

Servant of India

Editor: S. G. VAZE.

Office: SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA.

VOL. XVIII, No. 1.

POONA—THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 1935.

INDIAN SUBSN. Rs. 6.
FOREIGN SUBSN. 15s.

Topics of the Week.

Change of Creed.

A YOUNGER section of the Liberal Party proposed at the annual Conference last week a change in the Party's creed. The political objective of the Party is defined as swaraj and interpreted as responsible government and Dominion Status. The change proposed was the deletion of the interpretation, which would leave every member of the Party free to interpret it in as wide a sense as he pleased.

WE can well understand the motive of those who favoured the change. The British Government seems to have gone back from Dominion Status, and in any case it does not seem willing even to take the first hesitant steps towards it. Should not the Liberal Party then give up its insistence upon dominionhood and, when circumstances became ripe, openly abandon its adherence to the British connexion? This would at any rate put an end to unnecessary controversies that occasionally arise between the Congress and the Liberal Party. So runs the argument of the young Liberals.

THE Party, however, did not support the proposed change, and quite rightly. The Liberal Party in fact has the advantage of the Congress in this matter. The Congress defines its objective as purna swaraj or complete independence, but interprets it to mean just the same as Dominion Status. The only difference between the two is that if your goal is independence, you decide here and now to sever the British connexion as soon as you get the power to do so; while if your goal is Dominion Status, you get the power to sever the British connexion when you reach the goal, but you have not made up your mind yet as to the desirability of severance. It is of no advantage to the Liberal Party to give up its own goal, which is definite and perfectly honourable, in favour of another which is ambiguous in itself and which you have to underinterpret in order to bring it within the range of practical politics.

Going Hungry!

THE *Pioneer* has paid us the compliment of answering the question we had put to it, though it has not answered it as explicitly as we should have liked. Our question was whether the vote of non-official members of the Legislative Assembly on the motion concerning the acceptance or non-acceptance of the J. P. O. Report would be regarded by it as the verdict of the country, and whether, if the verdict goes against the Report, it would advise the British Government to drop the India Constitution Bill.

OUR contemporary answers it in this wise. It says that it would certainly advise the Government to accept the country's verdict provided it was satisfied that "the verdict was the verdict of the country and that it was given from honest conviction and not in a spirit of bargaining, petulance or cussedness." This is a fair answer, for we quite realise that it is possible for politicians to reject the reforms scheme or proclaim its unacceptability in a spirit of bargaining.

FOR this reason we suggested that the Government should declare before the Assembly elections took place that they would persevere with the Bill only if either the elected or at any rate the non-official members accepted the general principles of the White Paper proposals. We should then have known quite clearly whether the country really supported the rejection or non-acceptance policy or not. If, in spite of such a declaration, a majority of members were elected who were in favour of this policy, as is the case now, there would have been no manner of doubt that the country as a whole did not want the reforms that the Government had offered.

BUT neither the *Pioneer* nor any other paper which is now urging acceptance of the scheme upon Indians favoured the suggestion, and the Assembly elections took place in circumstances which leave room for doubt in the minds of some that the results do not represent the real feeling in the country. Nevertheless, having failed to take the necessary precautions in the matter, these papers must now agree to be guided by the Assembly's opinion, whatever it is. However, if the *Pioneer* can suggest any other method of finding out the real wishes of Indians in regard to reforms, we are quite willing to consider the matter, but we feel that it will not be able to put forward any concrete suggestion.

If the Assembly's decision is to be an index to public opinion, the *Pioneer*, we are sure, will agree that the officials must be ordered not to vote as they were ordered on the question of Burma. Will our contemporary then press this on the Government? If it does not do so, or if the Government permits officials also to vote, it would prove that the Government wants somehow or other to saddle the country with a constitution condemned out of hand by the people and that the *Pioneer* and other papers of the same ilk are willing to make themselves handmaids of Government in this unholy policy of coercion. These papers are welcome to try and persuade the country to accept the reforms, but they must not lend their countenance, directly or indirectly, to coercion.

