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Topics of the Week.

If the Constitution is Forced—

AS President of the Andhra Provincial Conference, which met in Visagapatam on 30th December, Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao gave his opinion as follows as to what the Congress should do in case the unwanted constitution was forced upon the country. He said :

The question naturally arises as to what the Congress will do when the elections come off next year for the new Provincial Legislatures. We shall not regret if the new constitutional reforms are not passed. If they are passed we reject them as unworthy of acceptance. Does the rejection necessarily mean boycott of the Legislatures that will be formed?

Not necessarily so. We may boycott them or we may capture them, and when we capture them we may keep the seats vacant or carry on pure obstruction or utilise the very legislative and administrative machinery for our own purposes. The All-India Congress Committee will meet in due course and give a clear mandate to the Congress party.

I am strongly of opinion that the Congress party should also take up the Ministry if they get a majority in the Legislature for the same purposes as they enter into the Legislature itself. They can use the little influence and power that they get thereby for the furtherance of the national movement in the country and resist the Govern-

nor in his exercise of special powers and interference with the Provincial Government.

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Feudalism Revived.

MR. KALESWARA RAO subjected the reforms scheme to a searching criticism. The evils of the nominated States' bloc he described thus :—

The advent of the autocratic Native Princes into the Federation will be a source of great danger. They are going to be under the direct control of the Viceroy representing the Crown. They will be nominated by them and will be nothing better than the pocket boroughs of the Governor General.

If the people of the Native States directly elect representatives to both the Federal Houses, an All-India Federation is doubly welcome; but if the seats are to be filled by nominees of native Princes the Federation will be really reactionary.

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What will the Labour Party do ?

THE divergence of view between the British Labour Party and the Indian progressive parties is gradually becoming clearer, and Mr. Attlee's broadcast talk puts the point beyond doubt. He agrees that what India wants is not merely the replacing of British by Indian rule, or the transfer of the people from bureaucrats to autocrats, or the handing over of the many poor to a few rich. He further agrees that "the paramount need in the Indian constitution is that it should be such as would enlist the active co-operation of the vital forces of the nation," and he is under no delusion that the proposed constitution is acceptable to any but reactionary elements in the country.

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EVEN so, however, he thinks that the proposed reforms, though small and inadequate, "constitute a very big advance over the present system of government," an opinion which will hardly meet with support in any quarter in India. He further counsels India to work the reforms. Working the reforms or not working them is a matter for the future. The present question is whether they should be adopted by Parliament or not. On this point Indian opinion has expressed itself very clearly. The Liberal Party and other advanced parties have said that if it were in their power either to pass the Constitution Bill or to reject it, they would unhesitatingly throw it out. What is the Labour Party going to do about this ?

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MR. LANSBURY and others have said that the Labour members would move amendments with a

view to improving the Bill. These promised attempts at improvement leave political India very cold. One can foresee what the result of making these amendments will be. When all these amendments are mechanically rejected, will the Labour Party vote for the third reading of the Bill or against it? This is the question that the Party must ask itself. Will it say: "Progressive Indians do not want the Bill; we are therefore bound to vote against it"? Or will it say: "Indians do not know what the potentialities even of such a constitution can be. We will pass it, in the hope that they will come to see their mistake"?

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If the Labour Party has any regard for the self-determination of nations, it must vote against the third reading of the Bill. Is this too much to ask of the Party? We don't ask it to put through a large Home Rule measure. All we ask is that it will reject, so far as lies in its power, a constitution which only entrenches all the reactionary elements in positions of power, from which it will be next to impossible to dislodge them subsequently. Let the Labour Party at least help India in proving to all concerned that the constitution is being forced upon her against the wishes of the progressives in India and England.

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Go on, Churchill.

AN appeal is being made to the die-hards in England even by such papers as the *Manchester Guardian* to drop their further opposition to the Indian reforms. They have put forward their point of view; they are in a minority; now let them gracefully allow the majority to go on with its programme without any hindrance from them. Such is the nature of the appeal, and, in enforcing it, the papers say: "Consider the effect that the continuance of the opposition will have in India. Indians will feel that they are being balked of the constitution at which they have laboured for many years."

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THIS brings home to one how even papers like the *Guardian* can be uninformed of the state of feeling in countries like India. The withdrawal of diehard opposition will do immense injury to this country, both from the point of view of those who want the reforms and those who do not want them. The former will say to themselves: "Since the diehards have abandoned their attitude of opposition, the reforms which we were led into supporting are really worth nothing. Is it possible that England would offer something worth-while and the diehards would keep quiet? Are we not really being fooled in this matter?" The latter will say: "The diehards command but few votes. Even if these will not be cast against the reforms, we must do something very big to attract notice of the British Parliament to our point of view. The diehard opposition was useful to us in this way, that Mr. Churchill and his followers always harped on the unacceptability of the reforms to Indian opinion."

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LET not the *Guardian* persuade Mr. Churchill to withdraw his opposition. He cannot block the way of the Bill to the statute-book. But progressive Indians will at least have the satisfaction if he is at his post in Parliament that he will be unweariedly zealous in making it clear to British politicians what they themselves would like to have made clear, viz. that the constitution is being forced upon India against her wishes! Do let him go on, please.

* * *

I.L.P. View.

THE following excerpt from the speech which Mr. John McGovern, an I.L.P. member of the House of Commons, intended to make on the J. P. C. Report but could not make for want of time expresses the feeling of all British and Indian progressives:—

The Government's proposals for India are a sham and a fraud. They should be treated with the contempt they deserve by the people of India.

I was struck by the parts of the Minister's speech concerning the Princes of India. One would have thought that nobody lives in India except the noble Princes. It is the old story of making certain that those who are loyal to your capitalist and imperialist system shall remain in control.

The Princes, like the British ruling class, have ground down the people of India and extracted vast wealth from them. They must be fought by the combined effort of the workers and peasants of India.

During this discussion we have heard a great deal about "terrorism" and the methods to combat it. Is not the "terrorism" of which you speak simply the expressed resentment of the Indian people against a long period of British terror and plunder? If you deny to any people the right of self-government, they will surely show their resentment, if they have any spirit. It is not for you to whine if the resentment takes some undesirable and ugly form. I do not like terrorism, but you can stop it by handing back India to the Indians.

You cannot blame the Indian people if they have profited by the struggles of the people of Ireland. All fundamental issues are generally settled by a struggle in the streets.

Let there be no doubt about this—these proposals are repudiated by the overwhelming mass of representative opinion in India. They recognise this as an attempt to set up a bogus constitution. It is an attempt to buy the Princes, capitalists, landlords and a proportion of the middle class by the betrayal of millions of workers and peasants.

* * *

The Congress and the Liberals.

