

The

# Servant of India

Editor : S. G. VASU.

Office : SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA.

VOL. XIX, No. 13. }

POONA—THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1936.

{ INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.  
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15R.

## CONTENTS.

	Page
TOPICS OF THE WEEK ... ..	145
ARTICLE :—	
The Trade Policy for India ... ..	149
MISCELLANEA :—	
Payment of Wages Bill—Mr. Bakhale's Speech ...	151
The Social Service League	
Mr. Dinkar Desai on its work ... ..	154
SHORT NOTICE. ... ..	156
BOOKS RECEIVED. ... ..	156

## Topics of the Week.

### Mr. Kunzru's Tour.

MR. KUNZRU has undertaken a tour in Madras Presidency, in which, besides inspecting the work done by members of the Servants of India Society in different centres, he delivered public speeches on important political and other questions. The new constitution naturally formed one of the most important of these subjects, and in speaking on it he emphasised that the Liberal Party saw no reason to retract even one word of the bitter criticism levelled by them against the Reforms Act, and that they honestly believed that it would have been more to the interest of India to have been left with the old constitution instead of a new one being imposed upon her. He was quite prepared to admit that the constitution had been so framed as to render impossible a programme of wrecking in the sense of bringing the political machinery to a dead stop. He deprecated, however, the self-complacency of those who would ask people to work the constitution in a spirit of contentedness, for he felt that, work the constitution though they must, their hostility to it could not and should not by any means be concealed. He dwelt at great length on many other questions also, like the Hammond Committee's report, the problem of defence, excluded areas, etc. His tour of the Madras Presidency would come to an end about the end of this month.

### Babu Subash Chandra Bose.

THE Legislative Assembly by 62 votes to 59 censured the Government of India for their persistent persecution of Babu Subash Chandra Bose. They let it be known that if he returned to India he would not remain free for a long time. If this had meant that he would be put on his trial on a charge which they could bring home to him on evidence no one would have any cause for complaint. What Government mean, however, is that he would remain in internment. They say that they are

satisfied that he is deep in revolutionary plots and that if his movements were unrestricted he would prove a danger to the country.

SURELY Government cannot expect that, in the case of a leader of the people of Subash Babu's eminence, the people will take their reading of his political activities in India with anything but a large pinch of salt. The Government spokesmen—the Home Secretary, Home Member and the Leader of the House—made a great show of producing conclusive evidence proving the dangerous character of Subash Babu's activities to the hilt. Most of what they did say, however, amounted only to this: that he is a radical, being even to the left of the Congress leaders; that he always opposes any move for slowing down or discontinuing drastic political movements; that he in fact ever casts his influence on the side of making them more drastic; that he even questions the creed of non-violence of a body which indulges in civil disobedience; that his general attitude disturbs and alarms vested interests; that he harbours hopes of a revolution, &c. &c. All these things may be true, but they prove nothing as to Mr. Bose's complicity in a violent revolution.

THE cocksureness with which Government retail some of the incidents connected with Babu Subash Chandra Bose cannot fail to arouse suspicion that they are acting under the influence of prejudice. For instance, we are told, he promoted a revolutionary organisation called the Samayavadi Sangh, the intercepted letters in his own handwriting to whose members show that he "regretted the limitation of the Congress movement due to non-violence." One need not be a votary of armed revolution in order that one may believe that violence also has a place in national movements. Is Sir Henry Craik himself, who adduced what evidently he regards as a conclusive piece of evidence, prepared to pledge himself to utter non-violence in all circumstances? In fact very few people will be so prepared. But anyhow if Government have evidence let them produce it before any ordinary court of law. Until they have the courage to do so, the public in India will continue to believe that grave injustice is being done to a gifted leader who has captured the hearts of the young.

### Salt Duty.

THE consideration by the Assembly of the Finance Bill was signalized last week by the passage by 52 votes to 41 of an amendment proposing the abolition of the duty of Re. 1-4 per maund on salt. To the highly burdensome nature of this tax on a prime necessity of life, Mr. Gokhale drew pointed attention in one of his earliest speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council nearly forty years ago. He then quoted the opinions of many distinguished

Anglo-Indian administrators who either spoke apologetically of the impost or advocated its total abolition. Prof. Fawcett, e.g., urged that salt should be "as free as the air we breathe and the water we drink." In spite of this imposing array of influential opinion to the contrary salt still continues to be taxed, discouraging its consumption in adequate quantities by the poor.

It is significant that the amendment succeeded in enlisting the support of the majority in the Assembly, even though the Independents as a party refrained from voting on it. Their abstention from voting cannot however be construed as approval on their part of the imposition of the duty. In explaining their neutral attitude, Mr. Jinnah made a statement from which it was clear that the Independents would have voted solidly in favour of the abolition of the salt duty if only some alternative suggestions for filling the gap in the Government's finances that may be created by the step—the loss of Government revenue was estimated at nearly Rs. 9 crores—could have been put forward. Mr. Satyamurti did indeed put forward such suggestions, but Mr. Jinnah and his followers apparently considered them impracticable. The fact that the amendment could muster as many as 52 votes in its support, though deprived of the positive support of the Independents, constitutes a measure of the unpopularity of this tax. The tone of some of the non-official speeches shows that the infliction of this defeat on the Government might have been avoided if the Government had promised to do away with the tax within a measurable distance of time, if not at once.

#### Half Anna Post Card.

THE Assembly has passed an amendment to the Finance Bill which, if given effect to, would restore the half-anna post card. There can be no doubt that the relief would be highly appreciated in all parts of the country, specially by the less well-to-do sections of the community. The loss of revenue which the effectuation of the amendment would mean to the Government is estimated at Rs. 50 lakhs. This is by no means a very formidable figure. In no case is it likely to throw the Government's financial machine out of gear. Let us see how.

THE Assembly has already in no uncertain terms expressed its disapproval of the Government's proposal to defray the cost of the reconstruction of Quetta out of current revenue. Should Government decide to bow to public opinion on that point, as they should, the loss in revenue entailed by the reduced price of the post card will be reduced to that extent. The balance of Rs. 52 lakhs it should be quite easy for the Government to make good either by departmental savings or by rigorously discouraging new expenditure. All this of course presupposes the willingness on the part of the Government not to mind the indignity of having to defer to public opinion in both these cases. But if they really look at the matter in the right spirit, they will see that there is no loss of dignity involved in such a course. As a matter of fact they will thereby rise higher in public estimation. We do hope the unwisdom of certifying these items by the use of the Governor-General's special powers will be avoided.

#### Suppression of Terrorism.

THE suggestion was recently pressed on the Government by means of a resolution moved in the

Upper House of the Indian Legislature that they should appoint a committee of three High Court Judges to examine the cases of persons condemned to indefinite detention without trial and release those recommended for such treatment by the committee. To some the proposal might not appear as going far enough; but there can be no gainsaying the fact that the object underlying it was laudable in every way. It was to reassure the public that people suffering detention without trial do not have their liberty restrained unjustly or without sufficient cause.

THE examination of the detenus' cases by such a committee would have acted as a safeguard to the Government themselves. In case of any attack on them on the score of the unwarranted detention of any of the detenus, they might conveniently have taken shelter behind the committee's verdict in their favour. The proposal had also this to be said for it, that it involved very little dislocation in the status quo. Whereas the cases of detenus are at present submitted to the scrutiny of two Sessions Judges, they would hereafter, if the proposal had been acceptable to the Government, have been examined by three Judges of the High Court. Nor, if past experience as detailed by the Home Secretary himself is any reliable guide, had they much ground to fear that their action would not be endorsed by the Judges except only in a few cases.