THE *Pioneer*, for instance, believes that "half a loaf is better than no bread, and that the Liberal politician in India who is prepared to surrender

substantial and immediate increase in self-government for undefined benefits which he may or may not secure from a party that may or may not come into power within the next ten years is the human counterpart of the dog in Aesop's fables who abandoned his bone for its image in the water—and

went hungry." Let the *Pioneer* make converts to this view and beat up a party of supporters for the Government scheme. All we beg of it is not to make itself a consenting party to the forcible feeding of an ignorant and obstinate person who prefers going hungry to the chewing of a bone for nourishment.

WE DO NOT WANT THE REFORMS; TAKE THEM BACK.

IN these words Mr. Chintamani concluded his speech on the Joint Select Committee's Report at the annual Conference of the Liberal Party in Poona, and the Party, agreeing with him, pronounced the Report unacceptable and added, to put the matter beyond all doubt, that the Party did not want any legislation based upon the Report. Thus all sections of progressive opinion have lined up in condemnation of the proposed constitution, and if, in spite of this strong expression of opinion, the Reforms Bill is persevered with, passed and brought into operation, the new constitution will be a clear imposition upon India. Its only friends in this country will then be the Princes, communalists and vested interests. The Government is welcome, if it so chooses, to carry on with the help of all the conservative elements, but it will receive no support whatsoever from any section of progressives.

The Liberal Party lay under a special responsibility in making it clear that the Government can look for no co-operation from it in this matter of reforms. Because its creed is to offer co-operation whenever it can do so on honourable terms. It has never refrained from opposition whenever, in its judgment, opposition was required; but it has also given co-operation in the past, when large sections of people denied it, because the Party felt that it could do so without loss of self-respect and with possible advantage to the country. So often has it gone against the popular current of thought in tendering co-operation that it has come to be branded as a party wedded to co-operation in all circumstances. The Government too often assumes that it has a prescriptive right to the Liberal Party's help in popularising measures upon which it may have set its heart. It has therefore become all the more necessary for the Party to leave the Government and the people in no manner of doubt that it can lend no help whatever in winning popular support for any so-called reforms founded upon the J. P. C. Report, and that it would rather go on with the existing constitution than come under the new one. The report is in an especial way a challenge to the Liberal Party's principles, and we are happy to see that the Party has accepted the challenge in the only way which was open to it consistently with a sense of honour.

There is no doubt that this is for the Liberal Party definitely the left turn. It must be ready hereafter for a political orientation much to the left of the position that it now occupies. It cannot continue to stand where it does; it will be driven leftward by the force of circumstances. And the Liberal Party realises it. Most of the leaders of the

Old Guard indicated in their speeches the necessity that would arise, in case the proposed constitution was thrust upon the country, for all the progressives intensifying the swadeshi movement, creating difficult situations for the Government and bringing into effect the more radical measures which constitutional agitation understood in a large sense allows. The familiar role of the Liberal Party in recent years has been to issue occasional friendly warnings against the adoption of extreme methods. While the Party will henceforward too be under the painful necessity of warning, its main task will be that of finding out ways in which the united weight of progressive opinion of all shades can be brought to bear upon the Government. It must play hereafter the part of an active co-worker more than that of a candid friend. What can be more significant than this change in the general attitude of the Liberal Party indicated by the fact that the thoughts of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and Sir Cowasji Jehangir are now turned in the direction of political swadeshi and constitutional deadlocks? In fact, there are even among those who are in favour of acceptance of the reforms scheme—though there are none such in the Liberal Party—who advocate acceptance on the very ground that the new reforms will give us more opportunities of producing constitutional crises than the present reforms do! It is clear anyhow that all progressives will have willynilly to move to the left if the unwanted constitution is thrust upon the country by the Government.

Nor can we lose sight of the fact that the constitution thus foisted upon us will be a federal constitution, and therefore a constitution almost unamendable and wholly unrepealable. The country can put up with a constitution which, though unsatisfactory, can be easily improved in future. But the proposed constitution blocks the way to future improvement, and the block comes not only from the side of the British Parliament but from the side of the Princes. If the constitution cannot be improved in normal ways, the people will be tempted to break through it in other ways and it would be impossible for any one to prevent them from trying to do so. Members of the British Parliament must keep this fact steadily before their minds' eye when they will vote upon the Constitution Bill, and at any rate it cannot be charged against the Liberal Party any longer that it failed to warn them in time. India does not want the constitution and will leave no stone unturned in shaking herself free from it; if it be forced upon her.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT.