THE *Tribune* writes as follows on the possibility of common action between these two parties:—

If the statement just made by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari regarding the Liberal Federation's resolution on the J. P. C. Report reflects the true mind of the Congress, as we have no doubt it does, there is no reason to despair of the future. "It is very encouraging," he says, "that responsible Liberal organisations are expressing opinions exactly equivalent in every respect to the resolutions of the Congress in regard to the proposed constitutional reforms. The acid test is whether one prefers to remain as we are and struggle for real freedom and self-government to doing so under the proposed constitution. The Liberals have accepted the Congress position." This is perfectly true, though it is only fair to point out that individual Liberal leaders like Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, for instance, and Liberal journals like the *Leader* and the *SERVANT OF INDIA* had expressed the same view that the Federation expressed at its recent session long before the Congress had any opportunity of expressing that view. "Now that the Liberals have come to a clear decision," Mr. Rajagopalachari adds, "their duty is to throw in their lot with the Congress members of the Assembly in their action with regard to the constitutional reforms." We entirely agree, and we have no doubt that the Liberals will do what is suggested if the Congress members themselves will act in the spirit of Mr. Rajagopalachari's statement.

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Late Mr. M. V. Abhyankar.

MR. M. V. ABHYANKAR, whose death last week at Bombay at the early age of 49 will cause wide-spread grief, is the second Congress M. L. A. to be called away before formally taking his seat. In the last Assembly election he had such a formidable rival as Dr. Moonje to fight; and it is stated that it was the strenuous electioneering activity which it involved which hastened his end. He was however not fated to enjoy the honour which he won after such a hard struggle. He began his public life as a Tilakite, but soon embraced Gandhi-ism to which he remained loyal to the end. His attachment to the present-day principles and policy of the Congress was firm and unshaken and to his credit it must be said that he underwent heavy sacrifices for its sake. It may be recalled that he was a member of the Assembly during the three years (1924-26) the Swarajists dominated its deliberations. A sturdy fighter for the national cause and a nationalist to the core, Mr. Abhyankar did more than any single individual in that province to keep the Congress flag flying high in C. P. during the last few difficult years. His death deals a very heavy blow to that body, which it will take long for it to rally from.

* * *

States' People Reject Federation.

THE people in the States, though all in favour of a genuine democratic federation, are unalterably opposed to a bogus undemocratic federation such as is outlined in the J. P. C. Report. This was made clear for the hundredth time by the speech made by Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddi, President, Kolar District Board, as President of the Mysore States' People's Federation. He said:

We have expressed ourselves very often that we are wholeheartedly in favour of an All-India Federation. We long to seek our re-union with our long-lost brethren of British India and the rest of the States. We want to have representation in an all-India body, so that we may have a voice in the shaping and determining of the many problems that are common to all-India. But we want a healthy Federation of an enduring kind, based on fair and equitable foundations and not a travesty of it, through which both the Paramount Power and the Princes seek to further strengthen their position, to the eternal harm of the British Indian people and the States' people. The present proposals regarding Federation are so reactionary, that if they are implemented as they are, we would much rather not have it.

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IT may be that the conditions laid down in the White Paper and the J. P. C. Report for the coming into force of an all-India federation will not be fulfilled at all, or will be fulfilled after much delay. That, however, will not fill the States' people's hearts with concern. For Mr. Reddi asked:

Will a single tear be shed if the proposed Federation never comes into existence? The proposed Federal Legislatures will comprise members of a type who will make for disunity and reactionism and it will be a miracle if Indian Nationalism can ever assert itself through such cramped bodies. What the nature of the representatives of British India in the Federal Houses will be, in view of indirect election, and various other factors, has been clearly brought out by British Indian politicians. And the representatives of the States, who will form no less than one-third of the Federal Lower Chamber and 40 per cent. of the Federal Upper Chamber, are to be appointed by the Rulers of the States... Thus the ship of Indian Nationalism is sought to be wrecked what with the Scylla of the State Rulers' representatives on the

one hand and the Charybdis of separation on the other! The cardinal point that has to be realised is that the representatives of the States should be elected by the people of the States if democracy has to function through the proposed Federation.

Unless the States' representatives are elected by popular election the people in the States have no use for federation. But the British Government will not pay heed to the cry of rejection raised in this quarter any more than to the cry raised in British India.

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THE States' people, however, have to contend against another difficulty, and it is that British Indians themselves, if given satisfaction on the question of safeguards, will insist on the imposition of the federal constitution upon the States' people as the British Government insists on imposing it upon British Indians with the safeguards. It is not to be supposed that British Indian politicians have any greater regard for the principle of self-determination than the British Government. Both stand for coercion one will coerce one section for one thing, another will coerce another section for another thing. The moral position of British Indian politicians is thus exceedingly weak, and the British Government knows it.

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MR. REDDY therefore makes an appeal to the Congress to apply the principle of self-determination, for which the national assembly stands so far as British India is concerned, to Indian States as well, in two ways: first, by making election of the States' representatives and other things on which the States' people insist essential conditions of federation; and secondly, by admitting the States' people's representatives to the constituent assembly on the same terms as the representatives of British India. In imploring the Congress not "to desert" the States' people, Mr. Reddy says:

The attitude of the Congress towards the States' people has been, it must be respectfully stated, a very evasive one. But I hope it has been realised, now at any rate, by our British brethren that they can never secure a satisfactory constitution, unless they take the people of the States along with them. This matter assumes importance, in view of the Congress plans for the future. They have decided to reject the proposals of the J. P. C. Report and their next step is to convene a Constituent Assembly to frame the Indian Constitution. Let not the blunder committed by the British Government be committed by the British Indian people. Let the people of the Native States be given their due place in any such Constituent Assembly, so that the constitution framed by that body may have the warm approval and support of all the people of India. That way lies our happiness and salvation and that of the British Indian people.

* * *

CONGRESSMEN fulminate with all the vehemence of which they are capable against the British Government, but they haven't a word of comfort for the States' people. The constituent assembly will perhaps never come into being, but even on such a body destined, may be, to remain in the land of dreams for as long a time as we can foresee they cannot promise the poor States' people any place! And yet the Congress professes to act on the highest moral plane!!!

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SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU ON THE SITUATION.

By V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI.

THE RIGHT HON'BLE Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's article in the *Twentieth Century* is an able, lucid and judicial survey of the provisions recommended to Parliament by the Joint Select Committee. I may be pardoned if I express satisfaction at finding that the last two years of political separation have made no material difference to our agreement on the main features of the projected Constitution. The slight difference may be compendiously described as one of emphasis. Half way down in his article, he writes: "I may frankly say that I am one of those who hold that neither safeguards nor reservations can be powerful enough to effectively bar the way of India to that position (that of a Dominion). Forces will grow and public opinion will gain strength, which will make it impossible to retard for long India's progress towards that position." Quite so. Those forces and that public opinion, however, will not be the natural or intended results of this Constitution. They are there already. The present British Government tries to block their course. They will only be dammed for a time; but rising in volume and power, they will sweep onward and carry India to her destiny. The interval, as Sir Tej proceeds to point out, will be marked by struggles and disturbances for which the framers of the new order cannot escape responsibility. Sir Tej chronicles the refusal to admit India's right to Dominion Status in bland phrases. I am unable yet to reach that degree of dispassion. Once in 1923 the Government of Mr. Baldwin put aside our demand for equality in Kenya with a disdain which was the more galling because it was not expressed in words. On this occasion also we meet with the same silent refusal. Would the British treat any other people with this adamant contempt? They are confident that owing to our prolonged political subjection we might be treated like children, appeased at one time with promises and told at another time to be quiet and not to bother. We do not command the means of international publicity and cannot call the world to witness. But we are not bound to smile or express a contentment which we do not feel. When we are deceived and know it, we had best say so. It is beside the point to tell us that our own defects have brought us to this pass. These defects existed when the promise of Dominion Status was made. They disable us to-day from exacting its fulfilment.

