

The Servant of India

Editor : S. G. VASE.

Office : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA.

VOL. XVIII, No. 33. } POONA—THURSDAY. AUGUST 29, 1935. { INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15s.

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Topics of the Week.

The Bengal Ordinance Law.

THE Ordinance Law has been renewed by the Bengal Legislative Council for a further term of three years. The legislation was due to expire in December next and the Bengal Government, unwilling to forego such a handy instrument for tackling inconvenient popular movements, proposed another five years' extension to it. The period has since been cut down to three years as a result of non-official pressure. While we must be thankful even for this small mercy, we fear we cannot applaud the action of the legislature in renewing an emergency legislation no longer necessary in the light of existing conditions. As our readers are aware, the Ordinance legislation was enacted with a view to the suppression of the civil disobedience movement. That movement is now virtually dead and there is very little chance of its revival in the near future.

It is true, as the Council was told by Mr. Reid, the Home Member, that the weapon is directed against "other subversive movements" as well. Its use for such purposes in other provinces cannot be denied. But that excuse cannot be held to be valid in respect of Bengal, because of the existence on the provincial statute book of special legislation designed to cope with such movements. The most serious menace of that kind existing in Bengal, which cannot be ignored by any government without danger to public safety, is doubtless the terrorist one. But the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act is designed particularly for dealing with terrorists and it is widely complained that besides being

unduly harsh it is too freely drawn upon by the Bengal Government. It is not clear what other subversive moment is intended to be dealt with under this law.

A SORT of justification was suggested by Mr. Reid when he referred to the present Government's anxiety to hand over the administrative machinery to its successor in working order, as if the machinery would have broken down but for this proposal. It is difficult to believe that this anxiety is based on any altruistic considerations. But even if one were to take a charitable view of the action of Government such a long lease to such an unpopular and reactionary legislation seems very difficult of condonation. The reformed provincial Governments are expected to start on their careers by the beginning of 1937 so that, if at all, a year's extension would have more than met the needs of the situation. But where the idea is to heap upon the country a series of repressive acts, necessary or otherwise, it is sheer waste of breath to try to meet the Government's arguments.

Mr. Jayakar's Q. E. D.

A writer in last week's issue of the *Labore People* writes :

Speaking at Satara, Mr. M. R. Jayakar has proved conclusively that the New Reforms (Neo-Reforms sounds better, and No-Reforms better still) transfer a good deal of real power to Indians, for else why should it be necessary to forge such strong safeguards? Yes, if only Sir Samuel Hoare had made the safeguards strong enough, Mr. M. R. Jayakar would be able to prove we had Dominion Status—or even Complete Independence. It is a pity Sir Samuel had not heard of this simple and homely recipe.

A Queer Argument.

A REPRESENTATION on behalf of the Hindu subjects of the Nizam has been recently submitted to his Government urging the need of their larger employment in the service of Hyderabad State. The Hindus in the State form a very large majority among the subjects of the State and are, comparatively speaking, well educated. They are also keen upon entering the service of the State.

It appears from the representation that in reply to similar memorials in the past a communique was issued by the Nizam's Government three years ago in which doubts were cast on the Hindus' anxiety to join public service in the State. We do not know what evidence the Nizam's Government would like to have adduced in support of the Hindus' eagerness to enter the State service. One would think that their making repeated requests to that end may reasonably

be treated as such evidence. If that desire had been really lacking, is it at all possible that the Hindus would have put themselves to the trouble of kicking up such a row about it?

BUT the real point is whether, assuming the Hindus' readiness to join the State service, the Nizams' Government is prepared to entertain a larger number of them in their employ. An unequivocal statement on that point from the Hyderabad Government rather than all this needless beating about the bush about the Hindus' want of earnestness for State service would give a quietus to all public suspicion about the unsympathetic attitude of the Government towards the Hindus' demand. It is high time such a declaration of policy was forthcoming.

Marketing Law in Kenya.

THE Native Marketing Bill in Kenya ran its appointed legislative course and became the law of the land on the 10th inst. in total disregard of the unanimous Indian opposition to it. The legislation had given rise to such strong feeling among local Indians that four out of their five representatives on the legislative council walked out of it by way of protest against its anti-Indian character in the early stages of its discussions. The responsibility of safeguarding Indian interests, therefore, fell upon Mr. J. B. Pandya, the only representative who stuck to his guns till almost the very last. When the third reading stage was reached, he too followed the example of his colleagues and temporarily retired from the legislative council.

IT must be admitted that his solitary presence in the council was not altogether unfruitful in the matter of introducing desirable amendments in the measure. We see from the Kenya papers that the Indian community owes two such amendments to his watchful efforts. One related to the declaration of trading centres as markets for purchasing native produce. The Indian contention had been that such centres should be regarded as markets under the Bill and that a provision to that effect be included in the Bill. The Government, while willing to give verbal assurances on the point, were unwilling to make a statutory provision as demanded by Indian opinion. Eventually however they yielded on that point and inserted a clause to that effect in the Bill.

THE other desirable amendment which was accepted by the Government throws on the Government the obligation to give to the applicant their reasons for the refusal of a license. It would doubtless have been very much better if, as demanded by Mr. Pandya, this concession had also been coupled with the right to the aggrieved party of an appeal to the High Court. Such a safeguard is not reported to have been attended by any untoward consequences in its working in Uganda and should have been found feasible even in Kenya.

FOR the rest the Bill underwent no modification worth the name either in the Select Committee or in the public session of the Legislative Council. The odious provisions about the grant of exclusive licenses whose deletion was demanded by Indian opinion remained unaltered. By way of mitigation of their iniquitous nature it was suggested by Mr. Pandya that they should be issued only after the purchase right had been auctioned. By this means he aimed at ensuring reasonable competition and the prevention

of undesirable practices being associated with the grants of such licenses. But the fruition of these laudable aims was frustrated by the Government's obdurate refusal to accept his amendment.

Indian Agitation in Tanganyika.

THE Kenya Marketing legislation, as is well known, is based on similar legislation which has been in force for the last three years in the adjoining territories of Uganda and Tanganyika. But there too Indian opinion does not yet seem to have reconciled itself to the system of exclusive licenses. It is doubtful if the extent of Indian resentment against that feature of the legislation is even now fully realised in this country. Indian opinion in Tanganyika was so hostile to it that it not only exhausted all the constitutional means of seeking redress from the local authorities; but it went further afield and even approached the League of Nations in the matter.