MR. SASTRI'S DENUNCIATION.

In the session of the National Liberal Federation held at Poona last week, the resolution on the Joint Select Committee's report was moved by the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. He said:

Mr. President, fellow-delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

I HOPE you will allow me to speak in this (sitting) posture. As is the practice in the case of important resolutions, I shall first read this one to you.

"The National Liberal Federation of India records its profound regret at finding that the Joint Select Committee's report, instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals that were pointed out by the Federation at its two previous sessions, has, in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades, including the British Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee, introduced further highly objectionable and reactionary features, rendering responsible government in the provinces and the centre, which the British Government profess to give to India wholly illusory. The Federation is convinced that any Constitution based on the lines of the Joint Select Committee's Report will be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion and will, far from allaying, very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. This Federation, therefore, does not want any legislation based upon the Joint Select Committee's Report."

This resolution, without going into detail, sums up the general feelings of the Federation on the subject. It would be difficult for me to cover the whole ground even if I had three hours' time. I propose, however, with your good leave, to exercise the privilege of an elder and, without being bound too closely by the rule of relevancy, to go round the subject, as it were, and after some observations on the general character of the proposals made therein, to dwell a little on the general policy of the Liberal Party and its position in the country. I spoke upon the subject at the Calcutta session of this Federation i. e. the session before the last. On reading that speech again yesterday I was struck by the degree to which it would be perfectly opposite today—in spite of the feverish activity of this Committee whose report we are considering and of the political events in this country—so little change has really taken place in our political prospect. I said then when we were only considering the White Paper and nothing was known yet of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's work—I said then that, if it were in my power, I would do without the forthcoming constitution for India. Now that the Joint Select Committee has reported after a laborious and exhaustive enquiry, I have only to say that my opinion, formerly unfavourable, has become greatly aggravated (hear, hear), and it is impossible to contemplate with anything like ease or peace of mind the enactment of this Constitution and the way it would affect, not merely our political fortune in the future, but our daily transactions in the various legislatures of the country. The Committee, however, have taken very good care, and

any one who reads the report of the proceedings in Parliament will be struck by the thoroughness of the preparations that seem to have been made for the inauguration of the new regime, absolutely irrespective of what the Assembly in Delhi might have to say and of public opinion throughout the country. It would appear from what the Secretary of State announced in Parliament that the Government of India and the various provincial governments have been consulted upon the important question whether the Constitution would be in actual fact workable and worked by the people for whom it was meant, and the answer seems to have gone across the water that the Constitution would be workable, and that all over the country there was a sufficiency of persons prepared to operate it. I will not read to you what Sir Samuel Hoare or what Colonel Amery seems to have said, but I would read just the most authoritative statement on the subject made by Mr. Stanley Baldwin. It is a clear statement meant to reassure the members of both Houses; it is a very short passage.

"It is true that there has been a good deal of wordy denunciation from members of Congress, and it is a fact that other political parties have criticised it; but this does not mean that there will not be responsibly-minded Indians, [evidently we here do not come within that category (laughter)] who are ready to play their part in the new Constitution by the time the Constitution becomes law. We have, as a matter of fact, made enquiries during the last few days and received assurances from all the provincial governments on two points. First, that in their view, the proposals are workable and secondly, in their view, there will be people to work these proposals."

Now, I suppose it was an uneasy fear in the minds of the Government that they were fabricating a thoroughly unacceptable Constitution that made them feel the ground as to whether it was favourable. I told you before, and this resolution, which I read out to you and which, I hope, you will accept with unanimity, states our conclusion, that we wish with all our hearts that we were let alone. For what would this Constitution be? As far as I can see, while the Government will be able to get people to work it, there are other people, who, in their humiliation and grief, will set their hearts if possible on seeing it superseded by a better constitution. It is human nature all over the world, that when a constitution meant to be democratic is of the contrary nature and irks people in a hundred ways in their daily work, they will not settle down to the ordinary social or economic or educational or other ameliorating work, but will spend all their energies in removing the absurd features of their Government. That has been proved over and over again. There would be much to do, much urgent and important work to do. Men, however, will not find it possible to do it till this, their greatest annoyance, is removed. And what will it result in? Continued wrangles between the Government and the people. This Constitution may work in a way, but there will be no peace in the land, nor will the relations between England and India be improved the least bit;

