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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE news of Sir Sankaran Nair's resignation wired by the Associated Press from Simla has not yet been officially confirmed. The circumstances that could have led to such a momentous step on the part of Sir Sankaran must have been serious indeed. It could have been thought of only as a last resort and as a cumulative effect of a series of cases in which his own decision having been systematically overridden the resigning member felt compelled to obtain relief from a position of utter impotence. The whole tone of Sir Sankaran Nair's dissenting minute, which has been published along with the Government of India's despatch regarding the Reforms, is suggestive of a systematic policy of obstruction on the part of the Government which Sir Sankaran must have encountered in the performance of his official duties. Rumour has it that what has brought about a crisis in Sir Sankaran's relations with his colleagues and the Viceroy is the state of affairs in the Punjab and the policy pursued there. If there is any truth in this rumour we still hope that the situation and Government's policy in regard to it will so charge that it will be possible for Sir Sankaran to continue in office.

HAPPILY, the regime of Sir Michael O'Dwyer has now ended and the reins of office have fallen into the hands of an administrator of a more equitable temperament. We have never disguised our own firm moral conviction that the occurrences in the Punjab, which have come to be known, did not justify the militarist regime that has been inaugurated there. When there was a talk of passive resistance in times past, Sir Michael O'Dwyer had warned

'agitators' like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others that in their own interest they should keep out of the Punjab. We believe the temper evinced in such a threat is in a greater degree responsible for the reign of terror that now prevails in the Punjab than, perhaps, any actual events, bad as they are, that may have happened there. The day of reckoning is, however, yet to come; for we make no doubt that after the withdrawal of the martial law a part of the action taken under it will be judicially tested. In the meanwhile, the finding of an independent commission of inquiry is needed to satisfy the public mind that needless severities have not been perpetrated simply to strike terror into the hearts of the people. The Punjab is not so isolated from the rest of the country that nothing that passes there can be known outside. If half of the things that it is said are happening there in the name of law and order be true, they disclose a perilous condition of affairs. We hope Sir Michael's retirement will facilitate the speedy restoration to the normal state of affairs. In any case the Punjab will heave a sigh of relief that Sir Michael's term of office has come to an end.

New India has been led by its zeal for Home Rule into a very unjust criticism of the Functions Committee's recommendations. It is wide of the mark to represent them as whittling down responsible government "to almost insignificant proportions" and as conceding "practically no autonomy at all." Mr. V. Chakkarai's estimate, given in the same paper, corresponds more nearly to facts, viz., that the committee's proposals are "substantial" and that they "give a large measure of responsible government to the legislative council." *New India*, we suspect, ascribes to the committee the proposals which have emanated from the Government of India. To the latter's dispatch the description applies truly enough. The paper says in one place, "When the committee come to consider revenue, they divide it into two parts—allocating one part to the officials for the reserved subjects and the other part to the minister for the transferred subjects." This is a proposal not of the Reform Committee, but of the Government of India, and it is unfair to transfer to the former the censure which belongs to the latter.

THE Government of India's dispatch of 5th March is said to have been issued to the Press on Sunday last. It has not yet reached us.

AN APPEAL.

WE respectfully appeal to the Government to allay the fear entertained and the widespread rumours going about all over the country regarding the situation in the Punjab. The fact that intercourse with that province is not free, that independent investigation is not allowed, and even the orders of the Viceroy do not get obeyed as in the case of the permission to Mr. Andrews, and that everywhere in the disturbed areas there is the reign of the martial law gives free scope to such rumours. Under such circumstances no amount of eloquence on the part of its late ruler can carry any conviction to the impartial outsider. Those who know this country are fully aware that, in a province ruled with an iron hand, any number of deputations presenting any kind of fulsome addresses can easily be got up. We do not say that they are so got up; but we only say that the situation offers a ripe field for such suspicions. It is not in the best interests of the country that such an attitude of suspicion should be widely entertained. An atmosphere of this type is almost the worst conceivable for the inauguration of a reform scheme. It is time that an independent inquiry should be held which would induce absolute confidence in the public mind.

In spite of the much advertised cries of *Martial Law Ki Jai*, one can easily see that people would not exactly welcome a regime in which the military can commandeer anything they like including electric fans and lights and the motor car of an Indian Judge, where boys are not allowed to use bi-cycles, where going out at night is forbidden, where public whipping took place in the beginning, where the accused are not allowed to get from other provinces the legal advisers whom they want and cannot get them from their own province, as the lawyers there are dreadfully afraid of appearing to take the side of a suspect even in a professional way. If such things are welcomed, humanity in the Punjab must be something different from that elsewhere. Even if this be true, we would like an independent inquiry into the reasons which have so radically altered human temperament in that province.