IT may be conceded that the in devising the present procedure the Government aimed at the prevention of all possible injustice. But even Government must admit that it can never be a satisfactory substitute for an open trial. If open trial is resorted to it is the Government's contention that sources of information against terrorists will dry up. It will be a pity if this results in terrorists being let loose on society. This would undoubtedly be a calamity which should be averted at all reasonable cost. At the same time it should be realised by all concerned that public opinion will need a lot of convincing in order to make it revise its view that sources of information which cannot stand the glare of open daylight are largely worthless and untrustworthy.

WHILE on this point, it is interesting to note the procedure for dealing with terrorists proposed by a League of Nations Committee charged with the task of suggesting remedies for the international repression of terrorism. The conventions framed by the Committee do not provide, as in India, either for a secret trial of the terrorist or his detention without one. They expressly lay down that the proceedings of the International Court will be public unless in the interests of good international relations the Court itself decides otherwise. Public trial will thus be the rule rather than the exception. The accused would be given the usual facilities for defence and would be free to engage the services of a lawyer or lawyers approved by the Court. Where the accused himself fails to do so, his interests would be protected by the Court itself by engaging a pleader of its own choice. Moreover, it is expressly provided that the Court's judgment will always be delivered in public.

#### Material For Indian Sandhurst.

THE official complaint against the lack of suitable material for admission to the Indian Sandhurst has latterly become rather loud. The matter is too vital quietly to be passed over. It was well therefore that it was last week formally proposed in the Council of State that a committee be appointed to advise Govern-

ment on the subject. Given a satisfactory personnel, we are sure the Committee would have proved of inestimable assistance to the Government by reason of the advice it would have tendered to them. But the Government, even when it finds itself at one with non-official opinion, tries its best to avoid even the appearance of accepting non-official suggestions without reservations. They followed that rule even on the present occasion.

UNDER the plan outlined by the Commander-in-Chief in his reply, there will not be a committee, but an informal conference, to deal with the problem raised in the above-mentioned resolution. The Conference will contain representatives of the Indian Legislature as also of the Army Department. It will however not be free to advise the Government on the means to be adopted to secure better and more plentiful material for the Military Academy at Dehra Dun. All that will be done at it will be that the suggestions so far made to this end will be freely thrashed out in an atmosphere of complete informality.

IF it is found that the purpose which the popular representatives had in mind in asking for a committee was effectively served by this conference, all talk of the proposed committee would be at an end. If on the other hand Sir Robert Cassels could be persuaded by non-official representatives at the Conference that a Committee was still needed, it will be for him to make the necessary recommendation to the Government.

#### Single vs. Multi-Member Constituencies.

WHEN Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru in his recent speech at Madras expressed his envy of that province on its being recommended for the grant of multi-member constituencies by the Hammond Committee, the chairman Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar expressed the fear that the envy might after all prove to be short-lived. The Madras Government supported by the Legislative Council was then pressing for single-member constituencies and as the British Government believed in the principle of trusting the men on the spot there was, he said, every likelihood of the Hammond Committee's recommendation being given the go-by in the Order-in-Council which was expected at the time to be shortly placed before Parliament by His Majesty's Government. This has now happened and Sir Sivaswamy's prophecy has unfortunately come true.

THE Hammond or Delimitation Committee had recommended the institution of single-member constituencies throughout the country except where the needs of reserving seats for the depressed classes necessitated a different course. Even in such cases it did not want any constituencies to be big enough to return more than two members—the one general and the other reserved. This plan was generally followed in its own proposals. A departure was however made only in the cases of Bombay and Madras. In the case of Bombay with its minorities like Jains, Parsees, Jews, etc. the committee was convinced on the testimony of the Local Government that the system of multi-member constituencies had proved useful in securing representation to these minorities. It therefore saw no reason to disturb the status quo in Bombay.

THE Madras Government's scheme of the delimitation of constituencies, which had the support of

a majority of the local Delimitation Committee, was generally based on the principle of single-member constituencies, an exception being made only in cases in which a seat had to be reserved for the scheduled castes or depressed classes as they are popularly known. But the Hammond Committee, after bestowing its careful consideration on the scheme submitted by the Madras Government, felt so impressed by the volume of opinion in favour of multi-member constituencies and by the necessity to remove the bitterness of inter-caste strife in Madras that on its own responsibility it recommended the creation of several new multi-member constituencies not included in the local Government's scheme.

THE Order-in-Council since presented to Parliament, instead of giving effect to the Hammond Committee's recommendation, endorses the local Government's scheme. Provision is therein made for single-member constituencies generally except where a seat is reserved for the depressed classes and in six other cases. Care is also taken that in no case does the number of members to be returned by any constituency exceed two. It may be incidentally noted that the Order-in-Council closely follows the recommendations of the Assembly Committee specially appointed to consider the Hammond Committee's report, and must be said to have shown a correct appreciation of the general public view on this point. At the same time it cannot be gainsaid that it has failed to give due weight to the special conditions of public life in the Southern Presidency. While it is undeniable that the system of single-member constituencies tends towards simplicity of voting, that of the multi-member ones is greatly conducive to ensuring fair representation to minorities and must be welcomed as being calculated to reduce communal bitterness. This is the most pressing need of Madras at the present day, which would have been met in a considerable measure if the scheme evolved by the Delimitation Committee had been incorporated in the Order-in-Council.

#### Retrograde.

WE are afraid we cannot similarly plead for the acceptance of the Committee's recommendation in respect of University representation for the reason that it is of a retrograde nature. As matters stand, graduates of seven years' standing are qualified to vote at the election of the University representative. The Hammond Committee has added to it the additional qualification of registration which, owing to the obligation to pay the prescribed fee, will act as a deterrent in many cases. It is not clear from the memorandum of the Secretary of State explaining the Order-in-Council which is telegraphed from Delhi whether it adopts the Committee's recommendation or sticks to the status quo. The memorandum talks of adopting the Committee's recommendation, but while mentioning everything else of importance it is silent on the point of registration. It refers with approval to "the existing system" "whereby members of the Senate and graduates of seven years' standing should exercise this franchise," but makes no reference to registration. If the omission is intentional and not accidental, graduate voters have good reason to feel thankful to His Majesty's Government for maintaining the status quo intact. If otherwise, the Government's endorsement of the Committee's recommendation will meet with a storm of opposition at their hands and of public opinion in general.

### The Shop Assistants Bill.

THE Bombay Legislative Council has fully lived up to its reputation as a reactionary body by throwing out Mr. Bakhale's Shop Assistants Bill designed to prohibit the employment of children under 12 and limit the hours of employment of young persons under 18. The Bill was introduced last year in the Poona session of the Council when it was decided to invite expression of public opinion on it. It is gratifying to find that the opinions were mostly in favour of the principle of the Bill. But in defiance of this consensus of opinion the Council in its wisdom has thought fit to turn down Mr. Bakhale's motion for its reference to a select committee!