THE Indian contention was that the feature relating to the grant of exclusive licenses virtually amounted to the perpetuation of a system of monopolies, which was definitely banned by Article 7 of the Mandate under which Tanganyika was administered by the British Government. This absolutely prohibits the granting of "concessions having the character of a general monopoly." At the instance of the local Indian Association the subject came up for consideration at the twenty-second session of the Permanent Mandates Commission. The representation submitted by the Association appeared to have created a deep impression on the members of the Commission who would have done justice to the Indian community but for the fact that they were misled by the deliberately evasive answers of the official spokesman for the Tanganyika Government. How we wish a representative Indian had been present to voice the community's real feeling!

THE Tanganyika official representative had the hardihood to tell the Commission that the Association's protest was based on an imperfect understanding of the whole scheme and that the purport having been subsequently explained to it, it was reassured that Indian interests would not suffer. A member of the Commission, M. Rappard, thereupon inquired "whether better prices would not be more likely to be ensured by free competition," an inquiry which failed to elicit any satisfactory reply. Mr. Menon, who visited Tanganyika last year on his mission of inquiry into the working of the scheme, reported that the statement about the Indian Association having been reassured did not accord with facts. Indeed, he failed to meet "a single Indian in Tanganyika who was satisfied with the marketing legislation or did not fear that it was a potential danger to Indian traders." What better proof is needed that the Tanganyika official representative was guilty of a deliberate distortion of facts? The incident also proves the necessity of the aggrieved parties being directly represented at the sittings of the Commission when their grievances are taken up for discussion.

Responsible Government in Kenya.

IN the course of a statement of their policy recently published in the Kenya papers, the local Europeans have renewed their demand for responsible government with the inevitable corollary of the establishment of a White Dominion in East Africa. It will be recalled that the demand was turned down by the British Government in 1923. But it is being unwillingness on the part of the villagers to tax

resurrected at the present juncture probably in the hope of its more sympathetic treatment at the hands of the Conservative Government installed at Whitehall. Whether the hope is going to be fulfilled nobody can say at this stage. But, judging by the rights of the case, there appears to be no reason why it should be more favourably received by the British Government on the present occasion. The Government's responsibility as trustees for the Kenya natives which could not be shared with any immigrant community was then cited as the ground for their non-compliance with the Europeans' demand. The rejection was no doubt not to hold good for all time; but the Government did not fail to utter a plain warning against expectation of any change in their attitude towards the demand within any calculable period of time. In expressing their strong disapproval of it, the British Government spoke in no equivocal terms. "His Majesty's Government," they said, "cannot but regard the grant of responsible self-government as out of the question within any period of time which need now be taken into consideration." During the twelve years that have elapsed since that declaration was made, the progress of the native towards civilisation has by no means been so complete as to render the British Government's sole trusteeship for his welfare superfluous. We may well hope therefore that the demand will not find more receptive listeners in the present British Government than their predecessors of 1923. We may hope, but who can say that the hope will not be disappointed?

Village Panchayats in the Punjab.

IN common with other parts of India the panchayat movement does not seem to be making much headway in the Punjab where, out of a total of nearly 37,000 villages, only about 1,100 have village panchayats. The number might have been a little bigger if the posts of panchayat officers had not been abolished four years ago as a measure of retrenchment. The honorary panchayat officers who replaced them were apparently not able to give a uniformly satisfactory account of themselves, with the result that the posts of panchayat officers will have to be revived soon. Even if this happens and as a result of their activities some more panchayats come into being, it can by no means be said that the movement has taken deep root. Party feuds and an

themselves appear to be the principal factors which thwart its development. As a matter of fact one Commissioner goes the length of saying that so long as panchayats refrain from raising funds under the provisions of the Act, there would be some hope of advance. His experience is that, as soon as they transform themselves into tax-assessing and tax-collecting agencies, they make themselves odious to the villagers. All which points to the conclusion that the villager in the land of the five rivers, as in other parts of the country, has yet to be adequately educated in the benefits flowing from the spread of the movement. Vigorous propaganda to this end should be the work of the honorary agency, whose services may usefully be retained by Government for the purpose, if only as an experimental measure. For unless the villager is convinced of the good the panchayat may do to him, he cannot be expected to take to it kindly.

GRANTING his unwillingness to tax himself, there is nothing surprising in the fact that the judicial functions vested in panchayats arouse greater enthusiasm in him. This phenomenon is by no means peculiar to the Punjab. The neglect by panchayats of their administrative and municipal duties which is the subject of complaint in the report under notice, is a natural corollary to the villager's unwillingness to raise funds by local taxation. But this will decrease in proportion as his appreciation of the benefits of panchayat work will increase.

IN 1933-34 the number of criminal cases heard by panchayats fell by nearly 500 to about 3,750 with a corresponding reduction in the number of accused persons. The number of civil suits also went down by nearly 2,500 to 13,500. It may in this connection be noted that the number of convictions, instead of showing a decline, showed a rise of nearly 100 and stood at 1,231. In the absence of any official explanation as to this increase, it may be assumed that there is nothing extraordinary about it. With the reduction in the number of cases tried by panchayats there was a drop in their income. The fines in criminal cases yielded about Rs. 1,000 less than in the previous year and fees in civil suits were less by about double that amount. We hope that the report for 1934-35 will give a more cheerful account of their working.

A MORAL ISSUE.

IF Sir Homi Mody expected, when he suggested the formation of a Reforms Party to comprehend all sections of opinion which favoured the working of reforms, as distinguished from wrecking, to which the Congress seems to be committed, the leaders of all non-Congress progressive parties would lean forward and say, "This is my Party", he will now find that he was labouring under a grave delusion. No forward-looking politician has yet come forward to bless the idea; on the contrary, many have laughed it to scorn. Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar and Maulana Sir Mahomed Yakub, like all other communalists, of course, welcome the suggestion. It was rather amusing to see Sir Mahomed Yakub getting anxious about the Muslims and pathetically pleading with Sir Homi Mody for their admission into the proposed new Party designed to confound the wreckers, for if the Party cannot persuade

extreme communalists of his ilk and representatives of other vested interests to join, the Party will have no membership at all. As the *Times of India* has very aptly put it, Sir Homi's is intended to be a pro-Reform Party and can include only those who are more or less satisfied with the constitution or at least are not grieved terribly by it. It is nonsensical to think that, however uncompromising may have been the opposition offered to the Bill by the progressive parties in India, they will now join, after the Bill has passed into law, with the supporters of the Bill and work the Act contentedly. This is precisely what every British statesman was saying when the Bill was before Parliament. "There is no need to be frightened by the extravagant denunciation poured on the Bill by the Liberals and other groups in India. They are bound to make a show of opposition while the proposals are still being considered. Let the proposals

be once accepted, and all controversy will cease, and all Parties (except, perhaps, the Congress) will set themselves to work the constitution as if all the time they were according their wholehearted support to it." The Liberal Party will stultify itself if it followed the course which was so confidently predicted of it. Why should it feel called upon to make common cause with the reactionary forces in the country against the Congress? In order to prove the success of a constitution which the Liberal Party has been foremost in warning the Government will not be successful?