If all the rumours one hears be true, even if a small fraction of them are true, the state of things there must be extraordinary. The methods in which the riots were suppressed, and the people terrorised and cowed down do require investigation. If one may compare small things with great, we remember to have read in English papers violent attacks against the methods of the Germans in Belgium in the early days of the war. The Germans claimed to have pacified Belgium by their methods which were for the time quite effective, though they involved the killing of a few thousand Belgians. We take leave to inform Government that rumour credits the Punjab Government and its martial law authorities with having similarly shown greater concern for immediate effect

than for requirements of scrupulous justice. Only we must acknowledge and gladly mention the fact that rumour does not mention the molestation of women and children in general as in Belgium. We do not wish to go into particulars, but the fact of the existence of the rumours is undoubted. The numbers of the killed at Amritsar and other places are greatly exaggerated by the rumour; the bombing of the people from aeroplanes at Gujranvala came as a great shock and outsiders wondered whether the British forgot their outcries against the German air-raiders who shot women and children indiscriminately. The Germans had made several charges against the Belgians to justify their strong measures. But the British people would not take these charges at their face value unless they were regularly investigated. Lord Bryce led a commission to examine all the evidence before them in regard to these charges and to the methods of the Germans. Should not something similar be done in the present case? We want an independent commission to investigate the matter, and we shall be very pleased if the rumours are once for all authoritatively shown to be baseless. The Commission would also find out if the situation is in any degree due to methods of recruiting. We would propose the name of Lord Bryce himself for the head of the Commission. Anybody giving evidence before it should be assured of a free pardon and full freedom from any future trouble from the police. If the military or other authorities in India oppose such an independent inquiry, they will only expose themselves to the suspicion that there is something to be hidden and that the military mind is the same all over, whether in Germany or India. We again appeal for a full, free and impartial inquiry to allay public apprehensions.

SOCIAL RELATIONS.

SEVERAL papers have recently opened their columns to correspondence on the important question of the social relations between Indians and Europeans. In fact, there is no doubt that a good part of the problem of India would be solved if this question were satisfactorily settled. So far as we can see, however, there is not much chance of a better state of things coming into existence in the present circumstances; the question of social relations will be really solved after the general political problem of India is settled. This may seem a pessimistic conclusion to the discussion; but we can see no other.

It must be understood that we are thinking only of good friendly social relations as between equals—equals in character, education, mental and moral equipment and approximately even in material circumstances. Of course, there can be a sort of social intercourse between unequals as when the Saheb is invited to grace a wedding ceremony in the house of his subordinate or when a ruling chief or a zemindar gives a big

dinner party to Europeans whom he may or may not have known. But in such cases the host always expects to get a *quid pro quo* in some form or other. The subordinate hopes to rise in the superior's favour, the chief wishes to get some title, and so on. This is not real social intercourse; no earthly good can come from it; the European will accept the hospitality and despise the host, and the Indian will fawn upon the European in his presence and lower his own self-respect.

If there were no other factors in the problem, some social intercourse with the European would be possible for the so-called westernised Indian. But such is almost always the *bete noire* of the average European who is content and often willing to show some patronising condescension to the Indian who knows his place. There used to be many such in former days; but their number is rapidly decreasing with the advance of education and the attainment of wider outlook by the educated Indian. Unless, therefore, the European is prepared to forego the pleasure of patronising, it is useless for him to expect to meet many Indians on a footing of equality. But it is difficult, indeed, to obtain these conditions. None can forget the fact of the existence of the two races, one politically superior and the other politically inferior. This racial prejudice is one of the hardest things to get rid of. It often appears in the most unlikely places. A third-rate European, even though he may be actuated by the most sympathetic feelings towards Indian aspirations, claims unconsciously an importance in Indian gatherings out of all proportion to his intrinsic merit; and unfortunately many of our own people are but too ready to give it to him. Hence, for true social intercourse, the sense of condescension on one side and the sense of excessive awe on the other have to disappear before the problem is properly solved.

The smaller questions that have been raised will then appear in their true perspective. The seclusion of women in India is steadily disappearing among educated circles; even the knowledge of English is not now such a rare commodity among Indian women. There must always be some give-and-take in such matters. Indians refuse—and rightly refuse—to leave their own manners and customs just for the pleasure of receiving an occasional European friend. Just as an Indian does not expect to be provided with his own usual food or to squat on the ground for meals in a European's house, so should a European not expect to receive his own animal food or intoxicating drinks in the house of an Indian, to whom or to whose family both these are naturally unpalatable. One writer complained that an Indian never returned an invitation to dinner. But the Indian knows that the European will not care to eat and drink in his own way. If Indians knew that they would be prepared to do so, there would be many more such occasions than there are. As it is, only a few Indians who have given up their old ways and live in European style can ask European

friends to dinner at their own houses; others occasionally try to return the hospitality by a dinner at the club or at a hotel; but this is after all only a very inferior alternative.

Then, again, there is the question of means. Indians who are by character and culture considered to belong to the higher middle class among themselves are generally considerably poorer than Europeans of the same status. The two may be approximately equal in social status in their own circles; but the European can afford hospitality far better than the Indian. This being so, it is rather ungracious, almost ungentlemanly, to complain of a want of return hospitality. This is perfectly well understood among Indians themselves. Two Indians, one of whom earns two thousand and the other two hundred, are often very good friends, enjoying each other's hospitality to such an extent as each can afford. There may be other artificial distinctions among Indians like those of caste which, however, are disappearing so far as social intercourse is concerned among the better educated; but Indians are not divided on the basis of wealth. So far as one can see, wealth is one of the main *fundamenta divisionis* among the westerners. This consideration then is another of the smaller obstacles to free intercourse.

