

# The Servant of India

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## CONTENTS:

	Page
TOPICS OF THE WEEK ... ..	505
ARTICLES :—	
Special Powers Bill ... ..	507
The League's Moral Flabbiness; ... ..	508
SHORT NOTICES. ... ..	511
MISCELLANEA :—	
Mr. Joshi's Speech on Criminal Law Amendment Bill. ... ..	511
Who Should Work the Reforms?— <i>Indian Social Reformer's View.</i> ... ..	514
Famine in Ceded Districts—Mr. Suryanarayana Rao's Statement. ... ..	515

## Topics of the Week.

### "No Option but to Work."

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD, in the press interview that he gave on his return from England last week, expressed the opinion that, bitterly dissatisfied as Indians were with the constitution, they had no option but to work it. In what spirit they should work it is a more important point, but Sir Chimanlal did not say much about it. However, there is no reason to suppose that his opinion has varied in the last eight months from the opinion to which he gave expression at the Liberal Federation in Poona in December last. There he said :

No doubt the constitution will be worked when it is going to be imposed upon us in spite of us. But, as I have often observed, there are two ways of working a constitution. What is wanted is to give India a constitution which will make people peacefully and quietly to sit down to work it. The test is this of any constitution, whether it is a constitution which is acceptable to the people for whom you designed it. Is it a constitution which the people for whom you designed it are prepared to work peacefully and in the right way?

Can this constitution be ever worked with peace and contentment? There will be irresistible temptation to work it with the object of forcing the pace and creating situations which would make the working of the constitution very difficult and thus forcing the hand of England to reconcile the whole matter at a very early date. Is that the situation which the British Government wish to create in this country, or, is it not necessary to create conditions by which there will be good-will between Britain and India so that India will progress towards the early realisation of dominion status as she desires?

The answer of the Liberal Federation to this constitution is this: it is wholly unacceptable; it will never create peace in this country, but on the contrary will in-

crease strife and will very much deepen the existing discontent.

### Proposed Financial Inquiry.

GIVING evidence before the Joint Select Parliamentary Committee two years ago Sir Samuel Hoare foreshadowed a financial inquiry to precede the inauguration of his reforms. The inquiry, he said, would be "a small expert inquiry, the kind of inquiry that would not raise a lot of big political issues, questions, for instance, between one province and another, but a small expert actuarial inquiry, really seeing how the balance sheet stood." This certainly prepared us for the inquiry committee being very small in personnel, consisting of not more than three or four persons. But hardly would anybody have expected that it would be a one-man inquiry. It is beyond doubt that Sir Otto Niemeyer who has been selected for the task is a financial expert of international repute. It may also be admitted that his selection for the task is all that it should be. But what is in doubt is the wisdom of the action of Government in making him the sole inquirer. The action cannot be defended even on the ground of the expert or technical nature of the inquiry, for it would be difficult to maintain that there are no financial experts amongst Indians. It should have been easily possible to associate some of them with Sir Otto Niemeyer. But one forgets that those responsible for foisting the new constitution on this country have a rooted dislike of treating Indians as their equals or even as people knowing what is good for themselves.

THE exclusion of Indians from the proposed financial inquiry would probably not have been sorely felt if its object had been, as stated by Sir Samuel Hoare, merely the preparation of a balance sheet. In point of fact a far more serious responsibility has been thrown upon Sir Otto Niemeyer. He is expected to submit a scheme of financial allocation between the Federal and Provincial Governments. The allied question of financial subventions to new provinces like Sind and Orissa and to the existing deficit ones like Assam must necessarily engage his attention. The thorny problem of the apportionment of the income-tax receipts between the federation and its provincial units is also sure to come under his notice. All this connotes something much more important than mere actuarial calculations. To throw the undivided responsibility for such a serious and far-reaching task on a single individual, however able, is surely not to try to create a favourable atmosphere for the reception of the results of Sir Otto's inquiry. Even now it is not too late to repair the mistake by the association of one or two Indians with Sir Otto Niemeyer in his very arduous task.

### Training of Detenus.

ADDRESSING the Bengal Legislative Council last month Sir John Anderson announced the early inauguration of a scheme for training detenus to be useful members of society by giving them training in agriculture and small industries. The details of the scheme are now available. Under this scheme agricultural and industrial camps will be set up where practical training would be imparted to selected detenus. It is proposed, to begin with, to bring into being 3 agricultural and 14 industrial camps, the extension of the experiment being naturally dependent upon its success. Each agricultural camp will have 25 detenus and about 500 bighas of land assigned to it. 450 of this area will be utilised for agricultural purposes, while the rest for residential and recreative purposes. The number of detenus to be assigned to an industrial camp will be 15 and the distribution of the proposed 14 industrial camps has been fixed as follows: 3 for brass, 4 for cutlery, 3 for pottery and 4 for umbrella-making.

THE agricultural scheme will make a start with market gardening and fruit farming. The work will not be hard and will certainly be interesting. The location of these camps has been decided upon specially with an eye to the availability of easy marketing facilities. As for training, it will be imparted by an agricultural demonstrator, the detenu proceeding, after the completion of this short instructional course, to put the results of his instruction to practical test.

IN the selection of industries in which the detenus are to engage, care has been taken to select only those in which there is not keen competition, for the products of which there exists a ready market, the raw materials for which are available in the country and which have been more or less standardized by research and experiment. A factor which influenced the selection of these industries was also the fact that the Industries Department had acquired special knowledge of their technique in connection with the unemployment relief scheme. The results of this experimental method for the reclamation of suspected terrorists will be watched with interest by the public.

### Quetta in the Assembly.

IF one were to judge from press reports, the Government seem to have read more into the Congress resolution about Quetta recently moved in the Assembly than was really intended. The demand for a committee of inquiry which it put forth was not apparently intended as a vote of censure against Government for its handling of the earthquake situation in Baluchistan. As a matter of fact the mover explicitly assured the Government that his sole object in asking for a committee was to restore public confidence. What is even more significant is that more than one Congress member paid eloquent tributes to the work of the military forces in the matter of relief. This should have been enough to disarm Government suspicion about Congress intentions. But the Government chose to treat it as a move to discredit them.

THE only point on which the public needs to be assured is that everything possible was done to avoid needless loss of life. Assurances to this effect on the part of the Government have no doubt not been lacking but do not unfortunately command public con-

fidence. There is nothing surprising in this, having regard to the present state of Indo-British relationship. A similar assurance given as a result of the labours of a committee would naturally carry greater weight with the public. That was why it was suggested that the matter should be inquired into by a mixed committee. If the Government's assurances are worth anything and if their record is really unimpeachable, the Government had nothing to fear from the work of the proposed committee, for its findings would only have served to lend strength to their reassuring statements. In these circumstances we think the Government were not well advised in opposing the Congress demand for the appointment of a committee.