All Parties seem to be agreed in working the constitution in the sense that they will not boycott the new Legislatures. But the main question is in what spirit they will go into the Legislatures. Unity is possible only among those who are actuated by the same spirit. It is not possible among those whose only common bond is non-abstention from the legislative bodies. The Liberal Party, like every other Party, is yet to consider its future line of action. But we can say one thing of it with confidence, viz. that it will find it impossible to put all its bitter disappointment behind it and work hand in hand with the conservative groups whose particularistic interests have been considerably advanced by the constitution. The Liberal Party has nothing in common with those who sincerely distrust all popular progress and are blindly addicted to a reactionary social order. If the Party is to live up to its name, it must battle ceaselessly against the vested interests and holders of privilege who will be in an enormously strong position in the new regime. How it can do so or whether it will at all be successful in this endeavour is a question that must be carefully considered. A programme of action which is both practicable and beneficent is not easy to draw up. But the direction of its effort is clear out in advance. It must not put itself in a position where it will be required to whitewash the inside and outside of all the obscurantists that will be assembled in the Reforms Party; it must not seek to uphold privilege but must make a determined effort to destroy it. In doing so, it will necessarily draw upon its devoted head the hostility of the Governor and the Governor-General, but this position it must face. The one function of the Governor and the Governor-General in the new constitution, apart from safeguarding British interests, is to throw the shield of the British Government over the vested interests of Indians, and the Liberal Party, in attacking the latter, must be prepared to fight the former. Nor must it go about its business in a spirit of hopelessness and despondency. We are aware—none has pointed it out with greater persistence—that the constitution is thoroughly watertight. It is ringfenced with impassable barriers in the form of safeguards. However, the progressives who will go into the Legislatures, if they cannot jump the fences, can at least do damage to them. But whatever the prospect of ultimate success, they must carry on the good fight and not abandon it in despair. And they must certainly not join the conservatives for opportunistic reasons, for it is the conservatives who will

be their chief antagonists in the new dispensation and not the so-called wreckers.

There are some who from the most unselfish and personally honourable motives argue in a different way. They think that the whole battle is lost. The situation is now past recovery. It is no use now showing oneself in an ugly mood. It will only make matters worse. Let us now resign ourselves to our fate. Who knows the oligarchy and the plutocracy that will be established in the country under the Act may be the only means of escape from the stranglehold of the British power and that a route to democracy may ultimately be discovered through oligarchy and plutocracy. Let us not therefore try to clip the wings of the classes that will obtain mastery over the political machine that will be set going very soon. Let us rather help them obtain this mastery in hope that in course of time they will first rid themselves of the Britishers and then quietly give place to a really popular government. In the long view of the matter it would be best to allow the constitution to work smoothly, even if it works to the advantage of the privileged classes. We are in any case unable to hold them in check, and therefore, like practical politicians of ordinary prudence, we must not make an attempt destined to end in failure. There are analogues of the people who reason in this way in international politics at the present day. Those who are opposed to the application of sanctions to Italy in defence of Abyssinia use similar arguments. They recognise that Italy is an aggressor in every sense of the word. They know that to let Italy gobble up Abyssinia with impunity is to revert to the law of the jungle. Their heart bleeds for the hunted Ethiopians as it would bleed for their own families. They are not wanting in personal courage. They would spill their last drop of blood if by doing so they felt that they could save the one independent Kingdom that the European countries have allowed to exist in tropical Africa. But they think Abyssinia is doomed; it cannot be saved; and, what is more, that, by the abortive use of economic and military sanctions, the League of Nations itself would be involved in ruin along with Abyssinia. They are, therefore, willing to sacrifice Abyssinia to the League, in the larger interests of humanity. The League at present is an extremely feeble body for any disciplinary action that may be required of it. It cannot police the world. But it is the only hope for the establishment of a code of international law and honour. It is an ideal of great value; it at least lays down moral standards and holds the nations of the world to them. It can cross-question the Powers on their behaviour and it can very often compose international disputes by its mediatory influence. It is the only machinery we have at present for this purpose, though it is eminently unsatisfactory. But to put upon it at this early stage the intolerable burden of bringing a Great Power to book is to destroy it completely by demonstrating its utter futility and impotence. Therefore, use all the conciliatory methods you can, these people say, but, for heaven's sake, do not invoke Article 16 of the Covenant.

There are different shades of thought among those who plead for non-intervention of the League in the Italo-Abyssinian dispute by the use of physical force. There are some who say: Let the League wash its hands of the affair; let Abyssinia be thrown to the wolves of the Capitol. There are others who say: Let the League hand over Abyssinia to Italy as a mandated country. Slavery is rampant in Abyssinia; it has proved itself to be a bad neighbour, always making forays all round. The League cannot teach a lesson to Italy; it is much too weak for this job. Let it teach a lesson to Abyssinia. There are still others who say: Italy must have an outlet for its surplus population; it has received no reward for its active part in the World War on the side of the angels. Persuade England and France who are gorged with colonial possessions to give a good bit of them to her. Let the League buy off Italy's opposition to international order and collective security in that way. There are others who say: Let the League pretend that aggression is not proven. Did not the League assume the same attitude when Japan committed a rape on Manchuria? Japan's incursion is spreading rapidly. It is now clear that she will penetrate into inner Mongolia and overrun the whole of China up to the Yellow River. Of course, the States-Members of the League saw in these strides of Japan deliberate and purposeful aggression. But they pretended not to see it, for if they found Japan an aggressor they knew they would be called upon to resist her march, which they could not have done. Possibly only Russia and the United States could have done it, but they were both outside the League, and no Power inside the League had the resources to stop Japan. The League, therefore, very wisely persuaded itself, first, that China's sovereignty was disputable, and, secondly, that Japan's motive was one of self-defence. Cannot Italy be now credited with the same motive and the League secure its release from dangerous entanglements? Cannot the League further say, 'We stand for peace. It would be immoral for us to wage a war even for the sake of inflicting a penalty upon a wrong-doer'?

