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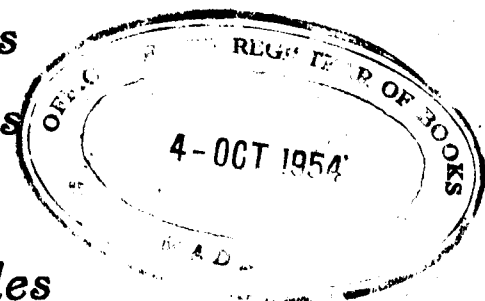
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SOCIAL ACTION 186

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Important Notice

From January 1955

SOCIAL ACTION

*will have a larger number of pages,
several new features and a new editor.*

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will be raised to Rs. 6 per year.**

HERE AND THERE

Second Class Consolation

Social workers gingered enough to launch social enquiries are apt to feel discouraged at the poor response they get. They may find some comfort (that second class comfort we have in learning others do worse than ourselves) when going over the report of the Press Commission. Their enquiry was official, voted by Parliament and financed by Government; it had framed a scientific questionnaire, sent timely reminders and even added threats of legal action.

The questionnaire was sent to people keen and expert on the subject, to among others, 670 members of Parliament, 1,015 MLAs and MLCs, 285 Ministers, 29 Vice-chancellors of Universities, 172 political parties, and 7,335 editors. Answers came from 3 MPs, 4 MLAs and MLCs, none from Ministers, none from Vice-chancellors, 5 from political parties, and 111 from editors : an impressively low total which makes a percentage of 1.3. Yet with that scanty material the Press Commission succeeded in issuing a report of some 550 closely printed pages, and it promised a second part with historical notes and voluminous appendices.

Social enquiries rarely show such a literary fertility, but they meet with better response. The secret is not far to seek ; the press is called an industry, social work is a labour of love. People are most industrious in love.

Tricolour Aloft

Repeatedly touring visitors and armchair economists tell us of the wonderful progress made in Red China. Apparently they never saw or heard what has been done in India since Independence. One might even say that few of our urban citizens are aware of the changes that took place in our villages over large tracts of the country. Undeniably much has been done in the countryside. Community projects and National Extension Services have acted as catalytic agents and accelerated the progress. Take the voluntary and unpaid labour spent on wells, roads, drains and the like ; it has meant doubling the investment in agriculture. The National Survey put agricultural investment at Rs. 166 crores in 1950-51 and at Rs. 350 crores in 1953-54,

this was exclusive of the large multipurpose works undertaken right and left and due to yield returns only after 1956.

What is still more significant is the revolution in the peasant's mentality. Conservatism is shed ; the peasant has developed a keen feeling for self-help. The proofs are in the increased demand for fertilisers, and the ever-growing practice of intensive cultivation (Japanese style).

What of glorious Red China ? Chinese papers (like *Ta Kung Pao* of Tientsin) complain that "certain commodities are in short supply", even before subtracting the food stuffs exported to Russia against heavy machinery. Chinese production of food is much lower than in India, and instead of nearing self-sufficiency China finds herself in greater scarcity than ever. India has raised both her agricultural investment and her food-production, China has reduced both. Whilst the Chinese oligarchy imposes increasing burdens on the peasant, India's government lightens his burden and registers economic progress. Some patches of the Indian countryside show little advance (*v.g.* Chota Nagpur is still in a sulky mood), but by and large the peasantry is on the upgrade. Our urban intelligentsia are not uniformly aware of it and go on belittling their people. Yet the progress is there for students to see and for publicists to advertise.

Buffet Socialism

Besides and above economic considerations, there are larger issues, and the British Labour Party's tour was an occasion to underline them briefly and gently. Mr. Attlee and his pals went to Moscow : it was a merry

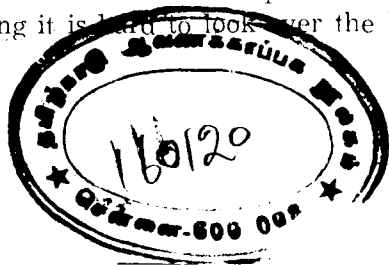
party with little protocol but plenty of caviare, vodka and toasts. They went to Peking; it was a merrier party with the cuisine and the protocol emperors and mandarins had brought to perfection. Neither party implied socialism in the world or even socialism in one country: it was socialism at one table.

In Peking the mood was frankly convivial. The British Labourites were at ease and Mr. Attlee quite spontaneously and neatly told some differences between Old England and New China. "In our younger civilisation with its different traditions, we of the Labour Party brought in extensive changes in order to meet the aspirations of the masses. We were able fortunately to do this by peaceful and constitutional means. We had however to deal not only with internal problems, but with external, in particular with the historical position of Britain as a world power".

India Ahead

The occasion called for another remark. For a populous under-developed nation which comes of age and grows aware of its tremendous resources, it is a great temptation to make a hurried bid for world power by dictatorial methods. India resisted the temptation and maintained the Gandhian priority of moral means over immediate advantages. That is why her economic progress is rapid, her world stature growing even faster, and her future more hopeful. But of course, from Peking it is hard to look over the Himalayas.

A. L.



THE QUIBBLES OF THE LAW

Who is a workman?

In a recent award of the Industrial Tribunal, sitting at Ernakulam, to adjudicate a dispute between the Burma Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Co. of India and their workmen in Travancore-Cochin State, the first point of the decision was to determine the exact status of the depot superintendents. Were they workmen as defined by the Industrial Disputes Act? According to the definition of the Act, a workman is "any person employed (including an apprentice) in any industry to do any skilled or unskilled manual or clerical work for hire or reward." Basing himself on this definition, the presiding judge observed that "the definition does not mention anything about designation or pay of the employee. The only tests to see whether an employee of an industry is a workman or an officer are according to this definition, his employment for hire or reward and the nature of his work. If a person is employed to do a skilled or unskilled manual work or to do a clerical job for hire or reward he will be a workman; if not, he will be an officer or a member of the supervisory staff and would be excluded from the operation of the Act. Thus it is the nature of the work and not designation or pay that determines the status of an employee of an industry. This is the principle adopted by Industrial Tribunals and the Labour Appellate Tribunal of India when considering the question whether an industrial employee is a workman or not".*

* Labour Law Journal, July 1954, pp. 99 sq.

The judge then went on to appeal to precedent. He quoted the ruling of Justice Bini Basni Prasad, the Chairman of the Bank Conciliation Board, who in 1949 declared in his conciliation award that "as a general principle...the nature of the work done by an employee and degree of his responsibility determine whether he is a clerk or an officer. His designation does not matter. But the salary of an employee is not the determining factor because the definition of workmen in the Industrial Disputes Act contains no limitation based on salary, as is the case of the definition of Workmen's Compensation Act".

The difference between the definitions of the same term 'workman' of the Industrial Disputes Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act is an important point that should be remembered. The Workmen's Compensation Act covers all manual labourers, whatever their occupation, subject to certain maximum earnings. In India, this upper limit has been fixed at Rs. 400, and therefore covers manual labourers drawing Rs. 400 and less. Moreover the Indian Act specifically excludes persons employed in the capacity of manual labourers in the Armed Forces from being covered by the Act.

The learned judge then went on to point out that on previous occasions whenever a question arose as to whether a particular person was an officer or a workman, the difficulty was solved by on-the-spot evidence. Thus in a similar situation in 1951, the Labour Appellate Tribunal of India had held that where the main duties of an employee were of a supervisory nature, he would not be a workman within the meaning of the Industrial Disputes Act even though he might

have some manual or clerical work to do occasionally but incidental to his main duties. For the same reasons, a foreman cannot be regarded as a workman.

The final test of the problem whether a person was a workman or an officer was to see whether the person in question was in a position to command, to issue orders and to exercise management functions to the extent that he was empowered.

Dealing with the case under adjudication, the judge declared that the depot superintendents could not be considered as workmen within the meaning of the Act, since the evidence clearly showed that they were responsible for the company's stock at the depots; that they had power to fix work for the employees under their charge; that they could grant them leave, suspend them, or recommend them for punishment, etc. They had some clerical work to do in the nature of certain forms to be filled in, but this hardly occupied them for more than half-an-hour a day; the rest of the time was taken up with administration and executive functions. The award was therefore against regarding such persons as workmen.

Strange to report, but almost at the same time, a precisely contrary judgement was given in respect to the same persons doing the same type of work in the High Court of Judicature at Madras.* Only this time the petitioners were the Messrs. Burma-Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Company of India, Ltd., Madras who appealed to the High Court against the decision of the Labour Appellate Tribunal, Madras which had

* Labour Law Journal, Aug. 1954, pg. 153.

certified that the Depot Superintendents were workmen within the meaning of the Industrial Disputes Act. The Judge sided with the Tribunal and maintained that in his opinion as the Depot Superintendents were responsible for stock receipts, storage and issue of stocks, they are merely store-keepers and as such, their duties were not of a directional, managerial or supervisory nature. Rather their duties were substantially clerical. They had no power to punish clerks, though they could recommend the issue of a charge-sheet. Nor did they have any initiative but had to work under the instructions from the branch offices, and had no power beyond these instructions. In the mind of the judge, a managerial or supervisory function involved some degree of initiative and independent work. Hence he decided that the Depot Superintendents were not officers, but workmen within the meaning of the Act.

Quantum of Bonus

What share percentage of the total surplus profits earned by the industry should be apportioned among the workmen of the same has always been a problematical question for the adjudicator. And though the difficulty has often come up before the courts, no consistent policy has been adhered to, but each case has been decided on its own merits.

The case we are here considering is an interesting one. Kenyon Greaves, Ltd. was incorporated in 1950 as a private limited company with a paid-up capital of Rs. 2 lakhs, about three-fourths of the shares being held by the Greaves Cotton and Co., Ltd. It began manufacturing ropes for the use of the textile mills

since December, 1950. Although in the first year the firm suffered a loss of Rs. 41,000, in 1953 there was a profit of Rs. 1,50,000. How had Kenyon Greaves treated their workmen? A clerk was being paid Rs. 75, plus a dearness allowance of Rs. 60—14 as. Out of eight machine operators, two were paid Rs. 100, three Rs. 80, and three Rs. 50 as basic salary. The mazdoors were paid a salary of Rs. 30, and all began to be paid a dearness allowance of Rs. 50—9—0. From January, 1952 the company started paying provident fund contributions. The dearness allowance was increased and in 1953 almost all were given promotions in salary. In 1952 the workers were paid a bonus of one-sixth of their annual basic earnings.

The workmen however were dissatisfied with the bonus they had received in 1952 and demanded that the percentage should be raised to two-thirds of the year's basic earnings, since the company had made huge profits and since their salary was inadequate. They desired to see the balance sheets of the company to get an idea of its financial position and also the trading ledger.

The judge upheld the action of the company in refusing to show the ledger as, he maintained, the workmen were not entitled to look into the detailed affairs of the business. Moreover the company was still in its infancy, and though it seemed to have a virtual monopoly in the production of ropes for textile mills in Bombay, much older companies making larger profits had not been asked to pay a higher percentage of their profits in bonus to the workmen. Finally he explicitly denied that the payment of bonus

was a profit sharing scheme and that there was no ceiling to the quantum of bonus.

Let us take the last denial first. Obviously bonuses are paid out of surplus profits. And though they are calculated not as a percentage of profits but in relation to basic earnings, still the fact that they are paid out of surplus profits, in the long run transforms them into a kind of share in profits. Have workmen a right to such a share? The Courts have discussed this point and come to the conclusion that where the actual wages of the men fall below the living wage, bonuses may be regarded as a kind of deferred wage to make up the loss suffered by the wage-earners. But where the firm pays its men a living wage, it is generally allowed that they can still claim a part of the profits because they have co-operated with management to secure them. It is true that no such stipulation of a bonus-payment enters the wage-contract when it is first agreed to by the workman and his employer, but the payment of bonus has become so customary in certain industries that workmen would resent its cancellation unless the firm were making losses.

Strictly speaking, a workman has a right to a living wage, which has been defined by the Committee on Fair Wages in the following manner: "The living wage should enable the male earner to provide for himself and his family not merely the bare essentials of food, clothing and shelter, but a measure of frugal comfort including education for the children, protection against ill-health, requirements of essential social needs, and a measure of insurance against the more important misfortunes, including old age." While this

is a very comprehensive definition and quite acceptable to our way of thinking, the real difficulty arises when the living wage has to be calculated in monetary terms. Generally the Courts proceed by a rough and ready measure of what they think should be the living wage in a locality and then decide on the quantum of the bonus. But when wages are sufficiently high what right have workmen to a share of the profits?

The question is further complicated by the fact that as Fraser says, "the theory of profit is by common consent the most recalcitrant element in the whole structure of value and distribution analysis".* The right of the entrepreneur to what is known as profits in the strict sense, *viz.* the difference between the sale of the product and the total cost of production, is generally admitted as a reward for his organising, directing and risk-bearing activities. And though the place of the individual entrepreneur in our days has been taken by the management, yet the ownership of the means of production vests in the shareholder who also controls the executive, and bears the loss. So the shareholder has the right to the profits. The worker can claim part of them only from a distributive angle in so much as the state may decree and permit that when the surplus is very large, a wider distribution would be more to the national good. A very large surplus is often due to monopoly and in this case distribution of part of it among labour is more obviously justifiable.

Whether workmen are entitled to look into the detailed affairs of the business depends on the attitude

* Fraser, *Economic Thought*, pg. 213.

of management and of society at large. Managements who favour intimate co-operative endeavour with their workmen might easily agree to have representatives of labour on the managerial board to discuss questions of policy, price fixing, quantity of goods to be produced, etc. In India where labour is still largely illiterate and shifting, it would be inadvisable to favour such projects in many industries. But the ideal of tempering the wage-contract with a more co-operative attitude to the workmen on the part of the management by acquainting the former with the position of the firm and seeking their opinion in regard to policy and prices should be sufficiently emphasised by the tribunals.

Retrenchment

The Government Porcelain Factory, Bangalore, had retrenched 61 of its workers ; 30 of them on the ground that as the revenue had fallen and stocks had accumulated they were found to be superfluous, while the remaining 31 from the electro-porcelain section were dismissed for the losses incurred in that section and for reasons of rationalization. The Union took the case before the Industrial Tribunal.

The Court held that retrenchment is a necessary incident of any industry and that so long as it is not undertaken on false pretences or *mala fide* in the sense of unfairly increasing the labour load, or victimising certain individual workmen or discriminating against them, it was justifiable and the Industrial Tribunal could not interfere. The management of the industry has the right to determine the strength of its labour force, and if any retrenchment has to be made, this

should be done *bona fide*. In other words, any signs of victimisation or discrimination, or unfair labour practice or an increase of the workload would be evidence of a lack of *bona fide*, and in this case the management would have to justify its action. Otherwise if the retrenchment had to be made for good reasons management was the sole judge of its extent and should not be asked to justify its action in this matter.

While upholding management's right to effect the retrenchment in the case under consideration, the Tribunal decreed that the retrenched workmen could not however be thrown into the street especially when through no fault of their own they had been retrenched. The judges declared that the workmen were entitled to what is termed "retrenchment relief", i.e. compensation for loss of employment for no fault of theirs even when retrenchment is justifiable. In assessing the amount, the Tribunal took into consideration the length of service of the retrenched workmen, the causes of their retrenchment and the ability of the employer to pay. Thus workmen with service of more than three months but less than six months were entitled to fifteen days' total emoluments. Workmen with service of more than six months but less than one year were to get one month's total emoluments. Workmen with service of between one and two years were to get two months', between two and three years, two and a half months', and more than three years, three months' total emoluments. By total emoluments was understood both basic pay and dearness allowance.

It is quite clear that the judges were aware of the loss and harm caused to the retrenched employees by

a policy of retrenchment. But the 'retrenchment relief' decreed by them was surely meagre. With the present state of unemployment in the country, few of the retrenched men would be able to get a new job within even three months. And the older they are, the harder will it be for them to find and adjust themselves to a new type of work. Some enquiry into the efficiency of management, especially when the concern is a government one, could be usefully undertaken before retrenchment is finally permitted. There is a hue and cry all over the country today over the threatened rationalisation in the textile factories especially; both government and trade union leaders abhor the vacuum of unemployment. The industrialists have been asked to shelve their rationalisation projects. The first priority must always be to ensure a livelihood for as many workmen as possible.

In the face of such a mass of public opinion against retrenchment, it is not likely that the judges will so easily condone any scheme of retrenchment in the near future. Even a *bona fide* attempt will not be so easily permitted. The employer may be forced to suffer a temporary loss till alternative employment can be found or provided for his unemployed men. But at the back of all this apparently awkward and dilatory policy one can sense the desire for a fairer deal to the manual and clerical worker. There is a growing awareness of the greater worth of the individual, a respect for his dignity, a determination to provide for his essential needs; all this marks a great step forward in the building up of a social order in which men will be able to live a more satisfying life, more in accordance with their rational nature and their divine destiny.

A. Fonseca

WE'RE HIT WHERE IT HURTS

The Socialist Trade Union at Ahmedabad brought a charge against the Textile Labour Association (which isn't dominated by the Reds) stating that its "*leaders are too active and the members too passive*". This is according to a report in the July number of the *Social Action*.

Irrespective of whether this charge by the Socialists against the TLA is just or not, this piece of criticism, it strikes me, can be tagged on most appropriately to a large number of our Trade Unions.

Often, some of us at the top of these unions believe that if anything has to be done well, we ourselves must do it. Consequently, in all good faith, we try and centralize all the work on ourselves. And if at all we solicit the help of others, don't our furtive glances dart a thousand times towards our helpers to see if what they're doing is the way we want it done? And if they try to be original, woe betides them. Haven't we tried and tried and tried until we found that our present method of procedure to be the most practical one? So, 'keep to the old track, son,' originality doesn't pay!