THE attitude of the Government towards this humanitarian piece of legislation which concerned the lives of nearly one lakh of people, about one-tenth of whom are children of 12 or less, is very puzzling. While the Government professed all possible friendliness to its underlying principle, they saw to it that the Bill itself was throttled once for all at that stage so that nothing more was heard of it, their expression of sympathy in the circumstances being little better than a source of cold comfort to the mover or to those whose cause he so zealously espoused. If the Government were eventually to adopt an attitude of unbending opposition to the Bill it is inexplicable to us why they at all put themselves to the trouble of collecting detailed information on the problem touched by the Bill. But the ways of Government, like those of the Gods, are sometimes utterly inscrutable.

THEIR expression of friendliness towards the principle of the Bill would have meant something if while encompassing the end of Mr. Bakhale's Bill they had volunteered to introduce at a later date more acceptable proposals for achieving the aim the mover had in view. If the provisions of Mr. Bakhale's Bill were loosely worded or appeared to be too elaborate to be practicable, as was contended, could not the select committee with the help of the legal talent at the disposal of Government have cast them in proper form? The Home Member made short work of the Bill by declaring in advance that do what the Select Committee might the Bill was beyond mending and therefore must be ended!

### Two Approaches to Removal of Untouchability.

BOTH the orthodox and reformed Hindu leaders are at present engaged in a vigorous drive for the removal of the greatest blot upon Hinduism—untouchability. It would perhaps be misleading to describe Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, to whom we owe the drive on the orthodox side, as an orthodox, for he is both an orthodox and a reformer in the best sense of the terms. A devout Hindu, he is still as keen on cutting away the excrescences that have grown on Hinduism as any reformer can be, but he is convinced that, restored to its pristine purity, Hinduism can bring all the spiritual salvation that religion can give. He went to Nasik last week, with the object of persuading the orthodox Hindus of the place to meet all the grievances against which Harijans are justly crying out. He had long talks with shastris and pundits who are custodians of Hindu religion and tried to convert them to his view that exclusion of Harijans from the local Kalaram temple, denial of their right to participate in the car festival, or refusal to allow them to have a dip in the sacred waters of the Godavari was not

only not in accordance with the dictates of true Hinduisim but was wholly irreligious. He did not succeed in these immediate objects, but he apparently made a great impression on the orthodox leaders and their opposition is possibly shaken to some extent. Any way he aroused marvellous enthusiasm among the masses for the removal of untouchability, and they are convinced that even orthodoxy is left without an excuse for the retention of this grave wrong. Malaviyaji also administered *Diksha* to several hundreds of villagers with a view to their self-purification.

THE reformers, however, do not bother too much about the precepts of the Hindu scriptures. If the scriptures do not sanction untouchability, even then untouchability is a fact while the scriptures are a fiction, so far as the current beliefs of Hindus go. Let us deal with the fact, and leave the fiction alone, they say. If, on the other hand, the scriptures sanction untouchability—well then the scriptures too will have to go with untouchability. There is a rationalistic approach to the solution of the problem and they will not waste any time in finding out whether in any nooks and corners of the Hindu scriptures some passages cannot be found which are capable of being construed as prohibiting the inhuman practice of untouchability. In Maharashtra the reformers have now started the practice of holding mass mixed dinners of touchables and untouchables. Two or three such dinners were held in Bombay, in which some 600 or 700 people participated. These were followed by a dinner in Poona, on the grounds of the Servants of India Society's Home, on Sunday last, in which nearly 1,300 people took part—men and women of all sorts and conditions, a quarter of them Harijans and the rest caste people. The dinner was preceded by music and followed by short speeches, in both of which an exhortation was made in inspiring language to treat Harijans as brothers. The dinner was a huge excess and the most remarkable thing about it was that response to it was almost spontaneous, showing how rapidly the leaven of untouchability doctrine is spreading over the whole lump.

### Indians and Kenya's Defence.

IT appears from a recent despatch of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Kenya that the former has sanctioned the disbandment of what is so far known as the Kenya Defence Force. This is to be followed in due course by the constitution of a Territorial Force, admission to which will, we hope, not be refused to our countrymen settled there. If the decision of the question were to be left to the wishes of the white colonists, it is on the cards that it will be decided in the negative. As matters stand, Indians are not allowed to enrol themselves in the Kenya Defence Force—a disability the blame for which must be visited on the Europeans.

ACCORDING to the *Kenya Daily Mail*, when the Kenya Defence Force was constituted, Indians were specifically debarred from joining it, thanks to the opposition of the Europeans to such a step. The Indian community had then expressed its willingness to bear its own share in the defence of Kenya; but the Europeans would have none of it, with the result that they made themselves responsible for the defence not only of their own community but of other communities as well.

## THE TRADE POLICY FOR INDIA

**A**MONG the various statements issued by the Finance Member together with his annual budget figures is a statement showing the additions sanctioned by the Governor-General in the non-voted grants. This statement for the year 1935-36 contains the following interesting item under the head "Commerce Department": "Rs. 8,100 (Rs. 7300 Pay of officers + 800 allowances, etc.) due to expenditure on a detailed and critical examination of the working of the Ottawa Trade Agreement." It has been widely noted that while the report on the working of the Ottawa Agreement for the year 1933-34 appeared over the signature of the then Director of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Dr. Meek, the report for the year 1934-35 is unsigned. The present Director, Dr. Mathai, is an economist, not less eminent (to put it at its lowest) than Dr. Meek. The Director of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics is, it would appear from the budget figures, also assisted by a special research staff. In these circumstances it is difficult to see why Government had to incur a special additional expenditure of some thousands of rupees for a "detailed and critical" examination of the Ottawa agreement and equally difficult to understand where they could get economic talent of a higher order than was already available to them in the Department. This anomaly could only be explained if it is supposed that the activities of this special officer are directed towards the kind of examination of the working of the agreement that appears in the numerous notes issued recently for publication through the Director of Information. For, no economist with a reputation to lose could be induced to put his signature to them. It would have been futile and wearisome to examine at length the various articles issued as a result of this costly examination of Ottawa. But we feel it necessary to pay some attention to the final article in the series on trade policy as this is a fair sample of the reasoning followed in the others, and as it purports to embody the considered conclusions of this "detailed and critical examination."

To begin at the beginning; we are met at the very outset by the statement that India today is not a "distress" country but is "reasonably prosperous"; and when it comes to proving this by an examination of the foreign trade statistics the exports of gold are "for the moment" left out of account. [It may parenthetically be noted that in this note the moment never arrives when they are taken into account.] It is not perhaps very difficult for a specially deputed officer in receipt of allowances and honoraria to persuade himself in the atmosphere of New Delhi that India is "reasonably prosperous." But he would find it difficult to put this statement "across" even the Railway Member, let alone the Finance Members of provincial governments and certainly not "across" any body who knows anything of the condition of the agriculturist. And whatever is the use of any amount of juggling with India's

foreign trade figures if the "gold exports" are even for a moment left out of account. They are the most significant figures for a consideration of our balance of payment position. We are not a gold-mining country, normally we are not importers of gold, and nobody will deny that our gold holdings are in the nature of reserves. What further evidence of "distress" can even a Government officer want than that a person or a body of persons finance current purchases out of their reserves? And we have had to do this not only just once but over a series of years since 1931 and there is no sign of any reversal of the process in spite of all the talk about recovery. The latest figures of these exports are as follows:—

The balance of transactions in treasure (private).