It must be admitted that, in fact, the imposition of sanctions in this particular case is not such an exceedingly difficult matter as is implied in the above reasoning. England by its unaided resources can halt Italy. If England will close the Suez Canal, as she is entitled to do under Article 20 of the League Covenant, withhold supplies of coal from Italy and cut off her communications with East Africa, Italy will have to submit. England has the power and she seems determined to use it. The Foreign Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare declared in the House of Commons in unequivocal terms: "We are fully conscious of our obligations under our treaties and under the Covenant and we certainly intend to uphold them." Discussing the question whether England's resources are commensurate with her responsibilities, he remarked: "I do not say that we cannot carry out our commitments; I do not say that we cannot defend our principles. . . ." Single-handed England is in a position to enforce peace. There

is no need, therefore, for any one to take a defeatist attitude, but the main question is, even assuming the League were really powerless to use sanctions, would it be right for that body, as Sir Herbert Samuel asked in the House of Commons, to put aside questions of right and wrong, deliberately avoid determining who is committing and who is suffering aggression, and give up all claim to become a Parliament of the World striving to secure peace and justice? Above all, would it be right to refrain from giving an adverse decision against Italy because such a decision might have unpleasant repercussions on the general political situation? It must be prepared to carry out its duties to the extent of its power, endeavouring while doing so to strengthen itself. Similarly the progressive parties in India must not shed their hostility to the Reforms Act because there is not much dynamite in the measures they can immediately take. They cannot now put a good face on the Act, saying: The letter of the constitution is as bad as it can be, but the spirit of it can be better. It is possible that the Governor and the Governor-General will in practice give a free hand to the Ministers, that the privileged classes who will come into power will not be unduly grabbing, that the British Government will soon change the Act and that the Princes will not impose their veto. It is the bounden duty of the progressive parties to maintain their attitude of hostility, however fruitful or fruitless it may be. They may be, as they ought to be, as cautious and careful as they can, but they must be firm and resolute in mapping out a policy and programme, not of making the constitution a success, but of showing up its defects and making it subserve as far as may be the interests of the general mass of people. It is a moral issue, which they must not compromise for reasons of expediency.

STABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY.

AS if to bring home to Indians the folly of their being indifferent to that aspect of the Reforms Act which makes it utterly impossible for them to secure constitutional amendments in future, events are happening in quick succession in the United States which impress upon the Americans the urgent need of changing their rigid constitution. We have already commented upon the Supreme Court's recent decision which practically kills the New Deal in the industrial field. Now a subordinate court has given another decision which has the effect of killing the New Deal in the agricultural field. With the object of raising the prices of agricultural commodities, the U. S. Government instituted the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which drew up a programme of crop reduction and gave to farmers who co-operated in it bounties in various shapes. These bounties were paid partly out of the processing taxes which Congress empowered the Secretary of Agriculture to levy at his discretion. The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston has now declared, by a two to one decision, that the whole of this A. A. A. scheme of crop control and payment of benefits to farmers from processing taxes

is unconstitutional and has restrained the Government from collecting these taxes from a New England cotton mill. If the Circuit Court's decision is upheld by the Supreme Court, the Government will lose nearly \$500,000,000 a year which is the annual yield from these taxes, and will have virtually to give up the New Deal in regard to agriculture as it has had to give it up in regard to industries.

The Supreme Court is certain to uphold the lower courts' decision for the latter has closely followed the lines of the unanimous decision of the former in the famous Schechter case. The Circuit Court's arguments, like the Supreme Court's, are two. First, the U. S. Federal Government is a government of enumerated powers; all powers not specifically assigned to it are reserved to the States' Governments; and, therefore, the Federal Legislature has no power, under the constitution, to control the output of farm products with a view to bringing about a price increase. For "the power of Congress," said the Court, "to regulate interstate commerce (which is among the enumerated powers) does not authorise it to do so by taking products, either of agriculture or industry, before they enter interstate commerce, or otherwise to control their production merely because their production may indirectly affect interstate commerce." Second, Congress cannot delegate its legislative powers as the tax-fixing body to the Executive Department by permitting the Secretary of Agriculture a wide latitude in determining the amount of taxes and the commodities to which they shall apply. Only Congress can determine what commodities shall be taxed and at what rate.

The basis for the crop control policy has been described by the *New Republic* in the following words :

The economic logic of the measure was clear. Supplies of crops had been increasing or remaining virtually constant, while their prices fell. Manufacturing or mining industries, faced with a similar situation, reduced their output and held up their prices, as far as they were able—and many of them did so with considerable success. Farmers, however, being numerous, highly competitive and without large capital resources, could not practise voluntary reduction of output. This law provided them with a means of paralleling industrial practice. They were induced to restrict production by government benefit payments. Money to pay these benefits was collected from those who processed the crops on the way to the consumer. Thus the result, both to the producer, and consumer, was precisely the same as if the farmers, like the manufacturers, had restricted production of their own accord. The grower got more per unit, and what he got the consumer paid. Sometimes the consumer paid more than the extra amount the farmer collected, and sometimes less, but by and large the thing worked in that way.

And the conclusion of the *New Republic* is that either the judicially interpreted constitution of the U. S. must be drastically amended or the Legislature must be freed from the tyranny of the courts. For, as it is, "the courts forbid the government from doing anything important to regulate the national economy, whether it is bad or whether it is good. That is, they forbid it from doing anything that privately owned industry does not want done," just as our own constitution forbids us from doing anything which the

Princes, not to speak of the British Government, do not want done. But the difference between the situation in the U. S. and India is this: while in the U. S. the constitution can be amended, though with some difficulty, in India it cannot. Even if the British Government were willing, the Princes—and each one of them—can impose their veto, as the latest issue of the Foreign Policy Report of New York points out with admirable clearness, which will make things plain even to Indian publicists.

The question of amending the constitution is also being seriously tackled in Canada. A committee of the Dominion House of Commons has been appointed to frame constructive proposals on the subject. The Committee is to consider what specific amendments are immediately necessary, and further, what procedure should be adopted for amending the constitution in Canada itself in future instead of having to go to the British Parliament for making any amendment that may be desired. The second is the larger problem and the Committee is at present dealing with it. In regard to this the *Canadian Forum* writes :

The clearest and most definite proposals on the amending process are those which were presented to the House of Commons Committee by Professor F. R. Scott of McGill. His scheme is that an amendment should require a majority of both Houses at Ottawa sitting in joint session (this is to get around the obstacle of the senate's vote) and further approval of a majority of the provincial legislatures. A provincial legislature which did not oppose any proposed amendment within a year of its being passed at Ottawa would be deemed to have consented. Amendments which dealt with certain sections of the Act (those which protect the educational, linguistic and cultural institutions of the racial minority in the country) would require the consent of all the provincial legislatures. This scheme seems to provide a reasonable adjustment of the conflicting claims of local and central jurisdictions, and to combine reasonable stability with reasonable flexibility.

In the Indian constitution not only has every amendment first to be sanctioned by the British Parliament but, in the case of the federal part, to be sanctioned by every State Government. Here we have stability with a vengeance, but not an iota of flexibility. The British Government and the Princes will, however, find that an absolutely rigid constitution like ours, which affords no lawful means of amendment, is really unstable; only the discovery will be attended with some ugly consequences which we had hoped the British Government at least, if not the Princes, would have had the wisdom and common sense to avert.