As time elapses, our relationship with our very co-workers too gets coloured. It dawns on us in slow degrees that our co-workers ought not to know one or two details with regards to the running of the union. We rationalize it by saying that they wouldn't understand. But details have a way of adding up till they gather sufficient momentum to emphasise a point in a

big way. Then under varying circumstances things our co-workers, we feel, ought not to know about begin to multiply visibly. We then become secretive. By distrusting the judgement of others to begin with, we ultimately reach a stage when, unconsciously, we distrust the persons themselves.

Many who've tried to co-operate with us have thus been made to feel that they aren't allowed to exercise their own ideas sufficiently; they wonder whether their presence in the union isn't merely being tolerated; some even feel they're bluntly unwanted in their unions.

Soon we discover that a good many of the members absent themselves from meetings. Then quite suddenly they fail to put in their appearance altogether. A little later we make another startling discovery: our very co-workers have followed suit. One by one all have left us. And so we face the task ahead alone, feeling as if we were martyrs without ever realizing that we're our own persecutors. This is the mournful result of trying to do the work in our unions all by ourselves.

This disease of "centralization" is eating into the cadre of our unions. This is a disease that's gnawing at organic points which makes the smooth running of our unions an impossibility.

This will never do. Something has got to be done about it. But just what?

Being an official of a union is no reason whatsoever for any of us to impose our will on others. And if we're obeyed under such conditions, it won't last. It can't. It will soon wear out. As Mr. Kalapura,

one of the speakers at the recent AICUF Ernakulam Conference, emphasised so much, one has to be fully *convinced* in a cause before he takes to it seriously. Those who look up to us for the lead have a right to know what they're in for before they can be persuaded to follow us. Unless we explain to them what exactly we're going to do and convince them of its fruitfulness, it's hardly just on our part to expect the members of our unions to follow us in an intelligent and enthusiastic way.

As explained at the Central Committee Meeting of the AICUF in 1953, according to the dated concept of leadership, the soldiers in some former wars were kept in the dark regarding the decisions of their superiors. They hardly knew what they were fighting for. Whereas in World War II, the speaker remarked, "the radio was kept busy all hours of the day and night giving the rank and file the latest news and carrying the very voice of Alexander or Mac Arthur or Eisenhower to each fighter's heart". And, the speaker added rather pointedly, "it is only if they are taken into the leader's confidence and shown that their co-operation is appreciated by their leader that men will continue for any length of time to work for his cause".

In this connection, I'm reminded of a sentence from a lecture on the *Vocation to Leadership* at the First National Chaplains' Session of the AICUF. He said: "The leader must associate his men as closely as possible to his work; nay to the very responsibility of leading. He will thus make them feel that the movement is *their* movement, and that its success depends on *them*."

And until we get accustomed to consider our followers as co-operators, and not as *sub-operators*, such a charge as was brought against allowing insufficient incentive to members of a union, to know better its working, by the over-activity of its officials can easily be flung into our faces. And doesn't it hurt where it hits, or does it? Here are seven tips to fellow-leaders.

Plan your work

Don't plunge yourself and your followers into action without mature consideration. Plan your work. Try and envisage possible difficulties. (Be prepared to be contradicted).

Consult others

Before attempting anything, as far as possible, ask the advice of others who're in a position to "know", and don't forget to ask the opinion of your own members.

Discover facts

Facts are facts. Don't try and dodge them. If convinced by another's argument, admit it. If you're convinced that another plan will work better than your own, adopt it.

Enlist aid

From committees. (Planning committee,...) If possible get every member into one of the committees. This procedure will get very many people working. (But don't boss over these teams!) Let them feel they have a hand, and a free one, in running the show.

Face difficult situations

Don't leave it to your members to contact people who're unpleasant to deal with (*e.g.* getting necessary permission from a short-tempered employer). Do it yourself.

"I shall go with you."

If a member is about to do a job and if you've a few moments to spare, tell him: "I shall do it *with* you." You'll make him proud of his leader's company. *Give the devil his due!*

Not that your followers are devils, though at times you might be inclined to think so. But when some work is done well, find an opportunity to congratulate those responsible for it in private or/ and in public.

Vinny

SOME ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

In the preceding sections of this study, we achieved some understanding, albeit a very limited one, of democracy's essential implications for the larger functional divisions of society. The latter were taken to be those categories of collective human relations which are most frequently and fittingly classified as political, economic, and cultural. So far as man's large-scale, common, temporal endeavours are concerned, these three levels of institutional life would seem to cover them rather completely. In this the final phase of our

investigation, the aim is to see how the actual social situation in India compares with the principles previously laid down. Before starting out on this interesting factual survey, however, there is need of a bit more theoretical preparation. The term temporal that appears in the above explanation injects a new and important issue into our discussion. Its presence makes a further consideration of its significance advisable at this point.

As used here, the qualifying notion of temporal sets limitations of time and space upon the realities under review. It therefore restricts our attention to those joint efforts of men which aim at attaining objectives whose content and value are measured mainly by terrestrial or earthly standards. This existential condition should be sharply distinguished, of course, from that other one wherein man, in his capacity as a creature of spirit together with body, is able to transcend a purely dimensional order and move about in timeless and trackless spheres. That higher realm, we know, is customarily referred to as the spiritual or eternal order. There, man is specifically confronted with goals and goods having an existence as well as a worth that is fully beyond the pale of sensory experience. The corporative designations usually given to the group affairs of men transpiring in these areas are those of moral and religious.

With the principles and practices followed there, democracy has no direct connection. Since that is an order peculiarly God-given and God-guided, it must ever remain preeminently authoritarian in its mode of operation. God's infinitely unique position in such a system demands that He exercise a proportionately

unique power there. No element of equality exists between men and God. Nevertheless, a sound, supernaturally oriented morality and religion will have a vitally important indirect bearing upon, and will supply the only thoroughly stable foundation for, a truly democratic social life. From such a source comes the sole enduring, and a singularly objective, basis upon which to establish the personal dignity of the individual man, and the concomitant sense of duty in each individual person. And without these pillars of human personality no democratic development will long prevail. Hence the relationship between democracy and religion is a most intimate one. But its proper realization requires that religion penetrate and permeate democracy, not that the latter enter so much into the former. One very special and significant way, though, in which a democratic social system does work a marked, yet indirect effect, upon religion lies through the political process known as limited secularism. The modifying notion of "limited" is generally left out of this expression. It is inserted in the present instance to help introduce and emphasize important distinctions which must be made in this regard.

Secularism, the social arrangement whereby the religious affairs of a society are radically separated from its civil proceedings, can be practically implemented in different ways. In as much as these two planes of human existence are in a certain sense separable, with each having its own ends to achieve, and each likewise equipped with means for attaining such objectives, they are respectively entitled to a mutual independence of a sort. Still, by reason of the simple and essential fact that both sets of actions are intend-

ed to benefit the very same subjects i.e., individual persons, they can never be absolutely segregated one from the other. The ultimate unity of their respective ends imposes a demand for close and continuous co-operation between the two diverse procedures. This is what is implied in the concept of limited secularism. But it is all very far removed from the unlimited, exaggerated, and unrealistic kind which strives for a full and final divorcement of the dual paths.

When we turn to the present official position of India in this matter, we note that, by the terms of the National Constitution, it is a secularism of the limited variety which has been introduced. Despite the satisfaction that is derived from such a fortunate finding, it is yet possible to have qualms in this respect for the future. After all, the Constitution is amendable, and is in fact already in the throes of such a procedure. Not that there is anything wrong or even dangerous in such a move of itself. But it does indicate the existence of a ready-made facility for effecting fundamental changes in contemporary social life. Should there be a sufficiently strong will in favour of some basic revision, the way to procuring the same is quite evidently within close reach. And certain currents of thought that are blowing somewhat freely, even if not strongly, in India today clearly show the presence of a mentality aiming in that direction. There are overt, though still somewhat scattered, signs of a movement in favour of an absolutely autonomous secularism, in which there will be complete separation between social and religious life. The latter is to be allowed, perhaps even aided, to wither away. And in its place, depending upon particular preferences, stands either

the Individual, the State, or the Class as the arbiter of society's ethical norms. Supporters of India's traditional conservative policy in this regard must maintain a constant and articulate alertness to this crucial challenge, if they are to prevent its eventual and fatal success. So much for our observations on the ideological plane. Let us now turn our attention to the more specifically social side of the Indian factual picture.

Politically, one might justifiably assert that India has stepped off to a fast start in its march toward a democratic social development. The election proceedings held thus far demonstrate a strong sense of civic responsibility on the part of the people, together with at least a satisfactory ability to discern the more important issues at stake, and to select their representatives with a reasonable degree of relevance to the practical solution of these problems. Many improvements yet remain to be effected along these lines, no doubt, chiefly through better educational facilities for the general advancement of the voters' social knowledge and understanding. A gradual lessening of the superficialities in the prevailing political platforms, with the consequent lowering of the superfluity in numbers of participating political parties, appears as another accomplishment that is highly desirable. Such quantitative excesses invariably contribute to the qualitative debasement of any democratic political system.

Anent the status of post-election relations between the chosen officials and their choosing constituents, some further salutary symptoms of democratic virility are in evidence. The quantity and quality of civilian

advisory committees to the Government that are regularly in action bear notable witness in this respect. Periodic party conventions which are well-attended and efficiently conducted provide additional instances of this healthy sign. The fact that these meetings are most frequently organized on a provincial pattern, and occasionally are even more localized, with extensive attention devoted to small-scale as well as large-looming problems, supplies ample opportunity for, and likely assurances of, the proper degree of intimacy that should characterize the positions of rulers and ruled. Worthy and public-spirited citizens too seem, more often than not, to be presenting themselves as candidates for public office, thereby subjecting themselves to the many disconcerting, sometimes even debilitating, duties associated with such endeavours. Nevertheless, at least a few democratically dangerous tendencies can be detected in this area also. There are indications anyway, of a rather tight centralization of administrative authority; undue impatience with criticisms and opposing views, even when the latter arise within a particular political camp itself; and worst of all, an unfortunate amount of suspicion amongst the ordinary people that too many of their officials are more self-centered than public-spirited. The latter deficiency, assuming it does exist, is indeed a critical one. There is nothing better calculated to destroy the very heart of a political community than the loss of its peoples' confidence.

In the economic sector, we find what are unquestionably the poorest proofs of Indian democratic development. While employers, on the whole, are probably no more autocratic and absolutist in their poli-

cies and practices than are their business brothers in other parts of the world, a number of national conditions combine to give them an appearance of holding such an undesirable position certainly. One of these seems to be the awareness of a serious need on their part to prove to the new national Government that private enterprise can really do an effective and efficient job for the country, and hence should be allotted its proper place and prerogative in the general economic program of the country. To underscore their productive prowess, producers may at times resort to methods which are not far, if at all, removed from the dictatorial type. Unilateral and often-times unjust action in the matter of making and enforcing the working regulations of a plant (Standing Orders) is an outstanding example of undemocratic offences taking place there. On the other hand, ignorance and a rather hopeless apathy among workers, enhanced by a scarcity of earnest and informed leaders, tend to handicap the satisfactory progress of a widely scattered labour movement. Political patronage and pressure is a twin-headed hinderance that adds considerably to the desultoriness of trade union activities. So long as disabilities of this sort continue to plague the workers' cause, little if any advance can be made in the direction of democratic economic mechanisms. The strongest support of the employees' position, as well as the most direct restraint upon that of the employer, is thus kept woefully inept. When we consider the democratic prospects from the consumer angle, the bleakness of the scene becomes still more profound. Outside of the vaguely elementary efforts at legal controls through governmental agencies, there is precious

little being done to safeguard the economic status of purchasers. This, it is hardly necessary to say, is by no means a uniquely Indian condition. The same defect can be found in just about every country of the world. And yet, the adverse effects of such a situation are probably more hurtful here than elsewhere, in view of the extremely low figures of the consumer's income. What is more, Indian consumers do not even enjoy, in any large measure at least, the advantages of helpful advice regarding their expenditures, much less anything like gainful advances toward voicing their opinions over the prices and the products involved therein, from associations formed in their prime interest.

There are some bright spots in the scene though. The trade union movement is growing internally and gaining ground externally, both occurring with painful slowness. Leaders are being trained and are accumulating experience, and followers seem to be manifesting a surge of hopeful enthusiasm. Employers are learning the value, not to mention the inevitability, of dealing with their employees in a spirit of partnership. First steps toward the vital process of Collective Bargaining have been taken, and there are expectations of things to come in this connection which, while they may not be exactly great, are indeed encouraging. The procedures adopted here stand in need of much clarification and expansion. But this should come with additional time, so long as the participants continue their present efforts. The Government's attitude toward voluntary methods and measures of co-operation is a powerful factor in their favour, and affords added assurance of its eventual success. If the

joint approach to employer-employee relations is conscientiously cultivated, then, when that rather ridiculous, from a really democratic viewpoint, system of economic control known as the Managing-Agency is finally removed from the Indian scene, it may be satisfyingly superseded by a bipartisan coalition of the two main parties-at-interest. This would come very close to a concrete realization of the democratic ideal. Not nearly so much cause for elation can be found in the consumers' camp. True enough, strong attempts at fostering the consumer cooperative movement are being made. But this always has been, and very likely ever will be, a secondary form of organized consumer activity, so far as a full-scale economic democracy is concerned. One can hardly visualize the utility of such a mechanism for mass production purposes. And yet, the consumers must deal with producers who operate in that way. Some manner of more democratic means is therefore required to assist purchasers in arriving at more equitable positions in their contacts with the makers and distributors of a product. Both employer and employee ought to interest themselves in the advancement of this economic project. For they both should gain in a very proximate and practical way from the ensuing results. The subsequent strengthening of consumer attachment to their enterprise that must inevitably follow upon this arrangement is bound to improve the security of their respective investments therein. And the increased confidence, on the part of the Government, in the public value of their productive efforts that simultaneously stems from the social consciousness thus displayed will

between separate sectional groups. All too frequently, it seems, relatively petty social factors of locale, like language and habit, are permitted to interfere, beyond the proper measure of their real worth, with more weighty nationalistic and humanistic obligations. Traces of an inveterate casteism also disturb and to some extent detract from the prospering of democracy. While the fading remnants of this lost ideal are being subjected to a relentless corrective pressure by political processes, and have thereby been compelled to contract their dwindling forces slowly but surely, there is still need of some supplementary measures, if the blight is to be eradicated entirely. Since the real source of this social illness is centered in the interior recesses of the human personality, it can never be thoroughly expurgated except by means which can somehow reach into that deep-dug sanctum. Law, the major instrument of political persuasion, is inherently unable to meet this requirement. But the penetrating powers of cultural dynamics, strengthened and sharpened by the precepts of revealed religion, are the most reliable of all possible equipment for such purposes. As we saw in an earlier section of our study, these are the facilities for touching the hearts and souls of men.

To conclude this consideration of the principles of a sound social democracy, it is well to stress two additional points which, for want of time and space, have not been elaborated upon in what has been said so far. Such a move seems particularly pertinent, since both these items, in their Indian context, constitute what might truly be termed the weakest and the strongest features of democracy in this country. One

pertains to the social role of the state. The other relates to the position of the family in society.

We noted before, in the article on political democracy, how it is not only necessary that the government of a state should be subordinate to the citizens thereof, from the standpoint of ultimate authority, but also, under the organic social principle of subsidiarity, that this organized political power must acknowledge additional limitations on its sovereignty which stem from sources below it in the social hierarchy. That is to say, the State has to recognize a certain sphere of self-sufficiency in the structure of the lesser social units otherwise within the scope of its general jurisdiction, such as the economic and cultural groups, and the family, and hence refrain from interfering with a legitimate functional autonomy there. In India, for readily understandable reasons, the Government finds it advisable, or even necessary, to utilize its organs and mechanisms of social control in a rather comprehensive way, economically and culturally speaking. This paternal interest, which, when properly held in check, is a rich blessing, can, upon its bursting the bounds of propriety, turn into a hideous curse. Just where the critical dividing line lies is extremely difficult to determine. The fact remains, nevertheless, that the great divide is there, and must be respected, if the ascendancy of political authoritarianism, with its terrors of totalitarianism hovering in the background, is to be avoided.

Nothing at all has been said about the family, except for the brief reference to a statement of Pius XII cited in the opening article of this series. Such neglect

is not meant to imply any insignificance or inappropriateness in that social unit so far as democracy is concerned. Rather should the silence be taken as a testimonial to the unique status of that association. It stands in a category by itself, much the same as that other exceptional social institution known as the religious body or Church. And it is, also like the latter, an extremely vital factor in a democratic society. Since the spirit of a common brotherhood, and fatherhood which constitutes the dominant element in a democratic social order, is first born and best nourished within the confines of a healthy family life, the strength of the latter will largely effect the stability and virility of the former. Furthermore, the family may be considered the source and the stimulator of all the social virtues. It is surely the cornerstone in the whole edifice of society. Looked at from this angle, democracy in India has as great, if not greater, substantive resources as exists anywhere else in the world. For India, above all else, is a nation of families. However, here too, similar to the situations we have already noticed in the remaining social sectors, there are ominous signs of danger present. A number of degenerative processes are creeping in, and this under a mistaken notion of progress. What are perhaps the two most insidious and internecine instances of this drift towards social deterioration work in opposite ways but produce the same final results. One is a method of unnatural control-over births, contraception. The second is a process of unwarranted decontrol-over marriages, divorce. Both threaten the family as an institution with the same dire end-death. Both represent a concession to

immoral tendencies latent in the social body. Those citizens of India who earnestly seek the continued prosperity and progress of their country, not only as a democracy but also as a nation, will do well to remember, to promulgate, and to put into practice the fundamental principles of sound and successful living recommended by the universally esteemed father of their Country when he said, "Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms....Moral results can only be produced by moral restraints. All other restraints defeat the very purpose for which they were intended..and if artificial methods become the order of the day, nothing but moral degradation can be the result".¹

J. S. Connor

SOCIAL SURVEY

DEPRESSED CLASSES

Education should change the look of the villages. This is badly needed if we believe the finding of the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. And why not to believe it when it tells us what everybody can easily observe: namely that the rights granted by the Constitution are absolutely ignored, in this case as in some others. Public wells, tanks, public shops, hotels, places of entertainment are still shut to Harijans. The reason is, that Harijans being dependent on people of the Higher Castes for their living, would

¹ M. Ghandi, *HINDHU DHARMA*, pp. 57, 142-43.

not venture to go against the wishes of the latter. There is also the fact that even among Harijans the caste system flourishes as of old. They are not welcome to claim equality with the high castes when they themselves are so particular about their subdivisions.