It is often contended that Indians are keen on invading the special preserves of Europeans like their Gymkhanas, Yacht Clubs, &c. The reason for this keenness if there is such, though we doubt its magnitude, is that the admission to these circles is necessary for one to be in the centre of things. Many things are talked or decided at clubs which afterwards appear in the form of accomplished facts. If an Indian Collector who lives in a completely English style is not admitted to such a club, he will certainly not command as much respect at the hands of his subordinates as a European Collector who is free of such circles. *In vino veritas!* A great number of mistaken opinions often get circulated through the medium of such clubs. If reports be believed, unfavourable opinions about even the greatest Indian officers get formed there, and a European subordinate of an Indian superior is able to prejudice the powers that be against him. Common people are also naturally prone to attribute a sort of inferiority to an Indian who does not belong to these circles. In the case of non-officials also, opportunities of intercourse at clubs are often utilised to further private ends in a variety of ways. This, of course, is done in no conscious spirit; but when, for instance, a concession in the interests of business is sought for by two persons, one of whom is known to you socially and the other is known to you only on paper or in the formal atmosphere of the office, you will have to be more than human if you are invariably able to overcome the natural bias in favour of the first. The economic value of a European partner in business, even though he may be a sleeping partner, is well recognised in commercial

circles; and this value is due to some such considerations.

Several years ago the late Mr. Gokhale, while still a member of the Deccan Education Society, was once asked by a high official why the Society made such a point of having an entirely Indian staff and why they did not admit a European among them. Mr. Gokhale's answer put the point clearly. In the first place, he said that a European was not likely to join the Society on its usual terms which involved some sacrifice and practically enforced poverty on its members. In the second place, if it was suggested that Government would be willing to make up this loss to him, still his presence would be inconvenient, for the European would be able to meet the higher powers in social circles and inoculate them with his own views when he had a difference of opinion with his colleagues. No chance would be given to his colleagues to put forward their own case at an early enough stage, and hence on a crucial occasion the single European would be the master in a body organised on purely democratic principles of equality. On account of this risk, said Mr. Gokhale, the practice was on the whole salutary for the stability of the body, and the Society acted correctly in refusing instinctively to take over the Deccan College which was proposed to it by the Government of Lord Reay, when coupled with the condition that the principal was to be always a European. This little piece of history well shows the opinion of the greatest Indian of recent times who by the way had very great social gifts and who, if anybody, was often in English society.

UNCOMPROMISING OPPOSITION.

READERS of the SERVANT OF INDIA will remember that in July last I wrote in these columns a wholehearted appreciation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme published a few days earlier. They will further remember that I also suggested certain improvements and extensions with the double object of making the Scheme more conveniently workable and making the power proposed to be given to our countrymen more real and substantial. Two conclusions would clearly have been drawn from that article: (1) that I considered the Scheme a genuinely liberal one and worthy of our grateful acceptance; (2) that I did not consider it as liberal in certain important respects as it well might have been without any of its essential features being impaired. During the intervening months the Moderate or Liberal Party of Indian Congressmen have made two things unmistakable: (1) that while they did want certain alterations in the Scheme they supported it and wanted to see it translated into an Act of Parliament; (2) that they would resolutely oppose any attempt at whittling it down. A separate resolution was devoted to this latter point at their All-India Conference held in Bombay in November last, and the speeches that Sir Hormusjee Wadya and the Hon'ble Principal Paranjpye made on the occa-

sion may now be read by the members of the Government of India with some profit. The same point was emphasised in strong language in the manifesto published in January and also in the resolution of the Committee of the All-India Conference passed a month ago in Calcutta. I mention this at such length to show that the one test by which the supporters of the Scheme judge the Government of India's despatch published a few days ago is furnished by the position taken up by them consistently since July last. As the reports of the Southborough Committee and the Government of India's despatch thereon have also been published I should draw attention to the opinion they have throughout expressed on the question of franchise, the strength and composition of councils and the list of transferred subjects. In brief, they urge that the franchise should be as broad as possible, that the councils should be so enlarged and so constituted as to be truly representative of all classes of the community and that the largest possible number of subjects should be included in the transferred list. Therefore, while it may be a matter for consideration how far the recommendations of the Southborough Committees are satisfactory to public opinion, it is undoubted that anything less than what the Committees have recommended cannot possibly be acceptable. Have the Government of India in their despatches on the Committees' reports sought to whittle down the recommendations? If the answer to this question is in the affirmative, it must follow that we must decline to support the Government view as against that of the Committees.

With great regret but without any hesitation, I feel bound to say that in all their despatches the Government of India have displayed a disposition to narrow the scope and minimise the utility of the proposed reform as much as they could do without assuming an attitude of frank hostility to the Scheme. If their opinion should unfortunately prevail what we shall have may be summarised somewhat as follows: In the provinces now administered by civilians the Governors of the future will also be civilians. In the three presidencies the want of a civilian Governor will be made up for by the retention of a second civilian executive councillor. In all provinces the position of ministers will be undisguisedly inferior to that of councillors. They will be like footballs kicked from one end by a Governor endowed with much more autocratic powers than he now possesses anywhere, and from the other end by a legislative council consisting of a substantial majority of elected members. The Governor will not be bound in any respect to act on the advice of ministers; but the latter may be required by him to resign office if the legislative council expresses disapproval of an act forced upon them in spite of themselves by the Governor. The ministers will be subordinate to the Governor but responsible to the legislature. Refusal to resign will be met by dismissal. If, in the circumstances, other members