THE CONVOCATION ADDRESS.

THE address delivered by His Excellency Lord Brabourne, the Chancellor of the Bombay University at its annual convocation last week, was not unlike the proverbial curate's egg—sound in so far as the theory of the matter went, but far from right in the matter of any fruitful suggestion of reform in the affairs of our University in particular and of education in general. It is easy to describe in the abstract the function of a

University in the life of a nation. It is admitted on all hands that those who are privileged to teach at a University should be men of ripe learning, unquestioned scholarship and distinct intellectual eminence, and that those who administer its affairs as members of the Senate should be men of ability, power and independent judgment, who will not be influenced by any other consideration than the good of the institution in their charge.

The distinction that the Chancellor drew, quoting from Seeley, between school-masters and professors is also right. But the question to-day is whether our University has, as professors in the colleges and as members of the Senate, the necessary quota of men who, tried by the test laid down by Seeley, will come up to the description given by the Chancellor. We are afraid that our University to-day is poorer in the right type of men than it had ever been in the past—not to mention the halcyon days of Grant, Wordsworth, Hughlings, Sydney, Owen, Oxenham, Selby, Bin and Scott as professors, and of Ranade, Bhandarkar, Mehta, Telang, Chandavarkar and Gokhale as members of the Senate. They were all men of ability and power, of independent judgment, with the distinction in addition of ripe learning, love of scholarship and intellectual worth. They had none of them any axe of their own to grind. They worked solely to maintain the fair name of our University as a seat of learning. Speaking of these men, the late Mr. Gokhale paid them a high tribute in the days when Lord Curzon sought to officialise the University by appointing a special Commission for the purpose, and by introducing an Act in the Imperial Legislative Council to implement its recommendations. It must be said here that Gokhale himself belonged to the far-shining company of wise men and true, who had made the University what it was in those days.

We may ask the Chancellor of the University if that high tradition is being maintained to-day in the choice and appointment of professors and teachers in Government institutions. And we may ask the University electorate of to-day if it exercises its vote in a manner to return to the Senate members of ability, power and independent judgment—men who know what higher education involves, and who have the necessary zeal, earnestness and drive in them, to right the wrong, to discourage nepotism, to turn the University into an institution devoted to levelling up its work all round. Our professors to-day, barring rare exceptions, are no better than school-masters, who are busy expounding texts, dictating questions and notes, and caring for nothing better than examination results. Ripe learning, sound scholarship, inspiring guidance are not to be expected of them. We wonder if in any other country than our own, they would have been able to get an appointment as teachers in the higher standards of a full-graded school. What wonder, then, that the Indian students learning under them catch no fire or inspiration from such rushlights? And of our Senators, what shall we say? Men become members, get themselves elected to the Academic Council, are

appointed on several committees, on no better qualification than that they know to perfection the art of canvassing and capturing votes. Why, then, talk of the Great Mods at Oxford, the Mathematical Tripos at Cambridge, and of Metallurgical and Agricultural degrees elsewhere? When one hears such words, one is reminded persistently of the observation of Herbert Spencer that you cannot make golden character out of leaden instincts.

Education at our University began to take a turn for the worse since the introduction of what may be styled, for the sake of convenience, the Sydenham course. Before that Lord Curzon's Act had done it no small harm. And the present regime, under the so-called University Reforms Act, has revealed it to be much worse than it ever was. The democratic Senate to-day is unable to set its own house in order, for most of the members are no better than mediocrities and have neither the vision nor the will to press for a change that will be their own undoing. The Chancellor, as the head of the University and, therefore, a link between it and the Government, is expected to devise ways and means and lead the way in order to bring our University upto the standard. Specialisation and research are all good; but only when they are based on broad and general culture, and when the students undertaking it are guided by teachers who are masters and enthusiasts in their own line. You cannot draw water out of empty buckets any more than you can make post-graduate study and research fruitful by entrusting the task to professors who are so only in name. Post-graduate learning in our University has become a huge farce, only useful to the extent that it provides fat salaries for a few styled as University professors, and an additional allowance to the usual rank of teachers at our colleges, who know *how* to get it.

What is the remedy that the worthy Chancellor proposes to apply this evil? It is not levelling up the quality of teachers in colleges but making the Matriculation entrance high! As if the mere raising of the standard of examination at the entrance and at the end will work as a miracle to reduce unemployment, to improve the tone of University teaching and University life, and to turn post-graduate learning and research into the real thing that it ought to be! If His Excellency the Chancellor, is keen on improvement and is really in earnest to turn the University into a vitalising influence in the life of the country, he must start by a sort of Pride's Purge in the institutions of the Government, beginning right from the top, winnow the grain from the chaff in the college professoriate, and, reaching down to schools, strenuously apply himself to overhaul the whole system. This he will not be able to do by leaving the University severely alone or by subordinating it, albeit indirectly, to his Department of Public Instruction. This mode of departmental control was tried in the days of Lord Curzon, and, in spite of the Sadler Commission, is still operating as a stranglehold on sound, healthy and progressive direction of education all round.

The plan and method he ought to follow must be inspired by no other consideration than the good of the rising generation. They must be free from any political or other bias. Lord Sydenham, swearing by the name of science, succeeded in jettisoning the Telang course and substituting a lop-sided specialisation in its place, with the result as we know it to-day. Let us not, in the name of technology and industrial education, sap still further the foundation of general culture, for which primarily a University exists. If he shows himself to be keen on restoring the lost tone of higher education he can appeal to the rich public to co-operate with him and to strengthen his hands financially for the task by loosening their purse-strings. We may remind him here of the way that Lord Curzon went to work, as the Chancellor of the Oxford University, or the way in which the London University and its colleges were remodelled from top to bottom under the guidance of Lord Haldane and his committee. Raising the standard of examinations is the least part of the matter, and to be content with that merely is not the right way to proceed with the work.

V. N. NAIK.

Reviews

PROFITS:

THE THEORY OF PROFITS. By PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH. (University of Calcutta.) 1933. 22cm. 422p.