	(Rs. lakhs)	
1930-31	24,43	Imports
1931-32	55,65	Exports
1932-33	65,52	"
1933-34	57,05	"
1934-35	52,54	"

The net export of treasure (i. e., gold and silver) on private account is still continuing. The latest figures show that during the 10 months April to January (1935-36) there was a net export of treasure of Rs. (lakhs) 34,45. This may be compared with the figures of Rs. (lakhs) 41,72 and 42,12 of the corresponding period for the years 1933-34 and 1934-35.

This shows that the net adverse balance of foreign trade payments is not in any considerable measure diminishing. And as long as such a serious draining of our reserve resources continues the case for doing something to adjust the balance of our international trade is very strong. It may not be possible to find general agreement as to what the best way of doing this may be or may have been. Many countries including England and U. S. A. have followed the path of devaluation, others like France have tried directly to restrict imports and a large number has combined in a varying degree both ways. The Indian Government amongst all has the unique distinction of having done nothing in the crisis.

We are told that we need not be alarmed at an increase in imports, because the increase in the latest eight months when compared with the eight months of the previous year is chiefly due to the imports of raw cotton. But why is the level of the previous year (i. e. 1934-35) to be taken as the desirable or normal standard? If we compare the imports of 1934-35 with those of 1933-34 we find an increase in imports of the former year over the latter of nearly Rs. 16.8 crores. And the items, chiefly responsible for this increase are as follows: cotton piece-goods Rs. 5.75 crores; grain and pulse, Rs. 1.83 crores; metals and ores Rs. 1.88 crores; raw cotton Rs. 1.72 crores; motor vehicles, Rs. 1.47 crores; wool manufactures Rs. 1.08 crores. One wonders what this Ottawa Expert would make of this list of increases in imports, what conclusions he would draw from them? Certainly not that we were im-

porting essential raw materials and increasing our industrial output. To say in the face of the clear adverse balance indicated by gold exports that a parallel movement of increasing imports and increasing exports is indicative of "prosperity" is, to put it mildly, sheer chicanery.

So far with regard to our being "reasonably prosperous". But all this talk about prosperity and recovery is a prelude to the main point that the trade policy followed hitherto by the Government of India needs no change. It is no doubt startling to learn even from a protagonist of the Government that it has had a trade policy! If it has had one, remarkably few signs of it have appeared on the surface. Perhaps a brief resume of the outstanding events will not be out of place. When in the early years of the depression most agricultural countries were hard hit and Australia came near to repudiation as the way out, our Government did nothing in the face of all distress. It was only concerned with maintaining intact the link with gold and sterling. It watched the exports dwindling and prices tumbling and did not even contemplate any action. Then, when the sterling went off gold it was with some hesitation decided to follow the sterling and to remain linked to it. This decision was taken in the face of protests, that if devaluation was to be effected the measure of it should be sufficient, and in spite of the example set by Australia. (But then India has always been truer to British interests than the Dominions.) An adverse balance of trade and immense gold exports followed. Still nothing was done either to curtail imports or stimulate exports. Then England desired extended and sheltered markets and sought a regime of Imperial Preference; the Indian Government acquiesced and we had the Ottawa agreement. Then Japan threatened and after threats had proved futile imposed an actual boycott and our Government agreed to confer with the representatives of Japan. As a result we had a bilateral treaty (exactly of the type that we are advocating should be entered into with other countries and of the type that is being denounced by the Government expert) in which, curiously enough, special attention was paid to safeguarding the position of British imports into India. Lastly in 1935 we had the Indo-British treaty in which under the guise of merely implementing the Ottawa agreement a number of admissions damaging to the Indian bargaining position vis-a-vis U. K. were unnecessarily made and the principle of preferential buying as such formally endorsed for the first time. Such is the history of the actions of the Government of India in crisis. In this we can discern no policy; or if there be one it has no connection with Indian conditions or Indian interests.

Not only are we told that the Indian Government has a trade policy but we are also told its character. We read: "General most-favoured-nation treatment is still the best policy for a country like India." We confess we find it difficult to understand what this exactly means and to understand by what active steps the Government of India

has been implementing this policy in recent years. So far as we can see the most important step the Government of India has recently taken—entering into Imperial preferential arrangements—is at least logically opposed to the principle of the general most-favoured-nation treatment. And what is meant by following the "general most-favoured-nation-treatment policy?" What is a country to do when it sees bilateral agreements among other countries curtailing its old markets? Will a solemn asseveration of one's faith in the "general-most-favoured-nation treatment policy" help? Is entering into a bilateral treaty with other countries inconsistent with the "general most-favoured-nation treatment" policy? And if it is how has U. K. entered into so many bilateral treaties with countries outside the Empire, and how is it claimed that she has profited greatly by them? And if the operation of these is inimical to the growth of international trade and therefore, as it is said, of India, is it that we depend even more on international trade than U. K.? All these conundrums readily suggest themselves on a reading of the Ottawa expert's pronouncement on trade policy: but we look vainly for any solution of them in this final article. Or perhaps it was unwise to look for a solution; for is this not all mere verbiage put forth in order to create the illusion of a policy where in reality none existed?

Of course, the application of the most-favoured nation treatment clause can be made an instrument of bringing about freer trade; this has been made clear by the policy followed during the past few months by President Roosevelt. This can be done, however, not by adopting a negative attitude but by actively entering into trade treaties with other countries and enlarging by degrees the group within which freer trade obtains. This would mean a readiness to embrace within the group all those who desire to enter and not to keep it confined to members of a political group like an empire. That is, if such freer trade were honestly desired there is no way by which you could let in British imports and at the same time keep out the Japanese. There is not a single action of the Government of India that could be cited to support the thesis that that Government has had for its trade policy the aim of increasing the sphere of the application of the most-favoured-nation clause. For our part we would sympathise with the Government policy—though we may not heartily endorse it—if it really pursued this objective. The logical consequence would be to get us out of the Ottawa arrangements and to have a uniform minimum tariff level based entirely on our revenue needs. And this tariff level would be applicable to all countries who enter into appropriate agreements with us. Though we think this to be a logically consistent policy it is perhaps not one that we can afford today. Our general position is too weak and our adverse balance too heavy for us to follow the heroic path. We must today explore ways by which the growth of our imports will be directly checked and our export position bettered.

Under the Ottawa regime a special stimulus is afforded to British imports into India and our export trade with non-British foreign countries is fast diminishing. That regime must, therefore, be speedily ended and a trade policy founded on the pattern of that of all the countries of the world (including U. K.) established. This means nego-

tiating trade treaties and using the tariff wall and your bargaining position fully in their negotiation. It also means that nothing is given away for either political or sentimental reasons. It is this policy whose acceptance is being urged upon the Government of India by the vast majority of the Indian publicists.