of the council will show a natural and commendable disinclination to step into the shoes of the late lamented ministers the council will be punished by being dissolved. If the self-respecting electors return a new council not including a couple of self-seekers who will oblige the Governor by accepting office, the Governor will remain safe and secure as ever, but the province will be punished (and incidentally Mr. Montagu will be avenged) by minister-ships and transferred departments being abolished and the *status quo ante* being resumed by the whole Government being placed in charge of the Governor-in-Council. Let it be noted that the position of the legislative council in relation to the Governor-in-Council is avowedly to be that of an advisory body. Furthermore, the heads of departments and the officers of imperial and provincial services generally on whose loyal and willing cooperation the success of ministers will depend are to be guaranteed by the legislature a firm position in which they can well afford to snap their fingers at a minister who will not make himself their obedient servant. I deliberately make the challenging statement that if the Government of India's proposals are accepted by higher authority I should like to meet the capable and self-respecting Indian who will accept the office of the minister in any province. The original Congress-League scheme has been riddled with destructive criticism on the ground that it confers power upon the legislature leaving responsibility with the Governor-in-Council. What the Government of India's proposals do is to burden this Governor-in-Council with a legislature so constituted that it may on nine questions out of ten pass resolutions against his wishes and yet he will have to carry on the Government in the teeth of the hostile legislature. The financial arrangements proposed in the Montagu Scheme—is it any longer necessary to call it the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme?—were not its strongest part; but the Government of India have an easy way out of the difficulty. They would give absolutely no power over the finances of the province. I must make one reservation to this statement. The unfortunate minister will have to resign office if the council passes a budget resolution opposed by him, whether of his free will or because he was ordered by his master, the Governor, to do so. With solemn mockery the Government of India define the position of the would-be analogue of the English Parliamentary under-secretary. The office will have no statutory recognition; it is to be created or not at the will of the executive; it is to be honorary; its duration may be anything. The proposals of the Government of India with regard to standing committees may be contrasted with those embodied in the Scheme. We shall be forced to the same conclusion, *viz.*, that the Government of India were apparently anxious to combine a real rejection of the Scheme with a seeming acquiescence in it. There was no unanimity of opinion among the supporters of the Scheme on the proposed grand committees; but there is likely to be unani-

mity among them in summarily rejecting what the Government of India offer under this head. The composition of the grand committees is to be no more liberal than that of existing legislative councils. The Governor's right of certification is to be enlarged, and the legislative council is to be deprived of the right to make a reference to the Government of India against the Governor's decision. The Scheme was the least satisfactory as regards the central Government. The Government of India's proposals make it much more unsatisfactory. The strangely un-British doings of the Government in the Punjab without one word of remonstrance from the Government of India, and with silent acquiescence from the Secretary of State have prompted the inquiries: Is there a Government of India? and, Where is the Secretary of State? Many of us feel much more strongly now than we did until a couple of months ago that it is essential for us to press for an effective voice in the central Government instead of being put off with the phrase: "Delhi is yet far off." (*Hanoz Delhi dur ast*)

In dealing with the Franchise Committee's report, which I am bound to say might have been less perfunctory than it is, the Government of India naively propose a substantial reduction of the strength of the electors in provinces where electorates of respectable dimensions have been recommended, while the variations that the Government propose in the composition of the councils are in several respects the reverse of being improvements over the Committee's recommendations. The Government of India's despatch on the report of the Functions Committee is reactionary. What it does is to take away from the Committee's recommendations the subjects of secondary and higher education and the development of industries included in the transferred list. The Hon'ble Sir Sankaran Nair has dealt with this part of the Government of India's despatch with signal ability and in doing so has faithfully voiced the opinion of his countrymen.

Here I may leave the subject. It will have been seen that the test by which the supporters of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme are bound to judge the Government of India's proposals can lead them but to one conclusion. They must bend every particle of their energy to resist those proposals. In 1909 the Government of India admirably succeeded in nullifying the good that Lord Morley's Indian Councils Act was designed to do. They achieved their task by the device, of which bureaucracies are unsurpassed masters, of framing regulations which cut up in detail what was conceded in principle. They are now engaged in an identical task. Mr. Balfour complained in Parliament in speaking on the Indian Councils Bill that it gave a blank cheque to the Indian executive. We know how the cheque has been filled. If we are wise in our generation, if we are not "by lesson untaught," it is our duty now to see that a similar disservice to the national cause is rendered im-

possible. Our decision has been made for us by the position we have consistently taken throughout the last ten months. We must be no parties to the Government of India's proposals. We must oppose them. Our attitude has got to be uncompromising.

C. Y. CHINTAMANI.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S PROPOSALS.

YOUR invitation for an expression of my opinion on the Southborough Committee's report and the despatch of the Government of India came to me when I was just leaving Ellore for Bombay on my way to England. It is a matter of regret that the Government of India have not as yet made the reports available to the general public, but have merely contented themselves so far by placing the reports on the Editors' table. I have, therefore, read the extracts that have appeared in the Press in a cursory way, but since my arrival in Bombay yesterday, I have had an opportunity of looking hurriedly through the whole report and the despatches of the Government of India on the Southborough Reports and also their despatch of the 5th March. The frequent references to the latter document in the despatch on the Southborough Report made it incumbent on the Government of India to publish the earlier despatches, and with them we now have the views of the local Governments, the tentative alternative scheme of the heads of provinces and other important papers which must be of great interest at the present moment. As I am leaving the country in a day or two and will not have an early opportunity of expressing my opinion on the points raised, I shall briefly refer to a few topics.