Coming on the top of four years' incessant palaver in which our representatives took part, the Joint Select Committee's Report may seem to be the result of negotiation on equal terms. It is far from being the case. The final outcome embodied in the Report did not command the approval of any section of the Indian representatives. The joint deliberation was a form. Our men had full opportunities of speech and used them; but their pleadings fell on deaf ears, their recommendations were all rejected, and none of the proposals to which they objected was

abandoned. When the Constitution is enacted in Parliament and sent out to India, it will be an imposition by superior authority, hateful to many and received by others with indifference. What is called the 'trijune' basis is no doubt the core of common agreement—partially responsible federation at the Centre, Provincial Autonomy and safeguards and reservations circumscribing both. Too much, however, is being made of this basis by the advocates of the White Paper and the subsequent Report. The Federation is thin and anaemic, and what responsibility is accorded is both diminished and marred by a multiplicity of safeguards, several of which are not for the benefit of India and are calculated both to hamper and irritate. The ideal Viceroy and Governors which the system requires are not produced in sufficient number even in the free and highly efficient public life of England, and of these but few will be available at any given time for the service of India. Ministers, too, for many years will not all be of the proper calibre and, if they desire to steer clear of the safeguards, must learn to suppress their individuality and become pliant tools for the policy of others. Sir Tej Bahadur is right to contend that the future Constitution is on the whole an advance on the present. Many Liberals will be disposed as a matter of academic comparison to admit this claim. But they may strongly hold at the same time that the advance is so slight and so marred by the framework that it is not worth while to make it on the principle that a small gain is often the enemy of a great gain. Moreover, how is it possible for any patriot who has indulged the hopes of 1930 and knows the requirements of to-day not to use these hopes and requirements as the measure by which to judge the proposed Constitution? So judged, the advance must seem pitifully inadequate and, taken in conjunction with the practical denial of Dominion Status, almost eleemosynary and humiliating.

Sir Tej Bahadur wrote before the recent debate in the House of Commons. His opinion that India has not the capacity to 'reject' the new order is amply confirmed by the authoritative statement that enough persons will be forthcoming to work it. The Liberal meeting in Poona fully realised this. It would have advised rejection if it considered that course practicable. Knowing the limitations on the power of India at this juncture, the Liberals contented themselves with saying that they did not want the proposed change. This is a correct statement of their mind on the subject. It does not purport to indicate their course of action in the future. Future action is contingent upon circumstances that can only be partially foreseen. A political party may be justified in refusing to decide what it shall do many months later. This is the reason why the Congress oracles are dumb. Individual leaders have spoken this way and that. Though it is unsafe to predict, the probability is that Congress authorities may con-

sider it their duty, on the establishment of the new Constitution, to serve the country from within the legislatures as well as from without. However that be, I have often stated my personal opinion to be in favour of that course. The affairs of a nation are always of sufficient importance to demand the services of its best and noblest sons. Its welfare can never be relegated to those who are out to serve particular sections and not the entire people. While I rejoice that Congressmen have resumed constitutional methods, I feel a sense of ungraciousness whenever they accuse other parties of having betrayed the higher interests of the country while they practised non-co-operation and civil disobedience. Did they ever believe that the posts which they scorned would remain unfilled and Government could for that reason be brought to a stand-still? A bad constitution is like a fire or flood. The householder and the citizen ought not to quit the scene of action lest their presence should be construed into an official recognition of the calamity. An imposed constitution affects the people and their fortunes in just the same way as an agreed one. To work the one is no less a duty than to work the other; perhaps it is more. Technically it may be described as co-operation with Government. In one case the co-operation brings pleasure, enthusiasm, satisfaction; in the other it is a duty to one's countrymen performed under difficulty and discouragement, but not necessarily from a desire to help the Government and enjoy its honour and patronage. What matters is not the action itself but the spirit and the motive behind it. I have compared a bad constitution to a visitation of Nature. Like all comparisons it must not be pushed far. This much, however, may be said. No one would claim authorship of a fire or a flood. We may pray against it; we may mitigate its evil; but we have to submit to it. The tyrannous use made by the Conservative Party of their power gives the comparison much point.

I have no means of knowing how far Mr. Satya-murti may be taken as speaking the mind of Congressmen in general. Some remarks, however, that he recently made at Chittoor may be cited as having an intimate bearing on this topic. Explaining what the Congress means by 'rejection' of the Report, he said:

"Positively it means that it has no use for these proposals and would gladly do without them. Apart from other points of view, even from the point of view of the peaceful struggle for the freedom of the country, the present Constitution is much better than the proposals. If however, the Constitution is forced upon us, rejection does not mean that we are committed to the boycott of legislatures. It is quite on the cards that we shall contest all the elections on the twin issues of the Constituent Assembly and the rejection of these proposals, rather the substitution thereof by a Constitution to be framed by the proposed Constituent Assembly; and we shall capture the power such as there is in these legislatures and use them as an instrument in the struggle for swaraj. While we are doing that, we shall also do everything in our power to mitigate the people's difficulties and to improve their lot to the extent to which it is possible to do under the restricted Constitution."

The reader must be struck by the close resemblance between the views expressed in this article and those of the eminent Madras Congressman quoted above. The two sets of views agreeing so far in substance, the difference between them is reduced to the narrow verbal question whether the word 'rejection' expresses the idea best—a point of comparative unimportance which it is possible to debate too minutely. Congressmen and Liberals had drifted far apart. It is an acute sense of common danger that has drawn them together at this moment. It looks as though they could march together for some time at least; Let us hope that some plan of immediate national value may be evolved until this common danger has passed away with its noxious brood of consequences. It behoves the wise heads among the largest and most powerful political body to take the initiative and, realising the supreme need of the hour, rise above considerations of mere party and assemble all progressives on the high level of common national endeavour with a common national objective.

