



OUR BOOKSHELF

INDIA A NATION. Mrs. Annie Besant.

This is a remarkable book by a none the less remarkable woman. A marvel of clear thinking, and lucid expression, it is a clear, concise summary of the life, religion, and political aspirations of a wonderful people.

It is probably one of the best contributions ever made to the classic history of the Hindoo people, dealing with the religious, ethical, and political activities of a people not as seen by the outsider, but by one who by association and religious affinity is one of them.

This is the work of a student, a devout lover of the truth as she sees it, an earnest, persevering, and courageous woman with a mission to perform; the greatness of which is only set in relief by the nobility of her character.

The leading figures in Indian thought and culture are here presented with clear delineation, not with a view of placing them on a pedestal or perpetuating their memory, but for the great cause of enlightenment and liberation of an oppressed people.

A chapter is given to the economic questions affecting the people in which the word "drain" has been objected to, as connoting that the burden of the white man on India tends to exhaust her resources. Fifteen pages are given to consideration of an economic nature which leave no room for doubt in the mind of the reader that "India has for several generations been a prey to the profit-seekers of the Western World, who sought to gratify the bondholders and cotton gamblers of Britain, and others who were prepared to take more than they were prepared to return, at the expense of India's man-power and the perversion of her natural resources.

Many excerpts of speeches made by viceroys from the days of Lord Macaulay and others who held prominent positions in the Indian Civil Service are presented at great length. These in themselves are valuable to the student of Indian affairs, as they present the official views and policies of succeeding political parties in power at Westminster, and the deplorable consequences to the governed in India, by the pernicious system of exclusion to all things Indian in every department of state.

The Nationalist movement is almost analogous to the political groups in Ireland. In each case we find the irreconcilables, with their motto, "Home Rule or Nothing," and on the other hand the compromising element who were prepared to suffer indignities and work systematically for the redress of the social and political ills of the people as a stimulus to the greater accomplishment—"Self-government for India."

The chapter on education is extremely interesting, and leaves one deeply moved by the tragedy, enacted to keep the people ignorant and poor in order that they may be kept in submission. Education in the main is carried on by voluntary associations, and the government has signally failed in so far as the instruction given by the regulated body is exclusive of all things Indian. The book concludes with a graphic sketch of the government of India as an autocracy vested in the Secretary of State, and with a plea for nationhood in the following dramatic words:

"O English Nation! great, free, and proud, cannot you understand that your Indian brothers feel now as you would feel if a foreigner ruled your land. A stranger in your own country, with no rights save those given by authority!"

We recommend this book without reserve to all our readers.—I.B.

THE POLICY OF THE ENTENTE 1904-1911.

A reply to Prof. Gilbert Murray by Bertrand Russell, published by the National Labor Press, Manchester, Eng. Obtainable from Headquarters. Price

The writer of this book is a son of Earl Russell and a grandson of one of the Prime Ministers of England who has lately joined the I.L.P. in the Old Land. He was only recently professor of mathematics at Cambridge University. Because he had identified himself with the Socialist movement, and has, during the war, helped to keep alive those traditional prejudices in favor of liberty which characterize his family and brought some of them to the scaffold, he was asked to resign his position at Cambridge. The military authorities in Britain likewise prohibited him from taking up a post at Harvard University and even went so far as to refuse him the right to deliver lectures in Britain during the war.

In his reply to Professor Gilbert Murray, Bertrand Russell criticises the policy of the British Government, urging that such criticism is more likely to benefit England than to injure it. In the introduction he says: "I consider that either a serious weakening by England, France, and Italy, and a serious strengthening of Germany, would be a great misfortune to the civilization of the whole world. I wish ardently to see the Germans expelled from France and Belgium and compelled to feel that the war is a misfortune for them as well as for the Allies. But there are other things forgotten by most men in the excitement of battle which seem to me of greater importance. It is important that peace should come as soon

as possible lest European civilization should perish out of the world."

The writer directs his chief attack against the foreign policy of the entente, which Professor Gilbert Murray had defended in his book "The Foreign Policy of Sir Edward Grey, 1906-15." Students of foreign policy throughout the world have generally mocked at Professor Murray's version of Sir Edward Grey as being an over-fulsome eulogy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In Bertrand Russell we find a refreshing advocate of openness in diplomacy savouring somewhat of idealism. In his vigorous narrative, he uses Morocco as a medium for unmasking the sins of secret diplomacy, backing up his exposition by reference to the diplomacy that led to the partition of Persia by Russia and Britain in 1911 and the dismissal of Mr. Shuster (who formerly was an American financial official in the Philippines) after the Russian ultimatum had been presented to the Persian Government on November 29, 1911.