Sir Sankaran Nair.—At the outset it is necessary to make a brief reference to the minutes of dissent of Sir Sankaran Nair both in regard to the Reforms Report and also in connection with the Southborough Reports. The views of the Indian progressive party have been stated by him with thoroughness, and the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to him. The attempt made by the Government of India and the local Governments to whittle down reforms will have a most unfortunate effect throughout the country. The Government of India assert that the scheme in the Reforms Report "in all its essentials has their full adherence and that it was not their purpose to whittle down the scheme or to expand it." They proceed to state that their aim in making their proposals was to make the scheme a working plan. They claim that the modifications suggested by them to the scheme are required by four universal tests of administrative machinery, *viz.*, the smoothness or friction in working, its burdensomeness or otherwise to the people, its educative value and the capacity for further development. We now have to see whether these essential conditions are satisfied by their proposals.

Budget Control.—One of the most important proposals in regard to provincial Governments made in the original report was that the provincial legislative councils should vote the budget as a whole and that the Governor should have exceptional powers to restore the disallowed allotments. While the system of reserved and transferred services divided the Government into two halves, the unity of the budget, it was considered, will give the legislative council the necessary financial control over the whole field of provincial administration. It was this view that reconciled many critics to the system of diarchy which was considered inevitable under the circumstances. The authors of the Report foresaw many objections even to this system of a modified diarchy, and public opinion in the country was fully directed to the discussion of this system. The Reforms Committee did not deviate from the proposals about financial control. But the Government of India have now made certain alternative proposals for a separate purse for each part of the Government. They recommend a definite division of resources between the two halves of the Government. The resources of the ministers are to be different from those of the executive council. In regard to taxation, the original Report made it clear that all new taxation should be imposed only with the consent of the ministers, but in the name of the whole Government. The Government of India propose that each part of the Government "should be free to impose a new tax for its purposes." Similarly either half of the Government may borrow for its own purposes. Proposals made in this behalf are to be debated by the Government as a whole, and if one part of the Government opposes the other, the Governor is to step in and decide the matter finally. We thus see that if opinion is divided as to the imposition of a tax, "the consent of the Governor is to be the deciding factor," and that the responsibility of ministers for all new taxation as proposed in the Report is to be shifted to the Governor, if the Government of India's proposals are accepted. In regard to the budget, the Reforms Report proposed that the financial resolutions adopted in the legislative councils on the whole field of the administration should be binding on the Government unless vetoed by the Governor. The Government of India now suggest that budget resolutions should be wholly recommendatory, that those relating to the reserved services should not be binding on the Governor-in-Council and that those in relation to the transferred services should be in the same position, but that the ministers may have to consider, if a resolution is carried against them, whether they would remain in office or resign. The far-reaching effect of these proposals is a matter for the most serious consideration. If these proposals are accepted, there can be no doubt that all popular control will practically disappear. I have dealt at some length with this important subject of financial control by the provincial legislative councils, as this is the most vital point in the

Report on constitutional reforms. The Government of India's proposals will deprive the ministers and the councils of any real voice in the settlement of the budget, and, notwithstanding their assertion that their proposals do not whittle down the scheme, they undoubtedly reduce the value of the Reform Scheme. The proposals are presented in a manner that appears reasonable at first sight, but there is no doubt that the first essential of the popular government which the Reform Report proposed to concede, *viz.*, financial control, will be taken away under the proposals of the Government of India. Even the heads of provinces have in their majority minute recommended that the legislature should vote on the budget subject to the power of the Governor in Council to restore the original allotments, which power was proposed to be conferred in the Reforms Report personally on the Governor.

In fact, the whole set of proposals by the Government of India would tend to destroy the unity of the Government which the authors of the Reforms Report were so anxious to preserve. The proposal of the Government of India in regard to the sharing of the balances and the suggestions about periodic adjustments in the allocations of the two parts of the Government appear to be reasonable in themselves. But the attempt to evolve a complete scheme of diarchy with separate financial resources, separate powers of taxation, separate allocations of borrowed funds, separate control of the services, separate budgets,—these along with other proposals, constituting the Governor a supreme authority in financial matters, leave the legislative council in much the same position as at present.

The Ministers.—In regard to the position of the ministers also the proposals made by the Government of India are generally of a very retrograde character. While a member of the executive council will not be liable to dismissal, but will have to be dealt with under the service rules by the Secretary of State, it is proposed that the Government should have the power of dismissing the minister. It is also suggested that the Governor should under certain circumstances assume control of the departments concerned and report his action to the Secretary of State, and it is also recommended that, while the minister is liable to resign on an adverse vote of the legislative council in regard to action taken by him on his own responsibility, he will not be compelled to resign, if the council censures a minister for action pressed upon him by the Governor, and if the Governor considers that he retains the confidence of the council. In fact, the modifications proposed by the Government of India in regard to the position of the minister are so utterly inconsistent with the position assigned to him under the Report. The proposals made in regard to the relations of the minister with the heads of departments and the services also make his position altogether untenable. They strike at the very root

of the Reforms Report, and would weaken the position of the minister to such an extent as to make him a figure-head.