The remedy proposed by the Commission, or at least one of the remedies, does not seem adequate. It consists in dropping the word "Harijans, Adi Dravidians", and to tell depressed castes to call themselves Hindus without any addition. It is there that the shoe pinches. A Hindu as such does not exist, one is always a Hindu of this or that caste, Paria or Brahmin. It is so deeply embedded in the system that it would be easier to separate Siamese twins than to separate the two. Hinduism has few tenets compulsory on all, but caste is one of them, since it is the practical expression of karma at each fall, or rebirth, in *samsāra*. There are good reasons to believe that at the beginning it did not exist in the present form of so strong an exclusiveness in commensality and marriage. The past is a one-way river, as all rivers, and the water does not go up stream to its source.

CHRISTIAN HARIJANS

Where Dr. Kaka Kelkar, the President of the Commission, exaggerates, it is when he said that Harijan Christians are economically, educationally, politically more backward than their co-caste brethren. Let us say in fairness that economically they are on a footing of equality with the others; their huts are the same sordid hovels. If educationally they are in a worse state than the Hindus Harijans, we hope that

Dr. Kaka Kelkar will be able to point out the cause: the official exclusion of Harijan Christians from the benefit of educational schemes intended for the betterment of the downtrodden people.

If unluckily there is still contamination from Hinduism even in the Christian fold, there is a capital difference. It is against the spirit of Christianity, and there is perfect equality in the sight of the Church; Adi Dravidians have been raised to the priesthood. The untouchability at the time of services, marriages etc...pointed out as the common shame of Hindus and Christians has not to be shared by the second, at least to the same extent. Even if here and there priests have for peace-sake tolerated, the ancient customs to linger in their parishes. They do it against the main current of Christianity.

The educated scheduled castes, backward classes etc...always turn to the Government for more advantages. In the Technical Colleges of Madras University after the admission of the few students coming from other states 15% of the remaining seats are reserved for the scheduled castes and 25% go to the educationally and socially backward classes, which include many well-to-do people. They easily accept the stigma of backwardness if it enables them to get into a College. The Government has done away with the ancient practice of taking into account the educational status of the parents of the candidates. It may be that circumstances are such as to warrant a more lenient treatment to the backward and scheduled people but when one considers that only 40% are entering on merit one may ask whether it is for the general good.

A PUZZLE

One variety of puzzle consists in reconciling hard facts. Here is an instance. On the one hand, India plagues her friendship to China : Chou en Lai is received at New Delhi with the welcome, Bhai Bhai, we are brothers (or is it sisters ?). On the other hand, the highest officials of the land denounce all lackeys of foreign powers, even or especially the Red lackeys, a lot that are ready to sell their country to Moscow. Why then welcome Chou en Lai who is a lackey of Moscow, who receives arms and munitions from Moscow, and who, whatever be appearances, does like all leading Communists, receive and obey orders from Moscow ? Why ? Of course the world does not follow logic, least of all in foreign policy.

What is of greater interest to the readers of "Social Action" is the Communist Action in India. It is quite alive, and benefits by the Red victories and by the prestige their delegates and delegations enjoy in our official circles and our publicity services. How many members of the Communist Party are there in India ? According to official statistics there would be some 60,000. And these sixty thousand are not sleeping partners making a sleepy appearance at general meetings. They are trained agents, alert and ready to obey any signal from Moscow. How many are there in the Trade Unions, in the Peace Leagues, etc. ? Apparently even the police is not able to keep count of them, chiefly because the best are not the most obvious and are never arrested or suspected. They all have the "Agitators' Handbook" at their fingers tip ; they are authentic agents of Moscow.

The *Pravda* of the 4th of July carries a significant article : "Russia has only one desire, it is to keep the friendship of India. That is why Russia denounces the enemies of India, and those enemies are the foreign missionaries who swamp the country, who insult Indian customs and culture, who lead an anti-Indian propaganda, who in short are Americans or the lackeys of America. India has better do away with them all". This article is well in the Soviet style ; whatever benefits the Soviet, that and that alone is good, and also in the Voltarian tradition : lie, lie again, lie always, and the lie will stick some way or other.

Of course, each and every Christian missionary or not, will oppose the atheistic materialist propaganda of Communists ; but Hindus too should do so. In the meantime Red propaganda goes on unabated in many newspapers, even in some owned by pious Hindus. Stranger still the Hindu Mahasabha advocates an alliance with the Soviet, and takes the lead in the Campaign against Christianity which the Reds confess is their staunchest opponent of materialism. Who among men can sort out the thoughts of men ?

In the meantime Communists go on merrily with their nefarious work ; delegations are multiplied, books arrive in shoals, public services are burrowed, slogans, and tales are dinned into the ears of the educated and semi-educated, and so on. Yet they are denounced as lackeys of foreign powers and disloyal citizens. Who among men can solve the puzzle of mankind ?

MADRAS LAND TAXES

Coffee, tea, rubber, cinchona, and cardamon are among the main exports of India. The Government

of Madras felt it had to do something for the planters, or about the planters. After deep thinking, it decided it would put a tax on all those products and prepared the Madras Plantation Agricultural Income-tax Bill. It even decided to levy the tax from April 1st, 1954, a retrospective measure which is alarming, which might by contagion be extended to other areas. The income-tax is levied over and above the assessment tax, and its rates run as follow : on the first Rs. 1,500 of total agricultural income, nil ; on the next slab of Rs. 3,500, 9 pies per rupee ; on the next Rs. 5,000, 1½ annas per rupee ; on the following Rs. 5,000, 3½ As. ; and on the remainder As. 4/- ; this is provided that no such tax will be paid on an agricultural income of less than Rs. 3,000 for single owners, or Rs. 6,000 for joint families. Besides, a super-tax is levied for revenues above Rs. 25,000, rated at As. 1½ per Rs. in the first 15,000 slab, As. two for the second, As. 3 for the next, and so on, until it reaches As. 6/- for anything above one lakh.

The tax is payable by single owners, unregistered companies etc., with the companies being charged at the maximum rate for the whole of their agricultural income. Insurance money will be calculated as part of the income. Will be exempted incomes which are totally spent on religious and charitable purposes, poor relief, education, medical assistance.

Vakils welcome the sixty-six articles of the bill ; planters are dismayed. They are resigned to a tax on agricultural income, but they complain that the rate is harshly excessive,

A CEILING TO HOLDINGS

The Travancore-Cochin government plans to wrench a trump from the Communist cards. They decided to put a ceiling on holdings, though they exempt plantations which can hardly be cut up into bits. The maximum size per family will be as follows : 15 acres of wet land bearing two crops per year or worked as a garden ; 22½ acres of wet land yielding a single crop ; 30 acres of dry land. For families, having more than five members, 25 acres of the best land are allowed. The surplus land may be sold or settled otherwise within six months ; if not so disposed of, it will be surrendered to the Land Board who will allow the owner a compensation equal to four times the yearly gross produce.

If later on a man ever comes, by inheritance or otherwise, to possess a larger acreage than the legal maximum, he will hand it over to the Land Board at the same rate of compensation. Compensation may be given in ready cash or in six-month bonds. How the Government will secure the money is not clear. How it will deal with companies who hold mortgages on oversize holdings is still less clear. That the measure will not bring much relief to landless people is only too clear. In Travancore properties over 100 acres number one thousand, those of between 25 and 100 acres cover only nine per cent of the land.

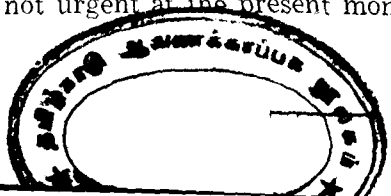
INDIA'S COLD WARS

War against locusts first : 70 swarms covering each 60 sq. miles devastate northern India. War against the flood waters which destroy crops and houses in Assam, Bihar, Bengal, the total being tentatively estimated at

some eight crores of rupees. The Relief Minister ascribed the floods to 'deforestation': an evil denounced periodically and hardly countered by the academic tree-planting which has become a national ceremony every July. Many plant trees in the village, and nobody waters them. This year the Bihar Government wants to mobilize the sadhus for village work; alas, every sadhu is not a Vinoba Bhave. The most delicate piece of cold war is against foreign statesmen who want to send Indian nationals back to their motherland. Ceylon is the most acute case; a first batch of 25,000 are gathered for repatriation; others are segregated on special registers; the fate of others is uncertain. Delhi has decided that Indian unskilled workers living in Ceylon will in future receive not a passport but an emigration certificate if they come back to visit people in India; as this certificate has no value in Ceylon, they will perforce remain in India once they come back. On the other hand, shopkeepers, clerks, etc., will be given regular passports and be free to travel both ways.

In Burma the friendly ministry is ready to provide Indian labourers staying there with a one-way ticket; there are one lakh such unskilled labourers. In Mauritius, the Indian community are in a majority in the population and in the Government so that they can regulate the India-ward movement. In the other lands and islands on which over four million people of Indian origin are scattered, the migration problem is not urgent at the present moment.

E. Gathier



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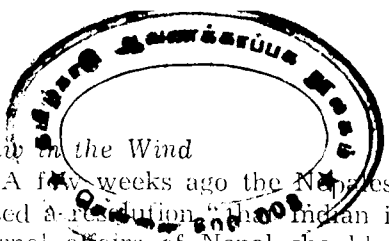
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HERE AND THERE

Pacific Co-existence

For years on end, day in day out, the Kremlin told us that it was all for peace. Such persistent effort reminds one of the Assistant Predestinator in Huxley's *Brave New World* who said: "Four hundred repetitions three nights a week for four years — 62,400 repetitions — make one truth.... Statements which 62,400 repetitions have made people accept are taken not merely as true but as axiomatic, self-evident, utterly indisputable".

Unhappily or rather happily, one remembers other communist statements that communists are all out for world revolution, and world imperialism. Such statements are reserved for the elite and are not repeated 62,400 times for the public. Red world imperialism is the goal and ideal of the Soviet; the means may change, the path may be a wild zigzag, the goal does not change. In course of time the Reds might give up orthodox communism, but as long as they do not give solid proofs of a change of heart, they should be treated neither as friends nor as foes, but as philosophers that have gone astray; and such people are the hardest to handle.



Straw in the Wind

A few weeks ago the Nepalese Communist Party passed a resolution "The Indian intervention" in the internal affairs of Nepal should cease at once; that the 1950 Treaty which regulates the relations between India and Nepal is derogatory to Nepal's sovereignty, and that in consequence the Indian military mission be withdrawn, Indian personnel in check-posts recalled and the "unequal treaties" abrogated.

The Nepalese Praesidium glories in honorary members like Mao Tse Tung, Malenkov, Ho Chi Minh; it is presumably bound by the discipline and rules of the Cominform and the party is a branch of the Communist Party of India. Hence one is led to admit that the Nepalese demands reflect the directives of the Cominform.

It all means that in Red eyes India's influence in Nepal is on a par with America's in what are called imperialist colonies. Logically such countries have to be "liberated".

One must also note that K. I. Singh, the runaway leader of the Nepalese Communist Party, was recently feted officially in Peking, and it is said that a "liberation army" is being formed in West Nepal with headquarters in Tibet. The present campaign against Indian influence in Nepal is meant to prepare a suitable public opinion. Rumour has it that in the near future Red propaganda will claim back the Indian territories conquered from Nepal by the British; this would be implied in the claim for Greater Nepal. The claim, however, has not yet been repeated 62,400 times.

Mind the Pockets

India is bent on streamlining her sea-coasts and suppressing foreign pockets. The Premier of Ceylon

on the contrary said he was not averse to a well-lined British pocket and "wanted British bases in Ceylon against a possible invasion from South-India if it turned communist". Mr. Attlee denounced Formosa (not Hong-Kong, mind) as an ugly pocket.

The newly voted Chinese constitution provides for representatives from the Chinese communities overseas; would a Chinese pocket in Calcutta please Sardar K. M. Pannikar, the chairman of the States Delimitation Commission?

Some Indians overseas would not object to Indian pockets in Africa; but our Government is turning a stone-deaf ear to such whispers.

Streamlining

Once upon a time it was taken for granted that the Prime Minister had to do the hardest bits of work. Things are changing. The Prime Minister had done a tough job when streamlining the dress of our officials: coat and pants, no tie, no swallow tails. The Home Minister has gone one better: he tried his hand at streamlining the conduct of officials: no loose threads, no bulging pocket.

The new rules for the All-India services should give us an austere administration: no bigamy, not even marriage for women officials, no recourse to court or to press to vindicate an official action, no money speculation, no private business over Rs. 1,000 (by an official or anyone of his family), no acceptance of gifts except trifles (the maximum trifle is Rs. 20 from an outsider, Rs. 50 from a friend, Rs. 200 from an intimate). For any departure from the above rules, due permission must be obtained from the Home Minister

who will sanction the legality, if not the morality, of the exception. But in no case whatever, any political activity, or any criticism of government; these are sins without remission.

The Home Minister is out to purify the administration; his henchmen in the Hindu Mahasabha might well turn to this new field of activity and turn away from irresponsible missionary-baiting.

A Matter of Balance

Dr. Katju was at his best in Parliament when countering a communist protest against the ban on the sale of Soviet literature in railway stalls. "What is happening to the sale proceeds? Where do the profits go?". At the expected uproar, he went on: "When my friends, (the comrades) are infuriated, it means the thing is substantially true and that there is no answer except shouting. When a man offers me millions of books that would cost five rupees each for nine annas, I am a little suspicious".

What was unexpected was that a Congress member pleaded to have the ban removed: "Let us have balance in our politics and literature". Apparently in his mind a balanced diet means a fair amount of rice, and an equally fair amount of datura. Has he not understood the present view of the Congress party? To be on speaking terms with communist foreigners is one thing, to take them home as cooks is another.

At the next elections, will the Congress High Command show such balanced judgment as to check on the ideological balance of its members and chuck out unbalanced candidates?

A. L.

SOCIAL MEDICINE

Like all living beings, man lives in his surroundings, through them and at times in spite of them. It is his privilege, which sets him apart from other living beings, to be able not only to adapt himself to his surroundings but to adapt his surroundings to himself. It is on this background that one is tempted to make a popular survey of what man does to protect his life under the guidance of medical research.

The world population is roughly estimated at 2,300 millions; out of the total about two-thirds have a short span of life (about 27 years in India and China, 37 in South-America). Worse still, this very short span is made miserable with disease, malaria, tuberculosis etc. Possibly close to two-thirds of mankind are afflicted with more or less dangerous diseases. They are ill-protected against outside enemies, virus, microbe, parasite, and whilst they are ill-protected, their constitution is impaired with insufficient or deficient diets which favour scurvy, pellagra, rickets, beri-beri etc. Finally those two-thirds of the world population are without self-defence against climate and weather. Are those masses without hope or help? Are they a prey to some biological or physiological factor or other which plagues their existence?

Even among the one-third who seem to be better off, strange diversities in life expectation and tone of life are noticeable, (infant mortality, death rate, etc).

One difference between countries and regions is due to a disparity in medical services: one doctor for 300 people, in the U.S.A., one for 1,600 in France, for

12,000 in Ceylon, for 100,000 in India, for 175,000 in Ethiopia.

Another source of different conditions is food ; undernutrition is cured with an improved diet. But food resources are strangely distributed. Western Europe which covers three per cent of the earth's surface and shelters fifteen per cent of the population produces thirty-two per cent of the world's foodstuffs. With North America we have 12 per cent of the land, 6 per cent of the population and 25 per cent of the foodstuffs ; in Africa 25 per cent of the land, 6 per cent of the population, and 3 per cent of the food. In Asia the percentages are 10 for land, 45 for the population and 17 for the world's food production.

If we take 2,750 calories as the daily requirement of an adult, we note that one-third of mankind have something over this amount, one-sixth something between 2,750 and 2,250, calories and more than half of mankind has less, even much less. The major part of Asia, part of the Middle East, and Central America and the major part of Africa are put in this last category. On the other hand a high caloric level may well go with an ill-balanced diet ; *v.g.* in North America or Scandinavia, cereals supply only 1,000 calories, whilst milk and meat consumption is above normal, and over 50 grammes of proteins are from animal sources. But in other lands reaching the level of 2,000 calories, half came from cereals but little appears as proteins from animal origin (4 grammes in Java) and everywhere the vitamin content is insufficient. The balance in diet is important, as was noted by the French Institute of Public Hygiene during the war by comparing the calorie and protein content of the diet

and the mortality as observed in the rationed cities and the countryside. (Evidently due caution must be exercised when calculating or handling what is called an average national diet).

One may conclude that scientific observations have confirmed the common sense (is it really so common ?) that there is a clear nexus between being fed and being alive, between being well fed and keeping well alive, and also between being well fed and working well. At their Bangalore meeting last year the F.A.O. experts agreed that "mal-nutrition is still the most acute problem in Asia and the Far East". Under-nutrition, mal-nutrition, all diet deficiencies influence health, productivity and also, this should be noted by social workers, the spirit of cooperation and the tone of social life.

That men are equal or born equal is said only after an effort at metaphysics ; it is obvious that in the matter of diet, clothing and shelter, nations, regions and families differ widely ; men are glaringly unequal in the face of death.

A second fact is the varied rate of growth in the world population. At the time of Akbar it had reached some 550 million ; it grew at a uniform rate for two centuries and then from the eighteenth and even more so from the nineteenth century it increased rapidly. Before the reader will have come to the end of this article, there will be a few thousand more babies alive.