Disappointment, frequent and deep, has made my friend Sir Tej cautious. He won't indulge any more hopes. If one would love politicians one should expect nothing of them. We cannot, however, all be literal followers of Schopenhauer. In the political world particularly we need not kill the last germ of hope. The mistake lies not in hoping but in hoping too much, not in depending on others but in depending on them altogether. Great Britain may seem for the moment engulfed in reaction and self-aggrandisement, but magnanimity is still traceable in her public life and the large international mind still functions soundly. I have faith in Labour. Its ranks no doubt include many Imperialists, some of these being high class Intellectuals. I remember once asking a Labour Minister known to have the widest sympathies how he would vote in case the Cabinet was considering the grant of Home Rule to India. He slowly wiped his glasses, looked away for a while and then said that he was not fully confident of his generosity though he had boasted of it and that it was quite possible that at the last moment he might be overborne by the thought of the great sacrifices that his ancestors had made to build up the Empire. May be, he added, he would act up to his principle on the second or third occasion the vote came up. Those that have known the hold that political power obtains over the entire nature of man in the East as in the West, irrespective of culture or colour, will understand and allow for this hesitation and self-mistrust at the supreme moment of abdication. But let us remember that, in the actual conditions of the world, abdication, whether individual or national, is never sudden or wholly voluntary. Events have long led up to it, and men's wills have been slowly bent by the force of circumstance before the final test is applied. -But there is little reason to doubt that when, our Labour friends come into power, they will proclaim a policy of Dominion Status for India, and, by taking some large steps towards it, make impossible any further defection like that which we

are witnessing to-day. Noble proclamations, once brought down from the heights of speculation, have a way of fulfilling themselves. Let us trust the larger hope. How can we forget so soon that, during the two years immediately following the declaration of Dominion Status, when the Round Table spirit reigned and our hopes were high, it was Labour that ruled in England, though without real power?

Like Mahatma Gandhi, I cherish some old-world love tinged with romance for the order of Princes. I would have our young and zealous patriots treat them somewhat tenderly for the sake of the heroic memories and the proud associations with which, as with an inalienable heritage, our school-boy reading has enriched our minds. Well would it be if these scions of our ancient houses realised how easily they could forge fresh bonds of affection in the hearts of their own subjects and those of British Indians alike. Instead, alas, the flattery of British Conservatives and Liberals has proved stronger than the fond entreaties and adjurations of their own countrymen. Coming into Federation as bulwarks against the advancing tide of democracy, they are only too eager to play this dangerous part, and are demanding provisions and guarantees informed by distrust of their kith and kin, and looking more and more to the British Crown for protection and support. Do they know how much they have brought into jeopardy the ideal of Dominion Status which they once acclaimed with enthusiasm? More than on any minority the British Government lean on them to-day for the frustration of India's hopes. The words of Sir Samuel Hoare are literally true and have an instruction even for well-informed journals like the *Times of India*. As if to set at rest the false and inverted belief that has gained ground as to the parts played by the Princes and British Indian politicians relatively to one another at the birth of the mighty idea of Federation, the present Secretary of State, whose grasp of facts and candour of speech have earned just and universal praise, said: "It was the Princes who made the offer of a Federation four years ago, and it was the British Indians who received the offer in the spirit in which it was made

and were glad to think there was a chance of having as part of the Government of India advantages that their position in history, aspirations and traditions their Princes could bring." I italicise certain words in the quotation to enable the reader to see clearly who were the originators and who the recipients of the idea of Federation. If there is a greater and a smaller degree of responsibility for the idea and its working out in practice, the greater rests on the Princes and the smaller on British Indian statesmen. It is up to our Maharajas and Rajas to see that the idea of Dominion Status is not allowed to be put away by their British allies but is once more brought to the centre of the stage as the governing principle of all our political doings, not less than, but equal to, the newborn goal of Federation, if indeed it were not the elder and worthier brother. When I was first converted to Federation in 1930, I was not without a fear that it might usurp first place and oust Dominion Status. At a plenary session of the first Round Table Conference, I used these words:

"It only remains for me to say one word of caution. Great ideas, thrown together into the arena of politics, sometimes work together and co-operate with each other up to a certain stage, but may tend, when pushed each to its consummation, to collide and even to weaken each other. I do hope, in the deliberations of the Committees to which we shall consign these topics, nothing will be done on the side of those who care for Federation more than for Dominion Status to weaken the latter, just as nothing should be done on the side of those who care for Dominion Status more than for Federation to weaken Federation."

I am not using the language of menace. Anyone can see that no danger lurks in my words. The danger is in the time. The British Crown has no charm by which it could shield the Princes of India from the change which it has itself undergone under the pressure of popular ideas. Their subjects and the people of British India are rapidly learning how closely they are interdependent and cannot be kept after Federation in different political strata. The safety of the Princes is in guiding and directing democracy, not in thwarting it. Fortune is not going to be kinder to them than Nature was to King Canute.

"THE MENACE OF A MOCK FEDERATION."

WE think that there can be no Round Table who at first envisioned an all-India federation as a solvent of all the difficulties in the way of Indian swaraj but felt, at one stage or another in the constitutional discussions of the last four years, like Aesop's fisherman who, on uncorking the bottle found in his net, realised to his horror and consternation that he had only helped in releasing what turned out to be a big frightful monster. Federation was hailed as the surest means of achieving a larger measure of political freedom than seemed otherwise possible. Now it is found that it does not add one whit to freedom; but that it makes democracy impossible, not only immediately but at any time in future. To be quite accurate, one may say that,

under the White Paper scheme and the Joint Select Committee's Report, democracy will be possible only when autocracy wills it. The nominees of the Princes will be replaced by popularly elected members only when the Princes themselves desire it. It must not be supposed that if democracy has been given a death-blow, self-government of a non-popular kind fares any better. Control over the army by Indians will materialise only when the Princes agree, and when all the Princes agree simultaneously. The change that federation will effect in our position is only this: whereas we had to contend hitherto against the white bureaucrats alone, we shall have to contend hereafter with the brown autocrats as well as the white bureaucrats. But there is even a worse evil. We

have it now put in black and white in solemn State papers that central responsibility will be possible only under an all-India federation. Federation is no longer a matter of our volition; it must come about if we would make one forward step. We have got the demon out of the bottle he will not go back into it any more!