### An Overseas Indians Department.

THE non-official suggestion for the creation of a separate department at the headquarters of the Government of India to look after the interests of Indians settled in other lands was pressed on the attention of Government by means of a resolution recently moved in the Council of State. The subject is at present in charge of a Secretary who is burdened with numerous other duties. The result naturally is that with the best of will on the Secretary's part the interests of overseas Indians numbering over 25 lakhs—a number which will be added to by over 8 lakhs on Burma's separation from India—sometimes stand the risk of neglect at the hands of the Indian Government. The risk would obviously be very much lessened if overseas Indians were given a whole-time Secretary to safeguard their well-being. The number itself, if nothing else, constitutes a strong justification for the step proposed by Sir Phiroze Sethna, the mover of the resolution. The reply of the Government spokesman, though non-committal, gives ground for the hope that action on the lines suggested in the resolution would not be long deferred.

BUT let nobody delude himself with the belief that even if a new Overseas Indians department is brought into existence, it is going to usher in a millennium for them. The fact is that the creation of the new post by itself will not lead to any considerable improvement in their condition unless steps are simultaneously taken to keep him in touch with departments having or likely to have a prejudicial effect on Indian interests in different lands. The utility of the new department will largely depend upon its being apprised in due time of such developments, and its being placed in possession of reliable and exhaustive information with regard to them. To look to local Indians for this purpose is to expect too much. The collection of facts bearing on such anti-Indian measures in the different dominions and colonies must, if the information is to be really accurate and free from bias, be entrusted to an official agency. This must be created by the appointment of Agents to the Government of India in all countries in which Indians are settled in considerable numbers. Unless arrangements are made to furnish the new department with accurate and reliable facts concerning any anti-Indian measures, either already in existence or under contemplation of the Colonial or Dominions Governments, the proposed official protector of overseas Indians sitting at Delhi or Simla will find that he cannot make himself very useful to them. We are sure this aspect of the matter did not fail to receive attention at the hands of speakers who participated in the debate on Sir Phiroze Sethna's resolution.

## SPECIAL POWERS BILL.

**S**OME good-hearted but rather simple-minded members of the Labour Party in England suggested, at the close of the debates on the Reforms Bill in Parliament, that the Government should signalise the introduction of the new constitution, which the Government claims confers more power upon Indians than any constitution that went before conferred upon any people in any country, by a grant of amnesty to political prisoners with a view to preparing the most favourable atmosphere for the constitution. The Government, however, has its own ideas in regard to the creation of a suitable atmosphere for the working of the reforms. It presents us with a Criminal Law Amendment Act at the Centre and Special Powers Acts in the Provinces—all of them permanent measures and all of them of an extraordinary character, making serious inroads on personal liberty. We must confess that the Government knows better than the Labour members do what the nature of the constitution is and by what sort of measures it should be heralded. The constitution is going to inaugurate, as we have said before, an era of conflict and strife such as it was never our lot to experience before, and repressive legislation of a monstrous character will pave the way for the reforms better than a general gaol delivery. The Government has undoubtedly a better sense of realities than some of the amiable members of the Labour Party.

These measures are intended avowedly to meet an emergency, but that is no reason, in Government's opinion, why they should be temporary. It insists upon their being made a permanent addition to the ordinary law of the land. "They will harm no law-abiding person," says the Government. "Then why impose any time limitation? The executive will use the powers with which it is armed only when it becomes necessary. When it is not necessary the powers will remain unused, as the safeguards in the new constitution are going to be under Mr. Jayakar's Pact with the Governor! But the Indian people will have the satisfaction of having an improved criminal law which will fit any conditions, and they will not have to have emergency legislation such as now and then becomes necessary in less advanced countries like England." When last these measures were enacted, they were of short duration and were intended just to suffice the present regime, leaving the new regime to enact them afresh if thought necessary. But the Government has thought better of it now. To saddle the new legislatures with the ungrateful task of taking repressive measures, the Government now feels, would be to impose upon them a task under which they may break down, and in order to do them a good turn the Government wishes to place these harsh-looking measures, permanently on the statute book now, taking upon itself the odium for them. The Government cannot be praised too highly for its altruism, but we are inclined to think that it is unduly nervous that the future legislatures under the benign constitution that

will come into force shortly will be unwilling or even unable to do anything that offends grievously against civil liberties.

The Government's object being to have a sort of criminal law that will be able to cope with any kind of emergency which may or may not have actually arisen, it is under no obligation to prove that a certain emergency exists which makes it necessary to take special powers. All that it has to show is that it is possible for that emergency to arise, and the need for special legislation is proved. The Special Powers Act of Bombay, which an obedient legislature passed in 1932, was passed because the civil disobedience movement was on and a no-tax campaign was in progress in certain districts. The Member in charge at the time said, "The one and only object of the Bill ( was ) to provide Government with powers in reserve to deal with the civil disobedience movement", and tried to justify every clause of the Bill with reference to certain acts that had been done by the leaders of the civil disobedience movement in one part of the Presidency or another. Now, however, the Government is under no such necessity of showing that public peace is actually being threatened, and that certain measures must be taken immediately in the interests of public security. All that it has to show is that a spirit of lawlessness may break out again, and that means must be at hand to put it down. Here the Government is on safe ground because no one can say that the people will never take to unlawful activities in future.

But the Government is very ill-advised in making a half-hearted attempt in its statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill to show that all the powers of the 1932 Act are urgently necessary now. The civil disobedience movement has been discontinued, and the only justification which the Government claimed for the Special Powers Act then has completely disappeared. The Congress, it is true, has only suspended the movement and not formally stopped it. But even if it had done so, would it be possible for the Congress to start the movement afresh? The possibility of a revival will never disappear, and it only means that, whether the movement is actually in existence or not, we must always have on our statute book a criminal law strong enough to nip it in the bud, whenever it arises. But will the Government be powerless to arm itself with the necessary powers when the possibility becomes an actuality? The Government will certainly take less time to take these powers and bring them into force than the Congress can to restart civil disobedience. The best plan for the Government therefore is not to seek to justify the exceptional measure by the condition of the country, either as it exists now or is likely to be in the immediate future. Its only justification is that the country's ordinary criminal law should be such that it should be equal to any possible contingency. This, in fact, is the real justification that it does put forward. But it places itself in the wrong

when it tries to support its measures on the other plea.