the bitterness will be several times worse. Curiously enough, and it is in crises like these where the same question is viewed from various standpoints, a strange phenomenon occurs. It is extraordinary that in the House of Commons where this subject was under discussion, a statement should have been made by a critic from the extreme right—which might have been spoken by me or by the President. See how strangely the words seem to hit the situation. This is what Mr. Churchill said: "Of course, the Government will win; we do not doubt that. When they have won, what will they have gained? They will have gained the right to impose upon India a system wholly unsuitable to the welfare of its people and abhorrent to all who speak in their name. They will have plunged vast regions into prolonged political agitation and disputation which will proceed not only in every province but also at the centre and the summit of the Government of India." Mr. Churchill's commentary upon it will not be mine, but his words I need not change. There are other passages which I have here with me, but I will pass over them, as this sufficiently illustrates the point.

ABSENCE OF DOMINION STATUS.

Now, the chief offence of the document, which is sweetly worded and conveys the sentiments of the greatest affection and tenderness for the people of India, is that it does not contain the words "Dominion Status". We contend, ladies and gentlemen, that Dominion Status has been promised to us on the highest authority (cheers). It is not merely a Viceregal declaration as we call it, although it was the lips of the Viceroy that uttered it. He had the authority of the British Cabinet of the day and he stated so. But if it were only the Labour Government that had made the promise, it would not still perhaps be quite so authoritative as to command the highest respect. After the first session of the Round Table Conference and again after its second session the Prime Minister brought this subject before Parliament. The subject was debated, and although on the first occasion no vote was recorded, on the second the Prime Minister's statement was passed by a vote of the House. Now, that statement asked for the approval of Parliament on the Government's Indian policy which was being worked out by the Round Table Conference. That policy with regard to the future Indian constitution certainly was the policy which was enunciated by Lord Irwin on behalf of the Government. References were made to this subject of Dominion Status in Parliament, and if a vote of approval was given to Indian policy, which embodied this declaration of Dominion Status for India, may we not claim, I ask, that the word of Parliament and not merely of the Government of the day is pledged? (Loud cheers). When I add that the second debate was held after the General Election of 1931 and the establishment of the National Government, you will see that the case is complete against the present Ministry. What Parliament has given, only Parliament can take away. The present Government, stepping into the shoes of the Labour Government

who gave the promise, evidently do not love it—they would fain take it back. Their spokesmen referred to it with disapprobation. "What is this that we have inherited from our predecessors?" Among them, some leading members expressed their desire if possible to annul it. But they dared not do so, because the sanction of Parliament would be required. Sir Samuel Hoare himself did not once use the expression. Apparently, his tongue has some inborn aversion to it. Sir John Simon—whom, by the way, after his boycott in India, they have now resurrected and put in a place of great power—Sir John Simon referred to this subject, and the only thing he could bring himself to say was that the policy of Britain with regard to Indian political evolution had been clearly stated in that great document, the Montagu declaration of 1917, which used the words "progressive realisation of responsible government by India." It is this expression which Lord Irwin interpreted to mean "Dominion Status." Sir John Simon with his legal perspicacity apparently did not approve of this interpretation. He could not repudiate this: he, therefore, ignored it and went back to the original text. Other speakers did the same. Only Mr. Baldwin declared, in response to a pressing demand from Mr. Launsbury, that his party would stand by all the pledges that had been made, and that no distinction would be made between the pledges. Even he forbore to use the hated expression. But during the debate in the House of Lords, I grieve to have to say that it was left to the Archbishop of Canterbury to declare in so many words that his repugnance to this expression in connection with India was so great that he would advise all people if possible to give up its use. I am reminded of a certain community in South India, who when a person is on his death-bed, naturally gather round him and await, in solemn suspense, the dreaded moment when they have to pronounce in his ear the last word which might redound to his salvation. That word is "Narayana"—beautiful, sacred word carrying the most venerated associations. Why should they hesitate so much to say it? Because it is to be the last word which the man hears during his life and it is, therefore, to be pronounced at that very moment when life quits the body. But how could you be sure of that? (Laughter). So invariably what happens is that they wait until life is actually extinct and then summon up courage to pronounce the word. While yet there is life, somebody or other moves amongst those that wait and asks most anxiously, "is it time for *that word, that word?*" Now Dominion Status somehow or other fills British statesmen with that dread (Laughter). Whose end they are anticipating with such mortal anxiety I wonder! It must be, ladies and gentlemen, the end of India's exploitation (hear, hear), the end of India's domination by Britain (cheers) which they dread. Well, if they have that dread, is it not with a corresponding degree of tenacity that we should cling to the words? And yet I hear it said occasionally by some of our statesmen, "Why bother about Dominion Status which is after all a couple of words, provided you have a good constitution with excellent provisions in