The growth in numbers varies with births and also with a prolongation in the life-span. Some 150 years ago, in France life-expectation was what it is now in

India and infant mortality as high as in to-day's Calcutta, but in the last half-century life-expectancy increased by 30 years. One may say that conditions in ill-favoured countries are not unavoidable. Life in India is not short, it is shortened by insufficient and defective nutrition. Since medicine takes its stand on the side of life (barring the scientific criminals in some maternity clinics), medicine is called upon to fight for life against disease and ill-nutrition.

The fight against disease can be spectacular. In the eighteenth century, we had Jenner and vaccination against small-pox; in the nineteenth Pasteur and a new idea of infectious diseases, Laveran and the study of blood viruses, Ronald Ross and the observation of microbe-carriers; in the twentieth, we note the manufacture of chemico-therapeutic drugs, the discovery of antibiotics, and then a methodical war between man and other living beings.

This war registers splendid victories. For centuries Europe had known recurrent epidemics of cholera and plague. In 1851 an international conference studied measures against the epidemics but the conference was without results because the measures would have hampered international trade and business profits. It took several epidemics to rouse international opinion and we had to wait till 1893 for a new conference to set a series of suitable measures, and till 1901 for another series covering other infectious diseases. The work of Pasteur and Koch had supplied concrete means of combating epidemics and the governments dared no more refuse their co-operation. At the

same time a sense of public hygiene developed; medicine is concerned not only with individuals but with groups; hence public hygiene which is the technique of public health can tackle common diseases of which the causes, agents and cure are known; bacteriology, biochemistry, pharmacology supply guns and munitions for this war. Cooperation has extended to the international scale. In 1951 cholera broke out in Egypt, and would, as in the past, have invaded Europe and Asia; thanks to the cooperation of international institutions, the epidemic was choked on the spot.

Disease is not only combatted, it is also prevented. Vaccination is available against many diseases and happily replaces the old quarantine which is hardly possible in war-time and in an air-minded period. In that line the World Health Organisation has done a gigantic work, particularly against malaria and tuberculosis. Man is becoming aware of his powers against illness and nations who cannot agree among themselves can at least begin by agreeing against insects and microbes.

For the present, co-operation is more frequent and positive on a regional or national scale. Proud cities like "Bombay the Beautiful" or Calcutta "the City of Palaces" are awake to their squalid spots and like all large cities develop collective hygiene; not only water-works which by supplying drinkable water automatically prevent typhoid, but rat-killing campaigns which diminishes plague; slum clearance which is one of the most urgent problems of modern cities and nations. Even the measures against tubercular infection which are still in their first stages show encouraging results.

Medical science is not only waging a defensive and offensive war against disease ; it is beginning an out-flanking movement by clearing the way to rational nutrition ; the operation is entrusted to physiology and biochemistry.

People were always keen on eating, even on eating much, but it is only little by little, after many mistakes and delusions that they tried to know what to eat. It was taken for granted that one had to live before philosophizing, but surely more thought went to philosophizing than to the art of eating and living. A change occurred only in the eighteenth century when the first step was taken with Lavoisier. Nutrition began to be defined : replenishing the reserves of the organism so as to maintain a desirable equilibrium. Defined also were the losses, therefore the needs in physical terms (calories). Defined also the restorative values of foodstuffs in calories.

The second step came in the following century : physiologists discovered that the human body is built up of the same chemical elements as other bodies, elements which cannot be produced by the organism but have to be supplied from foods, and they started drawing up a list of elements and their corresponding sources of supply.

The third step was in modern times. Scientists made a further discovery : the body is not a perfect chemist, and cannot, even when supplied with the necessary elements, fabricate the most vital molecules. These must be supplied ready-made : vitamins, fatty and amic acids. That was the discovery that led to easy remedies against beri-beri, scurvy, pellagra.

In 1935 the Director of the Hygiene Commission of the League of Nations circularised physiologists to enquire into the social importance of the new-born science of nutrition. The enquiry covered developed and underdeveloped countries. Lord Boyd Orr, later director of the F.A.O., reported that half the population of pre-war England suffered from ill-nutrition, forty per cent from specific deficiencies and ten per cent from general deficiency. Even in the U.S.A. which is considered the best-fed country of the world, the Selective Services found that out of fourteen million people examined, only some two million adequately met the required standards. It was after two years of study that the Special Food Commission could list the "Geneva Norms" tabulating all the requisites of a well-balanced diet : carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, fats and amino-acids, the sixteen metals and thirteen metalloids always present in living matter and also the seven other metals occasionally present.

The list should allow us to calculate what is needed for a family, for a nation, for the world ; it should also help us to plan world-agriculture. The scientist can pass the order, the peasant will execute it. Instead of warring among ourselves or of preparing against an invasion of Martians, let us join the actual battle against an inner enemy : hunger.

First the problem of sufficient and suitable soil : reclamation, irrigation, cultivation, etc. Then improvement of crops, by suitable protection and nutrition ; supplying not only the three main fertilizers (phosphate, potassium and nitrogen), but also manganese, iron and trace elements ; improvement also by cross-

breeding (which method increased maize production three-fold in thirty years, sugarcane five-fold etc.) Storage and protection against pests are also well advanced.

In animal breeding technical progress is quite satisfactory (protection, raising of young ones, improvement in type and variety). Their diet is also attended to, with deficiencies made up with elements (calcium, phosphates, iron etc.) added to the pasture or to the rations. Selection, cross-breeding and artificial insemination increase production in milk, meat and by-products. (In New Zealand selection and cross breeding raised butter production up to 35 per cent, better feeding brought it up to 61 per cent). If improvements are so remarkable in some countries, why are they so slow in others? Mr. A. Mayer¹ blames it on poverty. Poverty works in a vicious circle: it fosters ill-nutrition and disease; disease and ill-nutrition in their turn foster poverty; from which arises the duty of favoured nations to assist underdeveloped countries. In any case or any country, the task of feeding the world cannot be left to the peasant; the very best is unequal to the work. Science, many sciences must be mobilised to discover what is being done, what is to be done, how it can best be done; organisation must be set up, managers, engineers, peasants, etc. must be brought together so that there be a fair hope that world needs will be satisfied.

¹ Facts and figures of this article are mostly taken from A. Mayer's study in *Dossiers de l'Action Soc. et Relig.* May 1953, and from de Castro's *Geography of Hunger*.

Too long has man followed his instincts in the struggle for survival or for the good life; it is high time he should make use of another natural resource at his disposal, namely his reason, his knowledge, his power of discovery and invention. The life of our slum dwellers depends on the invention of a gadget or other, on the discovery of bacteria or moulds by one or other student of Asia, Europe or America. Solidarity is growing tighter and tighter in so personal a matter as health. In this vast social movement, the share of the biologist, physiologist, doctor etc. is becoming greater and greater.

Outstanding among all others, is the role to be played by the medical man. The doctor is the interpreter of the suffering that comes to man from his inner and outer enemies; the doctor is the one who has taken charge of man's life. Ever since medicine became a body of scientific knowledge, the doctor has been conscious of his role and duty. The latest discoveries in the field of health are wonderful, and call for the admiration of all other scientists. The possibilities of medical science are the possibilities of the doctor; he is always the healer; he must go on spying out the diseases, and stamping them out; nowadays he must also prevent them.

His role in society is no more limited to the care and cure of individuals; he is to look after groups, cities, after nations, after mankind. From a healer he has grown into a hygienist on a world-scale; this demands that ample room be made for him in any national planning. The food problem for instance cannot be solved in tons of rice and wheat; the food problem is a problem of both quantity and quality,

it is the problem of a national balanced diet, hence it cannot be solved without health specialists.

Moreover, scientific advance demands the creation of industries, the organisation of industrial areas; it supposes new jobs and men for the new jobs. Here again the doctor must come in. He has to follow man through life, (infant, child, adolescent, adult) in all its aspects, (anatomy, physiology, psychology); he has to follow him in the home, the school, the factory and office. He must judge of his aptitudes for different jobs. He must judge and control sanitation and hygiene of any work and place of work. He might, if the suggestion be not unduly bold, check the environment and routine of legislative bodies, and make sure that the members, elected after a sound vocational examination, find nothing in Parliament to upset their emotional balance or to hamper the supremacy of intelligence and judgement. Everywhere the doctor should be a guide and helper of man and mankind.

The doctor's task is vital, his power enormous. But what is crucial in that task and power is the direction he should give. Medicine and hygiene are forces; in a force the direction is no less important than the magnitude and point of application. Hence the responsibility of the medical man in choosing the direction of social development. More than others, he should have sound ideas on the purpose of society, its conditions and progress; as society is made of men, the doctor should have sound ideas about man's purpose in life, the direction towards the best self. In other words, a doctor should be doubled with a philosopher. He must visualise man not only as a consumer or a producer, not only as a

clever animal, a clever technician, a good soldier, but also as a being made of body and soul, as a good citizen, as a loyal family man, as God's true child.

A. Lahuri

THE BELGIAN FARMERS' UNION

Modern India is looking out for new ways and methods to solve the huge problems it is facing in the economic and social sphere. Government Officials, good-will missions, organizations which are technically well organized, are all looking out for a spirit by which they may be informed, and for sound ethical principles, on which to base their activities. Examples taken from other countries will be welcome.

It is about one of these examples that we will now speak. The Belgian Farmers' Union, a private enterprise, started in a very humble way, has within 60 years grown into a mighty organization, one of the best of its type in the whole world. It is a challenge and an encouragement for us in India.

How it Started

The Belgian Farmers' Union or Belgian Boerenbond (BB) originated at a time when Western Europe was going through an economic depression. Agriculture, in order to survive, had to undergo some fundamental changes in its technical and economic

structure.¹ From being extensive it had to become an intensive agriculture, through better farming and through the extension of agro-industrial and vegetable crops. The Belgian farmers, according to the rules drawn up during the Catholic Congresses of Liege (1886, 87, 90) and Mechlin (1889), took to the means of joining together into cooperatives, in order to protect their interests and improve their conditions. After the elections of 1884 Belgium got a Catholic Government which paid greater attention to agriculture, put up a Ministry of Agriculture and got ready to help the farmers in their efforts.

The idea of the BB² owes its origin to the Rev. J. F. Mellaerts, parish priest of Sint-Alfons-Goor, a little village near Mechlin.³ He planned and framed the foundations of the local (1887) and central (1889) organization of the BB. Soon he asked and obtained the collaboration of Prof. J. Helleputte, engineer and F. Schollaert, a lawyer. It is this outstanding triumvirate of pioneers which stands at the origin of the organization that grew out into the big socio-economic

¹ Could not the same be said of Indian Agriculture today?

² The Belgian Boerenbond has directed its attention to and has mainly succeeded in the Flemish part of the country, which is not bigger than an average Indian District.

³ We may presume that the Rev. J. F. Mellaerts, like any ordinary Indian parish priest, was not a "specialist" with master's degrees in Social and Economic Sciences, but simply a man who had studied intimately the problems of his people and who wanted to "do" something in the practical line. Therefore he applied for the two specialists who were to help him by their technical knowledge in the starting of the B.B.

complex, which aims at helping the farmers and horticulturists⁴ in their religious, social, professional and economic interests.

How it grew up

The BB did not attain all at once its present structure. As it looks today it is the result of many attempts and failures, of reorganization and adaptation to the particular needs of the period. But before all it is the result of the undaunted enthusiasm of the Flemish farmers and their far-sighted leaders, together with wise government help.

In spite of all failures and difficulties those farmers wanted to "stick together" in their efforts to improve themselves, and they gave their full confidence to the BB. That everything was not plain-sailing is seen from a bird's eye view of the development of the BB.

1890 — 1902 :- Time of great meetings in order to make the idea catch on and to set up local guilds. A monthly "The Farmer" is started in order to spread the idea among the farmers and to secure the contact between the central, the district, and the local Organizations. In order to alleviate the economic burdens of the farmers and to improve the yield of agriculture, a start is made with a Purchasing and Marketing Co-operative Society, an Insurance Company, an Office for Agricultural Credit (Raiffeisen system) and an Inspection Service.

⁴ Horticulturist: (Hovenier) means not only a gardener but a man who grows vegetables to sell them either in his own shop or in the open market.

1903 — 1914 :- Defects, arising from an excessive decentralization are remedied. More attention is given to social problems. "The Farmer" becomes a weekly. The Inspection Service is improved and sees to it that local guilds evolve methodically and in close contact with the central organization. A League for Farm Women and another for Horticulturists, a Dairy Department are started and the Insurance Company is extended.

1914 — 1918 :- Due to World War I most of the activities are either stopped or are working at a low tempo. Many farms and fields are destroyed during the fighting especially in West Flanders.

1919 — 1925 :- Period of reconstruction, especially of West Flanders. Adult education in agriculture, horticulture and house work is extended. The Information Bureau is also extended in order to give legal advice to the members. A marketing centre in Mechlin encourages and helps the members in producing and marketing more vegetables and fruits. A Seed Improvement Station is erected near Louvain. Near the harbour of Antwerp the Purchasing and Marketing Department of the BB sets up machinery for the manufacturing of cattle fodder.

1926 — 1934 :- Period of economic extension and welfare. A greater centralisation of all the services and departments into a "General Secretariate," situated in Louvain. The Young Farmers' Association and the League of Country Girls are recognized by the Belgian Bishops as organs of Catholic Action for the rural population. The Purchasing and Marketing Department takes up the disposal of eggs, and butter in some

of the big centres. An economic crisis in 1934 destroys various factories and enterprises connected with agriculture, in which the Credit Office had invested. This causes the latter to go bankrupt.

1935 — 1936 :- Year of transition. Reorganization of the Direction, reshaping of the Constitutions by the Union's Council. The Central Office for Agricultural Credit is also reorganized. A tendency to decentralize more is noticeable.

1936 — 1940 :- This reorganisation and reshuffling creates again a strong confidence on the part of the farmers in their BB and especially in the Central Office for Agricultural Credit.

1940 — 1944 :- World War II slows down many of the activities. The economic work is being distinguished more sharply from the social activities.

1945 — 1950 :- The BB makes light changes in the structure of the General Council of the Union, the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee. During this period the national economy is gradually switched over from rigorism to a freer economy. In 1950 the BB has overcome the results of the war and works as intensely as before.

How it is organized at present

(A) *Local Organs: The Guilds.*

Farmers, market-gardeners, horticulturists, nursery men, grape growers etc. are grouped into municipal or parochial associations. The guild's committee is freely elected by the members. The parish priest is

the chaplain of the guild and also a member of the committee. The aim of the guild is to study and to further the religious, social, professional and economic interests of the members. Each local guild comprises a certain number of sections, each of them having its particular object. To mention but a few of these sections: The Section for collective Purchasing and Marketing, the Local Office for saving and Credit, the Syndicate of Cattle breeders, the Cooperative Dairy, the Mutual Insurance Company. There is a mutual representation of the guild's committee in the direction of these sections and of the sections in the guilds committee.

(B) *Regional Organs: District Federation of Agricultural Guilds.*

These federations are composed of the delegates, elected by the local guilds belonging to the same administrative district. The District Federations elect the delegates who will have a seat in the General Council of the Union. They have also to look to the realization of the aims of the BB as far as specifically regional interests are concerned.

(C) *The Central or Head Office.*

It has the same structure as the local guilds. The directing organs are:-

- (1) *The General Council of the Union:* which is a representative and advisory body. It is composed principally of the delegates, sent by the District Federations. (33 Persons)
- (2) *The Board of Directors:* is entrusted with the general management, it is composed of members

elected by the General Council, a certain number of co-opted members and the chairmen of the economic sections (13 Persons)

- (3) *The Executive Committee:* entrusted with the execution of the decisions of the Board of Directors, is composed of some members of the Board of Directors and a General Secretary. The General-Chaplain is appointed by the Belgian Bishops and is by right the member of the different managing organs.

How this Organisation functions.

The BB wants to solve the problems of Belgian agriculture according to Christian principles. Its activities are directed to the following ends:

1. To stimulate the spirit of cooperation among the peasantry.
2. To safeguard faith and morality among the farmers.
3. To improve their conditions of life and their social standing.
4. To popularize agricultural science.
5. To widen the vital space of the farmers.
6. To improve farming, growing and breeding methods technically and economically.
7. To study and defend the general interests of agriculture.

The aims of the BB thus cover all the interests of the members: as heads of families, as professional men, as citizens and as Christians.

In order to achieve these aims the BB has put up a number of central services corresponding to the sections of the local guilds.

(A) *Social Services :*

- (1) *The General Secretariate :* studies the religious, moral, social and professional problems of the members and looks after the strengthening and development of the whole BB. It also secures the technical and professional training of the members. It propagates cooperative ideas among them and publishes the various papers of the organization.
- (2) *The Inspection Department :* The inspectors form the connecting link between the central services and the local guilds. They stimulate the activity of the guilds, inspect the work of the different sections of the guilds and report on them. They also transmit their wishes to the Executive Committee. In technical matters they apply to the experts and specialists of the General Secretariate.
- (3) *League of Farm Women and League of Country Girls :* gathers and looks after the religious, social and technical training of the Farm Women of the local guilds. An outside service with female staff is at the disposal of the League, so that it may accomplish its mission.
- (4) *The Mutual Fund for Family Allowances :* It pays the allowances to the farmers and horticulturists, affiliated as independent workers, and to the wage-earners occupied by the members of the BB affiliated to that fund.
- (5) *Service of Social Aid :* Helps the members in the application of the social legislation and the observance of formalities concerning these matters.

- (6) *League of Rural Youth (BJB) :* The BJB is a real youth movement within the frame of the Catholic Action Movement and pursues a religious, cultural, social and technical activity among the rural youth. It works in close cooperation with the BB.

(B) *Economic Services :*

The economic activity of the BB is entrusted to a number of co-operative societies, closely connected with the Social activities of the BB.