"The only reason" for the Special Powers Act in 1932 was the existence of the civil disobedience movement. That reason being now unavailable, the Government has to adduce another. Now, we are told, "the principal reason for the continuance of the Act at the present time is the danger to which the Presidency of Bombay is exposed, especially in industrial centres, by communism." But why are special measures necessary to deal with a movement "involving force and violence?" Force and violence, when they actually break out or even when incitement to them is offered, ought to be met under the ordinary law. Communists ought to be left free to express their opinion that, under the existing social order, constitutional means alone will not be sufficient. Let the believers in constitutional agitation make a counter-propaganda. Let the Government take part in it if it pleases. But expression of such an opinion ought to be permitted without let or hindrance. We ourselves have been saying that, the Government having effectually closed the door to constitutional amendment by lawful means, people will take to unlawful means, and we shall continue to say it, no matter in what way the criminal law is stiffened. When people actually do take to unlawful means, the responsibility for driving them to that course will be solely the Government's. If anyone is to be punished, it ought to be the Government. But what will happen is that honest critics like ourselves will be liable to be arrested without warrant and detained in custody because forsooth they have acted in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or peace and may be ordered by the District Magistrate, without limit of time, to abstain from such acts. This is an invasion of public liberty which no decent-minded person can tolerate.

The Government has many strings to its bow : if the string of civil disobedience has snapped, it has

those of communism and terrorism. Terrorism, it had to admit in 1932, prevails in the Bombay Presidency to a much smaller extent than in other Provinces, and there is no evidence of its having increased in the intervening three years. Yet Bombay, the advanced Province that it is, must have a much more rigorous repressive measure than, e. g., the Punjab. In the Punjab the Government was able to show that by the use of the Ordinance powers it had succeeded in preventing at least two terrorist outrages. No such claim can be made by the Bombay Government. Nevertheless it seeks far more drastic powers than the Punjab Government took to itself in 1932. The Punjab Government omitted the powers given by the Ordinance to take possession of buildings ; to prohibit access to certain places ; to prohibit or regulate traffic and means of transport ; to control posts, telegraphs and railways ; and the special power of search. The Bombay Government retained all these powers in 1932 and would retain them now, although on its own showing the terrorist movement in this Presidency is nothing compared to the terrorist movement in the Punjab. These powers will be required when a revolution is imminent. We wonder whether we are at all in the land of the living since we see no signs around us of a coming revolution, which, however, appear so clearly to our watchful Government. Similarly one would feel that there cannot be even a colourable excuse for continuing Chapter III of the old Act containing provisions against refusal to pay taxes, since the movement for the non-payment of taxes which was being conducted as a part of the civil disobedience campaign has been discontinued.

It would be too much to hope that the present legislature would teach a lesson to the Government that it so badly needs for making these outrageous proposals. Public opinion must, however, teach a severe lesson, first, to the legislature and then to the Government.

## THE LEAGUE'S MORAL FLABBINESS.

**T**HE League may not be able to save Abyssinia from Mussolini ; but Mussolini can save Abyssinia from the League.

Poor Abyssinia, it now appears, has almost as much to fear from the League as from Mussolini. We say "almost as much" because being annexed to a country may be a trifle worse than being a protectorate, and Abyssinia is now offered a choice between the two.

Abyssinia, we are told, chooses what it apparently regards as the lesser evil.

But we are not quite sure that all will agree that conquest is really a lesser evil than the status of a military protectorate. Conquest is at least open brigandage. The conquered country has not to give its consent to its own violation. But if the terms of the League's Committee of Five are accepted by Abyssinia, her political freedom will be extinguished with her consent.

This is what is happening at the League. But Mussolini may yet prevent it. The latest news is that he has bluntly refused the terms of the Committee of Five.

Abyssinia's fate will be sealed anyhow ; but the League may survive if Mussolini remains firm. If Abyssinia is forcibly conquered by Italy, the League's utter impotence will be evident and, as an effective institution, it will be killed. But its position of moral pre-eminence will remain unassailed.

Which is better for the League : to negotiate successfully an essentially unjust solution and thus prevent open rupture, showing thereby that it has some practical utility ; or to strive for the assertion of moral principles even if, in doing so, it ultimately fails ?

If the League stands firmly on the principles of right and justice, it may yet succeed. But if it manoeuvres Abyssinia into an unholy compromise it will lose all its moral prestige.

The League is now feeble because it lacks power to uphold its authority as a World Parliament, but its moral authority is great. It would be a much smaller reproach to be morally strong and physically weak than to be physically strong and morally weak.

If the League is to die, let it die nobly. If it purchases its life at the cost of its moral principles—well, we for our part will say it has lived a bit too long.

## II.

WE are conscious that we are basing our criticism upon somewhat imperfect information, for the text of the Committee of Five's report is not yet available. But the reports that have reached this country leave no alternative to a harsh judgment, and no one would rejoice more than we if it becomes known that the actual report is substantially different from what we have been led to believe it is.

Before we examine the report, it should be borne in mind that this report has been modelled on the Three Power conversations between Great Britain, France and Italy in Paris, and these conversations took place on the basis of the Three Power Agreement of 1906. From the conversations Abyssinia was kept out as she was from the Agreement itself.

Now what was this Agreement? It paid lip service to Abyssinia's territorial integrity and political independence, but it went on to say that if perchance the political and territorial status quo in Abyssinia was disturbed, the Three Powers would concert measure to protect—not the interests of Abyssinia—but their own special interests as defined in this Agreement and in various other agreements mentioned therein, among which is the Two Power Agreement between Great Britain and Italy of 1891. This was thus an agreement, as Moon has well said, about "the division of the spoils." The 1891 Agreement reserved for Great Britain and Italy different "spheres of influence", Great Britain taking to herself the valley containing the headwaters of the Nile and, as Moon says, "a generous territorial corridor leading from Egypt to Uganda and East Africa, a necessary link in the Cape-to-Cairo chain of possessions," but giving to Italy practically the whole of the rest of the most valuable part of Abyssinia. The capital of Addis Ababa and the rich plateau on the west, on which Italy has set her heart, was to be, according to this Agreement, within the zone of Italy's exclusive influence.

A solution to the Italo-Abyssinian conflict was sought within the terms of these two Agreements, than which few other agreements bear greater marks of spoliation on their face. If the League is to maintain its moral integrity, it should first have forbidden the Powers concerned to proceed on such a foundation. The *Manchester Guardian* said quite truly long ago, in its weekly edition of 28th June, that "the 1906 Agreement is superseded by Article 20 of the Covenant" (of the League), which says: "The Members of the League severally agree that the Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or under-

standings *inter se* which are inconsistent with the terms thereof, and solemnly undertake that they will not hereafter enter into any engagements inconsistent with the terms thereof." The 1906 Agreement and the 1891 Agreement to which it refers are clearly incompatible with the basic principles of the Covenant, and the League should first have abrogated these Agreements.