Reserved and Transferred Departments.—The proposals in the Southborough Report on the division of functions and the objections thereto have been referred to and answered in the masterly minute of Sir Sankaran Nair, and it is unnecessary to refer to them again at any length. I am entirely at one with him that land revenue administration is the subject in which Indians have most distinguished themselves, and that the questions relating to resettlement should be specially brought under the financial control of the local legislatures. While the Reforms Report laid a great deal of stress on the fact that ministers will have great opportunities to influence the administration by the collective and associated deliberation of both parts of Government, the proposals made by the Government of India in their despatch of 5th March will, if accepted, almost eliminate the influence of the ministers on the administration of reserved subjects. This part of the proposals will, I trust, be carefully examined hereafter and their true significance realised. In this connection I may incidentally refer to the proposals of the Functions Committee in enlarging the sphere of provincial responsibility. The Committee have made certain recommendations to increase the powers of provincial Governments and the legislatures, and I shall briefly refer to them. In regard to education, it was proposed in the Reforms Report that the whole field of education, primary, secondary and collegiate, should be a wholly provincial subject, and the influence of the Government of India was to be limited to cases where the university served more than one province. The Reform Committee have gone further and recommended that the whole field of university education should be assigned to the provinces, but at the same time they laid further restrictions on the power of provincial legislatures in the matter of university development. They have now recommended that the control of legislation regarding the establishment and regulation and the constitution of new universities should be undertaken in the Indian legislative assembly, but legislation relating to existing universities alone should be undertaken in the provinces. This proposal will, I imagine, arrest university development in the provinces, and it is not quite clear as to why the Committee, while recommending that the whole field of education should be entirely left to provinces, should hesitate to leave the establishment of new universities in the provinces to the Government of India. The effect of this will be that all legislation about new universities will have to be reserved to the Government of India, and the various proposals which have been made and are being made for the establishment of new universities will have to wait till the Government of India and the legislative assembly find time to legislate in the matter.

It may be quite a different matter when the university serves more than one province.

Another matter to which I should like to refer is in regard to ports and water ways. The Committee have recommended that the administration of ports and water ways should be regarded as a matter of all-India concern. At present each province is looking after its own ports and water ways and to this extent the provinces will lose their existing powers. So far as Madras is concerned, it has been a matter of complaint for some years that minor ports in the province have not been developed and that the competing claims of ports outside the province have prejudicially affected the trade and commerce of the presidency. This matter requires consideration, and while we are suffering from the centralization of the Railway Board it is questionable whether a central authority should be created for the administration of ports and water ways. I am alive to the argument in favour of the proposal. In the matter of railways, the Functions Committee have not examined the question of devolving some of the powers of the central Government on the provincial Governments in the matter of existing railways, but have contented themselves merely by referring to the subject of light and feeder railways. On the subject of religious endowments, the provinces will be free to legislate according to their requirements.

General Remarks.—It is impossible to refer to the many vital questions that have been raised by the Government of India, but it is absolutely clear that the provincial Governments and the Government of India have done their level best to eliminate the idea of responsibility from the reforms and to prevent anything bigger than a small measure of association of Indians with the administration in advance of the existing position. His Excellency the Viceroy in his minute of the 5th March has reiterated his opinion that the basic principle of the announcement is a fixation of responsibility and a partial transfer of it to an Indian executive. It is clear that the proposals made by the Government of India get rid of these two basic principles and leave nothing of the reform scheme but an empty shell. All sections of Indian opinion are bound to oppose these proposals, and it is to be hoped that public men in this country will examine these proposals fearlessly and promptly. I have had no opportunity of examining the proposals relating to the Government of India, but there is no doubt, judging from the official summary, that they share the same general character as the proposals in regard to the provinces. We shall have to make a strenuous fight in England in which I trust that all sections of public men will join, but public opinion in India will have to back us up.

M. RAMACHANDRA RAO.

INDUSTRIES AS A TRANSFERRED DEPARTMENT.

THE Government of India's (fourth) despatch on Indian Constitutional Reforms must have come as a surprise to those who believed in the strength and capacity of the present Viceroy—a signatory of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report—to carry his council with him in the matter of adopting a really liberal policy as regards the question of preparing this country for full responsible government. Those of my countrymen who believe—and they form a vast majority—that it is the councillors who rule the country and not the nominal head of the Government, will find in this despatch one more justification for their belief. They will be strengthened in this belief by the minute of Sir C. S. Mair, who, with his intimate knowledge of the methods of administration, does not confine his remarks to the executive members of the council, but says that the whole civil service is opposed to the granting of constitutional reform in the real sense of the term. In a sense, Sir Sankaran Nair puts the service on its trial, and it remains to be seen how they acquit themselves in the case, if they are given an opportunity to defend themselves against this charge.

For the purpose of this article, I am taking only one head of administration from the list of transferred and reserved heads given in the Functions Committee's report, on which I can speak with personal knowledge and perhaps with some authority; I mean the industries department. The Functions Committee say in para 45 of their report:—"The only division we have found possible is between the development of industries (No. 24 Provincial list) and the administration of industrial laws (No. 25 Provincial list)." Item No. 24 comprises development of industries, including industrial research and technical education; while No. 25 includes (a) factories; (b) settlement of labour disputes; (c) electricity; (d) boilers; (e) gas; (f) smoke nuisances; and (g) welfare of labour including provident funds, industrial insurance (general, health and accident) and housing. Sir Thomas Holland's Industries Commission have recommended that technical education should be taken away from the control of the educational department and put under the Director of Industries. I have tried to show in my review of the report that the Commission have not been able to prove that this change of control is absolutely necessary in the interests of technical education, and that an organized department will be better able to carry out the recommendations of the Commission than a department about the constitution and organization of which we have but a very vague notion. The Functions Committee have not perhaps found time to examine these proposals of the Industries Commission in this respect and have consequently adopted them by attaching technical education to the Industries department. So long as this head, was, however,