- (1) *The Purchasing and Marketing Society of the BB :* This society produces fodder for great and small live stock. It purchases and sells for the marketing sections of the local guilds.
- (2) *The Insurance Company of the Belgian Boerenbond :* has its offices spread all over the country. It affords insurance against fire, accidents, storm, mortality of cattle etc.
- (3) *The Central Office for Agricultural Credit (Raiffeisen System) :* joins into a unity all the local Raiffeisen Offices, whose activities it controls and encourages. It executes financial business in their name, as far as the law allows.
- (4) *The Technical Services of the Belgian Boerenbond :* has been constituted as a cooperative society and it contains 5 sections.
 - a. Rural Construction Section : which studies and controls the building activities which are entrusted to it.

- b. Rural Hydraulics Section : furthers the reclamation of marshes and the improvement of water-logged areas.
- c. Agricultural Machinery Section : provides all the materials, implements and machines which are used in agriculture and horticulture.
- d. Electricity Section : studies and undertakes the gradual introduction of electricity in the rural areas as a source of power and light.
- e. Dairy Industry Section : sees to the planning, building and exploitation of dairy farms.

(to be continued)

M. Van den Bogaert

WHAT IS CAPITALISM ?

When we talk about 'Capitalism', do we all mean the same thing ? When Leo XIII or Pius XI described the Capitalist system as not vicious of its very nature but a violator of right order under certain circumstances, what kind of an economic system had they in mind ? When a confirmed Communist talks in bitter language of bloated capitalists and their exploitation of the Proletariat, whom does he precisely mean ? Is the Capitalist system still alive or has it been so modified by both social and legislative pressures that it can hardly be said to exist today ? Has the advance of technology so transformed our methods of production that the Capitalist system is no longer required, or cannot function in its classic form ?

While it is difficult to pin-point the exact connotation of the word 'Capitalism', there are various shades of differences in the understanding of the term which is due both to changing economic circumstances and to diverse political and social outlooks. And these must first be grasped before any unified meaning can be ascribed to the word.

Feudalism and Capitalism

In the Feudalistic society that preceded Capitalist society, the agonizing problems of low-paid labour, large-scale unemployment, periodic depressions, mass poverty and drudgery, as we know them now, scarcely existed. This does not imply that the Feudalistic society had no problems of its own, or was an idyllic social system. Even in Feudal times there was exploitation of the poor by the rich nobility, there were class distinctions more rigid than our own, there were the serfs, who were practically slaves. But with the discovery of the new worlds across the seas, the invention of machinery, the advance of science, the weakening of monarchic and oligarchic power, the old feudal system slowly crumbled away and in its place arose what we call the 'Capitalist' system.

Why were our modern problems comparatively non-existent in the Feudalistic society ? The answer seems to lie in the fact that the Feudal system never implied the disjunction of capital and labour on a large scale as can be witnessed today, when comparatively few people possess capital, while the rest possess nothing at all, and therefore put their labour at the disposal of the capitalist to earn their living. In Feudal times, or for that matter even today you can find

a farmer and his family working on the land which they own. In this case it is their own capital and their own labour that they utilise to produce the harvest. They combine in their own persons both the owners of capital and the workers who give their labour, so that they have never to decide upon the question how to distribute the produce of the soil between their capital and their labour. But in a capitalist society the eternal wrangle between capital and labour for their share of the final product seems to be a decisive characteristic, one of the distinguishing marks, as it were, of the presence of Capitalism.

What is Capital ?

The term 'Capital' has a variety of meanings. It can be applied both to goods and to money. Normally it is reserved to signify goods which are used for the production of other goods, and the money that is borrowed to set the wheels of production in motion and keep them oiled. Money that goes to form capital can either be saved out of current consumption or be 'created' by the banks. In the modern world, capital accumulates generally to the advantage of the holders of capital. But as the scale of wages improves, it is quite possible for the wage earner to save up a part of his income and invest it in shares and thus become a holder of capital himself. But with the establishment of the capitalist system, the people who have come into prominence are the lenders of money, who loan out their money at interest, and practically control the entire system.

A Definition of Capitalism

In his 'Reorganisation of the Social Economy' pg. 270, Nell-Breuning quotes Paul Jostock's definition

of capitalism as suitably describing the system from both the economic and the social angles. According to Jostock, Capitalism is characterised by the three following requisites :

- (1) The system serves the purpose of gain by exchange.
- (2) Production is regulated by the co-operation of two groups bound by contract, one of which possesses all necessary goods, while the other possesses and contributes merely its personal labour.
- (3) The theoretical possibility that each of the two groups as an organising factor engages the other, and directs the course of production, according to its own law, is practically decided in favour of those possessing the capital.

Jostock therefore stresses the profit motive, the ownership of capital by the capitalist and the offer of his labour by the working man (the only thing he possesses) and finally the direction of production by the capitalist as being of the very essence of the capitalist system.

In his 'Social Ethics', pg. 817, Messner, before giving his definition of Capitalism, points out that 'a definition that can satisfy a scientific analysis of capitalism cannot be founded on ideological postulates but only on the findings of economic history and economic theory. He therefore rejects the two extreme definitions of Capitalism, viz. that of the Liberals, who conceive capitalism as an amalgam of the free play of forces and the harmony of interest, and that of the socialist theory, which sees in capitalism a system of

class domination and exploitation by the power of capital.

Messner finally defines Capitalism as 'that form of social economy in which capital interest, i.e. the profit motive, is the primary driving force of its process.' He continues, 'Capital profit is thereby made the immediate operative end of the economic effort whose essential end, however, is the satisfaction of the needs of the community. If the dynamic of the profit motive thus engendered is not made subservient to the essential end of social economy by institutions of social control, it must give rise to a social system unjustifiable in the light of this end, that is, morally.'

While Jostock's definition is the more inclusive and all-embracing, Messner stresses the profit motive as being the dynamic of the Capitalist system, and practically makes it the distinguishing mark of full-blooded capitalism. It is generally admitted that the profit motive should hold pride of place in the capitalist system and much of the beneficial consequences of Capitalism, like the rise in the standard of living, large-scale production, labour-saving devices, increase of production, are traceable to the entrepreneur's desire for a profit. But it must also be admitted that the profit motive is not the only criterion whereby the Capitalist system can be marked out from others. Men always work for personal motives, either to earn a living, or to support their families, or to exercise their spirit of creativeness or inventiveness, or to improve their status, both materially and socially. The desire for personal gain is present in every system, only that it takes different forms. In the Feudal system, men

strove for the advantages that went with rank and workmanship, while in the Communist countries, there is a struggle for bureaucratic power. In capitalist countries, there is the struggle for amassing wealth which can be most easily attained through the acquisition of profits, especially when the stakes are high. In this sense and only under this aspect, the profit motive can be considered a qualifying requisite for the presence of capitalism.

But the owning of capital by private individual capitalists must also be set down as an important aspect of the capitalist system. If the capitalists are expropriated and their capital transferred into the hands of the state, so that the state becomes the sole capitalist, it is not likely that this system will be described as capitalist. It might be called state capitalism but it would not be accepted as the Capitalist system as we normally understand the term. Private individual ownership is therefore an important element that cannot be left out of the definition.

Capitalism in the Encyclicals

When the Popes condemn the abuses of Capitalism, what do they understand by the term? This is an important question since the Encyclicals are concerned with the moral bearings of the system, and some of their directives are binding in conscience.

Nowhere in the Encyclicals do the Popes give a definition of Capitalism, but they merely sketch the system in a few general terms, and denounce the evil effects of the system. Thus Pope Pius XI speaking of the changes that have in some way altered the economic system since the days of Leo XIII described what

Pope Leo had in mind when he had condemned the injustices of that *'economic regime in which capital and labour jointly needed for production were usually provided by different people.'** Thus it is only incidentally as it were, that the Pope states the essentials of the system we call 'Capitalist'.

A little further in the same Encyclical, the Pope says that 'it is true that even today this economic regime does not everywhere exist exclusively, for there is another regime which still embraces a very large and important group of men. There is for instance the agricultural class in which the larger portion of the human race provides itself with an honourable livelihood.' In these words, the limits of the Capitalist system as holding sway chiefly in industry is made evident. At least it is clear that the Pope is going to treat mainly of industrial capitalism.

One may therefore conclude that in the minds of the Popes, the Capitalist system may be said to exist when 'capital and labour jointly needed for production are usually provided for by different people.' If they are provided by the same person, then there is no problem, nor does the system exist. But with the world-wide diffusion of industry, adds Pope Pius XI, 'the capitalist economic regime has spread everywhere. . . . It has invaded and pervaded the economic and social circumstances even of those who live outside its ambit, effectively influencing them, and to some extent imposing on them its advantages, disadvantages and vices.'

* Quadragesimo Anno.

At the same time it is clear too that one of the basic essentials of Capitalism as understood by the Popes is that capital be owned by a private individual or a group of individuals. Of course Leo XIII especially describes the grievous abuses of private ownership of capital in his days, but at the same time he strenuously defends the right of private ownership against the socialists.

On the other hand, Pius XI speaks of the immense power and the despotic domination concentrated in the hands of a people who though they are only trustees and directors of invested funds, yet administer them at their own good pleasure. This was a characteristic of the capitalism of the thirties and is true even today in capitalist countries, despite legislative attempts to break up such concentrations of power through anti-trust acts.

To understand the papal condemnation of the abuses of the Capitalistic system, all these various references must be borne in mind.

Marxist Conception

To the Marxist, Capitalism which is intrinsically evil, is based ultimately on the possession of the means of production by private individuals. The holders of capital use it to satisfy the needs of the market. They are impelled to do so by the sole purpose of making profit. Profits ultimately are obtained by fleecing the workmen who work for the capitalist. Marx shows how this is done through his theory of Surplus Value. At the same time however, because of the fierce competition that goes on continuously between the capi-

talists, their number is gradually reduced, till just a few of them rule with an iron hand over the vast numbers of the Proletariat. But ultimately the Proletariat will overthrow them to usher in the Millenium of equality and plenty. Thus for the Marxist, the characteristics of the Capitalist system would be the prevalence of private property, the profit motive, the competitive principle, and the division of society into two camps, the expropriators and the expropriated.

Marx's analysis of Capitalism may have been true of his days, but his prophecy regarding the utter breakdown of the system has not occurred. Instead with the legislative measures taken to break up large concentrations of wealth and protect the workmen, a wider distribution of capital is taking place and the standard of living of the workingmen has risen remarkably especially among the predominantly capitalist countries. In other words, modern capitalism has been shorn of some of the abuses that existed in Marx's days and roused his anger. On the contrary, Communism has become the grave of freedom.

Philosophical Bias

Even considered as an economic system, Capitalism is deeply impregnated by the Liberalist philosophical outlook, which is thoroughly materialistic and individualistic, and is the real source of the evils of present day Capitalism. In the Liberal view, the Capitalist system requires complete freedom of competition and therefore no interference from the state in the hiring and firing of labour, the predominance of self-interest is exhibited in the profit motive, and the belief that when these requisites are present, the highest pro-

duction and the most equitable distribution will take place automatically. How dangerous and appalling have been the results of this false fundamental credo is amply proved by the frightful evils of mass poverty, hunger and unemployment, greed and cruelty let loose on the modern world.

Conclusion

Amongst these varying definitions or conceptions of Capitalism, certain common elements can be picked out without much difficulty. Private property, the profit motive, the capitalists possessing all the capital, while their employees have nothing to offer except their labour, the directive power of the capitalists in choosing what to produce for the market, private initiative, all these are considered to be the requisites for the existence of a social and economic system that we term 'capitalist.' Can this system be defended on moral grounds?

Some people are inclined to think that the capitalist system has been so deeply poisoned by the Liberal outlook that the system must be scrapped altogether and a new social and economic system must take its place.

On the other hand, there are other who think perhaps a bit too naively that in the predominantly capitalistic countries of the world, capitalism has been so transformed and chastened that it scarcely resembles the sordid description of Marx. In its new dress, it should be welcomed with open arms, especially when there is no other alternative except Communism.

It is still true today that in many parts of the world the Liberal spirit pervades Capitalism. The fierce fight for wealth goes on unabated. The social aspects of ownership are still forgotten or slurred over. The attempts to harmonise relations between Capital and Labour through humane treatment, sympathy and understanding of the workingman's problems in industry, have only just begun. Even here constant squabbles arise between management and labour as to the sharing out of the earnings of the firm.

Can Capitalism get rid of the Liberal spirit? Until the Liberal spirit of self interest is replaced by the earnest seeking for the common good and the functional notion of service within a unified community, only then will the Capitalist system receive final acceptance at the hands of men who wish to preserve both freedom and justice in a humane society.

A. Fonseca

BOOK REVIEWS

The Christian Doctrine by V. Courtois. Calcutta, Oriental Institute, 30 Park Street, 1954. Pp. 198, 8 illustrat. Price : Rs. 2/-. Abridged edition As. 12/.

As a meritorious effort at inter-communal harmony, this book deserves warm recommendation. The author who is the Director of the Islamic Section of the Oriental Institute has met a fair number of Muslims desirous of a closer acquaintance with the Christian doctrine. It is for them that he composed the

present book in Catechetical style. He has well adapted his exposition to the intellectual make-up of a Muslim reader ; whilst avoiding any controversy, he took advantage of data common to Christianity and Islam, and went on with a full survey of Catholic doctrine and practice. Equally significant are the illustrations mostly taken from Persian artists.

The book is bound to be welcome by educated Muslims ; it calls for a similar book adapted to the mentality of educated Hindus.

A. L.

From My China Diary. By Brajkishore Shastri. Pp. 55. Delhi, Siddharta Publications Ltd, 35 Faiz Bazaar, 1954. Price Re. 1/-.

A realistic appreciation of China by a trade-union leader of the Praja Socialist Party, who saw what happens in a red country : training of youth, exploitation of women's labour, oppression of workers and peasants, etc. The preface explodes the fancy of a "coalition government existing in China."

To be noted also is the provision in the Chinese Constitution for parliamentary representation for the Chinese groups overseas. What of such Red foreign pockets in India ? Are they not more dangerous than others by being "racial pockets" instead of being territorial ?

A most readable, informative and reliable booklet that should help to focus Sino-Indian friendship.

A. L.

SOCIAL SURVEY

Bank Employees

Towering above all social events, the intervention of the Government, suspending the effects of the Appellate Tribunal's Judgment in the matter of the Bank Employees's salary, invites everybody to consider the implications and the consequences of such a move. In 1953 this Review examined the consequences of the decision of the Appellate Tribunal. It was already a set-back for the Employees. A first award had been set aside at the demand of the Bankers on technical ground. The second has just been squashed by the government action. Useless to say that a campaign has been immediately started against the Government, accusing it of having surrendered to the dictate of the Bank Lords. It is easy to accuse politicians of being the creatures of Finance but less easy to prove it.

The reasons adduced by the Executive to step in were based on the fact that a Tribunal in giving a decision has to take into account only the immediate data of the case and has no right or power to place them in their larger surroundings. It is the government alone, which, with its knowledge of the wider issues, is able to do so ; and in some rare cases, as the present one, it has the duty to act, as it did.

People should not take such rare intervention as casting a slur on the prestige of the Tribunal. A Higher Court often invalidates the conclusions of a lower one, and nobody complains that it lowers the prestige of the inferior court. This may be true, but

simple people fear that once the door is opened, many other exceptions will follow. The country boor who answered Frederick the Great of Prussia "there are still judges at Berlin" meant that the Judicial Order is the supreme authority, even against the whims and fancies of a tyrant. Squabbles among legists do not matter much, they are family quarrels ; but the coming of an outsider to settle the trouble gives rise to misgivings.

Dr. Ambedkar in his attack against the Government granted it the right of interference. The question may be pushed further ; even if it is legal, is it just ? The two terms, legality and justice, do not always cover the same ground. If the judgement of the Appellate Tribunal was just, and had marked out the minimum living wages of the employees, has the Executive the right, even to save superior and wider interests, to commit what ultimately is an injustice ? If so, does it not seem to be a case of "the end justifies the means" ?

But already 300 Banks have been closed all over the country. It is a deplorable fact, but it should not be brought without examining the conditions of the closures of those establishments ? Certainly some of them belonged to the mushroom growth of banks after independence. People launched them hoping for quick returns without fathoming the possibilities of the country. Some of them were simply cheating institutions. Others came to grief on account of the reckless gambling of their Directors. The question which should be put is "How many closed on account of the salaries paid to their employees ?"

It is true that the State has the right and the duty to protect the deposits of the investors. This right does not extend to the point of sacrificing the legitimate interests of the workers, and does not include the obligation of bringing profits to the shareholders. In banking business, as in any other business, there are tracks of desert to be crossed from time to time.

The figures given by Sri Sundarayya, M. L. A., tend to prove that the situation of the Banks does not require such a drastic remedy as the one contemplated by the Ministers.

The A Category has suffered, it is true, a fall in working capital of 10% and 11% in deposits for the period 1949/'53, but the gross profits have increased by 20% and the dividend given reached 8% as an average. The B. Category underwent a fall of 13% in working capital and deposits, but still has a gross profit of 9%. The C Category with a 12½% decrease in working capital and deposits, has increased its earnings and dividends. The last category, D, turns out to be the most prosperous and has an increase of capital, and of returns.

Despite those facts the new rules imposed by the Government, brings a cut of Rs. 7 to 65 to the employees. A new area category has been created for places having a population below 30,000, in which the Bankers will be totally exempted from the provisions of the minimum salary and D.A. 680 banks (45% of B class and 50% of C and D) will profit by the Government's decision. Sri Nehru pointed out that the salaries have been kept very close to those of the Award, and that if the D.A. have been touched, the effects of the Government's

measure will be suspended for a year. So for a year more the employees will not lose anything. This affirmation has been challenged in so far as gratuities, bonus, provident fund will be affected immediately.

Even granted that the status quo is, for a short period, kept, or nearly so, nobody will deny that the principle of differentiating emoluments according to differences in capital of the banks is not the ideal one. To equal work should correspond equal salary, in the same town. If the salary was proportioned to work, the employee in small banks should even get more, since he is in the position of a Jack-of-all-trades.