## III.

BUT the League permitted conversations on the basis of treaties which should have been declared null and void, and here its moral fall began. What was the nature of the compromise proposals that emerged out of the conversations? The solution that was offered amounted in effect to transforming the Three Power Agreement of 1906, negotiated behind Abyssinia's back, into a Four Power Agreement, Abyssinia also being persuaded or over-persuaded to agree to it. An agreement which the League ought to have refused to recognise on the ground of its inconsistency with the League principles was now to be effected with the League's express sanction! Could anything be more destructive of the League's moral authority than this? The Franco-British proposal to Italy in Paris was that the economic exploitation of Abyssinia's natural resources should be taken in hand by the Member States of the League—by building roads and railways, by promoting foreign trade, by reorganising finances, by improving postal and telegraphic services and in various other ways. And—this is the most vital portion of the suggestion—in this economic exploitation Italy would have a predominating part. This is in keeping with another Italo-British Agreement of 1925, by which Great Britain promised to use her good offices to secure for Italy "exclusive economic influence" in the western part of Abyssinia. This Agreement, again, as the *Manchester Guardian* has pointed out, conflicts with Article 10 of the League Covenant, by which "the Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League." In protesting against the Agreement to the League, Ras Tafari, the present Negus Negusti, well said:—

We have the honour to bring to the notice of all the States Members of the League of Nations the correspondence which we have received, in order that they may decide whether that correspondence is compatible with the independence of our country, inasmuch as it includes the stipulation that part of our Empire is to be allotted to the economic influence of a given Power. We cannot but realise that *economic influence and political influence are very closely bound up together*; and it is our duty to protest most strongly against an agreement which, in our view, conflicts with the most essential principles of the League of Nations.

Nor did Mr. Eden and M. Laval take any other view. They too recognised that economic influence and political influence could not be dissociated from each other, and in giving Italy a large share in Abyssinia's economic development they proposed to give her a large share in the control of Abyssinia's

administration too. The whole of Italy's administration was to be reformed, judicial organisation improved, military forces strengthened, and police control stiffened—by the appointment of foreign advisers, a high proportion of whom were to be Italian. Abyssinia was to be induced to allow the settlement on a large scale of foreign colonists on her soil, and of these foreign colonists again a preponderant portion was to consist of Italians with extra-territorial rights. If they committed any offences they would be tried, not in Abyssinian courts, but in Italian courts. Now if these proposals do not infringe Abyssinia's political independence we should like to know what would. The *Manchester Guardian* truly said while the Three Power conversations were in progress.

If anyone has reason to be pleased with the outcome (i. e. failure) of the Conference it is probably the Abyssinian Government, for it leaves the Emperor with a chance of maintaining real independent sovereignty. As the *Temps* admits, Italy was in fact offered by England and France an opportunity to make something very like another Morocco of Abyssinia by peaceful penetration. If Italy had once succeeded in establishing large communities of settlers under her own consular jurisdiction she could not be driven out of Abyssinia.

In other words, Abyssinia would be, under these proposals, a protectorate of Italy, as Morocco is of France.

#### IV.

IT must not be understood that Abyssinia is averse to taking foreign aid. The Emperor, who is a progressive ruler, recognises that the country is backward, that it must be developed, and that it can only be developed with foreign capital and foreign expert advice. But in seeking foreign help he goes to countries which have no territorial ambitions and avoids those which have. It has in fact been said that Abyssinia is the only country in the world that still opens its doors to foreigners and permits them to participate in its economic progress. Is it either morally wrong or politically an unnecessary precaution to exclude from this process of economic exploitation Italians who have political designs on the country? E. A. Colson, an American, has served as financial adviser; a Swiss lawyer named Auberson has served as legal adviser in the consular court. A concession was signed only five months ago with a Swiss group to build a road from Addis Ababa westward to the Sudan. The affair of the recent petrol concession to an American concern is fresh in everybody's mind. The contract for barrage works on the Blue Nile is again given to an American firm. The army is drilled by a Swiss. Thus Swedes, Norwegians, Americans, Swiss are freely employed by the Abyssinian Government. But Italians are deliberately excluded and for a good reason. Because they threaten Abyssinia's independence. The Franco-British suggestion is that this discrimination against Italy should cease and on the contrary that Abyssinia should show overwhelming preference to Italians so that, being offered *de facto* domination, they should

not continue to aspire to *de jure* suzerainty over the country!

The Committee of Five has in effect endorsed these proposals, but it is responsible, we are told, for one refinement. Italians will not be mentioned *eo nomino* in the Protocol that will be offered to Abyssinia. It will not be laid down in black and white that a large proportion of settlers and concessionaires and advisers will be Italian; it will only be a sort of Gentleman's Agreement. What comfort can Abyssinia extract from the omission of specific mention of Italians if Italians are in fact to dominate her, and what satisfaction can Italy derive from the Protocol if Abyssinia is economically and politically developed but she has no hand in it? But why should the League boggle about mentioning Italians by name? What did the League's Lytton Commission recommend to China in regard to Manchuria? We give below a few points from the Commission's recommendations to make the position clear.

A special gendarmerie should be organised with the collaboration of foreign instructors.

An adequate number of foreign advisers would be appointed by the Chief Executive of the autonomous Government (of Manchuria), of whom a substantial proportion should be Japanese.

The appointment of two foreigners of different nationalities to have supervision of the constabulary and the fiscal administration would be made. (The foreigners must exercise exceptionally wide powers.)

The free participation of Japan in the economic development of Manchuria.

An extension to the whole of Manchuria of the right to settle and lease land, coupled with some modification of the principle of extra-territoriality.

Japan did not require a Lytton Report to grant her these concessions. She took the whole of Manchuria under her control, indirect if not direct. But the proposals made under the League auspices gave her, it should be remembered, quite a great deal.

#### V

SIMILARLY, the Committee of Five's recommendations give Italy the substance of political domination without the name. Italy should accept them if she is to consult her self-interest. But, fortunately, she has given a curt refusal, and we hope she will stick to it. We hope so because, whatever Italy may do to Abyssinia without reference to the League, we do not wish the League to be implicated in such a deal. It will bring the League nothing but discredit.

Abyssinia is willing to give her consent. One can imagine what pressure must have been brought to bear upon her. One dare not find fault with her, faced as she is with conquest, but one may be permitted to hope that Mussolini will confound the wily diplomats of Geneva.

England and France are prepared to see Abyssinia make large concessions to Italy; but they are not willing to make any large concessions to her out of their own territory. As Allan Nevins says in *Current History*, "The two countries which hold respectively 13,227,000 and 5,657,000 square miles in colonial empires could perhaps yield a little without greatly



missing it," but they will not yield it. Their contribution to the solution of the difficulty consists in advising Abyssinia to hold her neck under the butcher's knife. A new diplomacy has indeed arisen in the world!