THE quest for the knowledge of things fundamental has always given rise to revolutionary changes. The philosopher renounced the study of matter and the materialistic world, and turned to the spirit to reveal to him the eternal verities. The physicist then undertook the study of matter, analysed its properties, subjugated matter to the service of man, and enthralled "matter" of the physical world as the fundamental reality. But through continued analysis unexpected light has been revealed to him, the old materialism has been liquidated, and the scientist has confessed that matter is no longer "substance" having fundamental status, but is a "something", a "structure" whose relative knowledge is completed and verified only through mathematical ideology or symbolism. It is now the turn of the economist to pass through similar illumination, or clarification. He seemed to know everything of profits, "made" them, distributed them, consumed them or rather sought to capitalise them everlastingly, and even built up Empires and politics on profits. But a rude shock has brought him to face "real" realities and ruin. Not merely that a depression, deep and intense, tedious and unending as it seems to be, has placed people in the midst of deserted factories, enforced idleness and diminished incomes. Nor is there mere disequilibrium, and danger of invasion against capitalistic society. But even the scholar and the critic have had their thoughts stimulated, their conceptions oriented; and their conclusions restated. Ghosh's book on the "Theory of Profits" is not only a summary or reproduction of the theories of (or a result of discussions of the author with) Keynes, Robertson, Dobb and Straffa, Clark, Knight and Schumpeter, and many others; but by its own acumen and insight has merited from very distinguished

economists compliments such as "a respectable piece of work and some original contribution," "got one or two central ideas of very considerable value," "a very good performance and ought to conquer a place in the scientific world," "made a great deal of progress towards the heart of this difficult and fascinating theory."

The lines along which progress has been made in "this difficult and fascinating theory" are more or less the lines in which, for instance, modern physics has been oriented. This new economic knowledge has in the main consisted in revealing that pure profit is merely an analytical concept, like matter whose structure may be expressed in a mathematical form. It is unprofitable to attempt to describe matter, as this substance or the other. So also, in economic thought, profit is neither businessman's income, nor is it an industrial product, nor even a surplus. Its nature should only be known *relatively*—an "indirect return" as the happy phrase goes. The financier's concept of business capital will of course be distinguished from the economist's industrial concept of capital, but while profit is an income from property, it should be realised that all incomes from property are not profits. The phenomenon of profit is essentially bound up with the system of property and exchange. The importance of profit among economic incomes will increase in a society with the growing volume of interchange that the efficiency of transportation, on the one hand, and the facility of currency and credit, on the other hand tend, to bring about. Communism abolishes profits, not really by abolishing consumers' freedom of choice, but by abolishing private property as the alternative source of earning an income, and by obviating the necessity of an exchange as the channel of distributing national dividend.

There is thus very sharp contrast between the classical analysis and the views of the modern school in respect of the true nature of profit. The classicists thought in terms of the active agents of production, while the modern school think in terms of the *entrepreneur's* passive instruments and materials of production. Product is a mathematical function of the diverse materials and services, or the mechanical results of some passive elements according to the modern theorists; while, according to the classicists, product is the creation of some active agencies. Differences in productivity were, therefore, always attributed to the quality of an agency by the classicists, but not to the quantitative variation of a homogeneous factor, as with the modern school of marginal analysts. The preponderatingly mechanical nature of modern productive processes may have influenced the modern economists to look upon the product as the mechanical effect of some passive elements rather than the deliberate results produced by an active agent.

Undoubtedly also the theories of profits, certainly the most modern theory of profits as an "indirect return" existing only in the middle of private capital and growing volume of interchanges, affect the character and functioning of industrial equilibrium. It has been vividly brought to light that equilibrium can exist only when the prices of consumers' goods as well as the prices of producers' goods are in such a harmonious relation to one another as to ensure a satisfactory income to all the social resources in production. In this attempt to retain, or to restore, equilibrium it is not sufficient to treat each industry as a separate unit. The misfortune of one industry refuses to remain confined locally, but it very soon diffuses itself to the whole of the productive organisation of the nation. In such circumstances the behaviour of the capitalist must be correct and complete. He should break away from his habit of continuous accumulation, make I equal to S, in the lan-

guage of Keynes's equation, and strive to reduce the volume of unemployment to zero.

Ghosh's book is an admirable essay on such fundamental issues. In wealth of information, in presentation and in reasoned discussion, it is a severely academic publication. Only very rarely does one come across such a treatise. It is all the more creditable that the author is one of our own colleagues, Lecturer in Economics in the University of Calcutta; and certainly very few Indian writers have taken as yet such extensive and exhilarating excursions in the realm of pure theory in Economics.

K. B. MADHAVA.

INDIAN FINANCE.

INDIAN FINANCE YEAR BOOK, 1934. Ed. by P. R. SRINIVAS. (Editor, British Indian Street, Calcutta.) 1934. 26cm. 376p. Rs. 5.

THE year-book has kept up its reputation of giving a complete survey of the economic life of the Indian Empire in all its aspects. To the general reader who has no leisure to follow the current events from day to day, the volume is a veritable boon, enabling him at the end of the year to have a good picture of the activities of the departments of State and the industrial concerns. The task moreover is achieved with a remarkable detachment of mind in the present condition of trade depression when passions are likely to obstruct clarity of vision.

The budget position is reviewed as a necessary preliminary. The most striking feature is the great loss of income from Customs, which is likely to be permanent and the search for new sources of revenue; "the change marks the advent of realism in our financial affairs". The last remark is one to which no exception can be taken in the light of later developments. While the Indian railways have been able to meet the deficits of the past four years from their own resources, the charge that the Central Government has been taking more by way of freights than was necessary for the upkeep of the system cannot be easily answered. Liberal provisions for the Depreciation Fund by a refusal to effect reduction in expenditure can hardly be called a wise financial policy. It may be noted that the total revenue of the Provincial Governments has dwindled from Rs. 94.57 crores in 1929-30 to Rs. 84.12 crores in 1933-34.

The section on Currency gives a neat summary of the doings of the redoubtable President of the United States. It is curious that the Editors do not pass any judgment on the Gold Purchase Policy of U.S. from the point of view of sound economic theory. The over-valuation of gold makes the restoration of the Gold Standard difficult and defers the period of the anarchy in exchanges. It is easy to sing the praises of the sterling regime, because it eases the situation temporarily, but the ultimate stability of the world trade cannot but be shaken by such make-shifts. The outstanding feature of the foreign trade is the improvement in our exports to the tune of Rs. 14 crores compared to the previous year. The general level of prices does not show any rise. Swadeshi may take comfort from the fact that there is a continued reduction in our consumption of foreign goods. The foreign trade across land-frontiers is estimated at Rs. 20 crores. The imports of sugar have been reduced from Rs. 15.5 crores in 1929-30 to Rs. 2.7 crores in the year under review, which is in a way a triumph for protectionism. With regard to the index numbers, it is to be noted that India is the worst sufferer from low prices, showing -88 as against 104 in the United Kingdom and 106 in the U. S.