In this matter of the States the Congress has a notoriously bad record. It delights in making extreme demands upon the British Government, but its demands on the Princes are far more moderate than those of the Liberals. The Liberal Party, while agreeing to a federation of the right type, has asserted, in the event of such a federation not being agreed to by the Princes, the right of British India alone to full Dominionhood; it has refused to tolerate nomination by the Princes even in the transitional period; it has pressed for the elementary rights of citizenship of the Indian States' people being guaranteed in the federal constitution; it has stipulated that the federating States shall agree to accept constitutional amendments passed by the federal legislature the same as British Indian provinces. The Congress, on the contrary, gives a free hand to the Princes in all these respects. This policy is obviously unwise, anti-democratic and unpatriotic; yet because it was sponsored by Mahatma Gandhi Congress leaders dare not go openly against it. It is therefore very courageous of Mr. S. A. Brelvi, the talented editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, to assail this policy, though without associating it with Mahatma Gandhi's name, in his presidential speech at the first Gujarat States' People's Conference held in Ahmedabad on 29th December. He fully supports the demands made by the people in the States at their all-India Conference, and supports them in the interest of British Indians as much as in that of the States' people, and says further that unless these demands are satisfied the proposed reforms should be rejected by them. "The people of Indian States," he says, "justly claim to be part and parcel of the Indian nation. They are, therefore, entitled to their due role in the federal constitution. This role can be guaranteed to them only if they are entitled to elect their representatives to the federal legislature, if a declaration about their fundamental rights is incorporated in the federal constitution, and if the obligation is imposed on all federating units to accept all constitutional amendments passed in the federal legislature by a specified majority. No federation, which does not guarantee these essential demands of the people of Indian States, can be acceptable to them." He as a British Indian fully supports these demands and urges the Congress to make them its own. For he believes that "the cause of the people of the States is the cause of the people of British India" and therefore says, "It certainly will be the duty of the Indian National Congress, which is the authoritative exponent of the Indian National Demand for Self-Determination, to see that whatever constitution is established in the country secures these guarantees to the people of the Indian States." And in this connection he reminds Congressmen of

what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said in his presidential address at the Lahore Congress. Panditji's words on that occasion were: "The only people who have a right to determine the future of the States must be the people of the States including the rulers. This Congress which claims self-determination cannot deny it to the people of the States."

This brings Mr. Brelvi to the constituent assembly plan of the Congress. Not a day passes when some Congress leader of note or other does not refer to this plan and expound its virtues to his patient audience, but not one ever breathes a word about the place which the States' people are to occupy in this assembly, or even whether they are to have any place at all in it or not. Congress orators refer to British India alone and stop there as if the constitution to be framed by the constituent assembly is not to include the States at all. Either Mahatma Gandhi has expressly forbidden them to commit the Congress to the inclusion of the States' people, as is not unlikely, or he has spoken to them, as he often does, like the Delphic oracle, which leaves his followers wondering what he could have meant. His messages often leave a faint trail and contain confusing clues. Anyhow it is encouraging to find that Mr. Brelvi, a member of the All-India Congress Committee though he is, does not mind opening out his heart to the States' people, however embarrassing this may be to the Mahatma. The States' people, he says, "will certainly have their legitimate share in this act of self-determination on an equal footing with the people of British India", and that "the people of Indian States as well as the people of British India will be represented on the assembly on the basis of adult franchise or any franchise which most nearly approaches it." He takes exception to the demand made by the States' people that the States' part of the constituent assembly should consist exclusively of the people in the States as the British India part of it is to consist exclusively of the people in British India. He thinks that the rulers of the States also are entitled to representation, though the rulers of British India are not. This is a relatively small matter which can well be left over for discussion when the Congress has decided that the States' people will be admitted to the assembly on terms of equality with the British Indian people, as Mr. Brelvi advises it to do. We are rather concerned here to warn that the studied silence of the Congress on this point, like that of the British Government on Dominion Status, has given rise to profound misgivings. The States' people have begun to feel that the Congress, in evading this issue, wishes to deal with the rulers of the States over the heads of their subjects in framing the future constitution and that that is why the Congress authorities, whenever they speak of the constituent assembly, speak of it as if it were to be a wholly British Indian body. The Congress leaders have not yet realised, as Mr. Brelvi has, that the cause of the States' people is the cause of the people as a whole; that it is the cause of democracy. For, as he has so well put it, we are now face to face with "the menace of a mock federation" "in

which the nominees of the Princes will be used to thwart the establishment of the sovereignty of the people." It is earnestly to be hoped that, on account of the growing realisation of this menace among average Congressmen, the Congress will have the courage to deliver itself from the position into which Mahatma Gandhi so unfortunately led it in England and in which he is perhaps trying to keep it in this country.

INDIAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE.

THE sessions of the Indian Economic Conference, which recently held its eighteenth annual meeting at Patna, are deserving of a wider and keener interest than what the general public has hitherto evinced in them. The subjects discussed at these meetings fall into three divisions. Firstly, there is a purely theoretical subject—this time the subject was International Trade—on which the academically-minded members of the Indian Economic Conference read short papers, which evoke a discussion in which the lay public has very little direct interest. Secondly, there is a topic of current, almost emergent, public importance which forms the subject matter of a regular debate. This year the subject chosen in this class was Legislation on Rural Indebtedness. The debate was opened by Mr. Manohar Lal, formerly Minto Professor of Economics in the Calcutta University and Minister in the Punjab Government, and now a leading member of the local Legislative Council.

Mr. Manohar Lal might be said to have been fresh from the Select Committee and Council proceedings in the Punjab on this subject. Hence special significance attached to his words. After alluding to the enormous burden of rural indebtedness and the special hardship created by the recent crisis and depression Mr. Manohar Lal emphasised the need of properly understanding the real causes of rural indebtedness. Uncertainty of the condition of crops, extravagant habits of the farmer and easy facilities for credit were the principal causes stressed. Though Mr. Manohar Lal favoured an easier law of rural insolvency he was strongly impressed by the probable dangers of confiscatory class legislation at the hands of a new Council dominated by debtor interests. This note of disillusionment about the prospects of legislative redress of rural debtors surprised many of Mr. Manohar Lal's listeners. But the surprise almost rose to dismay when an economist of Prof. Radhakamal Mukerjea's wide comprehension and deep insight opened a speech in support of Mr. Manohar Lal's point of view.

It was soon clear, however, that Prof. Mukerjea criticised debt legislation not so much because it was a piece of factious legislative activity, but because he held that, in the absence of a comprehensive and positive improvement of agricultural business and of actual financial assistance by Government, the chances of a successful legislative remedy were meagre. Most people who have given careful thought to this subject will be inclined to agree with Prof.

Mukerjea in this part of his speech. It is, however, doubtful whether the further view that Prof. Mukerjea implied, namely, that, in the absence of such comprehensive and positive scheme of reform, indebtedness legislation must prove harmful to social harmony in the rural areas and must therefore be avoided, will be subscribed to by all. As it is, harmony in rural society has been strained to breaking-point, and it is exactly in the interests of social peace and economic progress of the countryside that some kind of legislative relief and protection to the small-scale agriculturist is urgently called for. Prof. Mukerjea was uttering a much-needed caution when he alluded to the rise of a new class of middlemen and money-lenders from among the so-called agricultural classes themselves. The conflict witnessed in the Punjab Council is not purely a rural versus urban, or debtor versus creditor struggle. More accurately it was a conflict between creditors belonging to classes not considered as agricultural, and both creditors and debtors of the so-called agricultural communities. A good deal of reform in land legislation will have to be undertaken before these anomalies are finally removed.