The weakness of the League consists, not so much in the Big Powers being unwilling to enforce sanctions against an aggressor, but in the League permitting aggression to take place under its own auspices, though a less harsh name is to be given to aggression.

### SHORT NOTICES.

**THE HILL BHUIYAS OF ORISSA.** By SARAT CHANDRA ROY. (The Author, Church Road, Ranchi.) 1935, 22cm. 320 + xxxviii p. Rs. 8.

MR. ROY has been one of the most enthusiastic and scientific workers in the field of Indian ethnology for over a quarter of a century, and he is a recognized authority on the primitive tribes of the Central Hill Belt of India. The present monograph is the fifth of a series, and the standard has been well maintained. Studies like these are of great interest and assistance to students of early Indian culture and traditions as well as of modern Indian society. Thus in the surviving Bhuiya traditions of their origins and in their culture and racial affinities may be traced the Epic Puranic traditions about aboriginal and pre-Āryan tribes; in their kinship taboos and licences, and terms of relationship may be found instructive parallels in certain grades of Bengali Society; or in their marriage and coronation forms and ceremonies may be discovered the source from which the Vedic marriage and coronation derived some of their peculiar features. As examples may be mentioned (1) the Puranic association of the pre-Āryan Rikshas with Magadha ('Rikhis of Magadh' from whom the Bhuiyas claim descent), and of the pre-Āryan Bhaumas or Bhumijas with Kāmarūpa (Bhuiyas of Assam' being an important subsection and a subject of legends); (2) terms like "barāi" 'putrā', 'dhāngrā', etc., jesting relations between grandparents and grandchildren, husbands' younger brother and elder brother's wife, etc., and mutual taboo between a man and his younger brother's wife, etc. which are all prevalent in Bengali society; and (3) the 'dhari-parā' and 'jhikā' forms of marriage,

which recall the Vedic courtship in the villages or at the 'Samana' followed by the Gandharva form of marriage, and the Vedic elopements and captures of the Rākshasa (Riksha, Arksha or 'Rikhi' = Bhuiyā?) form,—or the Bhuiya installation rites, including a mock human sacrifice (meñāh), coronation speeches and oaths, and the significant ceremony of standing on the striped tiger skin, all of which have close parallels in the early Vedic "abhiṣeka." It would indeed appear from ethnological studies like these that the Vedic and ancient Indian civilization was really a synthesis of pre-existing indigenous cultures of different grades and localities brought about by the political domination of the incoming Āryans, who took much but gave little else than that synthesis.

S. C. SARKAR.

**CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES FROM THE SILVER TO THE GOLDEN JUBILEE (1911-1934).** (Natesan.) 1934. 20cm. 914p.

THE Indian National Congress commenced its glorious career in 1885, i. e. exactly fifty years ago. It is intended by Congress authorities to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the premier national organisation by bringing out a nicely written volume containing a record of the achievements of that body. This volume is not yet published. Meanwhile Messrs. Natesan & Co. of Madras have been commemorating this Jubilee by bringing out in two volumes the Congress presidential addresses. The volume before us contains the presidential addresses since 1911 and the presidential addresses at the first twenty-five sessions will be included in the other volume which will shortly be out. Since the late Mrs. Besant published her "How India Wrought for Freedom" no other equally valuable book about Congress politics was published. As we go through these pages, the various vicissitudes of the national struggle for freedom stand before the mind's eye and we are able to visualize this struggle properly and consider it in all its bearings. These nine hundred pages of choice and select reading would supply the necessary inspiration to Indian readers and the necessary instruction to European and American readers. It is a most valuable reference book.

A.

## MR. JOSHI'S SPEECH. CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

*The following is the text of the speech Mr. N. M. Joshi made in the Legislative Assembly on 12th September on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.*

SIR, I am very grateful to you for permitting me to put in a brief plea on behalf of human freedom. The legislation which the Assembly has been considering is one of a series of repressive Acts, firstly, restricting personal freedom in legitimate activities, and, secondly, investing the executive with powers which should belong to the judiciary. Legislation of this kind is abhorrent to my instincts and inconsistent with principles which I have imbibed during the course of my education and public life. When the original legislation was discussed in this Legislature in 1932, I opposed it. I felt that such legislation unnecessarily restricts our freedom. It was said that we should not place too much value upon abstract principles of freedom. I do not share

that view. I feel that abstract principles of freedom are of great value and we should try to follow them as much as possible. However, admitting that abstract principles require to be modified in real life, I would like to consider this legislation from a practical point of view as it affects the working classes of this country. I feel the Honourable the Home Member was unnecessarily pessimistic about his reading of the present situation. I think he and the supporters of the Government unnecessarily stressed the difference between the suspension and the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement. I feel there is no difference between suspension and withdrawal. There is nobody in this House who will insist upon any one of us here swearing an oath that we shall never offer civil resistance to legislation, however outrageous, however unjust that legislation may be. (*Opposition cries of "Hear, hear".*) I wonder whether the Honourable the Home Member

himself will take an oath that he will never offer resistance to any legislation, however unjust. I feel that the terrorist movement in this country is, fortunately for us, admittedly declining. The economic depression has not only reduced the strength of the Communist movement, but has brought the ordinary Labour movement to a very low level. Unfortunately, in our country, there are communal clashes; but I have every hope that, with the passing of the Government of India Act, providing for adequate separate representation to all the minorities and making statutory provision for giving to the minorities their due share in the public services, communal ill-will in this country will diminish. I, therefore, feel that, in the present situation of the country, there was absolutely no justification for the legislation which the Government of India have brought forward before the Assembly.