Dr. Ambedkar showed that if the difference of capital is at the bottom of differentiating salaries, the Imperial Bank with its 218 crores of capital should be more generous than the bankers with only Rs. 25 crores of capital.

It is true that Sri Nehru made an appeal to the goodwill of the bankers to pay their employees over and above the minimum imposed by the Government's decision. If any one acts according to the suggestion of the Pundit, he should receive, next anniversary of the Independence day, one of the highest rewards bestowed by the State. But it should be only on humanitarian grounds and not to hush up certain revelations about the business of the bank.

In the whole discussion, employees challenged the figures given by the bankers and complained that after submitting their own they were asked to supply new data within 24 hours, which was beyond their possibilities. They supplied information showing that many

of the Directors cashed between Rs. 6,500 to Rs. 7,500 free of income-tax, and Hiren Mukerjee affirmed that one manager got Rs. 21,834 a month for his job.

Pundit Nehru confessed that he had not realized the extent of the salary of the Directors. He recommended patience to the employees and goodwill to the employers, and wound up the proceedings by affirming that nothing was yet finalized, that things will be considered more fully. He relied for the technical part on the competence of Sri Deshmukh who affirmed that, with the modern banking system in India still in its infancy, special protection and help were needed. The employees harped on the slogan of justice, fair wage, and sent telegrams of congratulation to V. V. Giri for having severed his connection with the Government. They spoke of a general strike. Let us hope that the common sense of both parties, employers and employees, will find a way out.

E. Gathier

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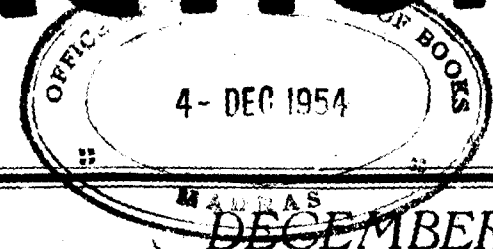
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SOCIAL ACTION

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HERE AND THERE

Bright Youth

The All-India Catholic University Federation with its five thousand members has come of age. Its regional conferences, training camps and congresses are held regularly and well attended; its leadership courses intensive and realistic. Our students dream of dotting the country with Sevagrams and Gandhigrams in which their social efforts will be embodied. They even cast their eyes beyond the seas and the Himalayas. At their Madras headquarters they will hold an All-Asia Seminar which will run from December the tenth till January the 2nd. Student delegates from Japan, the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaya and Ceylon are announced. In brotherly gatherings they will tackle a vast problem: the modern transformations of Asian Universities. A meticulous questionnaire on the spiritual, cultural, intellectual and economic trends in Asian universities is gathering all the realia which will provide a realistic background for the sectional discussions and general reports. Observers from Europe and America will cer-

tainly be amazed at the spirit and talent of our youth ; all will disperse with a heart-comforting glow of Catholic solidarity.

The Federation deserves all congratulations for their breadth of vision and up-to-date realism ; Asian unity is germinating and the impact of our university elite on such a momentous trend will be most welcome.

Some critical sympathizers are astounded when reading of a survey on the conditions of life for university students throughout Asia. A biggish job, indeed, that will take some doing and quite a bit of technique, were it only to frame the enquiry schedule. But our lads are bold and feel that fortune favours the brave.

Read and Think

Youthful Jawaharlal created a sensation when telling the Congress that he felt inclined to resign as Prime Minister and as President of the Congress Party. He felt tired. "I want to work hard ; at the same time I want time to read and to think. A great disadvantage of heavily engaged officials is the lack of time to read and think and to confer on basic matters."

A feeling as noble as it is rare ! Few are the politicians who feel such a need and who are sanguine enough to publicize it. Speculation is rife about the psychology of this impulse. Is it a disharmony between democratic convictions and solo leadership ? Is it apprehension before future immense tasks ? Is it that restlessness of the heart which was familiar to St. Augustine ?

Mountaineering

The newly born Mountaineering Institute is the proud jewel of Darjeeling. It is a monument of national pride and emotion. It takes our youth a step further in the field of sports and opens to our athletes vistas of sturdy adventure. It is hoped that in the near future the country will be dotted with Everest Clubs that will dwarf all Alpine associations. A few people who never saw the grandeur of the Himalayas may question the social value of mountaineering. Yet no better sport could be devised to shake lads out of their urban comfort and tone them up with the Excelsior call of the mountain. Mountaineering may do much to habilitate our younger generation for the heavy tasks of life, counteract the vicious trends of city life and dispense us with a few reformatory schools. Surely, my good Tensing, when you were on the top of the world, you did not realise all the good you had done to the nation.

Eastward Ho !

Mr. Nehru went East. He enjoyed the tumultuous welcome of Rangoon ; it was so like what he gets at home. He noted the regimented enthusiasm of Peking. In China he saw what he wanted to see but as a gentleman, he did not ask to see what would have been unpleasant to his hosts. His speeches were models of tact and reticence : same goals, peace and prosperity ; different approach and method. Mr. Churchill might have said much the same, at least in a lower key.

Quite a few critics are blind to a key-piece of the Nehru mentality : equality of all men, equality of

all nations. Hence his horror of any type of colonialism, his ailergy to any symptom of effortless superiority, his policy of increasing and redistributing the national income. Hence his Asian contacts, his Afro-Asian plans, his economic programme at home. It is on this rough background that his tractations with China should be viewed. His efforts at enlarging a peace area call for sympathetic attention. An uncontrollable ABC warfare, which Pius XII recently condemned so utterly, must be avoided at all costs; any effort or move to prevent it deserves our sympathy. Converting the Peking philosophers to genuine democracy is another problem. It will be hard enough to co-exist with them; they are impossible bed-fellows and troublesome roommates.

Realism

Mr. Vishinsky died at New York and due condolences go to his widow and relatives. Some of our editors, however, and even a few of our leaders went beyond the bonds of realistic eulogy. One might truly praise his forensic talent, even his histrionic gifts in playing soft or getting tough according to his government's dictates. But was it complimentary to his motherland to call him "a true representative of Russias?" Do people forget the salient success of his past, when as public prosecutor he did between May 1937 and February 1938 succeed in securing the death-sentence on 6,238 of his old friends and associates?

That possibly was Marxist efficiency but was that typically Russian? In any case was that commendable to Indian democracy? Are not some of our most eminent leaders occasionally carried away by their verbal facility?

A. L.

THE BELGIAN FARMERS' UNION

(Continued)

(In a previous issue of Social Action, we had published the first part of an article on the Belgian Farmers' Union. In that first part a short description had been given of the origin and growth of the Union, and of its present organization. But a tree is judged by its fruits. In this second part of the article therefore, which we publish here we shall see what the BB has realized up to now.)

The Belgian Boerenbond (BB) has grown into a mighty organization, which is still pervaded by the same spirit which its founders put into it. It tries to further the cause of the Belgian Farmer, in the religious, social professional and economic spheres. It surrounds his whole life and work with a system of protective means. We have seen its growth, its aims, its present organization. Let us now see what it has achieved. The BB takes its pride in showing the following items:

1. *Development and strengthening of the spirit of cooperation and of the class consciousness of the peasantry:*

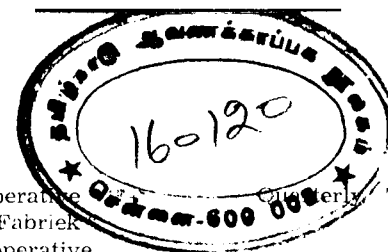
Almost in every village of the Flemish part of Belgium there exists at present a guild. Moreover the various groups of rural population have their own organization, as is shown in the table below:

Year	Guilds	Guilds of Farm Women	Rural Youth	Country Girls' Leagues
1890	10			
1900	360			
1910	531			
1912	—	67		
1920	951	220		
1926	—	—	296	62
1930	1,228	874	402	313
1940	1,245	973	544	629
1949	1,301 ⁽¹⁾	977	560	988

A set of publications secures regular contact between the members and the organizations :

Types of Members	Publication	Circulation	Issued	Aim
Farmers and Horticulturists	"De Boer" ("The Farmer")	100,000	Weekly	Social and Solidarity
Farm women	"By the Haard" ("By the Fireside")	90,000	Monthly	" " "
Young Farmers	"Kruis en Ploeg" ("The Cross and the Plough")		Monthly	" " "
Country Girls	"Zonnebloem" ("The Sunflower")		Monthly	" " "
Leaders of Local Guilds (Male)	"Onze Gids" ("Our Guide")		Monthly	
Leaders of Local Guilds (Female)	"Bestuursblad voor de Boerinnengilden" ("Directives for Guilds of Farm Women")		Monthly	Information and Direction
Farmers and Horticulturists	"Tuinbouwberichten" ("Horticultural News")		Monthly	Technical Information

⁽¹⁾ There are 1,147 villages in Flanders



ry Farmers "De Coöperatieve Zin vel Fabriek (The Cooperative Dairy Farm') Pamphlets and Booklets Quarterly 600 000 Technical Information Annually 10,000 cop and Guildir

A group of 50 inspectors keep also regular contact between the guilds and the central organization, by giving conferences, where various problems of farm life are treated.

2. Protection of Faith and Morality of the Rural Population :

If the Flemish part of Belgium has not gone the same way of dechristianization and demoralization as France and other West-European countries, it is due in great part to the work of the BB. The BB achieves this work through the following means :

a. Every issue of the various periodicals contains at least one moral or religious article written so as to meet the understanding and taste of the readers.

b. Every meeting begins and ends with prayer. At each meeting of the parochial guild, the chaplain gives a talk adapted to his audience.

c. At every district assembly as well as during the annual study-meetings, part of the time is devoted to moral and religious problems in connection with the present day country life.

d. The BB. organizes pilgrimages to Rome, Lourdes and other famous shrines in the country and outside.

e. The BB regularly publishes pamphlets and tracts on religious and moral topics (100,900 copies printed every year).

f. The parochial chaplains periodically meet in their district, or diocese, get instructions and exchange views concerning their activity in the guilds.

3. *Improvement of the conditions of life and the social standing of the rural class :*

This is realized in the following four ways :

a. *Improvement of Homesteads and Farms* :— The technical services of the BB issued nearly 2,000 models and sketches of simple, economical and healthy farms. After World War I this technical service built not less than 120 farms and 126 homesteads in the areas destroyed by heavy fighting. It also issued more than 50,899 loans for the buying, building or repairing of farms. Regularly the BB publishes pamphlets destined for Farm Women, where they can learn how to improve and decorate their homes in a tasteful manner.

b. *Hygiene and Sanitation* :— This is mainly the concern of the Farm Women. The League of Farm Women has therefore organized hundreds of courses, about motherhood, care of children, feeding, general hygiene etc. In this domain also pamphlets help much to spread the ideas and to get them realized in the rural areas. Finally the BB regularly organizes competitions for Farm Women in vegetable-growing, cooking, clothing, milking, sewing, care of cattle and other home-industries.

c. *Family Allowances* :— In 1948, 13,580 wage-earners and 116,000 independent labourers had joined the Mutual Fund for Family Allowances. The first had contributed to it 23,000,000 Belgian Francs (Fr) (²), and the allowances paid to them amounted to 30,550,000 Francs. The Second had contributed 74,771,000 Francs and the allowances paid to them amounted to the sum of 119,862,000 Francs.

d. *Training of an elite from among the Farmers* :— Most of those who at present are at the direction either at the Central Regional or Local level, have been taken from the rural population and have gradually raised themselves to their present status. The Monthly paper "Our Guide" helps the local heads to direct their guilds, it helps them also to emancipate themselves and to become real leaders of their fellow farmers. But it is especially the League of Rural Youth and the League of Country Girls that have contributed most for the emancipation and education of young farmers. Dramas, songs, horse-riding tournaments, conferences, evening schools, these are the means used in that slow process of educating the whole rural class.

4. *Diffusion and Popularization of Agricultural Knowledge :*

Here again various means are used in this difficult process of educating and improving the methods of tilling the soil.

a. Through periodicals and pamphlets, illustrated technical magazines as already mentioned above.

(²) One Rupee equals 12 Belgian Francs.

b. Through lectures, lantern shows and through practical demonstrations in the field, the stable, the barn, the nursery, and the orchard. This is especially the work of the inspectors which the Central Organization sends out and of the specialists to whom they can appeal. From 1920 to 1939, 101,000 such lectures were given with an average audience of about 50 persons per lecture.

c. Adult Education and Evening Schools:— in 1948, 429 evening schools were being run for the profit of the farmers and of the rural youth.

d. Libraries: — which provide both general information and technical instruction to the members. In 1935 there were already 358 local libraries spread all over the country. In the Central Organization in Louvain a well furnished library is at the disposal of the members, leaders, inspectors etc.

e. Agricultural Competitions :- these competitions help much towards arousing the interest of the farmers in their profession and to create in them a healthy ambition to improve themselves. Some 2,100 farmers take part every year in such competitions.

f. Exhibitions :- an average of 31 exhibitions are organized every year. They help much to spread the fame of local methods and develop the taste of the members ; it gives them suggestions on how to pack and present their produce in an artistic and tasteful way to the public.

g. Experimentation fields and Model Farms :— they are cultivated and kept up by hundreds of farmers and horticulturists under the guidance of the experts of the Central Organization.

5. *Widening the Vital Space of the Farmers :*

Belgium is one of the most thickly populated areas of the world with an average of 281 persons per square kilometer. At present almost all the waste land has been reclaimed. On the other hand the extension of railways, roads and airfields has claimed a good amount of cultivated land. This puts a serious problem. The BB contributes its part in solving that problem of the pressure of the population on the land by :-

a. Helping members to reclaim the little waste land that is left, or to render cultivable again large stretches of land which were destroyed during the two World Wars, or to put up draining works which make marshes and waterlogged lands cultivable.

b. By favouring direct exploitation :- The BB wants to make the tiller of the soil as much as possible the owner of the soil.

c. By intensifying exploitation :- The BB encourages specialized products which require much manual labour, so as to afford work to the many children of the farming families. Among such cultures may be mentioned : flax, tobacco, hops, medicinal plants, tomatoes, flowers in the open garden or in hot-houses, orchards etc.

d. Emigration Bureau :- Many farmers emigrated to the North of France. For them a special bimonthly is being published in Flemish "De Stem uit het Vaderhuis" ('The Voice from the Home'). At present attempts are going on to emigrate to certain areas of Belgian Congo.

6. *Technical and Economic Improvement of farming, growing and breeding methods :*

At present the Belgian Farmer together with his Dutch and Danish neighbour is counted among the best producers of the world. The lack of more arable land has obliged him to go for greater specialization and intensification of production.

The table below shows the profit per Hectare (Ha. equals 10.000 square metres.) of some of the produce :

		Belgian	Francs	per	Ha.
Wheat	2.500	"	"	"	"
Potatoes	7.500	"	"	"	"
Tobacco	18.000	"	"	"	"
Vegetables	31.000	"	"	"	"
Flowers	50.000	"	"	"	"
Vegetables in hothouses	95.000	"	"	"	"
Fruits (grapes)		"	"	"	"
in hothouses	177.000	"	"	"	"
Flowers in hothouses	375.000	"	"	"	"

These figures show the possibilities which lie hidden in a greater specialization and intensification of farm-produce.

The next table shows the increase in production per Ha. of some of the produce during the last 60 years.⁽³⁾

⁽³⁾ This may be a suggestion to those who think that there are "Too Many of us."

Produce	1890	1909-1913	1935-1939	Incr. in '35 on 1890
Wheat	1.824 Kg.	2.530 Kg.	2.710 Kg.	49 %
Rye	1.598 "	2.210 "	2.370 "	48 %
Oats	1.785 "	2.370 "	2.630 "	50 %
Potatoes	13.040 "	18.340 "	20.560 "	58 %
Linsced	311 "	560 "	555 "	78 %
Beets	33.933 "	54.487 "	64.970 "	67 %
Sugar beets (sugar)	12 %	—	16.5 %	
Milk yield per cow	1750-2500 l.	2500-3000 l.	3200 l.	
Eggs yield per hen	80 eggs	80-85 eggs	120 eggs.	
Average use of chemical manure per Ha.	121 Kg.	137 Kg.	186 Kg.	