This debate was characterised by the contribution made to it by Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, the prospective leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Desai emphatically denied the claims of the bigger landlords for legislative protection in the matter of their relations with creditors. He attached special importance to the growing population of the country as a leading cause of growing indebtedness. In view of the fact that the problem of indebtedness has been rendered acute in India at all stages of the growth of population, trained inquirers will not perhaps place the same emphasis on population as they would on such causes as climatic uncertainty and economic backwardness. With the first-hand experience that Mr. Desai had gained when he acted as the representative of the peasants before the Bardoli Inquiry Committee, he succeeded in clinching the issue regarding the responsibility of the Government's revenue policy in the matter of the peasants' growing indebtedness. Mr. Desai by his eloquent and informed contribution imparted a much-needed realism to the debate, which ended on a solemn and sympathetic note.

The Indian Census of 1931 was another topic of discussion in which the public at large is vitally interested. Several carefully prepared papers on this subject were presented to the Conference. The characteristics of the all-India Census came in for a comparatively negligible mention, chief interest having soon centred round a paper of Prof. P. J. Thomas, of Madras, who had set out in his paper the thesis that during the last decade the growth of population has not been faster than the increase in production. This is very probably true, and Prof. Thomas had some plausible statistical argument to support his case. The admitted unreliability of statistics in general, and of Indian statistics in particular, as a guide to conclusions not otherwise substantiated should, however, make us unwilling to

take the optimistic implication of Prof. Thomas's paper as established. It is a pity that none spared any thought at the Conference for the situation as revealed in the Census itself. The two sides—population and production—might, when intently studied, help the purpose of mutual corroboration, and if this is followed by first-hand inquiries in selected parts of the country we might hope to get a somewhat reliable statement of the Indian population problem. In the meanwhile one thing that clearly emerged from all the papers and discussions thereon was the appalling poverty and misery of the Indian people. In the face of this dire calamity any feeling of complacency would border on heartlessness and irresponsibility. Problems of inter-provincial migration are specially interesting in India and a good contribution to the study of this side of the Census is contained in papers on this subject written by Profs. Banerjee and Iyer of Dacca.

The subject that attracted the greatest attention from members of the Conference, including the President himself, was that of Economic Planning for India. Fortunately there was almost complete agreement among those who took part in the discussion on two fundamental points. Planned economy of the type of Russia, that is, one in which the profit motive of individuals and price mechanism of exchange cease to function, did not secure any adherents. On the other hand all combined to welcome the principle of collective and systematic effort to promote the cause of economic reform, even though such a course would entail considerable extension of State activity in the economic sphere and a definite encroachment upon individual property and freedom. Three circumstances, it was further agreed, made the adoption of the principle of planning specially difficult in India. Of these the one to attract most concerted notice was the political dependence of India on Great Britain and the undemocratic and unprogressive character of the Indian governmental structure. Several members pointed out the ill-organised and undeveloped nature of Indian economy as a technical defect of great significance. Over-shadowing both these defects were the planless mentality and behaviour of the average Indian which must act as brakes on all ambitious attempts at planning economic objectives for the whole nation and working for their realisation in fixed time. Different people placed varying degrees of emphasis on these limitations on planning in India. Some even thought that the economists might bestir themselves in time to have a plan of economic action ready for the guidance of a national government when one comes into power. But all were agreed that with our present political, economic and social limitations we must be discriminating in our support to the principle of planning.

It was noteworthy that no one attempted to set up economic self-sufficiency as the desirable end of planning in India, though there was considerable agreement on the pressing need of imparting balance to the Indian economic system by the development of non-agricultural pursuits. Equally well was it rea-

lised that though in a number of cases the provinces might be able to initiate plans for their own betterment, in many respects of national improvement the Government of India alone could take the lead in framing and regulating the course of planning. Currency, credit, transport, tariffs, borrowing, bounties—to mention only a few of the matters that require to be suitably shaped in an economy where the principle of planning is widely accepted—all these can be influenced only by central action. On the other hand the actual running of such vital departments as agriculture, roads, industry and finance is vested primarily in the provincial Governments. For the successful adoption of planned economic progress a greater co-ordination of effort between provincial and central agencies will be necessary than what appears to be probable with the new notions about the place of provinces and States in a federal India. It is to be hoped that the Conference will attract more and more support from the general public and from the academic economists themselves. The latter especially have an increasingly important contribution to make towards the building up of a rationalised and progressive economy in India. It might be feasible at some future date to have a closer co-operation between the economists on the one hand and the business community and politicians on the other.

Our London Letter.

(BY AIR MAIL.)

London, 28th December.

MR. LANSBURY ON THE WAR-PATH.

MILD and amiable as he is, the veteran fighter George Lansbury can sometimes be aroused to an emotion of very formidable proportions, as was evident on Friday night of last week when, having listened to Mr. Brailsford's diatribe against the Joint Select Committee's Report and his rather acid expressions of hope as to what the Labour Party would do in the circumstances, Mr. Lansbury clearly indicated that the Party was not going to be drawn into a flat rejection of the scheme of reforms that would be embodied in a Bill presented to Parliament. They would, he said, seek by every means in their power to amend the Bill suitably during its passage through Parliament. But he held out no hopes whatever that at the end the Labour Party would be found to be advising India not to work any constitution. He did not pretend that it would in any way conform to the ideals held by the Labour Party or to the programme laid down by the Party in respect of India at the Conferences, but if India wanted something better she must attend to the job herself and display a far greater unity of purpose than anything that had been witnessed in India so far. Mr. Lansbury spoke of India's many voices. If India wanted to go out of the Empire, he said, that would be a matter for consideration if and when it arose. In any case no such statement of her wish had come here sponsored by any authoritative or representative body of India and it was quite evident that he did not propose either to waste his or the Party's time in discussing what was at present irrelevant and in any case hypothetical. He roundly

told his hearers, who had attended upon the invitation of the India League to do honour to him and Mr. Brailsford, that he was not going to give them any revolutionary advice. He refused to advise people to do things which he himself was not prepared to do or of which to share the responsibility. He warned them, too, that if any of them were to resort to revolutionary methods they must not be surprised if they were dealt with harshly by the Indian Government. Since every Government's duty was to maintain law and order, and to prevent its own violent subversion every Government, whether Tory, Liberal, or Labour, whether British, Indian or foreign, whether Bolshevist or Fascist, would not hesitate to put down with a strong hand revolution and revolutionaries.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Following their usual custom the members of the Indian Student Union and Hostel at Gower Street, last week, gave a Christmas Party to a hundred and fifty poor children, each of whom received a stocking filled with presents, whilst another fifty gate-crashers, who had come without an invitation, were thoughtfully provided with a large parcel of cakes and sandwiches each. To-night the Union is holding its Annual Dinner, the Chief Guest being Sir Edward Greaves, the Chairman of the Management Committee, to whom, since he succeeded Dr. Edwin Bevan in that office, the Hostel owes so much.