to be a transferred one and was to be under the control of an Indian Minister responsible to an Indian legislature, no strong objection need have been taken to putting technical education under the Director of Industries. The Government of India, excepting Sir Sankaran Nair, are however, of opinion that "the development of industries should be concurrently undertaken by the local Governments and the Government of India; and that this subject should, as far as local Governments are concerned, be reserved." Their recommendation is tantamount to keeping the country, that is crying out for the development of her natural material resources, in the same position as she is at present, as far as responsible government is concerned, and that in a matter which the Government of India themselves style as "the vital question of industries." They all look upon this question of control as vital to the growth of industries in this country. The department must be run with the sole object of bringing this country in a few years in line with the industrially advanced countries. The country is so backward industrially—it is no use indulging in recriminations about the responsibility for this state of affairs—that unless the rate of progress in the next few years is very much greater than that of the other countries, the distance between this country and others will go on increasing. It must be admitted by those who have put down their signatures to the Government of India's fourth despatch that, theoretically speaking, Indians are more likely to carry out such a policy than the best English administrators, for to them the industrial progress of their country is the only goal to be attained. Non-Indians, however fair they may be, are always apt to be biassed towards the manufacturer and the exporter of their own country. It is only a human failing common to men of all nations, and no aspersion is sought to be cast against any nation in making the above statement. Taking this for granted, let us examine the arguments of the Government of India against the Committee's proposals and see if there are any *real* practical difficulties in the way of accepting them.

The first objection of the Government of India is to the transfer of the head of industries to the provincial list. They have not given any arguments to show that such a transfer will hamper the industrial progress of the country but they are so alive to their own importance, and so fond of the powers they have exercised hitherto, that they do not want to part with them, at least not entirely. To use their own words, "The central Government cannot possibly divest itself of responsibility for the industrial progress of the country, which is necessary to secure its military safety, its freedom from outside economic aggression, and its social and political stability." This clap-trap about military security and protection from economic invasion, and the social and political stability (heaven

knows what is exactly meant by the last phrase) will be swallowed neither by the leaders of any Indian political party nor by the Secretary of State, who is sure to have learnt by this time to assess at a proper valuation these vague and general phrases. Do the civilian members of the Government of India who have signed this despatch really and honestly believe that the provincial Governments will not be able to deal with these problems as efficiently as the Government of India? Loyalty to their own provinces, if nothing else, should have prevented them from signing such a despatch. The other arguments used for not making this head a provincial one are almost the same as those used in the Holland Commission's report for the creation of imperial services of various sorts, and I have already answered them in my review of the report. One wonders whether Sir Thomas Holland was taken into the confidence of the Government of India before his Commission's recommendations on these lines were made, and whether the Commission's report represents the views of the Government of India.

The Government of India recognise that they cannot now ask for complete control in industrial matters. They are wise enough to realize that such a demand will be strongly resented by the provincial Governments and by the authorities at Home. They therefore use diplomatic language, in doing which they are experts, and they say that they would discharge their responsibilities by "furnishing advice and help to local Governments by co-ordinating their efforts and by working concurrently with them rather than by direct control." Unfortunately their methods of helping and advising have in the past meant interference and control as was only recently said by the Dy. Chairman of the London Chamber of Commerce. Although they say that local Governments must participate in the industrial policy of the country *fully* (italics are mine) and not as mere agents of the central Government, in the same paragraph they so lay down the methods of carrying out the industrial development in the provinces, as to considerably restrict the powers of the local Governments and to lead later on to complete control by the central Government. So long as local Governments are merely to "participate" in a policy laid down by the Government of India, they cannot have any freedom of action, and the most advanced province will have to go at the pace of the most backward. We want not only the initiative to rest with the local Governments, but we want them to be given complete liberty to carry out their policy without any outside check or control. If they are given full freedom, they will put more life and spirit in their work and at the same time practise caution also, as they will realize that they and they alone will be held responsible for their blunders.

The opposition of the Government of India to making industries a transferred head is much stronger and is more strongly worded. With re-

ference to the proposal of the Functions Committee to "transfer" the head of industries, the Government of India say: "From this proposition we entirely dissent, and for most cogent reasons." In paragraph 119 they give certain reasons for their objecting to the Committee's proposal, but they reserve their "most cogent reasons" for the next paragraph, which they begin thus: "There remains, however, a still more serious objection." They fear that "considerable pressure may be exercised on ministers to refuse any form of aid or countenance to British enterprise and to favour Indian undertakings, especially those backed by political influence, irrespective of their business merits or equitable claims to consideration." What does this sentence divested of its verbiage mean? It means that the signatories of the despatch—always excluding Sir Sankaran Nair—think that the minister in charge of the industries portfolio will, of his own accord or to please his constituents, use his power on racial grounds against the legitimate industrial progress of the country. It cannot be said that this fear is justified by the experience of the past, because there is no experience of any kind to warrant any conclusion. This opinion can then only be based on general grounds and on what the Government of India expect the new legislatures and the new ministers to be like. On this supposition these legislatures or ministers should not be given any work which is likely to come in competition not only with vested interests, but with interests that may in the distant future compete with Indian interests. If, in face of these remarks, anybody should criticise the attitude of the Government as showing mistrust or want of confidence, both the Secretary of State and the Viceroy would express their indignation at such a misunderstanding, of their motives. If the Government of India have no mistrust of the new legislatures and ministers, let them boldly make industries a transferred head and show that, whatever a few Englishmen here or a few retired high officials in England might say, they at any rate will trust them to do what is right in the real industrial interests of the province. As regards the other reason given by the Government of India (para 119) against the transfer of industries, *viz.*, that the minister will be a man without industrial experience or administrative training and that it will not be possible to get capable Indians for the post, I may refer to the following remarks by Sir Sankaran Nair in his minute: "The argument that the ministers will inevitably be devoid of industrial experience, as if the civilian member has great experience, is a strong condemnation of the proposals of my colleagues to leave in the hands of the Governor the power of the appointment of ministers." He goes on to say that "there is little doubt that Indian ministers can be found who will be competent to do the work." The argument that as the departments of industries have not been fully organised, it will be unwise to hand them over to the ministers cuts