In order to make the Tariff Board an independent body, the Editors propose "that the status of the members... should be made similar to that of high judicial officers"; this is a valuable suggestion and ought to be made effective. The Tariff Board must be protected from the interference of the Executive. The Industrial Section gives an accurate survey of the industrial products and their marketing conditions. Jute and tea have maintained their position both as to quantity exported and the price of the product. Sugar is showing a rapid expansion owing to the imposition of the protective duty. It is a sad reflection for us in this province that it produces the smallest amount of sugarcane, with an acreage of about seven thousand. The imports of salt have been reduced from the average of about Rs. 2 crores during the War period to Rs. 82 lakhs in 1932-33; this is partly due to the additional duty of 4½ annas introduced in the budget of 1931-32.

The review of the balance-sheets of the principal banks in the country is a very useful feature of the publication. The salient feature of the year was the lifting of the depression in gilt-edged securities and the consequent revaluation of the reserves; there has also been an increase in the prices of the bank-shares. For the present at least there is no fear of any crisis. Most of the banks have been able to pay a dividend of 10 to 13 per cent. in spite of depression. The sound position of the central co-operative banks may be seen from the fact that the Bombay Provincial Co-operative Bank and the Madras P. C. Bank have gilt-edge investments of Rs. 84 lakhs and Rs. 1½ crores respectively. The balance-sheets of the principal life assurance companies make a very interesting reading. How backward India is in insurance business can be seen from the fact that while even a small country like Italy shows the amount of life insurance per head as Rs. 418, India can show only Rs. 5½. At the same time the progress of the leading companies has been very satisfactory during the year. The total assets of Indian companies are now almost equal to those of foreign companies, being approximately Rs. 33 crores.

We are in complete agreement with the Editors in the general criticism directed against the Railway policy in all its aspects. With all that, the Railway Board ought to be congratulated on their having paid Rs. 42 crores to general revenues during the years 1924-1931 and yet having built up a reserve of Rs. 20 crores. During the year under review, there is a deficit of Rs. 7.78 crores which is met by borrowing from the Depreciation Fund. One line of criticism is that the creation of the Depreciation Fund has led to liberal expenditure from capital since the connected charges are not met from revenue in the case of state-managed railways; this leads to an increase of the railway capital and consequently to the increase of the charges for interest. In this way since 1924 Indian Railways have been paying larger interest till by 1934 Rs. 9 crores have been added to the debt charges. The maintenance of the Fund also prevents relief to the tax-payer by the lowering of rates. The statistics of the working of the Railways clearly show that state-managed railways are giving a lower rate of return on the capital at charge in some cases going as low as 2.1 per cent. The reader will here be reminded of the arguments adduced by Herbert Spencer against state-management nearly a century ago. It appears that the Rupee-tender system has been made very effective; 93 per cent of the purchases of state-managed railways are in rupees. The company-managed railways however have shown greater slackness in the matter. The progress of Indianisation has been very disappointing in view of the fact that rapid Indianisation has

been specifically mentioned in the Convention of 1924.

The most serious effect of the motor transport has been a heavy fall in the railway revenue and a needless duplication along the parallel roads. This would be remedied when a co-ordinated plan for the whole of India would be evolved in accordance with the resolutions of the Road-Rail Conference. During the current year only 5500 motor-buses were imported, which is probably due to the prevailing depression in trade. There is very little progress to be recorded in the sphere of co-operation judging by the number of Societies as well as the amount of working capital; but we cannot expect spectacular progress year after year.

V. N. GODBOLE.

ABHANGAS OF TUKARAM.

VILLAGE SONGS OF WESTERN INDIA.
TRANSLATION FROM TUKARAM. BY
JOHN S. HAYLAND. (Allenson & Co.) 1934.
20cm. 86p. Re. 1.

THIS booklet is an attempt to render into English some of the selected Abhangas of Tukaram, admittedly one of the most popular of the seventeenth century Maratha Saint poets. The title of the booklet, however, does little justice to the fame and popularity of Tukaram. For the songs of Tukaram are read, appreciated, and loved not only by the rustics of Maharashtra but even by the so-called university men.

The author has rightly conceived that the core of Tukaram's teaching refers to spiritual life. And he has accordingly attempted to arrange the selections so as to present to his countrymen Tukaram's views of spiritual life. But in the absence of a very strong external evidence or an internal autobiographical account, such arrangements are bound to be only partially true. For there is ample room for the play of subjective factors in such arrangements. In the present case, there is greater room for incongruity between the proposed arrangement and the original, for the author shows little knowledge of the traditions in which Tukaram was brought up. Tukaram started his sadhana as a Warkari of Pandharpur and remained throughout his life a staunch Warkari. The present selections find no room for such an important factor in the sadhana of Tukaram.

The author claims that the great majority of the poems in this book are the only English translations available. If this is a fact, we venture to say that the author ought to have taken greater care in making what he calls 'translations'. We are afraid to call them translation. We are not sure whether they can be called free rendering. For, we are sorry to state that the author has in these so-called 'translations' taken undue liberties with the text. There are a number of Abhangas (pages 34, 64, 43 etc.) in which major portions have been left untranslated. What is worse is that there are others like those on pages 44, 65 etc. which have been wrongly translated. In one or two of these Abhangas, the author has failed to show that he can understand the simple meanings of some of these lines. It is quite possible that the author may have been working under certain handicaps. However, as it is, we feel it necessary to say that the translations fail to reflect faithfully in English what Tukaram really thought and felt.

S. V. DANDEKAR.

SHORT NOTICES.

RESEARCH AND PROGRESS, VOL. I—NOS.
1 & 2. (Berlin, N. W. 7, Unter den Linden
38.) Annual Subsn. 6/-

THIS is a quarterly magazine conducted in English for the purpose of giving an account of the achievements of German scientists. Apparently Germany is finding it increasingly necessary to indulge in costly foreign propaganda in the cultural as well as the political field and to counteract, at least in some measure, the result of the unpopularity incurred by the Nazis. Nobody had any doubt regarding the excellent work done in the past by scientists of German nationality (both the so-called Aryans and the Jews ranging from 100 to 0 per cent.) and the present journal seems to be a rather thinly veiled attempt to show to the world that in spite of the hounding out of a large number of world-renowned scientists owing to the shape of their noses, the colour of their hair or the nature of their views, Germany still continues to turn out good work in various fields of research. The articles themselves range from theology to physics and archaeology to biology and are rather heavy material for a layman. On the other hand they are not exhaustive enough for the expert. They may however serve the purpose of rousing interest for further reading in any particular field.

D. D. KARVE.

MANU: A STUDY IN HINDU SOCIAL THEORY.
By KEVAL MOTWANI. (Ganesh). 1934. 20cm.
261p. Rs. 3.

THE book under notice purports to be a study of the institutions of Manu considered from the point of view of a modern sociologist. There can be no doubt that the author has covered a wide range of literature bearing on the subject. The result, however, would have been more satisfactory if he had not allowed himself to be carried away by an enthusiasm for theorising.