## PAYMENT OF WAGES BILL

### MR. BAKHALE'S SPEECH.

*In supporting a cut in the Bombay Labour Office vote in the Bombay Legislative Council, Mr. R. R. Bakhale criticised the action of the Government of Bombay in lending their support to Sir H. P. Mody's amendment regarding lightning strikes to the Payment of Wages Bill which was recently passed by the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State. Mr. Bakhale said:*

#### BOMBAY GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE.

**I**n tabling a cut in the Labour Office vote, it is generally our practice to review the conditions of labour in this Presidency and to criticise Government's action where such criticism is necessary and to applaud them when they deserve an applause. But, Sir, on this occasion the issue of issues, which has created a stir in the labour world, is of such outstanding importance that I am afraid I cannot deal with the usual review which we generally take on this occasion, but propose to concentrate myself on the regrettable part that this Government took in supporting an amendment to a Bill which was passed in the Legislative Assembly. The Government of Bombay supported an amendment to what is now known as the Payment of Wages Bill in the Legislative Assembly. I may be asked, Sir, how this question of an amendment to a piece of legislation of the Central Legislature is relevant on the floor of this House, but I wish to point out that it was at the instance of this Government only that the Government of India persuaded themselves to support the amendment and therefore I consider that this is the forum from which we can enter a protest against the action of the Bombay Government. In supporting the amendment regarding lightning strikes moved by Sir Homi Mody, the Honourable Sir Frank Noyce said as follows with regard to this Government in the Legislative Assembly:

It (the delay in the consideration of the Select Committee's report) has enabled us to consider more fully the various points which have arisen and of which this is one and we have been able to obtain the views of the Local Government of Bombay on this proposal. This is my first and also my strongest reason for accepting this amendment. The Government of Bombay, unfortunately for them, have had more prolonged and unhappy experience of lightning and other strikes than any other Government in India and as the result of that experience, their views on this point are generally in agreement with those of Sir Homi Mody.

Mr. A. G. Clow, who is Secretary to the Government of India in the Industries and Labour Department and who is the brain of the Government of India in Labour matters, in narrating in the Assembly the achievement of the Bombay Government in passing the Conciliation Act and in appointing a special Labour Officer not merely for the purpose of conciliation but for the purpose of advocacy on behalf of Labour, said as follows:

It is that Government (namely, the Bombay Government) that comes to us and says that if the provisions of this Act are to operate smoothly, this amendment (namely, the amendment of Sir Homi Mody) will be valuable. There can be no stronger argument in favour of the amendment than that.

#### GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S *Volte Face*.

I may inform this House that when the Select Committee on the Payment of Wages Bill met in Simla in May last year, Sir Homi Mody tried to move a similar amendment to this Bill, but the Government of India then opposed that amendment and the amendment was defeated. At that time, Mr. Meherban, who is one of the Assistant Commissioners of Labour in Bombay and who was largely responsible for the Labour Office Report on the deduction from wages, was invited to Simla at the instance of the Government of India and was present when the discussion in the Select Committee took place and, in spite of his presence, if I may say so, Sir Homi Mody's amendment was defeated with the concurrence of the Government of India. It is therefore clear that the Government of Bombay are primarily responsible for the passage of that amendment and that therefore this House is the proper forum to protest against the action of this Government though the amendment may have been moved and passed at another place.

I submit, Sir, that in supporting an amendment of this type this Government have taken upon themselves a much larger and graver responsibility than they can legitimately take inasmuch as the amendment applies much beyond the jurisdiction under their control and by their action they have done an injustice to the workers outside this presidency, in addition to the injustice to those who are governed by them.

Sir, the conduct of the Bombay Government is really amazing. The bitter experience of industrial disputes through which they have gone had led me to believe that they had realised the futility of employing coercive methods and that the appointment of the Labour Officer was an indication of their directing their energies towards the adoption of constructive methods. But, Sir, I find that although knowledge has come, wisdom is still lingering; and this is perhaps the reason why they could persuade themselves to support the amendment of the type which I have mentioned.

Sir, in four or five sentences I may summarise the most important features of the Bill so that the House may be able to follow the arguments that I am going to use. The main provisions of the Payment of Wages Bill are these—

- (1) Fixation of wage periods in respect of which wages shall be payable;
- (2) Fixation of the time for the payment of wages after they became due;
- (3) Deductions which may be made from wages and their maxima; and

- (4) Machinery to settle the claims arising out of deductions or delay in payment of wages.

In short, this Bill is more or less analogous to the Truck Act of Great Britain. The Bill does not deal with strikes or lock-outs which are, broadly speaking, governed by the Indian Trade Unions Act and the Indian Trade Disputes Act plus, so far as this Presidency is concerned, by the Bombay Conciliation Act. The Bill does not deal with the termination of employment of service except that in the definition of wages are included payments due to the employee by reason of the termination of his employment.

Now, Sir, I shall explain what the proviso is. The proviso is added to clause 9 of the Payment of Wages Bill which deals with deductions for absence from work; and it says that if ten or more persons acting in concert absent themselves without due notice and without reasonable cause, their wages are liable to be deducted to the extent of eight days. This means, Sir, that there shall be no lightning strikes. I admit that I am not an admirer nor an advocate of lightning strikes. I have never been one. If anything, I have endeavoured to discourage lightning strikes. But, Sir, the circumstances in this Presidency and particularly in this town are such that even if you prohibit lightning strikes in the manner sought to be done by this proviso, lightning strikes will continue to occur, and therefore, Sir, I resist, and resist very strongly, this proviso about lightning strikes on four main grounds, namely:—

- (1) It is based on a wrong analogy;
- (2) It assumes that the Bombay mill industry constitutes the whole industrial world in India and that what obtains in Bombay should obtain everywhere else;
- (3) There is no element of reciprocity in the proviso; and
- (4) Though the proviso seems to penalise lightning strikes, it does penalise in effect all strikes.

#### REASONS EXAMINED.

I shall deal with these grounds separately and briefly. I say, Sir, that the proviso is based on a wrong analogy. The arguments invariably employed in favour of this proviso are based on the question of the termination of employment of service without notice on either side. The argument is that if the employer dismisses a servant without notice, he pays the employee damages in lieu of notice. If on the other hand an employee terminates his employment without notice, the employer should have the right to recover damages from the wages of the employee. This is the argument which is invariably employed in support of this proviso. But, Sir, I may point out that a strike, whether lightning or otherwise, does not constitute a termination of employment, and in support of that I shall quote an authority. In the case reported in the All-India Reporter, 1928, Calcutta, 491, *B. N. Railway versus Shah Bux*, the Court held:—

A mere declaration of a strike does not terminate the relationship of master and servant and make a servant lose the character as a servant.

I, therefore, submit, Sir, that the argument employed in this case with regard to the termination of employment is an absolutely wrong argument, in view of the decision of the Calcutta High Court; and yet the proviso authorises the employer to impose a fine and deduct the same from the wages even without terminating the services of his work people. Thus, for example, if ten or more people acting in concert absent themselves from work and return to

duty the next day or any other subsequent day before the employer has terminated their services, this proviso empowers the employer, as a matter of right and without any argument, to deduct eight days' wages. Therefore, Sir, I submit that the analogy of the termination of employment is wrong with regard to this proviso.

Next, the Bombay mill industry is supposed to be the industry on the basis of which the relationship between master and servant in the whole of India should be determined. The argument employed is that in the Bombay mills there are standing orders which prohibit the termination of the employment of service without notice and therefore what obtains in that City should obtain elsewhere. I know, Sir, in Bombay mills there are standing orders approved of by the Fawcett Committee, of which my honourable friend Mr. Kamat was one of the members. But in how many other industrial centres and areas, may I ask, do such standing orders exist? Do they exist in Jalgaon? Do they exist in Chalisgaon or do they exist in Bhusaval, the place of my honourable friend Dewan Bahadur Patil, and other small similar centres? I am afraid, they do not. I, therefore, submit, Sir, that it is wrong to apply to other places what obtains in Bombay and that too in the textile industry only.

