of the moral dangers that now beset American life. A shallow optimism based on freedom from material want, and a cheerful habit of eating and drinking "for tomorrow we die" are the author's summary of the special gifts of America's philosophy. The reader will, one hopes, fail to be limited by these conclusions, but will nevertheless enjoy the picture of national development, and the vivid impressions of the writer.

A. B. VAN DOREN.

#### FAR EASTERN POLITICS.

**CHINESE POLITICS TODAY.** By HAROLD S. QUIGLEY. (The University of Minnesota Press.) 1934. 22cm. 31p. \$0.25.

**MANCHURIA.** By ELIZABETH M. LYNKEY. (The Catholic Association for International Peace, Washington.) 18cm. 1934. 69p. 10 cents.

IN almost all that is written about Chinese politics there is a dangerous tendency to pick out and exaggerate one or other of its many facets. Some writers fix their attention on the factor of foreign privilege and regards the Chinese Revolution as a struggle against foreign domination. Another group of writers regards Chinese politics as a struggle between rival Tuchuns. A third group of writers, to whom Communism is anathema, sees red everywhere and regards China as a battle-ground between the forces of Communism and those of anti-Communism. All these partial views are dangerous, for they are exploited by some people to justify policies of their own. Harold S. Quigley deserves the thanks of the educated public by giving in this brochure a brilliant survey of the many-sided character of Chinese politics. The author is eminently qualified to write on the subject. He was on the Faculty of Tsing Hua College, Peiping, between the years 1921-1923 and was Guggenheim research fellow in Japan. He served as a delegate at the Shanghai Conference in 1931. He is now Chairman of the Department of Political Science in the University of Minnesota and a member of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. We need hardly say that the author's qualifications to write on Chinese politics are of the best. The great merit of the book is that within thirty pages the author is able to give a clear and concise account of present-day Chinese politics. We recommend the book to those who want to understand the Chinese situation and yet who do not find time to wade through the pages of ponderous volumes.

"Manchuria" is another brilliant brochure, but, as the title indicates, deals with the latest development in Chinese politics, the separation of Manchuria and the establishment of Manchukuo under Japan's aegis. The brochure has been prepared by the Asian Committee of the Catholic Association for International Peace. In this brochure the Manchurian problem is stated with perfect candour. After giving

the necessary historical and geographical background the Committee discuss the economic issues and national policies and trace Japan's relations with Manchuria which culminated in Manchukuo, a kingdom independent of China but a field for Japanese exploitation. The Lytton Report and Japan's defiance of the League of Nations are given proper attention. The book has an excellent bibliography, where information of a special kind may be sought. The Committee have suggested at the end of the book suitable topics on the Manchurian situation for a study circle. We welcome this brochure and recommend it to all who wish to deepen their knowledge of the Manchurian situation.

M. V. SUBRAHMANYAM.

#### RURAL MARKETING.

**FINANCE AND MARKETING OF CULTIVATORS' WHEAT IN THE PUNJAB.** By F. A. SHAH and L. R. DAWAR. (The Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab.) 1934. 25cm. 86p. As. 8.

THE sudden and unprecedented fall in the price level of agricultural products has divested the attention of all those interested to the problems of marketing agricultural produce. In days of boom prices, the actual producer did not care to ascertain how much was knocked off by the middleman or how much was otherwise wasted. The scales having turned, the producer would now mind getting anything more, even if it be a pie. One crop planning conference and the provincial marketing officers and boards are new creations for the same purpose and to them these surveys are very useful. This detailed survey brimming with details explains to us the intricate and difficult aspects of the problem, and it is by tackling these that we can solve the problem to the best advantage of the primary producer.

This is a survey of 1638 cultivators in 24 villages and nine markets in the three districts of Lyallpur, Ferozpur and Attock, having barani, well irrigation and canal irrigation. Of these 1638, 652 were proprietors, 293 proprietor tenants, and 693 tenants. The average holding was from 10 to 40 acres. Improved varieties of wheat were being sown. These have to make some payments in kind, and the balance they sell or retain for domestic consumption, according to the pressure of ready money they require. By August they sold away about 30% of the total yield, and the balance was retained for consumption or to be sold later. Of the wheat sold 47.8% was sold in villages and the rest in markets. The village prices were lower than market prices by Re. 0-4-9 to Re. 0-5-6 per maund.

Three markets in each of these districts are surveyed and details of marketing are given. For these 438 artias, 25 European firms, and 12 mills are the principal dealers. 2165 distinct transactions were studied. The roads to these markets were good, bad, and indifferent, and the distance from the villages ranged as far as 35 miles. The average cost of conveyance by camel or donkey averaged between 2.25 pies to 3.75 pies per maund. The revenue demand is the major factor which prompts agriculturists to sell their produce, and next to it the pressure of creditors. There are no organisations to control and regulate market practices. Cooperative societies for selling wheat exist and their terms are much better than those of private dealers, but only 10% of the agriculturists sold their produce through them.

N. S. S.