its various sections helping you on towards that destiny?" Well, although I dissent decisively from this view, for a moment let me accept it for the sake of argument. Now, let us examine this constitution, denying you the ideal or the goal of Dominion Status. Does it give you anything like consolation in the various provisions and arrangements it embodies? No. It is a reactionary constitution, meant to forge stronger fetters than ever upon our growth, denying to us the right and the initiative to make necessary changes in the constitution and then making the constitution at the centre as anti-national and as anti-democratic as possible.

" DELIBERATE DENIAL "

Now, ladies and gentlemen, neither in the goal it has nor in the steps it takes, is this a constitution that we may, for a moment, look upon with favour. And yet they have made arrangements to carry it out and apparently there are, amongst our own compatriots and colleagues, amongst our own countrymen and countrywomen, whose fortunes are intimately bound up with ours, to whom India belongs as much as to us; there are people whose consent, express or implied, has already gone forth, whose cooperation has already been promised, to the enactment and the operation of this constitution. Our President, referring to this question of Dominion Status, after examining every aspect of it, with great hesitation described the attitude of the Joint Select Committee's report to you as 'deliberate denial'. Now, a paper of great power in this Presidency, generally friendly to Indian aspirations, whose articles I read with great attention, because even when unfavourable they are usually couched in a tone which conveys no offence, that paper finds fault with the words "deliberate denial." Well, I think, ladies and gentlemen, those words are by no means excessive in their import. It is not open repudiation that has been perpetrated, but Government have a way of defeating a promise, which they no longer like. There is a firm refusal to fulfil the promise. Is that any better than 'deliberate denial?' I do not know. Shall we say 'obstinate ignoring'? Is that more appropriate? Could we apply any words which may sound pleasing to the ear in describing this transaction? Ladies and gentlemen, I find it difficult indeed to think well of a document which upsets the purpose of our struggles and puts aside the promises made by the highest authority in the land. We may not describe it as a breach of faith. No. It just falls short of it. It is a deliberate denial, I repeat the words of the President without hesitation.

Now, I want to say a word about the safeguards. We have been taught a hundred times over that we are unstatesmanlike, unused to the operation of a democratic constitution, that truly what are known as conventions lie embedded at the bottom of the Imperial Constitution. We know nothing of all these things and therefore we object to safeguards; safeguards there must be in any constitution. Since we Indian people are ignorant of the conventions necessary, British legislators

have to put them down in the actual constitution, that is what they have said. Now, it might surprise British statesmen, if we tell them that we also know about safeguards and we are quite willing to accept a certain type of them. In fact, safeguards were allowed by Mahatma Gandhi when he went to the Round Table Conference. Between him and Lord Irwin, it was agreed that such safeguards as could be demonstrated to be in the interest of India were to be put in. Well, that held ground for some time, but as I told you, the Government which made the promise was soon replaced by another Government which did not wish to carry out the promise. The result was that a very large number of safeguards got into the constitution which were not in the interest of India, which could be proved to be against the interest of India, but which Sir Samuel Hoare in his elaborate evidence described as "in the joint interest of Britain and India". (Laughter). Now, one step backward has been taken authoritatively. Instead of being purely in the interest of India, safeguards admittedly in the joint interest of Britain and India were put in.