The BB takes pride in having contributed much to this rise in production. It has achieved this through the following means :

a. Cooperation in vegetable and animal selection:-
A station of vegetable selection and improvement at Heverlee (near Louvain) is at the disposal of the BB. The registered results are very encouraging. New species of wheat, oats, etc., better adapted to the soil and climate of the Belgium have been obtained. For fruit growing areas, the technicians have fixed the standard varieties suited to each region. In view of the selection and breeding of cattle, 481 associations of stock breeders are at the disposal of the members of the BB. Full attention is given to milk control and tracing bovine tuberculosis. The BB puts stud-bulls at the disposal of the stock breeders and is now introducing artificial insemination.

b. Cooperation in Dairy matters:- At the end of 1950 the members could appeal to 80 cooperative and 5 intercooperative dairies. The intercooperatives, established in the great centres of consumption, provide hygienic bottled milk, to the city population. The dairies also produce: Butter, cheese, curds, milk-powder and ice-cream(!). In 1948, 370,911,335 litres of milk were being processed by the dairies.

c. Cooperation in the manufacturing and purchasing of agricultural goods:- This cooperation aims at fighting against adulteration of goods. It exerts a continuous control on price formation, it reduces the cost of transport and furnishes to the members of the BB the necessary information concerning the proper use of the different raw materials and implements. This form of cooperation has grown out nowadays, at Merxem near the harbour of Antwerp, into an important industrial system for rational manufacturing of cattle fodder, with an oil mill, oil refinery, and laboratory. The Purchasing and Marketing Society which manages these activities possesses 25 regional and 88 local stores.

d. Cooperation in marketing agricultural produce:- The Purchasing and Marketing Society has contributed to the marketing of vegetables, fruit, butter, cheese and eggs. In 1948 this Society handed:

Butter	1,376,564 Kg. to the value of 109,701,588 Fr.
Eggs	944,824 „ „ „ „ „ 48,946,784 „
Potatoes	22,927,000 „ „ „ „ „ 33,749,788 „
Vegetables and Fruit	— „ „ „ „ „ 17,398,548 „

Every year the associations of sugarbeet-growers draw up contracts with the sugar factories. In 1949 there existed 191 sugarbeet syndicates, which drew up contracts for 400,000 tons of sugarbeet. The collective marketing of pigs is one of the most recent forms of cooperation. In 1949, 13,885 pigs had been marketed to the value of 35,000,000 Francs.

e. Cooperation in controlling plant diseases and insects:- Due to the increasing demands of the consumers and the intensified commercial competition, all efforts ought to aim at quality-production. Collective spray services undertake to spray the orchards and potato fields. The Associations of stock breeders and poultry breeders on their part carry on an efficient campaign against diseases of cattle. The BB cooperates also with the official organizations fighting against bovine tuberculosis.

f. Cooperation in covering agricultural risks:- This task is entrusted to the Insurance Company of the Belgian Boerenbond. This organization places at the disposal of the farmer means of protecting themselves against the pecuniary consequences of certain risks which threaten his belongings, his physical capacities and his life. In 1948, 235,386 contracts had been made among which

156,932	were against fire
27,208	„ life insurances
96,811	„ against accidents
2,891	„ against destruction caused by hail-storm
1,454	„ Miscellaneous

g. Cooperation with respect to saving and credit:- The system is based on the principles of cooperation and mutual help. The Agricultural Credit granted by the local credit sections, which are managed according to the principles of F. W. Raiffeisen is personal and granted exclusively for professional purposes. It is organized as follows :

The basis is composed of 770 local credit sections, all of them being cooperative societies. Their task is to grant loans with personal caution to the members. These loans are possible thanks to the deposits of the farmers.

At the top is the Central Office for Agricultural Credit, which centralizes, controls and manages the local credit sections. In 1948, 61,267 members had deposited 1.193.151.961,19 Francs.

7. *Study and Protection of the general interests of Agriculture :*

a. The BB every 5 years, awards a prize of 100.000 Francs (Gilbert Mullie Prize) to him who has most contributed to the progress of Agriculture through inventions, or the publishing of studies and books concerning practical sciences, social ethics, sociology, law, history etc. In 1949 this prize was awarded to a professor of the University of Louvain for his research work in geology.

b. The BB has always clearly defined its position with regard to the Agricultural Economy of the country and the policy of the Government. Thus for instance,

re. the Marshall plan and the Benelux plan. ⁽⁴⁾ The BB defended the interests of the Belgian Farmer and horticulturist. It issues annually statistics and reports on the development of Agriculture in the country.

c. The BB also contacts the Government regarding Trade-Contracts and Customs-agreements which the latter makes with other countries, in order that the interests of the National Agriculture be not overlooked.

d. It has seen to it that a sound Agricultural Legislation be passed by the Parliament. The BB is also represented in Government Commissions and Councils which concern Agriculture.

e. The BB aims at a close collaboration, at least in the sphere where that is possible, with the other Catholic Organizations such as Trade Unions, Employers' Union, Middle Class Associations, Young Christian Workers etc.

What to conclude from all this.

The Belgian Boerenbond, according to the general consent of many outsiders, who have come and studied it, has become one of the best agricultural organizations of the world. It has joined the farmers together in a unity, according to the Catholic social principles put forth in the Encyclicals of the last Popes. The Belgian Boerenbond is a first step towards the corporative state, such as the Popes want future society to be organized into. But what has succeeded in

⁽⁴⁾ The plan to unite Belgium (BE), the Netherlands (NE) and Luxembourg (Lux) into an economic union.

Belgium is not to be slavishly imitated in other countries. The BB was founded at the right time and in a part of Belgium where a uniform economic, religious, political and racial structure is prevalent. A hundred years ago the farmer in Belgium was looked upon with contempt. Today he is respected, he has climbed quite a few rungs up the social ladder, improved his condition and has become conscious of his human values. Agriculture as a consequence has attained a high standard both quantitatively and qualitatively. All this is greatly due to the 60 years' work of the Belgian Boerenbond. Moreover if religion has not lost its grip on the rural population of Flanders (this is not so with the industrial workers) it is also due for a great part to the work of the BB.

What to conclude from all this for India? It is perhaps good to dwell once more on the analogies between Indian agriculture today and the situation Agriculture in Belgium at the time when the BB originated. The lessons and inspiration which the example of the BB contains for India will thus become clearer.

Here too the ryot is looked down upon. He is slowly awakening from his lethargy and is looking round for means to improve his condition. In India the co-operative way seems to be the solution. Here as in Belgium the pressure of the population of the land puts a grave problem which needs to be solved within a few decades. Heavy Industry and Cottage Industries may help much to reduce the unemployment but will never be able to absorb all the manpower which is looking out for employment. Therefore the country must look to agriculture itself and

change it in such a way as to afford more employment to the farmers' families. The only way to do this is to change the system from an extensive agriculture into an intensive agriculture. Intensify and specialize more, these are the two words which summarize the solution for Indian Agriculture.

There are immense hidden possibilities of making progress in this direction, both in the very character of our farmers and in the nature of the soil and climate. Our farmers like to go for meticulous work and are known for their strong attachment to their plots, animals and homesteads. Nature also in India allows of great possibilities. With the climate and the sun which we have here, there is no need of putting up expensive hothouses or other means to protect the crops. For the Indian farmer it is rather a question of securing water for his fields throughout the year, by irrigation.

In India there are great possibilities for the extension of vegetable crops and fruit orchards, for the intensification of industrial crops such as cotton, jute, flax, medicinal plants, etc. Intensify and specialize your crops and you have solved a good deal not only of the problem of unemployment, but you will produce more foodstuffs also and thus help the country chase the spectre of starvation from its boundaries.

But some one may object that the farmers do not want to change their methods of farming and living. They do not want to give up burning their cowdung, they pretend to go on eating only rice and curry. This is true, but this is due to their ignorance. Once a farmer has *seen* and tried a better way of doing some-

thing, he will reject the old way and take to the new. An example of this is the new method of rice-cultivation which was introduced some 30 years back and which is now almost universally used in many parts of the country. Farmers are the same all over the world, and if they have improved so much in another country, why shouldn't they in India?

The Cooperative way seems to be the solution for India. but it is not easily understood by the people who need a good deal of technical instruction and who must want to help themselves. Up to now unfortunately it has left to our government to start and run most of the cooperative societies. Cooperative societies on the contrary should be started and run by private initiative, as is the case in most other countries. Since nobody in India is coming forward with such initiatives, the state, whose task is a subsidiary one, has to supply what is lacking from the part of the individuals; hence the many cooperative societies run by the government.

The Boerenbond was started, not by the Belgian Government but by a simple country parish priest. He had seen the needs of his people and wanted to "do" something in order to solve their problems. He dared to make a start and had the good idea of applying for experts to help him in his plans. Because to run a cooperative society means to do business and not to organize charity and social help into a social service league. He had also secured the approval of his ecclesiastical superiors and the help of the government. With these supports he could go ahead.

What has he done that we cannot do today in India? Our Government is keen to help and foster with technical advice and even with money any private initiative that has a fair chance of succeeding. That is the whole idea behind the Community Projects. What should prevent us then from "doing" something?

There is however another important element which helped the Boerenbond to succeed, which is the confidence of the farmers in their organization. Unless we secure that from the part of the people amongst whom we are working, our attempts won't succeed. People should not only confide in us but among themselves. This is unfortunately still a difficult point. Another point which is often misunderstood by the people is that the cooperative society is not a method to get grants from the government but a method to put their few annas together and make them thus more powerful.

A cooperative movement like the Belgian Boerenbond can't succeed unless the people for whom it is erected, constitute a certain homogenous group of place, culture, race, and religion. Moreover they should at least have a minimum of education in order to be able to understand the idea of cooperation. They should not be in a state of utter dejection and poverty, but should be able to contribute something. But these conditions seem to be present in most parts of our country.

Therefore it is time for us, courageously to embark upon the social apostolate and not merely to go on doing "Charity". Let us,— we ourselves —start with cooperative societies, credit societies etc., to help

our people, and not wait until the government is forced to do it. Let us apply for technical help and advice from the experts of the Government, they are most keen to help us in that way.

By thus collaborating actively with the efforts of the country to rise socially and economically, we will prove that Christianity is and remains a powerful leaven in the progress of our nation. The Belgian Boerenbond took 60 years to evolve into what it is today. It is up to us not to lose courage at first failures, but to try again and again, cautiously but decidedly. This will be one of the positive means to prevent "India going red," because one does more good by lighting a candle than by cursing the darkness.

M. Van den Bogaert

A STUDENTS' CAMP IN A BOMBAY SLUM

One of the objectives of the Social Institute has been to encourage and give whatever assistance is in its power, to the promotion of social work in Schools and Colleges. The preparation of text-books on Civics and other aspects of social science has been one of our earliest undertakings. Indeed the success and popularity of the books written by Fr. Clump and Fr. Fonseca have been most gratifying. The practical side of the training of students in social service is of course no less important. From every side come reports of the activities of Social Service Leagues in

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Schools and Colleges. We believe that the most fruitful method of such practical activity would be the starting of social centres within School and College premises where working men and working women would be given means of recreation and various types of instruction by students and members of the Staff. Scarcely less useful would be the adoption, by a School or College, of a neighbouring slum and a persevering activity there to improve living conditions and inspire the dwellers with a desire for a cleaner and fuller life. It was my good fortune to visit one such slum where usually good work is being done by the students of St. Xavier's College, Bombay. The slum is Dabholkar Adda in Ambewady, on the outskirts of the city.

Breaking off from the main highway, you go along tortuous lanes and alleys, narrow and unkempt, where peddlers of all kinds encumber the ground. But these lanes have still some semblance of decency compared with the low-lying area where they end and give place to the most depressing cluster of huts and improvised shanties which form the slum in all its pristine squalor. There is an open space before these wretched dwellings begin and at one end of it are the ruins of a cotton godown which had been burnt down some months before. A part of this ruin, cleaned up, floored and roofed with borrowed tarpaulins, was the encampment of the students. They were forty of them, most of them boys and a few girls. They were drawn from all communities, Hindus, Christians, Parsees and Muslims: the majority being Hindus. There was nothing of the dandified undergraduate about them: they were preparing to go out for manual work when I went

there, and were wearing working clothes half dirtied by earlier labour. Amidst them was the principal, Fr. Balaguer, also in shirt sleeves and preparing to go out with them with pickaxe in hand.

They gave me a cordial and simple welcome. I was on the lookout to see if there was any look of superiority and sense of conscious virtue, and I found none. Soon they trooped, the boys to work on clearing and smoothing out the narrow and dirty alleys, scarcely wider than a footpath at times, which served as roads in this human anthill. Some were engaged in digging up a water pipe which they wanted to replace by a thicker one. The girls went to an improvised dispensary to hand out remedies to simple ailments, or to gather the children for games. Fr. Balaguer wanted me to go round the place and in his company I visited these humble dwellings where over 3000 people lived in conditions which I can only say were indescribable. These little huts were built with the flimsiest of materials, bits of wall here and there, supplemented by crumbling planks, bamboo matting, bits of canvas, gunny bags, and roofed over for the most part by flattened kerosene tins rusty and dirty looking. The height was not more than five feet in some cases. Yet, would the reader believe that the lodgers of these tenements have to pay rent for this? A little room, maybe seven feet by six occupied by a young couple and their baby was secured for a payment of six rupees per month. These six rupees were paid to an enterprising contractor who had put up the wretched shed and who, out of these six rupees, had to pay a share to the owner of the land.

Heading our way through these shacks we came to a spot which had been cleaned up by the students during the previous year and where they had constructed a cement platform for fixing two or three water taps. The little group around this could draw their water in conditions of relative cleanliness. But a little to the left of this I saw a sight which I shall not easily forget. All the drainage of that part of the slum had flowed down and gathered into a little hollow around which were dozens of tenements. A poisonous slum had gathered over the fetid waters. Little children were splashing in the slush at the edge of this pool. On one side was a mound made up of all the rubbish and filth of the neighbourhood, including dead kittens and puppies. A heavy sickening stench hung on over the place. I was told by the poor people that when it rains heavily the area is flooded and the filth of the pool goes floating into the dwellings.....

Into these cells of misery the students of St. Xavier's have brought the bright lustre of their friendliness and the aid of their energetic work. I saw them digging like professional labourers with implements not particularly sharp, stopping now and then to exchange a joke. They have come to be known and loved in these quarters. The good people looked on them first with amusement and then with respect; and then they themselves came along joining the work and helping themselves. Their plan was, in two or three days from then, to get a bull-dozer promised by a friend of the College and break up the mound of rubbish and fill the pool and find an outlet for the drainage.

On certain evenings there are cinema shows or games and amusements for the elders. That gives the students the chance of engaging in conversation with them, and without looking like wise people who have come to teach them, they slip in bits of instruction and advice regarding better living — health and sanitation, thrift and hard work, a knowledge of their rights and duties as citizens. Thus slowly the neighbourhood is being cleaned up and roused into common action for their own betterment.

I left these depressing surroundings with strongly mingled feelings. There was sadness at the thought of this mass of misery at the doorsteps of a proud city, as indeed of most of our bigger cities. But there was also hope and obscure feeling of joy; not so much at the example of the friendliness and simple goodness of the students who were working there, at their sense of solidarity with their poor brothers, though that *was* something to be thankful for. My hope and joy came from what I had seen on the faces of those poor men and women huddled in their huts. Wherever they could, they had struggled to keep the interior of their sheds clean and decent. There some little decoration here and there, a picture of a god or a goddess, of Mahatma Gandhi or Pandit Nehru. They loved their children and their faces beamed when we said a kind word to the brighteyed little things running around us. In the corner of one little hut a shy young mother was nursing her baby. The tenderness on her face was a sight to warm the heart. There was patience and a subdued cheerfulness on their faces and in some places chatter and gay laughter. In the midst of all

this degradation one saw elements of refinement and goodness. If Government and men of good-will do for these unhappy people even a fraction of what is due to them, they will never listen to the gospel of hatred.

J. D'S.

WHO IS A WORKMAN?

Occasionally one hears that the world will soon know a "workers' civilisation." What it means is not clear at all unless we include among the workers all the humans who really work in all possible fields. If it only implies that manual workers in agriculture and industry are going to be the dominant class in society, we are already nearing the times when they will have reached that ambitious goal, but it would be rash to fancy they will be the leading class since the masses are always led by an elite recruited from among all classes. When workmen themselves rise above the masses, they often enough give up the proletarian style of life. In any case for the present it is certain that the masses of India are not led by workmen and this is a definite weakness in the workers' movements. The very idea of a workers' civilisation so far proves only that the workingman has vindicated his name and dignity to the point that he feels he is on the ascendant.

It is attractive to gather under this attractive vocabulary all intellectual workers, apostolic workers, social workers, and all varieties of people who do something really useful and to divide mankind into two classes,

not the "haves" and have-nots" but the "works" and "work-nots". Such a division would be unhelpful naïveté. If we approach the question from the social point of view, the task is not easier. It is usual in sociology to grade occupational groups according to various standards. What are called the upper classes are the groups who do mostly direction work; what are named lower classes are the groups which only execute tasks assigned to them. In between come the very many and varied groups whose work is partly directive and partly executive. Even such a test is not satisfactory because not only economic consideration (difference in income) but also the ideology or mood of a particular society colours the regard people have for certain occupations in preference to others and facilitates or hampers mutual social relations. A station-master in India fancies he is superior to a mechanic though his own pay may be lower; on the other hand the fact of caste may upset this sense of distinction. Caste or nobility may wreck certain groupings which in other countries are dictated by equality of incomes or similarity of professions. Social gradation is a confused pattern drawn up by factors which are many and variable.

It is thus impossible to situate the workman in Indian society. Our present purpose is much less ambitious. It is to remove some of the confusion in the notion and talk about India's working class by taking a few steps along the legal approach. In other words, our question is: Who is a workman in India? The answer is not easily made clear owing to variations and inconsistencies in legislation and in judicial pro-

nouncements. At times the same words indicate different persons in different Acts of the legislatures. For instance, one remains a child until he is fully sixteen under the Tea Districts Emigrant Act 1932, until he is fully fifteen under the Factories Act 1948, the Children (Pledging of Labour) Act 1933 and the Indian Mines Act 1923; also under the Children Employment Act 1938 which however keeps children under fourteen away from certain industries (transport, dock labour, biri-making etc). Between 15 and 17 the youngster is an adolescent under the Factories Act.

In the same manner, some obscurity or confusion exists about the definition of workman, worker, labourer, employee; moreover some classes of workers are excluded from some provisions, usually those relating to benefits, in some of the acts; so also are generally excluded all members of the naval, military or air services however hard-working they may be.

Officers

The Industrial Disputes Act 1947 is one which is most useful for workmen to know; its definitions and the various interpretations of Labour Tribunals are most frequently mentioned. Section (s) reads: "a workman means any person employed (including an apprentice) in any skilled or unskilled, manual or clerical work for hire or reward..." However hard-working employers or managers may be, they do no work, as understood in this Act; they direct, command or reprimand, appoint or dismiss, but they are not workers, and a subordinate who does part of their functional task is not a workman either. Since the

task of such subordinates occasionally involves a certain amount of clerical or even manual work, where is the boundary between them and the workmen?

A leading pronouncement on the subject can be found in a case involving the Punjab National Bank and in the relevant decision of the Central Government Industrial Tribunal (Gazette of India, 25—7—'53).