Sir, my other objection to this proviso is, as I said, that there is no element of reciprocity. If an employer dismisses a worker without notice and refuses to pay damages in lieu of notice, the worker has to go to a court of law. If, on the other hand, a worker leaves employment without notice, the employer has only to recover his damages in lieu of notice, not by going to a court of law, but simply by deducting from the wages what he considers to be the amount of damages, and if the worker thinks that his wages have been wrongfully withheld, he has again to go to a court of law. May I know whether there is an element of reciprocity in this arrangement? If you want to introduce an element of reciprocity, you should penalise not merely the lightning strikes but also the lightning lock-outs. If the winding or reeling department, for example, in a textile mill goes on strike, the employer generally closes down the other departments, because of the dearth of supply of raw material and the men in these other departments are locked out. Have you provided for the payment of wages of those who are locked out against their wishes? Again, suppose 2,000 men in a mill go on strike and 3,000 continue in their work. After some days, it is generally our experience that these 3,000 people are asked to stay at home and the whole mill is closed down. Do you pay their wages for this enforced absence?

Then, again, the Bombay standing orders provide for what is known as playing off of the employees under certain circumstances, and the employers do not pay them. Under similar circumstances, do you allow the workers to be played off voluntarily under the Standing Orders in the Bombay mill industry? The reply is, no. Where then, Sir, is the element of reciprocity so far as this proviso is concerned?

#### COMMON LAW PRACTICE.

Lastly, I shall examine the legal position, so far as I have been able to ascertain it from my lawyer friends, with regard to deductions and forfeitures on account of the termination of employment without notice. I find that when a man leaves service without notice or is discharged for reasons justifying such discharge, all his wages that have become due to him must be paid under the law. And wages become due (1) in the case of daily rated persons, at the end of the day; (2) in the case of the monthly rated persons, at the end of the month; (3)



and in the case of contracts on a yearly basis, the wages become due at the time they are agreed to be payable, namely, either monthly, or quarterly, or six-monthly, whatever the period may be. The position therefore is that if a man leaves service without notice, the wages that become due to him must be paid and cannot be withheld. All damages due to termination of employment without notice must be recovered in a court of law. They cannot be recovered by agreement. It is thus clear that wages that become due or payable cannot be forfeited under the common law. I shall cite a case or two. In *Parkin vs. South Helton Coal Company*, 98 Law Times, 162, the plaintiff was employed in a colliery, the employment being terminable at any time after 14 days' notice on either side. The wages depended upon the amount of work turned out by him on each day, which was ascertained daily. The wages were payable and were paid fortnightly. The plaintiff having worked four days during the fortnightly period refused to work without giving notice and was dismissed. The employers refused to pay him any wages for the four days on the ground that they were forfeited. In appeal, it was held that as wages accrued daily, though payable at the end of each fortnight, the plaintiff was entitled to get wages for those four days. In another case, namely, *Taylor vs. Carr*, 30 Law Journal, M. C., 201, it was laid down by the rules of a cotton mill that any person absenting himself was to give notice to the owner concerned, and in default all wages then due were to be forfeited. A weaver having obtained leave for half a day, promising to return the next morning, did not return till the afternoon. The court held that her wages cannot be forfeited.

Under the proviso, wages that become due and are payable are allowed to be forfeited, and therefore I submit that the proviso goes beyond the common law.

Now, Sir, I shall deal with cases where wages become due but not payable till a certain time. They also cannot be forfeited under the common law. For instance, a piece-worker's wages become due at the end of each working day, but are not payable till the end of the month. But they are not liable to be forfeited under the common law. I shall cite an authority. In *Healay vs. Societe Anonyme Francaise*, 1917, 1 King's Bench, 946, the salary was fixed at £2,500 per annum, but payable monthly. The man was dismissed on October 22 for misconduct, which took place prior to May. His employer refused to pay him his salary from May onwards. The court held that he was entitled to recover his wages for the months he actually worked, that is, up to the end of September, but not for any part of October. That is, he lost wages only for 22 days of October—a point which I shall come to later.

#### THE BOMBAY PRACTICE.

Sir, having thus ascertained the position of the common law which I have stated just now, I come to the practice in the Bombay mill industry. In the Bombay mills, the practice is to forfeit wages on termination of employment without notice by the employee. But, Sir, I am informed on good authority that the practice is not law, and I hold that such practice is not valid in law. I may point out that the High Courts are divided on this issue, and therefore the case law cannot be stated with precision or definiteness.

*Sir Robert Bell*: Does the honourable member say that is the common practice when any workman in a Bombay mill leaves his work without notice?

*Mr. R. R. Bakhale*: Under the standing orders that is the practice.

*Sir Robert Bell*: That is the standing order. The question is, what is the practice?

*Mr. R. R. Bakhale*: That is the practice also. The practice in the Bombay mills under the present standing orders is that if a worker leaves his employment without notice, the employer generally deducts by way of damages wages to the extent of 14 days from the total wages of the employee. But, as I said, although the standing order is there and the practice obtains in the Bombay mill industry, the High Courts are divided with regard to law, and therefore, as I said, the case law cannot be cited with precision or definiteness, and I shall tell you why. The Bombay High Court has generally accepted the view that damages in lieu of notice can be recovered by forfeiting the wages for the notice period. But other High Courts have taken the contrary view. The Fawcett Committee has cited two cases supporting the view of the Bombay High Court, namely, that wages can be forfeited in lieu of notice. I shall cite two other cases supporting the opposite point of view. In *L. L. R. 10, Bom. 57*, a servant was engaged on the monthly basis. He served from November 1st to December 2nd, then left without giving notice. The court held that he was entitled to wages up to the end of November and that he forfeited them for the two days in December. Another case is, *23 Madras Law Journal, 618*. There it is held that both according to justice, equity and good conscience and statutory law as embodied in sections 39 and 64 of the Contract Act, a servant who quits his master's service in India before the expiry of the contract period is entitled to be paid for the full months he worked. The court held that a servant who engaged himself for a period of one year on a monthly salary basis but who left his employment 10 days before the expiry of the year, was entitled to wages for full 11 months.

When the courts are thus divided, there is a chance for the aggrieved worker to gain his point on some occasion. This chance, Sir, is now denied to him by the acceptance of the proviso which was passed in the Central Legislature at the instance of the Government of Bombay.

Now, Sir, I shall deal with the position as regards forfeitures and how far they are permissible in law. Where the termination of a contract takes place on any day within the current wage period, forfeitures are in law limited to such broken periods only. For example, if a man on a monthly wage basis leaves employment, say on the fourth day of a month, he forfeits his wages only for the four days of that month and not for any days of the previous month, because the last month's wages have become due and payable, and therefore cannot be forfeited, while the four days' wages have not become due and therefore they do not become payable. But under the proviso eight days' wages can be forfeited, even though they belong to the past month's period, and, therefore, I submit that the proviso goes beyond the common law.

To sum up, the legal position seems to be this. Firstly, all damages due to the termination of employment without notice must be recovered in a court of law; they cannot be recovered by agreements. Secondly, in the Bombay cotton mills, the practice of deducting damages from wages which are due and are payable prevails, but in law it is not valid. The High Courts are divided on this issue, and therefore the case law is not definite. Thirdly, wages that become due or payable cannot be forfeited under the common law. Fourthly, wages that become due but not payable cannot also be forfeited. Fifthly, forfeitures are permissible only for broken periods during any wage period. Having regard to this

legal position I submit that the proviso breaks all these canons of law and goes beyond it. With regard to case law, opinion is no doubt divided, but what little chance there was for a worker to gain his point on account of the difference of opinion is now denied to him by the enactment of this proviso.

