

News and Views

World Congress of Faiths (Continuation Movement)

As a result of the first World Congress of Faiths held in London in July 1936 (see *NATURE*, 138, 1; 155) a Continuation Movement to promote further the objects of the Congress was inaugurated with the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda as international president and Sir Francis Younghusband as chairman. It is now announced that a week-end intensive Congress will be held at Oxford on July 23-27, when the subject for deliberation will be "The World's Need of Religion". Addresses for discussion will be delivered by members from the different religions, and devotional meetings will be led by representatives of the various faiths. A symposium on "Can Politics replace Religion?" will be conducted from three distinctive points of view, and at a public meeting to be held in the Oxford Town Hall on the evening of July 24 addresses will be given on the subject of "The World's Need of Religion". It may be recalled that the Congress was organized to promote a spirit of fellowship among mankind through religion, and "to awaken and develop a world loyalty, while allowing full play for the diversity of men, nations and faiths". It is, therefore, essentially a movement that is both international and inter-denominational in the broadest sense of the term.

At the successful London meeting, a large number of distinguished and representative members of the great religious faiths of the world were present, and spoke in support of the objects of the Congress, more especially in so far as they were directed to the promotion of world peace through the co-operation of men of the spirit in all countries and of all faiths. Since, however, the spirit of fellowship, which it is believed by promoters of the Congress is latent in man, needs to be intensified if it is to work out its effect to the full, the Continuation Movement seeks support with that end in view. Particulars of the Oxford meeting, at which accommodation for members will be provided at Balliol and Somerville Colleges, forms of application for membership, etc., are to be obtained from the Secretary, World Congress of Faiths, B/M Congress, London, W.C.1.

Cultural Contrast and Government in India

THE debate in the House of Lords on April 8 on the situation in India arising out of the inauguration of the new constitution made apparent, in the gravity of the issues shown to be involved, the need for a common idiom as between races and creeds such as is sought by the World Congress of Faiths. The lucid and well-balanced statement by the Marquess of Zetland in particular brought into high relief the justice of the frequently repeated contention that, in the clash of culture contact, understanding grounded on a knowledge of local culture and history

alone can alleviate and remove the inevitable misconceptions and friction, which arise in the fusion of mutually alien civilizations. In India, the freedom of democratic institutions, notwithstanding the misgivings expressed by those who claimed with reason an understanding of Eastern mentality, has been bestowed upon an oriental community, which has behind it a lengthy tradition, extending over centuries and even thousands of years, of submission to autocratic control. The resulting conflict, if the intransigence of the extremists of the Congress Party be ignored, is expressed on one side in Mr. Gandhi's explanation and amplification of the demand for the unqualified and unconstitutional abrogation of the powers of the Provincial Governors, and on the other in Lord Lothian's letter to *The Times* of April 6 and Lord Zetland's speech in the House of Lords. On one hand, the British Government and the British people are willing and anxious now that the die has been cast, to give every freedom to the peoples of India to win their way through responsible government to a position of independence within the Empire, yet they are at a loss before the naive simplicity of the over-subtle Eastern mind; on the other hand, Mr. Gandhi, who, whatever opinion may be held of his policy and political methods in the past, embodies, especially in the eyes of his co-religionists, all that is best and highest in Hindu culture, in common with others of his creed is unable to enter into an understanding of an honestly intended generosity which rests upon no legal bond as he understands it.

Hours of Employment of Young Persons

A SERIOUS gap in our social legislation is exposed by the report of the Committee on the Hours of Employment of Young Persons. Since the Factory and Workshop Act of 1901 and the Shops Act of 1934, limits have been set to the number of hours during which a young person may work, as well as to the amount of overtime and night work. A large class, estimated by the Committee at 125,000, still remains which is not covered by this legislation and is liable to be grossly overworked. This class consists mainly of van boys, hotel pages, messengers, cinema ushers, and the like. The chief objections to these forms of employment are that they are often spread out over long hours, that in busy periods there is no limit to the possible overtime that may be demanded and that often the jobs lead nowhere. That such a position should arise in so new an industry as the cinema industry indicates how sadly overdue is a real attempt to deal with recruitment on quantitative as well as qualitative lines, and the whole report strengthens the case for a scientific approach to the question of recruitment. The recommendations of the Committee include fixed hours, intervals for rest, weekly holidays,