Perhaps one of his most effective chapters is that in which he outlines what the policy ought to have been. According to his viewpoint, in helping to suppress the Russian Revolution, we were not only committing a crime against humanity, but we were also preventing the refutation of the chief argument by which the military party has appealed to the ordinary citizen of Germany. The arguments of militarists have everywhere been based on fear. Powerful neighbors, they say, are ready to attack us. We must prepare or we shall be overwhelmed. Russia was the chief bogie used by the German militarists for their purpose. If the Russian

revolution had been successful and had met with successful outcome, this bogie would have ceased to be efficacious and a liberal programme in Germany would have stood a far better chance of fruition. By rehabilitating the Russian aristocracy, we took one of the surest means of reinforcing German militarism. The splendid appeal with which he concludes is well worth quoting: "The interests of the British democracy do not conflict at any point with the interests of mankind. The interests of the British governing class conflict at many points with the interests of mankind. The quest of a new colony does not raise the wages of British labor, but it affords posts for younger sons and attractive investments for capitalists. For this reason a policy of adventure and national prestige appeals most forcibly to the rich, while the wage-earning class, if it understood its own interests and were not caught by the glamour of jingo phrases, would insist upon a policy of peace and international conciliation. It is to be hoped that when democracy realizes, as it now will, its vital interest in foreign policy, it will compel the party representing it to adopt such a program as all phases of humanity would desire."

The book is exceedingly well written in a style that is both brilliant and interesting. For the information which it contains, it is worthy of a place in every thinker's library.

J.M.C.

HOW THE CANADA BREAD COMPANY PUTS IT OVER; OR, THE IRISHMAN'S RISE.

The miserable wages paid by this corporation for some two years has been the cause of much dissension amongst its non-union employes, with the consequence that the company in the spring of this year saw the necessity of increasing the wages of its workmen by \$1.00 per week and the granting of a from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per week. We presume from what took place that the company were not dominated by humane or philanthropic considerations, but rather the trade incentive of cribbing other companies' business and getting the men to work live slaves in order to increase their earnings, the company thereby benefiting by the increased sales.

Commission is not wages and can be eliminated any time the company desires; at least, from what took place, we are justified in forming that opinion. The company posted a notice the day before that on which the men usually received their pay, stating that commission would be discontinued until bread reached the selling price of 10c. per loaf.

We are informed that the elimination of the commission hitherto paid has reduced the salesmen's earning power from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per week. We would like to know what justification the company have (other than their power to take) for such outrageous actions in view of the phenomenal increase in the cost of living.

It is reported the companies who retailed bread at a lower price than the company referred to have been whipped into line, and now the Canada Bread monopolists can increase the price without any adverse effect on their daily sales.

The workers of this company would do well to ponder the words of Karl Marx, spoken more than forty years ago: "If you refuse to resist the encroachments of capitalism you will be crushed down to the level of brute beasts."

A Socialist Calendar..

We are preparing a beautiful high grade Socialist Calendar—a useful, attractive, educative piece of work. Order early from headquarters, supply is very limited.

THE "CLASS - LINE"

Picture One

The Duchess, who is very slight, was wearing a lovely gown of pearl grey charmeuse, made long and trailing, with a beautiful wide sable stole and muff, and hat of dull blue with plumes. Her daughters, Lady Maud and Lady Blanche Cavendish, were both dressed alike in suits of bottle green lady cloth with white fox stoles and muffs. Lady Maud's hat being small with sealskin crown and band of French blue, Lady Blanche wearing a black velvet picture hat.

Lady Hendrie looked handsome in a black velvet suit, black velvet hat with high upstanding osprey, and magnificent silver fox furs. Miss Enid Hendrie was in black velvet, with white hat and white fox collar.—Daily Press.

Your Excellency comes to us during a momentous period, when all the resources of our Empire are enlisted in the great struggle for liberty, humanity and the cause of free institutions, and when the energies of the Canadian people are pledged, heart and soul, to the successful prosecution of the war. In this stern duty upon which we entered with instant and unwavering resolve and from which we shall in no way recede, your Excellency may rest assured that no exertion can prove too exacting and no sacrifice too great to insure that the Empire our forefathers helped to preserve and extend, and for which their descendants to-day are proud to die, may be passed on in unimpaired splendor to those who come after us.

It is a source of gratification that at this juncture, when the aid of a wise and experienced counsellor is of paramount importance, his Majesty should be represented in Canada by the head of a family rendered conspicuous for centuries by high-minded devotion to the interests of the State, and by that zeal for the public welfare which has given permanence and strength to the British rule throughout the world.—Premier Hearst in his Provincial Address.

Picture Two

Hamilton, Ont.—Machinists are still out on strike. Their fight for better wages and better conditions has been on since early last spring.

"In the factories of this town children from 11 years of age are employed at the most miserable wages. Especially is this noticeable in the factory owned by R. J. Ball, M.P., where young girls are employed in the manufacture of chairs."—Correspondent in Hanover (Ont.).

Fernie, B.C., Nov. 28.—This morning the Fernie coke oven employes laid down their tools in sympathy with the miners who suspended yesterday, demanding a war bonus increase proportionate with the increased cost of living.

The residents of Coalhurst this morning found themselves without water. The company operating the mines there also controls the water supply system, and without warning cut off the water supply to the inhabitants.

Toronto.—C. P. E. freight handlers have been on strike for more wages. The strike has made public the fact that the majority of these men, despite the enormously increased cost of living, have been receiving only \$10 and \$12 to keep themselves and families alive.

A Socialist Christmas Card

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