With your permission, Sir, I shall now very briefly examine the various clauses of the Bill; and, being interested in the welfare of the working classes, I shall first take up the clause referring to picketing. Picketing, when accompanied by intimidation, obstruction, violence or encroachment on private property, can be dealt with under the ordinary law. I have got some experience of how the magistrates deal with picketing during strikes. In nine strikes out of ten, the magistrates have succeeded, legitimately or sometimes illegitimately, in putting down picketing; and I, therefore, feel that there was absolutely no reason why this clause should have been introduced as affecting the working classes of this country. Picketing means peaceful persuasion, and I feel that this is a right which the working classes value as being necessary for the maintenance of their standards of life. There is no method by which the working classes of this country or of any country can maintain their standards of life and also better their standards of life, without sometimes refusing to work for their employers. To refuse to work unless the conditions are satisfactory is a right of every human being. That action is sometimes called a strike. I feel that on some occasions a strike is not only desirable, but absolutely necessary if the interests of the working classes are to be protected; and if a strike is declared by a majority of members in an industry, is it not the duty of the majority to try to persuade the minority to join them in that strike? I feel it is not only the right of the majority of workers to persuade the minority to join them in their strike, but it is their clear duty to do so. By enacting this section against peaceful picketing or peaceful persuasion, I feel that the Government of India are putting themselves on the side of the employers. The justification given by the Honourable the Commerce Member and the Honourable the Home Member is that there is no such thing as peaceful picketing. I admit on certain occasions picketing leads to violence, but what justification has the Honourable the Home Member or the Commerce Member for saying that violence is always due to the action of the workers? When the working classes resort to picketing, what do the employers do? The employers try to collect together, not *bona fide* workers, but rowdies in the town and send them into the factory with the object either of frightening the workers who are on strike or sometimes of deliberately creating violence. It is not, therefore, right to say that violence is due to the action of the working classes or the workers. If picketing is to be prohibited because it leads to violence, not necessarily by the action of the workers, may I ask, Mr. President, why should not black-legging be made illegal? Unfortunately black-legging is resorted to by the employers, and the Government of India, by passing this legislation, are anxious to place themselves on

the side of the employers. (*Cries of "Shame" from Congress Party benches.*)

Mr. President, the next section of this legislation with which I should like to deal very briefly is the section dealing with illegal organizations. It was said that this section is only a complementary section to another Act passed in 1908. Let me make it quite clear, Sir, that I am opposed to that Act also, and if I am opposed to the Act of 1908 I must oppose what is called a complementary or supplementary legislation to that Act. Freedom of association is another right greatly valued by the working classes.

PROF. N. G. RANGA : And peasants also.

MR. N. M. JOSHI : And, by passing this legislation, the Government of India is taking away that right. Mr. President, during last year, the Government of India declared certain labour organizations illegal. I do not know if the Government of India had inquired whether the majority of the members of these organizations were Communists. I am sure that the majority of the members of those organizations were not Communists. If there were any Communists in those organizations, their number was extremely small; and if some members of labour organizations are Communists, is it a sufficient ground to declare an organization illegal and to suppress it that a few of its members are Communists? I know that most of the organizations which were declared illegal were not engaged in doing any revolutionary work. They may have carried out a few strikes, but I am sure there is no evidence to show that they were engaged in revolutionary activities. I feel that legislation declaring organizations illegal will be very harmful to the interests of the working classes. It may be said that the Union with which I am connected or others who are of the same view as myself are connected have not yet been declared illegal. But what guarantee is there that, when you have a law on the statute book which can declare almost any organization illegal, the organizations with which I am connected and the organizations with which my friends are connected will not be declared illegal next year or the year after that? Mr. President, I do not wish to deal any more with the details of this section.

I shall now say a word, Sir, about the sections dealing with propaganda. It was said that the section penalising republication of an article or a book which is proscribed or forfeited follows as a matter of logical sequence. I fail to understand how there is a logical sequence between the forfeiture of a book by Government by executive action and making the republication of that book a penal offence. The first act itself may be a wrong thing, the proscription of a book may be an unjust action, and, if that is so, the republication of that book cannot be made a penal offence. If there is a logical sequence at all, it can only be in the forfeiture of a book and the proscription of the republished copies. But it is wrong by executive action to forfeit a book, and, then, when that book is republished, to consider it to be an offence. The original forfeiture may be a mistake unless that forfeiture was investigated and declared right by a judicial inquiry.

Mr. President, the Honourable Member, the District Magistrate of Midnapore asked—do we want men of straw to own presses and papers? I do not know, Sir, what the financial position of the Honourable Member is. He may be a wealthy man, but I want to ask him whether the poor people, the common people of the country, have absolutely no right to express their views by means of a newspaper or to maintain a press in order to express their views? Why does he insist that the printing industry and the newspapers should always be in



the hands of wealthy people? I was surprised, Sir, to hear that phrase "men of straw" from a District Magistrate. I had always felt, Mr. President, that District Magistrates claimed to protect the poor people of this country. I never thought that a man, appointed specially to protect the poor people of this country, would have that contempt for the common people of this country. I shall not say anything more on that point.

Mr. President, I do not wish to deal with the details of the section dealing with the press, but I would like to make one remark as regards the sections which are intended to put down any propaganda which discourages recruitment either to the military or to the police service. That clause will prohibit even mere propaganda on behalf of what I may call pacifism. There are men in this world who do not believe in wars or in the military forces. Have they no right at all to say that the Governments have no business to maintain armies for wars? If tomorrow I publish an article saying that the police in this country are not properly paid and if some Magistrate takes the view that my statement has discouraged recruitment to the police, I shall be liable for prosecution. I feel, Sir, that all these sections dealing with picketing, illegal organizations and the press restrict our freedom without any justification.

It was said, Mr. President, that it is always better to prevent a wrong being done. I agree with the general principle that prevention is better than cure. The real difficulty in handing over power to our Magistrates and the authorities in general is the fact that we have no confidence in them. Our experience has shown that the preventive powers given to the Magistrates in this country have not been properly used. They imagine dangers and risks where they do not exist.

I shall not detain the House by detailing many examples which have come in my experience, but I shall give a few. There was a strike in the province of Madras a few years ago. The backbone of the strike was broken, but some of the workers kept out of the factory, merely because they felt ashamed to join work after having gone on strikes. My Honourable friend, Mr. Giri, and myself felt that it was wrong to allow these people to suffer. So, both of us together went to that place with the intention of telling those people to go to work immediately. I can swear on oath that I had no other intention. I persuaded the leaders of the men of the rightness of the course which I thought they should follow. The leaders asked me and Mr. Giri to address a meeting next day. The meeting was held, we went there, but an order was served both on Mr. Giri and myself (*Cries of "Shame" from the Congress Party benches*) that our speeches were likely to cause bloodshed. It is only one example. I will give you another, a more recent one.