Your readers will be interested in the two letters appearing in the *Manchester Guardian* of the 22nd instant and to-day by Major Graham Pole and Mr. Polak, on the subject of India and Dominion Status. These together with the preceding correspondence furnish practically a complete statement of the various pledges and declarations on the subject and bring the position up-to-date. It is surprising that, following immediately upon Mr. Baldwin's reply to Mr. Lansbury on the 1st instant, the Archbishop of Canterbury should have been so hesitant and diffident. It is to be presumed that he had not seen the report of Mr. Baldwin's speech.

Another speaker in Lancashire who has recently discussed the matter of Indian trade with Lancashire is Lord Fairfax, who reminded his hearers that Lancashire could not expect India to be a willing purchaser when she had less money to spend than in pre-war periods.

An interesting correspondence has been proceeding in the *Daily Telegraph* on Hindu-Muslim relations, a number of correspondents having written protesting against the assumption that, taking the country as a whole, there is bitter enmity between the two communities. The writers testify to the contrary from their own long and varied experience. Another writer to the *Telegraph* emphasises the bitterness in the relations between India and England caused by the aloofness of British civilians in India who keep themselves segregated from the cultural thought of the country.

There are two views held regarding Mr. Baldwin's attitude towards his rebel followers: one is that it is all going to be done by kindness, and that Mr. Baldwin is convinced that the dissentients' case will be destroyed by the debates on the Bill, and the other is that the rebels will hear the crack of the whip if they persist in their obstinacy.

Reviews.

SPANISH & WEST INDIAN POLITICS.

THE SPANISH CONSTITUTION. By H. R. G. GREAVES. (The Hogarth Press.) 1933. 18cm. 47p. 1/6

THE CASE FOR WEST INDIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT. By C. L. R. JAMES. (The Hogarth Press.) 1933. 18cm. 32p. 1/—.

MR. GREAVES gives in an admirable manner the essence of the Spanish Constitution that was established as a result of the Revolution of 1931. He considers the revolution itself as the final achievement in the long battle of freedom waged by the Liberals and as just the beginning of the Socialist's dream. Further, the advent of this constitution is regarded not as an isolated event but as the culmination of a long series of development. Its origin is traced as far back as to the Constitution of Cadiz, 1812. Since then a combination of intellectual, economic and regionalist forces have been at work revolting against all sorts of privileges, castes and oppressive systems. Things came to a head in the post-war Spain. There was the military revolution in 1923; but the army was not strong enough to bring about the desired reforms. The military dictatorship could not give the stability the constitution required, and the Republic of 1931 was the inevitable consequence. This was the work of the mass of Spaniards and to this the Dictator, the Army and the Civil service had to resign themselves.

In the Chapter on 'The Constitution,' the author describes briefly but clearly the essentials of the new Republican Constitution. Some of them are born of the 19th century Liberalism and some are traceable to the more recent experience and the aspirations of Europe. Anti-clericalism, equal rights for men and women, the emphasis on the social function of property, the compromise between the bourgeois sanctification and the Socialist denigration of private property, the placing of work under the care of the state, the guarantees to the worker of the necessary conditions of a worthy life, the safeguarding of equality of educational opportunities, the state's concern for the general cultural development, the safeguarding of the family and the duty of the state to carry out the obligations of parents in the event of their being unable to fulfil them, the recognition by the state of its international obligations and the various other features of the Constitution, are described in about twenty pages by Mr. Greaves, who deserves to be congratulated for this splendid work.

The other book is also equally interesting. Therein Mr. James shows that "the West Indians are quicker in intellect and spirit than the average Englishman and are far more advanced in western culture than many a European community," but "they are less continent, less stable, less dependable, which qualities are encouraged and exploited by the advocates of the Colonial Office trusteeship." He states further that the social grouping, the outlook and the aspirations of the Negroid population and the government of the country by the alien cramp effort. Mr. James describes how the unsophisticated Englishmen who come to govern, fortified by liberal outlook and noble traditions, become gradually corrupted by the Colonial Office traditions and by the White planters. Further he pictures to us vividly the ignoble part Government plays in corrupting

a people and in stifling their personality and in defeating the aspirations of its citizens. The West Indian Government today acts as the advance guard of the vested foreign interests, notably the Trinidad Electric Company. The meanness, the hostility, and the vindictiveness with which it pursues its aim, as outlined by Mr. James, will shock the conscience of civilised nations. He shows further how Britain's promise of 'self-government when fit' is illusive; for the structure of the West Indian Government, its personnel, its traditions, its institutions and its methods are destructive to the spirit of self-reliance, self-respect and self-confidence. He tries to bring home to his kinsmen that "led as we are by a string, we remain without credit abroad and without self-respect at home; a bastard, reckless conglomeration of individuals, inspired by no common purpose and moving to no common end;" a severe indictment indeed! Mr. James further claims for the West Indians the right of freedom to make their own failures and successes free from the tutelage of the White trustees and the right to gain that political wisdom and experience which come only from the practice of political affairs.

These two books forming a series are of absorbing interest and the publishers will ever have the gratitude of the reading public for having brought out such brief pamphlets on current questions.

K. S. VENKAT RAMAN.

THE DOLLFUSS REGIME.

NAOMI MITCHISON'S VIENNA DIARY. (Gollancz.) 1934. 20 cm. 287p. 5/-

WHATEVER her other literary credentials, Naomi Mitchison is a far less successful diarist than is warranted by her bold ambition. As a record of happenings in unquiet Vienna, it throws no connected and understandable light on the situation. Written in a light vein unbecoming the panic-stricken atmosphere of Vienna, there is so little relevant information to be gathered from it and so much immaterial stuff that lies scattered in a muddled heap, so much so, that reading it, one's mind is befogged. All that is vaguely understood is that Dollfuss stands deep in troubled waters raised by his political crusade against the Socialists on the one side and the Nazis on the other. The brutality, with which the Socialist workers are suppressed, compels them to seek what precarious safety is possible in the arms of Nazism which meets with as unmerciful a persecution. On the basis of these facts, Dollfuss and Simon receive much irreverent handling. For example, it is unflattering to Sir John Simon to be told, "Odd to think he is a lawyer, too, who once used to care for justice."

Occasionally our attention is sharply drawn in passing to colourful incidents and thought-provoking observations because of the veiled meaning they possess for us. "Anti-Semitism seems on the whole unreal, rather ludicrous to us... Do we in England and Scotland not feel anti-semitic simply because we are sufficiently intelligent ourselves to enter our learned professions?... Or if we were oppressed from outside into unhappiness and inferiority and hate, would we too look for a scapegoat?" "Is it not silly there is this cry in favour of Indianisation of services?" It is some consolation to know that in Austria "the police don't come out and beat their prisoners in front of one." Still there is "all that desperation and horror and hideous, enforced submission—and the cruelty on the other faces."

"Unless the present people" (meaning the limbs of law and order of the Dollfuss Regime) "do stop this wholesale beating and imprisoning

and outlawing, Dollfuss had better go to America and become a professor" (not an attractive job for his prototypes in India!) "The future is with the people whose faith is not shaken by danger or torture or oppression."