But it was left to the original author of the promise, who by this time had become Lord Halifax—a change of name perhaps requiring a change of attitude—it was left to him to say that he could get up on any platform and prove that every one of the safeguards was really in the interest of India. Now I have no desire to be over-critical. But I think his Lordship was wise not to try the feat as he would have found it outside his nature and character. The fact is that everybody who came and asked for a safeguard got it inserted in the Constitution—investor, capitalist, policeman. That is how it went along. If each of these safeguards could be said to be in our interests, what should we think? That we were in such extremity that it was really better to submit to those bad terms than to resist. That means it is blackmail which we paid or have to pay lest worse befall.

APPEAL TO PRINCES.

In my speech at Calcutta, I ventured to say a word to my erstwhile colleagues at the Round Table Conference belonging to the princely order. Our obligations to them are great. I shall not forget or underrate them. I remember the great acclamation with which we welcomed their advent at the Round Table Conference and their proposal of a Federation thus making central responsibility possible. But they have got to come in as a help to our country and not as a handicap (Hear, hear). In one of the first speeches I made at the Conference—my speeches are not generally read and that is why I refer to them myself—I pointed out that the new Federation idea was on a co-ordinate level with the previous idea of Dominion Status. They were of equal might and potency, but while some of us might be more keen on Dominion Status, others might be more keen on Federation. I begged all in the name of the future of India to work with one heart for both the ideas, each without impairing the integrity or usefulness of the other, Dominion Status without injuring Fede-

ration in the least, Federation without injuring Dominion Status in the least. I had a presentiment that something of the kind would happen. It has happened. The Princes, who time and again proclaimed their enthusiasm for the Dominion Status of India seem now to bestow more of their affection on Federation and are apparently willing that deductions should be made one after another from Dominion Status so long as their Federation idea is not touched. That, I think, is a great harm which the Princes are doing to our cause. I gave utterance to my fear in Calcutta and I repeat it here, imploring them to guard themselves against the fate which might overwhelm them, the fate of those who are content to be used as blocks in the way of India's march to her destiny. They may be safe today, but one day India will be fully aroused and competent to express herself and treat properly those that did not help but allowed themselves to be used as hindrances to her destiny. (Loud Cheers). Let us also remember this. It is sometimes forgotten and sometimes misrepresented, *viz.*, that till the Princes came on the scene and gave a new direction to our aspirations, we were thinking solely of British India. It was British India's dominionhood that had been contemplated, and when Lord Irwin made his declaration of 1929, he had no notion whatever that the Princes would come in and seek a share in the benefits and advantages of Federation. After we met in London the Princes approached us of their own accord and said "Federation will be incomplete without us." Ladies and gentlemen, please do not believe that we invited them; but it was they that made the offer to enter Federation in order to make things comfortable to themselves. We accepted it as it seemed to be an inexorable condition of central responsibility. Having so taken us to their bosom, I do hope that the Princes will see to it that our Dominion Status is not marred in any way on account of Federation.

NO CO-OPERATION.

We have been asked in the name of the traditions of the Liberal Party to be true to ourselves. It would appear that our chief title to distinction is our readiness at all hazards to co-operate with the Government. Do you answer in your conscience to that description? I will put the question in another form. We are admonished to co-operate with Government in the enactment of this constitution, to express our willingness that it should come into this country and shape her destiny. In the first place, are we invited to co-operate in the practical denial of Dominion Status or the refusal to fulfil the promise of it to our countrymen? Is our consent, our willing cooperation asked for in that regard? Now, we may be chronic cooperators (Laughter), but, Mr. President, I do not think we shall go that far. Are we asked to welcome and abide by this constitution, riddled as it is with all the safeguards and reservations that could be possibly invented by the wit of man? Is it such a constitution that we must recommend to our people as being in their interests, as calculated to secure their welfare and take them on to their