both ways and can conveniently be used to prove the advisability of allowing the ministers to develop and organise the new departments on their own lines as there will be no vested interests clamouring for the right to go to the Governor behind the back of the minister. As regards the argument about the probability of industrialists not seeking election save in specialized constituencies, it is rather difficult to understand what the Government of India actually mean; so long as there are industrialists returned by election to the new legislature, what do they care whether they come as representatives of general or special electorates? Moreover the best course to induce such men to stand for election is to give them an opportunity of working for the development of industries as ministers. I hope I have successfully met the arguments of the Government of India and I confidently trust that the Secretary of State and the British Parliament will take a broader and more liberal view of this matter and make industries a provincial head, and make the development of industries as defined in item 24 of the Provincial List with sub-head (g) "welfare of labour, including provident funds, industrial insurance (general, health and accident) and housing" a transferred subject and thus give full control over it to an Indian minister responsible to the new legislature. I have added g, item 25, because I think that an Indian minister will be more in touch with questions and will be able to tackle the problems more boldly than even an Indian member of the council, for the former will always feel that he has the whole council at his back in his attempt to solve the social welfare problems which are likely to go on increasing with the general industrial development of the country.

LALUBHAI SAMALDAS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

'MENTALLY AND MORALLY DEFICIENT.'

SIR,—In the year 1917, I volunteered for enlistment in the Indian Defence Force, and accordingly I was called to undergo military training at Poona, which I did. After my return, I applied for a license to own fire-arms, which was granted to me after formal inquiries on the 8th March, 1919. But hardly a month was over when I received the following memorandum from the District Magistrate of Surat:

"Batilal Lalubhai of Gopipura, Surat, who has been granted an arms license, No. . . . is informed that as the District Magistrate now finds that he is not fit person to own fire-arms his license is hereby cancelled."

To this I wrote the following reply:—

"Sir,—With reference to your No.—I beg to state in the first place that I do not understand why official correspondence should be wanting in ordinary forms of politeness, *e. g.*, of adding *Mr.* to a proper name.

Secondly, I beg to know what particular conduct of mine renders me 'unfit to own fire-arms' and the reasons which led to the cancelling of the license which was granted to me."

To this application the District Magistrate was pleased to give the following brief reply:—

"In reply to his application dated 20th April, 1919, Ratilal Lalubhai is informed that the District Magistrate considers a person who pledges himself to disobedience of the law, as the applicant is understood to have done, to be *mentally and morally deficient and unfit* to receive privileges at the hands of Government. This fact must be self-evident."

This means that because I took the Satyagraha vow, I am rendered deficient mentally as well as morally, in the eyes of the Magistrate. One really fails to understand the moral standard of the authorities. The Government for whom I came forward to shed my life-blood now regards me no better than a lunatic and a criminal. Is this British justice?—Yours, etc.

RATILAL LALUBHAI DESAI.

Surat, May 19.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

THE *Hindu's* objection to a system of dyarchy proposed in the "Montford Scheme" is not so irreconcilable as it appeared from the way it had declared war against it. In case dualism is finally decided upon, the paper is now willing to try it, provided a sufficiently large number of departments is made over to popular control. The most enthusiastic supporter of dyarchy does not need to say more in favour of it. But the *Hindu* plays the enemy's game, besides being inconsistent with itself, when it says of the Government of India's retrograde proposals: "The alterations made by the Government of India are the logical outcome of a desire to render dyarchy workable

and efficient. . . . Sir James Meston has, it may be considered, done some service to the cause of exposing the impossibility of dyarchy by the manner in which he has sought to introduce modifications." Here the *Hindu* lends tacit support to the Simla creed that "dyarchy is possible only by denial of real power to the people." This doctrine is utterly false. While friction can certainly be reduced by concentrating all power into the hands of the executive, which then becomes uniarchy, there is also another way of doing it, and the modifications urged by the Moderate party are designed as much to make the scheme more workable as to obtain for the people a substantial share of power. If the *Hindu* still holds, as it once did, that dyarchy is impossible and foredoomed to failure, why does it demand the transfer of land revenue? If its opposition remains no longer uncompromising, it should beware of playing into the hands of the enemies of reform by arguing as though such utterly reactionary proposals as the Government of India have put forward are the inevitable consequence of the adoption of dyarchy.

ANOTHER contingent of the Moderates' deputation, consisting of Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao and Messrs. Chintamani and Kamat, was to sail yesterday. The deputation now includes such well-known public workers as Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, Sir K. G. Gupta, Sir Binod Mitter, Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey, and Messrs. Srinivasa Sastri, Chintamani, Samarth, Ramachandra Rao, and Kamat. It will not compare unfavourably with any other deputation.

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