"There will be flowers on the graves without crosses—the graves of the leaders." The Austrian religious mentality is so like its Indian variety that they give rise to obstinate political complexities.

"A woman asked "what is God?" "God is a free spirit." "But then He can be followed anywhere." "No, No, only in the Catholic Church." One woman complains, "Here are Austrian Christians and Italian Christians and French Christians and German Christians, all taking up arms, all wanting to fight one another. And yet you say Christianity is brotherhood. How? Does one shoot one's brothers" Another Woman: "That is the Catholic international". The Priest: "Children, children, please, no politics here."

K. VENUGOPAL RAO.

Miscellaneous.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT.

CONGRESS NATIONALIST PARTY'S CONDEMNATION.

The Working Committee of the Congress Nationalist Party which met at Benares during Christmas adopted the following resolution on the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee:—

The Working Committee of the Congress Nationalist Party considers the J. P. C. report as wholly unsatisfactory and unacceptable. The recommendations of the J. P. C. do not transfer real power from the hands of the British Government to those of the people of this country, either at the centre or in the provinces, but by investing the Governor-General and the Governors with dictatorial powers in the name of special responsibilities and discretionary powers, reduce the Cabinets and Legislatures to a state of helplessness and thereby render the whole scheme a mockery of representative government. The recommendations are obviously designed to perpetuate foreign domination and facilitate economic exploitation of the country by providing a number of reservations, restraints and safeguards. The scheme of representation is based on anti-national, communal decision, which by its spirit of communalism will not merely hinder the growth of nationalism but render altogether impossible all healthy progress towards the goal of purna swaraj within a measurable distance of time. The Working Committee is clearly of the opinion that it would be better for the country to continue, if necessary, for some time longer under the existing constitution, highly defective though it is, than accept the constitution recommended by the J. P. C.

COMMUNAL AWARD.

The Working Committee regrets that in utter disregard of the great volume of public opinion existing in the country among Hindus, Sikhs, Indian Christians, nationalist Muslims and others, the J. P. C. has endorsed the Communal Award of His Majesty's Government.

The Working Committee is firmly of the opinion that the system of representation based on separate electorates, which the Communal Award has recommended, is glaringly unjust, particularly to Hindus, is anti-national, and constitutes an insuperable

obstacle to the establishment of popular self-government and can, therefore, never be acceptable to the people of this country.

The Working Committee strongly controverts the opinion of the J. P. C. that in the existing circumstances of the country communal representation must be accepted as inevitable. The statement of the J. P. C. that "there is among almost all the communities in India (not excepting the Hindus) a very considerable degree of acquiescence in the Award" is erroneous and misleading, and the observation (of the J. P. C.) that "if any attempt is now made to alter or modify it (the Award) the consequences would be disastrous" is incorrect and manifestly unfair.

ANTI-AWARD CAMPAIGN.

In view of the vital importance of the question and of the fact that the J. P. C. has taken such a mistaken view of public opinion in India with regard to the Communal Award, the Working Committee appeals to the people to carry on a ceaseless campaign against the Award until it is replaced by a scheme based on joint electorates on the lines recommended by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1931.

The Working Committee appeals to the people to hold public meetings all over the country on January 27, 1935, to give a united public expression of their feelings of opposition and resentment in relation to the Communal Award.

Resolved that an all-India Anti-Communal Award Conference be held at Delhi on February 16 and 17, 1935, of representatives from every part of the country to voice the country's opinion against the Communal Award.

The Working Committee invites all sections of people to unite in opposing the proposals contained in the Government of India Bill now before Parliament and in taking steps to prepare a scheme of national self-government which will be acceptable to all communities in India and will best serve and protect the interests of the country.

WOMEN AND J. P. C. REPORT.

The All-India Women's Conference held at Karachi during Christmas week condemned the Joint Select Committee Report as unacceptable. The resolution passed by the Conference says:—

WHEREAS the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the White Paper as a whole and in particular where its recommendations concern the status of women in the new constitution falls far short of our demands, we do hereby state in unequivocal language our strong disapproval of and inability to accept the same.

In a statement giving reasons for dissatisfaction the Conference deplore the absence of a declaration of rights in which the removal of sex disabilities should be clearly stated.

The Conference lodge a protest against the method of enfranchisement of women proposed by the Joint Parliamentary Committee, namely, the enfranchisement of the wives and widows of property holders as well as of the wives of men with military service qualifications and the pensioned widows and mothers of military officers and soldiers.

The Conference also protested against the invidious differentiation made between the provin-

ces with regard to the literacy and property qualification.

The Conference, while reiterating the conviction that on principle they are opposed to the reservation of seats in the legislatures for women or any particular interest, deplore the entire omission of women from the assemblies of several provinces and the total exclusion of women in the North-West Frontier Province from citizenship rights, including franchise.

The Conference further protest against the omission of a definite place in all second chambers as well as in the Council of State for women.

The Conference object with all possible emphasis to the indirect election to the central legislature.

The Conference also refuse to accept the nomination of women for the legislatures.

Concluding, the Conference observe that while mentioning the above details, we wish to make it quite clear that even if we had secured or secure for ourselves all we had wished or wish to secure and if at the same time we felt that the recommendations as a whole were not in the true interests of India, we would as women and the natural guardians of the future generations feel it our bounden duty to deny all special privileges for ourselves for the sake of the common good. In the light of the general criticism of the Report we know that the recommendations are unacceptable to all shades of representative opinion in the country. We, therefore, join in this universal protest and still hope that such a new constitution may eventually be created as will meet with general approbation.

ANDHRAS & J. P. C. REPORT.

The Andhra Provincial Conference held recently with Mr. Kaleswara Rao in the chair passed the following resolution about the report of the Joint Select Committee. The resolution runs:

"Whereas the scheme of the future government of India as set out in the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report does not concede to India at least the minimum national demand, namely the substance of independence while the Congress and the people have been demanding complete independence, but whereas on the other hand it falls far short of even the White Paper proposals which were condemned by the whole country as being reactionary and unacceptable, as clearly demonstrated at the recent Assembly elections, and whereas it is designed only to create and perpetuate dissensions amongst the people and is fraught with mischief, which would facilitate the continuance of the present political domination and exploitation of this country, this Conference is of opinion that the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report should be rejected."

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- THE NEMESIS OF ECONOMIC NATIONALISM AND OTHER LECTURES IN APPLIED ECONOMICS, By JOSEPH JOHNSTON. (King, 1934. 20cm. 116p. 4/6.)
- SELECT MODERN CONSTITUTIONS. By N. R. SUBBA AYYAR. (Srikrishna Publishing House, Kumbakonam.) 1934. 20cm. 272p. Rs. 3.
- AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME PROBLEMS OF AUSTRALIAN FEDERALISM. By KENNETH O. WARNER. (University of Washington Press.) 1933. 33cm. 309p.