#### PENALISES ALL STRIKES

I shall now deal with my third objection, namely, that although this proviso deals only with lightning strikes, it penalises in effect all strikes. Sir, the working classes in India generally go on strike when there is an attempt to lower their standard of life, when wages are reduced, or when workers are discharged or dismissed on a large scale, or when there is very heavy retrenchment. In the present state of their organisation and education, it is almost impossible for the workers to go on strike after giving notice. There is at present no minimum wage legislation which will guarantee to them a certain protection against the attacks of the employers on their standard of life, and therefore the only remedy that the working classes in India have is this weapon of a strike, in which they sometimes indulge, when there is no other course for them to secure a redress of their grievances.

Sir, there is no machinery to investigate the grievances and to give a decision which will be binding on both sides. There is at the same time serious unemployment prevailing everywhere. If you insist that the worker shall give notice, 14 days or 8 days, before going on strike, the only effect of that condition would be that the employer will take jolly good care to see that the place of those men who are to go on strike is filled in, immediately they go on strike, by those who are unemployed, within the period of notice. I am not advancing this as an argument in favour of lightning strikes; but I state the position as it obtains at present. Then again, apart of the impossibility of giving notice, in the absence of organisation, a notice to the employers means a weakening of the workers' position from the very beginning. Thus in effect you are penalising all strikes; but I may tell you that you are not going to stop them. What will happen is that the workers will take the risk of losing 8 days' wages and go on strike. Therefore, Sir, the remedy which Government have suggested and which has been accepted by the Central legislature will be a remedy which will have no effect whatever in serious cases. Sir, this proviso raises the issue of the period of notice and regulations have to be made by the local Government regarding, inter alia, the notice period. This question of notice on either side is a very complicated matter and, to leave it to be determined by rules is, I beg to submit, highly unfair to the working classes. There is no reference to the damage done by the employer in cases of dismissals or discharges. What is going to be the period of notice on the employers' side? Is it going to be the same or different? This again is left to the local Government for framing rules. May I point out for the consideration of this Government, when they sit down to frame rules, that there are several countries in the world, some of them are most important, where the period of notice is not the same on both sides. If the employer has to give 14 days' notice, the employee has to give only 7, 5, or 3 days' notice. Such laws prevail in other countries. I hope this Government will take into consideration this factor when they sit down to frame rules.

Another difficulty which I may point to this Government is this. I should like to ask them whether they are going to deduct 8 days' wages if workers go on strike for one day only, for any

number of days less than 8. I hope when they frame the rules they will see that the rules are so framed that they will allow the employers to deduct the wages for the actual number of days of absence and not for full 8 days.

#### SETTLEMENT WILL BECOME DIFFICULT.

The third point is with regard to the children, women and young persons in the industry. This proviso clearly states that the wages of all workers, whether they are adults or children or women or young persons, will be deducted, if they act in concert and go on strike. I may point out that women, children and young persons are protected in Great Britain. I want to point out to the honourable the Leader of the House what the position under the Factory and Workshop Act in England is. I am reading from the Fawcett Committee's Report, page 42, paragraph 87 :

No doubt, in England there are special statutory provisions under which, in the case of children, young persons or women within the scope of the Factory and Workshop Act, no forfeiture, on the ground of absence or leaving work, may be deducted from any claim for wages due for work already done.

I therefore hope that when the rules are framed, this point will be taken into consideration, namely, the deduction from wages in the case of women, children and young persons.

For all these reasons I am sorry to say that the Government of Bombay took a point of view which is wrong. They should have given serious thought to this question before taking a hasty decision. I shall be pleased to learn that the view that the Bombay Government have taken is the view they have arrived at after deep and careful consideration and in consultation with those who deserve consultation. Under this proviso, I submit that the settlement of strikes hereafter will become very difficult. We know how the 1929 strike was settled. Generally all strikers are willing to settle the strike, provided no wages are to be forfeited by way of damages. Hereafter as you have put down a provision under an enactment to the effect that if ten or more people go on strike, their wages for 8 days shall be forfeited, the settlement of the strike will become very difficult for the simple reason that the workers will always demand that their wages shall not be forfeited while the employers will point out that there is a legislative enactment passed with the approval of the House. Although settlement will be possible on the other issues, on this one single issue, the strikes in Bombay and in other places will become much more difficult of settlement than hitherto. It will be not only the workers, but also the employers and the Government of Bombay who will suffer seriously on account of the support they have given to this wrong proviso. I, therefore, support the cut.

#### THE SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE.

##### MR. DINKAR DESAI ON ITS WORK.

Dirty Homes made clean—  
Dark Minds made bright—  
Diseased Bodies made Whole—  
Dreary Lives made Happy—

THIS is the meaning and message of Social Service. Ignorance, Indigence, Illness and Insanitary conditions make of life a dreary burden for millions. Like the little candle that throws its beam in the darkness of the Night, every effort of sympathy spreads Light; and the Life of the Oppressed acquires new vision and is vivified.

by fresh hopes. For 25 years, the Social Service League has carried on its Mission of Light.

The Social Service League, Bombay, which was founded in 1911 completed 25th years of its useful existence on the 19th March 1936. The League is the first institution of its kind founded in our country. One of its aims and objects is to provide for the people, especially the working classes, education by means of day and night schools and continuation classes for literary and industrial education, lecture series, lantern demonstrations, reading rooms and libraries. It is now universally conceded that the workers are entitled to leisure, to live their lives outside the workshop and to time for recreation, for education and for the discharge of social and family duties. Though the activities of the League are in many directions, I propose to deal only with the work done by the League in the cause of workers' education.

The League conducted several night schools during all these twenty-five years and spent in all for this object a sum of more than Rs. 1,20,000. At present the League maintains five night schools, of which one is Anglo-Marathi, one Anglo-Gujarati and three Anglo-Urdu. Almost all the students attending these night schools belong to the working classes and earn their livelihood by working during the day-time in mills, factories, workshops, offices, shops and such other establishments. The total number of students in all these schools is more than 200. It is important to note that even Persian and Chinese students attend these schools.

#### MODEL HIGH SCHOOL

In addition to these five Night Schools, the League maintains a Night High School since 1922. In that year some undergraduates expressed to the authorities of the League their great desire to start an educational institution for meeting the growing demands of the poor students working during day-time. At this time the League had founded an institution called the "Bombay Working Men's Institute" as a central institution for focussing and co-ordinating the social, educational, economic and welfare activities for the workmen in the city. The existence of this institute facilitated the opening of the Night High School for imparting English education to such boys as were desirous of acquiring it but were unable to attend a day-school for that purpose being employed during day time. In the year 1926, the school was affiliated to the University of Bombay. The fact that the great utility of the school has been recognised by eminent educationists can be seen by the following remarks of the Inspection Committee, appointed by the University of Bombay. The Committee wrote: "This is one of the only two schools of the kind in the city and the progress it has made within five years shows that it has supplied the real need in Bombay. Being situated in the industrial area of the City, it gives great convenience to the working classes." The school is taken advantage of by working class people belonging to different communities, including Harijans. The school is equipped with a Laboratory for teaching Physics and Chemistry. Special attention is paid to imparting general information to the students by arranging lectures, with or without the aid of lantern slides, and to the cultivation of the social service spirit among them. It is a matter of great regret that this useful institution receives no grant from the Government. Last year the League had to spend nearly Rs. 2,700 for this school. The school sent thirty students for the last Matriculation Examination, out of whom nine were declared successful. Looking to the fact that the pupils from the working class attend this Night School, the results are undoubtedly encouraging. Rev. Father J. Duhr S. J. of the St. Xavier's

College wrote in the School's Visitors' Book: "I have nothing but admiration for the unselfish service and true devotedness of all those who have built up this Night High School. It strikes me also as a fine thing that Bombay lads who work for long hours in mills, would still be ready to spend their evening hours in a school."

#### TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

The Social Service League also maintains a Textile Technical School which aims at raising the level of efficiency of workers employed in textile mills of Bombay so that they may be able to increase their earnings and also be fit for holding the posts of jobbers for which there have been no recognised qualifications. The school has been in existence since 1924. This is the first institution to provide for the systematic training of ordinary mill-workers in Bombay. The students are given theoretical and practical lessons according to a syllabus prepared by experts. The course is divided into two sections, Spinning and Weaving, each section requiring three years' training. Needless to add that the medium of instruction is vernacular. The classes are held daily in the evening so that the workers can attend them. Last year, out of the 84 students who appeared for the examination, 82 were able to get through. It is to be noted that the School received Rs. 1,260 from the Committee of Direction for Technical Education in the Bombay Presidency for the last year and a sum of Rs. 40 from the Bombay Municipality. The Bombay Mill-Owners' Association has recognised the training received in the school as a qualification for promotion in employment in the case of spinners and weavers.

#### FREE LIBRARY.

Besides school education, another powerful means of educating the working class adults is the library. A free travelling library is the most suited for this purpose. It creates a liking for reading among the workers since they get books at their very doors. It also prevents those who have received some primary education from relapsing into illiteracy for want of the reading habit. The Social Service League, having realised the importance of this means of popular education, is maintaining a Free Travelling Library which has as many as seven centres in the city. In 1934, 5017 books were issued from this library, and 1850 readers took advantage of the same. In addition to this, there are three reading rooms conducted by the League. The total number of persons who took advantage of these reading rooms for the last year exceeds the figure of 40,000.

#### THEATRICALS.

It is now common knowledge that the part played by theatricals in the workers' leisure time is exceedingly important. As a means of spreading ideas and popularising culture, the theatricals are superior to many other means of education. The Social Service League therefore arranges dramatic performances for the benefit of workers. Last year, as many as 57 performances were staged, the languages of the plays being Marathi, Gujarati, Telugu, Bengali, and Konkani. The Sahakari Manoranjan Mandal, which is a dramatic club mostly consisting of workmen and clerks employed in mills, workshops and factories, has been working under the League's auspices for the last eleven years.

This, then, is a summary of work done by the Social Service League in the cause of workers' education in the City of Bombay. It is undoubtedly a creditable record of social services. But it is to be regretted that the League should find it extremely

difficult to extend its beneficent activities with efficiency due to lack of funds. It is, therefore, hoped that the philanthropic public will lend its active financial help to this needy institution.

DINKER DESAI.

### SHORT NOTICE.

#### THE TOWN AND A CHANGING CIVILISATION.

By DAVID V. GLASS. (John Lane the Bodley Head.) 1935. 20cm. 148p. 3/6.

THE book deals with town life in general and traces the course of our present urban civilisation. The author has very ably shown how unrestricted urbanisation was the cause of the downfall of Roman and Mayan Empires. Easy means of communication and exchange and highly developed agriculture and other means of production are the *sine qua non* of any urban civilisation, and unless these are well attended to by the powers that be the whole structure is bound to collapse like a house of cards. The present-day conflict between the rural and the urban population has to be, and is being, lessened by cultural influences emanating from the towns, and it may require re-planning of the whole basis of the present social structure.

The chapter "From Sumeria to Rome" is very fascinating, showing how six ancient civilisations nestled about the capital and great towns, and how religion helped their progress. And one is surprised to find how human nature runs on similar lines in every age. In 2700 B.C. and even earlier, "a Sumerian tablet bemoans that children no longer obeyed their parents, graft was rife among public officials, and every one was seeking to gain publicity by writing a book". The Indus civilisation is very ably but tersely described, and the reader will certainly be wonder-struck to find the high level of culture then attained. The towns were planned, as the author shows, even in ancient Egypt and Sind.

In the last chapter the author very clearly shows that future towns should be planned "not by archi-

tecs but by sociologists." Not only this, but he says that "if town-planning is to be effective it must be undertaken by the country as a whole." His socialist leanings are evident in this; but it must be admitted that for town-planning they are necessary.

The book will surely supply much material for thought to those on whom the burden of building up a new social structure will fall in times to come.

V. M. BHAT.

### BOOKS RECEIVED.

- THE PRESS AND A CHANGING CIVILISATION. By A. J. CUMMINGS. (The Twentieth Century Library Series No. 19.) (John Lane.) 1935. 20cm. 139p. 3/6.
- SHIVAJI, THE MARATHA. By E. F. MALCOLM-SMITH. (Heroes of India Series.) (V. Sundra Iyer, Trichur.) 1935. 20cm. 162p.
- NECTOR FROM INDIAN SAINTS. AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MAHIPATI'S MARATHI BHAKTALILAMRIT. CHAPTERS 1-12, 41-51, By JUSTIN E. ABBOTT & N. R. GODBOLE. (The Poet Saints of Maharashtra Vol. XI.) (Aryabhushan Press, Poona 4.) 1935. 20cm. 498p. Rs. 3.
- INTERNATIONAL YEAR BOOK OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS, 1933-34. (International Institute of Agriculture, Rome.) 1934. 24cm. 818p. 90 Liras.
- FEDERALISM IN GOVERNMENT. By M. VENKATARAMAIA. (Andhra University Series No. 12.) (Author Andhra University, Waltair.) 1935. 24cm. 215p. Rs. 2.
- THE UNTOUCHABLE CLASSES OF MAHARASTRA. By M. G. BHAGAT. (Author, School of Economics and Sociology, University of Bombay, Bombay.) 1935. 24cm. 45p. Rs.
- RATES OF FOOD CONSUMPTION BY 71 FAMILIES OF TENANT-CULTIVATORS IN THE KHANEVAL TAHSIL, MULTAN DISTRICT. Inquiry conducted By SARDARI LAL under the supervision of W. ROBERTS. (Publication No. 29.) (Board of Economic Inquiry, Punjab Lahore.) 1935. 25cm. 193p. Rs. 1/8.
- TRAINING FOR CITIZENSHIP. By ERNEST SIMON & EVA M. HUBBACK. (Oxford University Press.) 1935. 18cm. 48p. 1/-.

## SUPREME FOR YEARS SUPREME TO-DAY— QUALITY ALWAYS TELLS



Mysore Sandalwood Oil B. P. quality, the finest in the world, is perfectly blended and milled by a special process with the purest ingredients to make.

Mysore  
Sandal Soap

"It's good through and through  
to the thinnest water"

Available Everywhere.

GOVERNMENT SOAP FACTORY,  
BANGALORE.