Last year there was a strike of textile workers in Bombay. That strike has been declared legal both by the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Bombay and the High Court of Bombay. During that strike, some people took a leading part. The Government of Bombay, under the new emergency legislation, put in jail about 20 people, who were leading the strike, without trial. Mr. President, I shall give the latest example that has happened. Between Poona and Bombay, there is a place called Ambernath where there is a match factory. Only a few months ago, there was a strike there, and, without any provocation on the part of the workers there, the Magistrate issued an order that within some miles of the factory no meeting should be held and that not even a leaflet should be distributed. (*An Honourable Member: "They have done it in Malabar also."*) In spite of

these restrictions, the strike was settled by negotiation. After the strike was settled, a friend of mine who is interested in the workers of that factory issued a leaflet explaining to the workers the terms of the settlement. The Magistrate hauled up that gentleman (*Cries of "Shame" from the Congress Party benches*) and fined him Rs. 200. With these experiences, Mr. President, do you expect me to invest the Magistrates with these preventive powers? (*Cries of "No, no" from the Congress Party benches.*)

I shall say only a few words now as to whether this legislation is likely to serve the object for which it is intended. It is said that this legislation is intended to put down terrorism. Many speakers have spoken on this point at length, but I shall say only one thing. I feel that if terrorism can at all be put down, it can only be done with the co-operation of the common people of the province in which terrorism exists. Unfortunately, in our present political situation, co-operation from the common people cannot be expected. Secondly, if we consider the economic situation of the province I hold very strongly that so long as the permanent zamindari system with all its ramifications of first degree, second degree, tenth degree of landlordism exists in Bengal, it will not be easy to reduce unemployment in that province. I feel that if the communal hatred is to be wiped out from our country, it can be done, not by negative means of legislation, but by positive and constructive efforts. So long as there is religious fanaticism in this country, so long as there is religious orthodoxy in this country, communal hatred will remain. Unfortunately, the greatest supporter of religious orthodoxy in this country is the Government of India. I said, during the last Session of the Assembly, that I am not a Communist. I agree with a part of the philosophy which the Communists preach, but I do not believe in the dictatorship even of the proletariat. I do not also believe in the use of mass violence in which the Communists believe. Although I hold that constitutional agitation and parliamentary methods will give me what I want I equally feel that the Communists have a right to say that constitutional methods and parliamentary work may not lead us to the goal which we all want to reach. I feel, Mr. President, that if Government are anxious that the people of this country should have a strong faith in constitutional agitation and parliamentary methods, it will be wrong for Government to prevent discussion between the merits of constitutional agitation and Communism. If Communism is to be prohibited in this country on the ground that it preaches the use of violence, may I ask whether the Government of India have taken any steps to prohibit the entry of Fascist and Nazi ideas into this country?

Why don't the Government of India prohibit Nazi ideas coming into India? I feel that if Communism is not to be allowed into this country, that can happen only by two means. There must be perfect freedom of expression of views, and, secondly, constructive steps should be taken promptly and on a much vaster scale. I do not wish to deal with this point any further, but I should like to say that legislation of this kind which restricts our liberty weighs on our minds as a constant nightmare. It is all very well for people, who sit on my left and who themselves are the Magistrates exercising authority, to say that the law will be applied only to those who break it. The others have no fear. It is all very well for my friend, Mr. James, to say that the law will only be applied to those who break it. The law is not likely to be applied to any Europeans. If you will permit me a little exaggeration I shall say, Mr. President, that if

the Honourable gentleman from Midnapore or Mr. James commits a murder in broad daylight in this country, I am not sure whether any one of them will be hanged. Legislation of this kind frightens us. It hinders the free expression of our views. It prevents free action on our part. We must, therefore, continue to oppose such legislation.

Mr. President, before I close, may I say a word about what my Honourable friend, Mr. James, said yesterday? He said in England freedom is given, because the English people deserve freedom. The Honourable the Commerce Member said that the English people have a sense of humour. The English people may have a sense of humour, but may I ask him whether it is easy to develop that sense of humour under the conditions in which we live? That sense of humour is developed in England, because in England there is freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of action. The English people maintain that sense of humour, because the British Parliament is supreme. The Englishman has a faith that, whatever he wants, he can achieve through his Parliament and through his platform and press. Indians have not got that faith. If our Government will give us freedom, if they will give us self-government, I am quite sure, Indians will also develop a sense of humor. Unfortunately for us, when Britishers, who love freedom and self-government leave their country for imperialist adventures which they try to ennoble by calling them imperialist responsibilities, they lose faith in freedom and self-government. May I suggest to them that, in order that they should be true to their traditions as Britishers, in order to be true to their history, as freedom-loving people, even when they go out to further their imperialistic responsibilities, they should maintain their faith in freedom and in self-government. I hope, Sir, that the Government of India will withdraw this legislation, and if they do not do it, I hope that this Legislative Assembly will throw it out.

### WHO SHOULD WORK THE REFORMS?

INDIAN public men who feel called upon to advise the country as to what its response should be to the Samuel Hoare scheme should have regard not only to the immediate future but also to what may come after it. If ever a satisfactory relationship is to be established between Britain and India, between the West and the East, the first and most urgent need is that each should take the other to mean what it says. At the present time this is unhappily not the case. The British, and Europeans generally, expect the East to take them to mean precisely what they say. But they do not reciprocate the compliment. With reference to the Hoare reforms, it has been persistently asserted by British statesmen, with brutal frankness by some and in more or less courteous language by others, that Indian leaders were not sincere in their opposition to the scheme, that there was no need to pay attention to them, and that they would accept whatever was decided upon and presented to them as an accomplished fact. Indian leaders have not all condemned the scheme. Muslims have on the whole accepted it. The Justice party in Madras has not only accepted it but has constituted itself its champion against all comers. Dr. Ambedkar's is the one non-official name cited by Sir Samuel Hoare as a supporter of his scheme and "the scheduled castes" whom he represented at the Round Table Conference should be assumed to favour it. The Europeans, of course, support the reforms. Outside these elements, disapproval of the scheme has been the rule. There

are notable exceptions, particularly among those who took part in one or more Round Table Conferences as delegates or associates. Liberals have been vehement in protest as Congressmen. It is of them specifically that British protagonists of the reforms have declared that they would come round when the Bill was put upon the statute book. If these leaders now accept the reforms and undertake to execute them, the opinion of British statesmen that Indian protesters should not be taken seriously will be confirmed. The next time any proposal is made, whether within or outside the Act, it will be open to them to point to their experience and carry it over the heads of protesters. Not only will future expressions of public opinion be discounted, but Indians will acquire a character for "bluffing," the effect of which will go far beyond political controversy. If Indian leaders can back out of their strong words of condemnation, when a proposal is pushed through in spite of their disapproval, a premium is placed on irresponsibility. The public cannot rely on their spokesmen to stand by their convictions or what were proclaimed as their convictions. Consistency is not everything. It is, some one has said, the bugbear of small minds. The leader of men will not hesitate to change his course when new circumstances, not originally contemplated, demand a change. But that is quite a different thing from changing his course when what has happened is what he knew all along would happen. To be inconsistent on principle is poor title to leadership.

