

power project normally it three years to complete as been sanctioned and all financial allocations have de; hydro projects, of take much longer. If projects intended to meet demands of the present taken up for execution power from them will be- lable only towards, the fage Plan or, *more* likely, in *ring of the next* Plan. In ext., the suggestion made by the Chairman of the Electricity Board that the r power planning should the middle of one Five n to the middle of the eves to be carefully consi- his will not involve plan- - longer periods than at accept in the first instance, the power plan will ex- five years only but it will wo-and-a-half y e a r s if the overall plan.

Mauritius

bondent writes :

dy of Mauritius, a colony looks forward to self-gov- makes no reference to changes. Dyarchy is now and the Chief Minister of s is Dr Sewgooram Ram- i labour leader who has as a moderate. The fact Indian is the key figure in as. in spite of having orga- sugarj industry workers, notice, as the island is anthan African in compo- outlook and can now be red from Zanzibar with aristocracy looking away pan-African nationalists, ence on .sugar export or tence of French influence significance than the posi- e island in the rupee area, account of Mauritius' position or prospects can in the annual reports of Sank and the fact that only cong and Shanghai Bank ed in Mauritius may de- notice. Indian Banks looked Mauritius because asof business are email. In India-aspires now to sell Africa as a rival of Mauri- Economic Weekly, May 26, 839.

tius, Whether a comparison with another sugar island, Fiji with its large Indian element is appropriate is debatable. But the island of Mauritius has no old, indigenous element and the immigrants constitute the majority. There is a food problem but the tropical island can pay for its occasional excess of im- ports, though hurricanes have caused much damage in recent years.

The interest shown by local resi- dents in Indian culture is perhaps not deep but the absence of reli- gious and cultural missions from India to the emigrants there can- not be denied. In any case. India has shown more interest in emer- gent African nationalism. A notice of Mauritius in an Indian news- paper a few weeks ago contained no reference to the island being in the rupee area (like Aden in the past) or the fact that local political lead- ership was secure in the hands of Dr Ramgoolam who is quite un- known here because he has exper- ienced 'no ups and downs like Dr Cheddi Jagan. Dr Rarngoolam's *socialist* bias was mentioned in the *New Commonwealth* (December 1961) along with his practical grip of affairs, arising from 20 years of active work as a trade unionist and social worker. He may be descri- bed as a V I P whom India has miss- ed or who has missed India. But his concern has been to hold the balance not against the Creoles but against the Chinese whose racial memory is not less strong than that of Indians,

Letter to Editor

Government Payments

T H E comment on payment proce- dure in the public administra- tion and perhaps the public .sector may appear to some incomplete be- cause it does not mention one result of dilatory or irregular payments. There is no reason to maintain here a well-bred reticence about corrup- tion. To secure payment of dues in time, it has become necessary to pay bribes and even if the giver of bribes is an offender to some ex- tent under the law. the delay as- suredly breeds corruption. For passing bills due all on the offi- cial ladder expect illegal gratifica- tion and it is only the Special Police Establishment that can offer recent and apt instances.

How far delay in receipts of con- tractors raises the cost of tenders for work is an issue that needs to be examined by experts. If it is known that payment for work done is inexcusably late the contractor may be disposed to inflate charges, more justified as belated official pay- ment comes in depreciated paper currency. The remote results of excessive official delay are serious for the taxpayer too and the pro- blem is. not really one for banks extending accommodation.

What was done by the Supply Department during the war to en- courage the war effort may be reckoned as of limited significance at present. Bur the slower turnover of a part of business is an obstacle of sorts to those who feel that rapid economic growth is to be expected as of right. The Organisation and Methods Division may lay down rules so as to limit current liabili- ties in relation to current assets, for instance', in the engineering in- dustry but the purchase organisa- tion expected to handle more money and material must take a leaf from the book of private business. To get discounts for payment in cash may not be an ignoble aim if sup- pliers are willing to forego *some* benefit. The fact that certain in- dustries depend on one big buyer who dictates terms a- sonic say. may be even an argument for celerity in meeting claims for supplies made

The encouragement of small in- dustry depends largely on what is paid, and when, by the big parties and the whole value of orders may be destroyed by delay in meeting bills due. The consequence*; can be moral as well as material, and those who speak for small business and subcontracting should impress on the authorities that in some cases, payment delayed is payment denied.

M K RAMAMURTHY

Madras.
May 25.

A Correction

The title of the Weekly Note on p 829 in the issue of May 26. 1062 should read "Scrounging for Cotton" and not "Scourging for Cotton" as was wrongly printed.