It is stated therein that as a general principle, "the nature of the work done by an employee and the degree of his responsibility determine whether he is a clerk or an officer; his designation does not matter nor does his salary. In every office there are three classes of employees, officers, clerical establishment and inferior establishment consisting of those who do manual work. Officers do not come under the U. P. Industrial Disputes Act. In a bank an officer is one who has responsibilities of a directional and controlling nature within the scope of his authority. Powers such as passing final orders, signing receipts and documents on behalf of the bank, appointment or punishment of the subordinate staff and grant of leave to the staff, are some of the attributes of officers. There may be an officer who may not possess all these attributes. There may be a clerk who may possess any of those attributes in a restricted degree. A clerk does work of a routine or mechanical nature and has no responsibility to take a final decision in most matters coming in his hands. The underlying principle is that one whose work is under the scrutiny and supervision of another shall not be dignified to be an officer." The Tribunal concluded in the case under trial that the

accountant in charge of a sub-pay-office was not an officer since vouchers had to be signed and the office had to be visited by a higher employee of the bank.

Similarly head-cashiers and accountants are workmen; so also District Main Engineers of an electric company because they have no power of appointment or dismissal though they are responsible for drafting letters, checking stores, temporary receipts, meter readings, etc. (U. P. — Meerut 6—8—'53). A meter inspector or a store-keeper is a workman but an engineer is neither a clerk nor a workman though he is attending to the clerical work of preparing and sending returns (Fort St. George Gaz. 22—4—'53). Members of the Watch and Ward Staff and peons are doing manual work (or is it foot-work?) The head of the sales department on the contrary is an officer under the Industr. Disp. Act since he signs correspondence, leave register, credit notes and receipts (Bombay Gaz. 11—2—'54), whilst a depot superintendent is, though he signs stock receipts, issues stock and compiles standard forms and returns (Madras High Court, 28—4—'54).

In Between

Power of direction and responsibility of decision is the criterion that makes out the officer from the workman under the Industr. Disp. Act; but there are employees who are neither officers nor workmen, owing to the very quality of their task. The Fourth Industrial Tribunal of West Bengal when dealing with the case of an artist made elucidating remarks on the subject. "If the performance of the duty of the employee essentially and substantially involves work done with physical effort as distinguished from mental

or intellectual effort, then the employee must be considered as a workman, within the meaning of Sect. 2, s of the Act. Although the work of an employee may involve a certain degree of intelligence as well as manual skill, he is to be considered a workman as essentially his job consists in executing manual work under the direction or supervision of a technician or tradesman. A technician or tradesman may have to do occasionally a certain amount of manual work but his job is substantially of the intelligent type involving not manual work or personal skill but technical proficiency and experience." Hence the tribunal concluded, a lower assistant-artist working under the chief artist and drawing pictures under his direction for advertisements is a workman though he could add or modify something or other but only as a supplement to the original visualized by the chief artist.

On the contrary, according to the Patna Tribunal (9135 of '53), assistant editors of the editorial department are not occupied in doing what is mainly skilled clerical work, but do journalistic work which is superior to, and distinct from, skilled clerical work or the work done in the press section. In the same way, teachers running a school for the children of the employers are not workmen since their work is mainly brain-work (Visakhapatnam Tribunal Fort St. George Gaz. 24-6-'53). Nor should under the National Health Insurance Act 1924 be considered as a workman an acrobatic comedian, nor a chemist with scientific talent nor a professional football player (Cal. Gaz. Extra. I, 10-12-'53). Similarly a draughtsman is not a clerk though he occasionally copies maps and

drawings, because his work is of a technical nature (Madras, Ind. Trib. 8-1-'53). A bench chemist in a sugar factory who carries out chemical analysis and records results does a work which demands technical and scientific knowledge and experience; he is not a workman (Bombay Trib. 5-2-'54), though in the case under judgement he had learned his job in two months. Supervisors, overseers and assistant supervisors and overseers are not workmen, and mistries of plantation Kanganees are supervisors (Bombay Trib. 20-1-'53; Trav. Cochin 31-3-'52).

Yet under the same Industrial Disputes Act a doctor was declared a workman (not an officer or supervisor) because he had to do much clerical work (register of patients, applications for medicines etc.) and because though he had full discretion in using his skill he had no control or direction of the employees (Nation. Steel & Iron Co. *vs* Workmen, Cal. Gaz. 10-4-'52). Similarly the compounder of a dispensary attached to a sugar-factory was declared a workman under the Industr. Disp. Act but not a workman under the Factories Act since his work was not connected with the process of sugar-making. (Allahabad Indust. Trib. 19-5-'53). Whilst a foreman is not a workman since "his supervisory status and his duties and responsibilities do not involve manual work save and except such as is necessary in connection with his supervisory function" (Bombay Trib. 7 of 151), an assistant-chemist is not a workman because "his work is neither clerical nor manual" (By Gaz. 12-7-'51).

Men forced to retire on a pension cannot claim the advantages of the Industrial Disputes Act, whilst

a man dismissed during a dispute can do so. Once a gardener working in the house of the director and paid out of the factory funds was declared not to be a worker of the factory (U.P. Lab. Dept. 354 of 24—6—'51), whilst a gardener employed on a company's pay-rolls and receiving his wages out of the company's funds was acknowledged as a workman (L. A. T. of India — Lucknow 31—7—'53).

Workmen non-workers

Various acts of the legislatures explicitly exclude certain categories of workmen from benefits or regulations on different grounds. Whilst the Indian Deck Labourers' Act 1934 uses the words, worker or labourer, indifferently, the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act 1932 considers as labourer only the adult (over 16 years) working for wages not higher than Rs. 50 p.m. and declares that clerk, domestic servant, mechanic, carpenter, mason, bricklayer or any other artisan are not labourers under the Act and will not be assisted emigrants. In the Workmen's Compensation Act 1948, are excluded from benefits the employees occupied in a clerical capacity (Schedule II), or drawing Rs 400 or more, or employed in any administrative district or subdivisional office of a railway, or employed otherwise than for the employer's trade or business (Sect. 2). The Payment of Wages Rules 1937 excludes persons drawing over Rs. 200 p.m., the Employees State Insurance Act 1948 those drawing over Rs. 400.

The Indian Mines Act 1923 regulating hours of work and rest etc. excludes persons holding a position of supervision or management or employed in a confidential capacity (sect. 24) and the Indian Mines Rules

1924 enumerates such persons: any official in charge of a mine or part of a mine; mechanical engineers, engine wrights or electricians; surveyors, clerks, accountants and time-keepers (Rule 12).

Under the Coal Mine Provident Fund and Bonus Schemes Act 1948 is excluded from the provisions of the Act the employee (a) whose original basic earnings exceed Rs. 300 (b) who is employed as mali, sweeper or domestic servant on domestic and personal work, (c) who is employed on a state railway coal-mine on a railway-pay basis, (d) or who is employed as a labourer of a contractor for building, brickmaking or tile making. The Payment of Wages (Railway or Coal Mine) Rules do not apply to the employee drawing over Rs 200.

Conclusion

When talking workers and workmen, one should keep aware of the confusion that may exist both if we discuss social classes and if we speak of legal groups. The above notes are intended only to point out the confusion without ambitioning to dissipate it entirely. In particular they will not take one through the maze of legal enactments and pronouncements, but they may, it is hoped, help social workers to avoid the grossest errors when advising employees in trouble.

A. Lallemant

SOCIAL SURVEY

THE HINDI AREA REGIONAL SOCIAL CONFERENCE

(Patna Oct. 16th to 18th)

Among the most important resolutions of the Ernakulam Conference was the one dealing with the constitution of Regional Boards and the holding of regional Conferences before the end of the present year. It was expected that there would be no serious delay in getting the members of the diocesan boards of social work appointed, and this constituting the Regional Boards which would have the responsibility of Organizing the Conferences. The Ernakulam Delegates appointed provisional regional Committees with a Convener for each to get this work quickly accomplished. However the nomination of diocesan members could not be effected in all cases as quickly as was hoped and there was need for holding regional conferences without delay. The Convener of the Hindi area, Fr. De Meulder, therefore wisely decided that the Conference could be held even before the full constitution of the regional Board. Fr. De Meulder and his Committee deserve to be very warmly congratulated on the success of their Conference at Patna, from the 16th to the 18th October.

It was held under the chairmanship of Very Rev. Fr. Martinsek Vicar General of Patna Diocese, in the Hall of St. Xavier's College. The Hindi area consists of not less than 14 dioceses. By a regrettable oversight the Ernakulam resolution did not include within the area the Diocese of Cuttack which, while it is mainly a Oriya speaking district, has general problems

similar to those of the Hindi area. Of these dioceses only eight were able to send delegates to the Conference. But these delegates were able and representative men and women who did good work during the three days of their Conference. Much of the success was also due to the fine hospitality which St. Xavier's College and the Patna Women's College offered to the delegates.

The Conference, in keeping with the broad directive given at Ernakulam, decided to follow the resolutions of the Ernakulam Conference and examine which were the most important from the point of view of regional needs and to what extent each of them had to be adapted to local conditions. The resolution which received the closest attention was the one concerning the founding and utilization of multipurpose cooperative societies in our parishes. The presence of experienced Canadian Fathers who knew from first hand knowledge the fruits of the cooperative method in Canada, made the discussions very fruitful. Moreover the Hindi area contains dioceses like Ranchi where the cooperative movement had made great progress. It was therefore natural and fitting that this subject should have received particular attention in Patna. They passed a significant resolution that the theory and practice of Cooperatives should be taught in our Middle Schools, High Schools, and Colleges.

Another point discussed at length was the question of surveying available waste lands in each diocese in order to promote the Land Colonization schemes recommended by the Ernakulam Conference. It is good

to know that practical steps are being taken to make such surveys. The questions of a Catholic Medical College was also discussed at considerable length. The need for it is unquestionable, but the great resources required will not be easy to secure. We know that His Grace the Archbishop of Madras has been planning to start such a College in the South. Perhaps the North could start Colleges of Nursing and of Dentistry. The discussion however brought out the fact that the Patna Medical College has freely admitted Catholic applicants and that sometimes the seats reserved for Adivasi applicants, open to Catholics also, were not filled.

Two points of exceptional importance which should have received closer attention and should have led to detailed practical measures was that of starting social centres in the parishes and that of setting up machinery for the production or translation and dissemination of social literature. The delegates of the Ernakulam Conference considered these to be the most urgent of the resolutions passed there. Obviously, before the Constitution of the Regional Board with members from every diocese permanently appointed for promoting social work, these resolutions cannot be very effectively implemented. The Patna Conference did however deal with them and did recognise their urgency. It will be the task of the Regional Board to tackle them in detail from their very first meeting.

The Convener and his colleagues of the Hindi area deserve the warmest congratulations on the quickness and energy with which they have started working. Their enthusiasm and the record of their work at

Patna should be a strong incentive to the other regions. If this spirit is kept up and if the Regional Board and its working committee continue along the lines they have traced for themselves, the Hindi area will soon be a model for the Catholic social apostolate.

J. D'Souza

Our Press

There are 330 dailies and their total circulation is just over 25 lakhs, in India.

Of those 330 dailies five owners control 29 papers and 31.2% of the circulation and 15 owners control 54 newspapers and 50.1% of the circulation. So there is already a concentration in the hands of a few, and it could have been added by the Commission that this is increased by interlocking-interests of smaller groups of owners. When one knows how little the average reader is accustomed to reflect and how he takes ready-made ideas and even his expressions from the papers, one sees how the poor demos is led by the nose.

The replies to the questionnaires sent round were poor. While we understand that proprietors of papers do not care to let the cat out of the bag, it is with astonishment that we see 3 out of 670 M. P.s. 4 out of 1015 M.LAs, none of the 225 Central and State Ministers, 4 out of the 145 political parties, 1 out of the 17 Bar Associations, 111 out of the 7,335 editors of newspapers and periodicals, 41 out of 88 journalists organisations, and 77 out of 1,350 public men consenting to send in their replies. This does not show a real democratic spirit on the part of those who kept silent.

Anyhow it shows the grit of the Committee not to have been disheartened by such a poor reception.

First. In some States the number of newspapers is greater than the average number in the whole country, which is roughly of one paper for about 12 lakhs of the population. There are many States in which it is not even half of that number. In fairness we should add that many weeklies reach those who have neither the time, nor the means, to read a daily.

Out of the total circulation of papers in English and in major vernaculars, about 55% (13½ lakhs) of the copies are sold in the capitals and in the chief towns of the States, and those cities account only for 2½ crores or 7% of the total population of the country. Out of this, nearly 4.7 lakhs is made up of English papers. Two-thirds of the English newspapers are concentrated in larger cities or towns, and the corresponding proportion of Indian language is two-fifths.

The proprietary capital invested in newspapers is Rs. 7 crores, and the capital in the form of loan is about 5 crores. The net circulation revenue for the daily Press is estimated at Rs. 6 crores and the advertisement revenues at about 5 crores for 1951. The amount of salaries is over 4 crores out of which 85 lakhs go to the editorial staff. The return profit is about Rs. 6 lakhs a year for Rs. 7 crores or less than 1% per annum. Some better equipped reached 10% profit. Larger papers of 15,000 and above are making profits, those of 5,000 just can make both ends meet and that by overwork and underpaying their workers. They rely much on advertisement. To boost sales, commissions to newspapers agents are at times above 25 or even 33%. Those figures should be a maximum; else there would crop the temptation to sell papers at reduced rates.

The Commission is clearly against the prize competitions, cross-word puzzles, which make a newspaper lose sight of its aim to inform the public, to make it a commercialized concern of not a very high type. It thinks that the maximum price offered for purely intellectual amusement should not be beyond Rs. 500.

The Commission rightly objects to the advertisement of certain patent medicines, which lull the patient and prevent him from seeking medical advice. It is of opinion that pornographic advertisements should be altogether stopped. Magic remedies should not be boosted.

The complaints of the Commission are that the Press Trust of India has been subservient to business interests, not giving information against them, and starting campaigns in favour of them, thus deceiving the public.

The complaint about the smallness of space devoted to Indian affairs in European and American newspapers has been registered; but it can be met with a similar one about the interests of Indian papers in foreign news. Often even the news produced smacks of propaganda or shows a real ignorance of the conditions of the country about which they are supposed to enlighten readers.

The Commission examines the conditions of work of the editors, and other important workers in the newspapers, and their recommendations for ordinary hours of work, application of Industrial Disputes Act, emoluments, minimum wages, city allowance, holidays, essential amenities are reasonable.

The editorial policy of some newspapers came in for a good deal of criticism. Proprietors have dictated to the staff who had but to obey humbly or lose their jobs. One remedy would be to publish from time to time the names of proprietors and real executives of the journals. This would work if the proprietors could not easily get strawmen. An obvious form of the influence of the proprietors appears in the papers which are obliged to sing the praises of the bosses, print their photographs, and advertise their doings in matters which have not the slightest public interest. The right of a proprietor to map out the general policy cannot be taken away, but he should not dictate which news has to appear or to be withheld from the public. The remedy should lie in the diffusion of ownership among many ; or the formation of a Trust. The editor should have individual responsibility and liberty and he should be able to stop an anti-social policy. From this recommendation one can easily guess what is going on behind the curtain.

In the matter of advertisements, Government claimed the right to object to the tone of a paper, communism or communalism and to refuse to help it in sending advertisements. But the witnesses examined in favour of Government were not very consistent about what they meant by "tone" of a paper and seemed to have been oversensitive about their own dignity.

The responsibility of the press means that it should make known from day to day the chief events in the country and in the world, and foster among the masses the appreciation of the Directive Principles embodied in

the Constitution. Freedom of the Press does not mean freedom from responsibility ; an eye should be kept on the common good. Reports should not be twisted, nor significant facts kept out of the picture. Fair comments should be the rule, and the thrusting of news and facts without showing their importance should be avoided. So far, so good ; but we may ask whether commentaries will not be tutored by one or other organisation, or even by Government, giving a false view of the matter ?

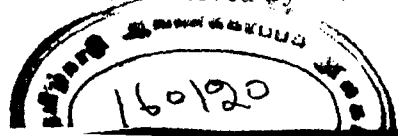
Freedom of the Press should not be confused with licence without any responsibility. Restriction on the Press should be admitted in rare cases when the public has to be protected from information which would be harmful. There should be a clear and present danger, and in this case legislation could be passed defining the meaning of the words "clear and present danger." The press has also duties to perform in regard to friendly relations with other States. However it should be well defined if we don't want to see endless difficulties cropping up about that question. The forfeiture of security is accepted as one of the remedies to stop the mischiefs of the yellow press.

The Press Commission examined some of the recent cases in which "contempt of Legislature" have been brought against editors, and in some of those cases oversensitiveness on the part of the Legislators is clearly discernable. And it is pointed out that when the decisions of the High Court and Supreme Court are liable to be criticized without any action being taken for contempt of court, there appears no reason why legislatures should claim excessive immunity from

criticism in the Press or public. The Courts resort to contempt proceedings in extreme cases only ; why should not the same rule be applied to the legislators ? This oversensitiveness was, perhaps, due, it should have been pointed out by the Press Commission, to ignorance of what democracy really means, and the real position of the representatives. The crime of lèse-majesté has gone by the board with the Majesties in most of the countries of the world ; it should not be reestablished to protect the thousand and odd Majesties of Delhi. Touchiness is often the mark of an inferiority complex.

The same applies to the criticism of Public Servants. The Press Commission accepts the majority view that the defamation of public servants in the discharge of their public duties should not be made a cognizable offence, (entitling the police to arrest the defaulter, and opening the way to much injustice). Public servants have means of redress if they judge themselves unjustly attacked. They should not claim exemption from the Common Law, directing that a magisterial inquiry or police investigation should precede a procedure in defamation for public servants as well as for the rank and file of the citizens. Else it would fetter the Press and would lead to the contempt of the administration. The Press Commission truly remarked that this country has been free from the amount of criticism which is rife in democratic countries. Would it not be good, we may add, if when about to enter the public services, people were made aware that they are public servants, to serve the public and not to be served by it ?

E. Gathier



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