Social institutions have to be studied in the light of history. Conditions observable among other communities at the same stage of civilization as the Hindu society in the days when the Code of Manu must have been compiled would furnish a valuable clue to the origin of the social institutions of Manu. Unfortunately, the author seems to overlook the importance of a comparative study of his subject, as is evident in his attempt to trace a connection between the social institutions of Manu and the ancient Hindu classification of the human temperament under three heads, viz., Satva, Rajas and Tamas and the division of human life into four stages, viz. Brahmacharya, Grihasthasrama, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. However great the temptation may be to emphasize the analogy between these and the division of society into four castes, the value of the work under notice would have been greatly enhanced had the author confined himself to a study of his subject in the light of history without trenching upon the realm of philosophy.

M. P. S. R.

THE REFORMS SCHEME. A CRITICAL
STUDY. By D. N. BANERJEE. (Longmans,
Calcutta.) 1935. 20cm. 189p. Rs. 2.

THIS book is a collection of lectures delivered by the author on some problems connected with the Indian constitutional reforms. It is divided into three parts, the first one dealing with the White Paper and the second with the Report of the Joint Select Committee. By means of copious extracts from the proceedings of the Round Table Conferences and the speeches of eminent Britishers, the author exp. ses some of the

fundamental defects of the schemes mentioned above. But the criticisms are not merely destructive, there are some important constructive suggestions also. Now that the India Bill has become an Act all these criticisms become academical and of little practical value. But as an attempt for showing what the Indian viewpoint on the constitutional question is the book is a valuable addition to the list of books written on the subject during the seven years during which it had been a live issue.

C. V. HANUMANTHA RAO.

Miscellaneous.

FAMINE IN CEDED DISTRICTS.

Mr. R. Suryanarayana Rao, a member of the Servants of India Society who is working for the relief of the famine-stricken in the Ceded Districts, writes:

THE seasonal condition in the Ceded Districts, especially in Bellary and Ananthapur Districts, has not improved to the extent expected by the authorities. The seasonal reports published from week to week in the "Fort St. George Gazette" indicate that the rains are not adequate to stimulate the sowings and to sustain the already sown crops, that the supply of water in wells and tanks is insufficient for irrigation purposes and that the scanty supplies received in tanks are nearing exhaustion.

The latest report for the week ending with the 17th inst. for Ananthapur District says that the rainfall during the week helped to some extent the revival of crops that were beginning to fade but did not bring any supplies worth mentioning to the irrigation sources. It is doubtful if the rain received was evenly distributed and if it at least amounted to average rainfall in different parts of the District. On account of the inadequate and uneven distribution of rain, it is said that all the cultivable area has not been brought under cultivation. To take one instance, the average rainfall for the period ending with 31st July used to be 5 inches in Hindupur Taluk. But the actual rainfall seems to have been not more than 2 inches this year. This is worse compared even to last year, which was 4 inches. Usually the tanks in this taluk used to get half the supply. This year as in previous two or three years there is hardly any supply. For want of adequate rains sowings in some parts of the district have concluded. Even if rains come during the next fortnight Ragi can be cultivated in some of the lands. But the cultivation of Ragi in some portions is not going to improve the situation much unless irrigation sources also receive full supply to undertake cultivation of wet lands. There are many dry lands where even Ragi cannot be cultivated. The lot of the black cotton soil tracts yet remains to be decided as the time for the sowing of Chollem and Cotton is not yet over. Timely and adequate rains only can save the situation. The Korra crop sown already is drooping for want of rain. Taking all the existing factors into consideration the situation seems to be gloomy.

The figures of workers attending the works and those in receipt of gratuitous relief are a sufficient indication that the season has not improved and that the agricultural labourers do not find employment. During the week ending 10th August the numbers of workers and those in receipt of gratuitous relief in Ananthapur district were 50,481 and 27,404 and in the week ending 17th August they were 53,856 and the 30,990 respectively. Only a slight increase is seen in the Bellary District, the figures being 23,736 and

12,207 in the week ending 10th August and 24,300 and 12,413 in the week ending 17th August. There is no denying the fact that agricultural labourers freely resort to works finding no employment in their village and that too in spite of the very low wages compared with those they would have received for field work if the season had been good.

In spite of the fact that rains have not been adequate, that agricultural labourers do not find employment, that the tanks have not received sufficient supplies for irrigation purposes, that the crops sown need more rains even for their revival, that the out-turn of the harvest of Ragi in certain parts has been from bad to poor, it is understood that the Government propose to follow the 'Rains Policy and Closure of Relief' prescribed in Chapter X of the Famine Code. Whether the rains which have been precarious have really set in necessitating the re-establishment of normal agricultural conditions, whether there is enough work in the fields for agricultural labourers and whether even if there is work—a circumstance dependent on receipt of further rains—the pattadars are in a position to employ labour for agricultural operations in view of the series of bad years and agriculture having become a precarious source of income, whether all the cultivated areas have been brought under cultivation—these and other connected points require sympathetic consideration of the authorities before action is contemplated under Chapter X of the Famine Code. If, as is proposed, public works are to be closed and the workers are to be distributed on village works, the authorities should be certain of improvement in the situation. From what I have been able to observe in my tours in the famine area and for reasons already stated I feel it would be premature action. From enquiries made on the spot I found that already action had been taken under Sec. 163 (a) and a large number of people had been removed from the village relief lists. Such increase in numbers as is seen under gratuitous relief is the increase in the number of those fed in the kitchen which increases or decreases according to the number of workers. I feel the condition prescribed in the section, viz. increase in the demand for agricultural labour, is not existing and this is more evident from the fact that a large number of workers seek admission to departmental works walking long distances, and that the number of such admissions is increasing is clear from the figures quoted already. Even pattadars who in ordinary times employ agricultural labourers are forced to seek admission to works and reconcile themselves to working alongside with labourers whom they were employing. If it is decided that village works should take the place of public works, relief to the dependants of workers now given in the shape of cooked food in kitchens will be discontinued. But it is hoped these dependants will be admitted to village gratuitous relief as contemplated under Section 161 (a) of the Famine Code. With the crops on the land in a precarious condition requiring rains urgently to sustain them and the uncertainty of the crops becoming ripe, I hope the authorities will not take any premature action under Chapter X of the Famine Code.

Now that the Hon. Mr. Souter has himself seen and studied the situation on the spot and the ever vigilant Famine Commissioner is anxiously watching the situation, it is earnestly hoped that nothing in the nature of premature action will be taken and the people of the famine-stricken areas will not be deprived of the only source of employment which the public works provide. Timely action on the part of the authorities till now has saved the situation. Let not any untimely action taken now result in undoing all the good done so far.

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