Compromise, it is true, is the soul of politics. It is also the soul of life. We have to make adjustments constantly in our surroundings in order merely to live. In fact, life is nothing more than this capacity to adjust itself to variations in environment. But the adjustments of life have for their purpose the strengthening, the enrichment of vitality, of personality. An adjustment, a compromise, which resulted in the weakening or impoverishment of an organism, is maladjustment, suicide. Compromise is possible and legitimate when the parties to it are agreed upon a common end. No compromise is possible when there is no such common purpose. Can we say this of the Hoare scheme? What is the central purpose of constitutional as distinct from absolute government? It is that the governed have the determining voice in the making of the laws which they have to obey, in the raising of the taxes which they have to pay and in the spending of them. All else is subsidiary. Does the Hoare Act concede this? Lord Lothian, who is not a mere party politician but a man of intellectual and moral calibre, avows in an article in the *Twentieth Century*, as a conclusive answer to all criticism of the Hoare Act, that it places the "initiative" in Indian hands. But what is the good of giving the Indians the wheel after taking good care to remove the engine and to puncture the tyres of the car of State? With the Governor on the top of him and the steel frame at the seat of him, the Indian Minister will have about as much initiative as the corn between the upper and nether millstones. We have in mind chiefly the reforms at the centre, though the observations apply also to the provincial part of the scheme. The scheme should be judged by its proposals for the centre. Provincial autonomy without responsibility at the centre is dangerous if it be real, and if not dangerous it is unreal. Autonomy by itself would be beneficial if it were by devolution from a unitary central government. But in the Hoare Scheme separation is more real than autonomy, for the provinces have been separated in order to put them on the same level with the States with which they are to federate. But does the Act put them on the same level as States? It is obvious to the most casual observation that the

new scheme opens wide the door of diplomacy, extra-constitutional propaganda, backstairs approaches. The provincial governments in all these respects will be under a tremendous handicap as compared with many States.

The right thing in the circumstances is to leave those who believe in the scheme, the Muslims, the "scheduled castes," the Justice party, to "work" it, and for the others to render them such help as they can in carrying forward measures which are for the good of the country, like prohibition, national education and the economic regeneration of the people. If they succeed, well and good. If they fail, it cannot be said that the reforms have not had a fair trial as it will certainly be said if those who have condemned them all along undertake to "work" them, whether with the avowed object of wrecking them or with a strong conviction that they are bound to fail.—*The Indian Social Reformer.*

### FAMINE IN CEDED DISTRICTS.

*Mr. R. Suryanarayana Rao, member, Servants of India Society, Madras, writes:*

THE recent rains have brought full supplies to most of the tanks and some of them, according to season reports, have even surplussed in most of the taluks of Anantapur. In Bellary district also where the rains were not comparatively heavy the seasonal conditions show decided improvement. The number of workers on public works in Anantapur and Bellary districts was 22,687 and 15,286 respectively in the week ending with 7th September and in the week ending with 14th September the numbers were 18,461 and 13,724. There is no doubt that the prospects seem hopeful and the acute distress which was once recognised by Government as the feature of the famine-affected area, has shown perceptible signs of decrease. But, in spite of this hopeful outlook, there are areas within the famine zone where either the rains were inadequate or untimely and on the works the numbers do not show perceptible decrease. The rains policy adopted in regard to areas where rains were plentiful, if applied in the case of these areas also, will increase the hardships of the people. It is understood that orders have been issued to close down all works on or before the 30th September. The authorities will do well not to take precipitate action in respect of works situated in the areas referred to above. The fact that a large number of workers still resort to these works as compared with other works is a clear indication that all is not yet well and the people of these localities still need employment which agricultural operations do not provide. This is specially the case in some areas in Anantapur district.

#### SITUATION IN BELLARY.

As regards Bellary district, the major part of the affected area is situated in the black cotton tract where for the cultivation of main crops the North-East monsoon is very important. This monsoon has yet to set in. The early rains have enabled the sowing of Korra and Cotton and sowing, so far as dry crops are concerned, is considered satisfactory. But whether the normal seasonal conditions have been established will largely depend on the rains received during the North-East monsoon. It is understood that even in this district orders have been issued to close down the works on or before the 30th September. The number attending the works during the week ending with 3rd September was 18,216 and that ending with 10th September was 15,286, and that ending with 17th September was 13,734. While there

has no doubt been decrease in numbers, it is not so very perceptible as in the case of Anantapur district. So it is earnestly hoped the authorities will not take any steps in undue haste but wait till the North-East Monsoon becomes firmly established.

It may be pointed out that when famine works were started the numbers were comparatively small and as the distress became acute the numbers increased. In many works the fall in number is not below that at the time of declaration of famine. Till the numbers go down lower than those at the time of declaration of famine and the North-East monsoon sets in, at any rate so far as the black cotton soil tracts are concerned, there is no case for closure of works.

It is to be deeply regretted that provisions contained in the chapter dealing with Rains Policy and Closure of Relief relating to gratuitous relief are not being strictly followed. Gratuitous relief is now given in cases of extreme debility. In view of the fact that workers had come to the end of their resources before they joined the works, they will be hardly in a position to maintain themselves and their dependents. Moreover, some of them may be small pattadars, who must be finding it difficult to procure necessary assistance required even for cultivation purposes. How can they manage to maintain their dependents also till the time of harvest? Expansion of gratuitous relief at this period when the works are being closed, should be the normal feature of famine administration.

#### NEED FOR HELP TO PATTADARS.

As most of the cultivators, especially small pattadars had come to the end of their resources, they have no money either to pay for labour or for food grain. They also maintain themselves during the period they are engaged in agricultural operations. Unless these wants of the small pattadars are fulfilled, the early re-establishment of normal agricultural conditions cannot take place. An out-right grant for each pattadar based on the needs for agricultural operations is the best course to rehabilitate them. But Government would naturally be reluctant to 'throw away' the general revenues even for such a good purpose. The next best course is the granting of short term 'Takavi' loans. At present, loans are being given for purchase of bulls, sinking wells, seed grain and subsistence. These small pattadars who are already indebted in most cases with their lands mortgaged cannot offer sufficient security to entitle them to these loans. But in any case, they must be helped to restart life. Will the Government be pleased to relax the rules governing the grant of loans and make them available on the security of prospective crops or on personal security only? As the sums to be given will be very small, no great risk is involved. As a precautionary measure, these loans may be restricted to small pattadars only owning 5 acres of dry land or 2 acres of wet land or both. A study of the conditions prevailing in the Ceded Districts will disclose the fact that land is passing into the hands of a few and the number of landless tenants and labourers is increasing. This is a disquieting feature of the situation. If the small pattadars are not helped by Government now on the lines suggested by me, very soon the number of small pattadars will become considerably reduced. It is in the interests of the community to help them and put heart into them.

I trust these suggestions will receive sympathetic consideration of the authorities and the Government will continue the generous policy they have been following till now instead of altering it in the last stage.

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