destiny of Dominion Status? I do not think this Liberal meeting will go that far. Ladies and gentlemen, in considering this matter will you cast your minds back a little and enquire what is the co-operation that we have received? After the first two Round Table Conferences, the third was so reconstituted that the Liberal Party was kept out save for one. And then it gave place to the Joint-Parliamentary Committee upon which there sat some Indians of weight, of distinction, of wisdom. Their services are amply acknowledged in this sweetly worded report (Laughter). Their wisdom is commended but not a single suggestion that they made was accepted; not a single thing that they objected to was dropped. That is the cooperation we have received. If on the heels of this phenomenon the Liberal Federation, accepting the invitation so cordially extended to them gave full cooperation in the enactment of this constitution, that would be a transaction unparalleled and unprecedented in the political history of the world. Now, Sir, it is impossible for the Liberal Party to give an atom of cooperation (Applause). To cooperate with our friends, with those who wish well to us, with those who hold out to us the hand of comradeship would be noble. But cooperation with those who treat us with the utmost distrust, who do not care for our most earnest representations, who frame a constitution in utter disregard and defiance of our dearest wishes, what is cooperation with them, I ask? What word would you suggest? I do not know, but I call it suicide (Loud Cheers). If that is what we are asked to do, whoever else may be willing—and there seem to be many such in India—it is not the Liberal Party. (Hear, hear)

THE LIBERAL PARTY.

I am afraid I shall have to stop here. I do not want to cause any uneasiness to the President (Laughter and cries of 'Go on'). There are two observations of a somewhat general nature which I should beg your permission to make. They concern the roots of our policy and of our position in this country. Our party has many critics, rather too many I should say and a good few from amongst ourselves. Well, they are all welcome. Inside critics, outside critics, sympathetic critics, hostile critics, all are welcome. We are not many, we do not pretend to wield a great influence in directing the course of events. There are many defects to which we plead guilty. Our house badly needs to be put in order. All this is granted and granted without reserve. But what follows? Have you observed, ladies and gentlemen, one curious feature of the situation? We are always spoken of with contempt. And those who write in journals, young men with fluent pens seem to dip them in the ink of ridicule. Let them. But there are occasions when they think otherwise of us and remembering our existence enquire earnestly, "Where are these gentlemen? What are they doing? Why don't they come to our help? What does this man think? His words would be opportune now. He has friends in England; his voice carries weight. Why is he dumb?" Is it any wonder when our ranks include men who have

held high office, who have filled distinguished positions, men who have known difficulties at first hand and grappled with hard facts and realities? You have Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, you have Sir Cowasji Jehangir. By the way, Sir Cowasji has achieved immortality. His name has got into Hansard. A Member of Parliament has conferred distinction on him by describing him (Laughter).—I hesitate to repeat the words (More laughter)—as a ewe lamb that has strayed into the Assembly. Is he a lamb, first of all? (Laughter) But if he were a lamb, is he a ewe lamb? (Loud laughter). I should call him a fighting ram (Prolonged cheers and laughter). Well, we have amongst us those whose voices are sought in times of difficulties and are capable of giving safe direction. If this party exists only for the purpose of guiding the political movement, of giving warning now and then, of showing the lines of promising developments, if it merely keeps the political movement on its properly laid rails, I contend that it would be still worth the while of the public to keep us alive, functioning with such efficiency as we are capable of. It surely would be desirable to become a political power in a deeper sense. There are many who think that a party which does not put forward candidates at an election, which does not carry many seats, which does not annex municipality, and district board and village committee, and which does not swoop upon school committees and temple committees and industrial managements and turn them from their legitimate functions into means of its own aggrandisement,—that a political party of that kind has no right to exist. I may be a heretic, but I do maintain that it is no disgrace to a party not to win success at elections. On the contrary, I contend that no political phenomenon is more worthy of attention, more full of lessons to students of contemporary affairs than the defeat of a good, honest, patriotic man at the polls merely because he has not pleased the people (Hear, hear). I do not think it at all discreditable to a man that he has gone down in an honourable fight. What if we do not get places in the Assembly? We still are elders, knowing life somewhat deeper than other people, knowing the shoals and the rocks that have to be avoided in guiding our ship to safety. Such men have a value and I am content that we should continue to perform our most necessary, though often neglected task. One remark that Sir Austen Chamberlain made in the interesting House of Commons debate, I must pass on to you. Did he feel, I wonder, that he and his party might be accused of having weakened us as a party? Was it in self-defence that he cast the blame for our failure upon our own heads? He said we were guilty of cowardice, we were faint-hearted, we did not make sacrifices and go forth courageously to fight for this constitution which we knew in our hearts was for our good. He believes that we must spring forward with enthusiasm to embrace it and hold it up to our countrymen as that for which they have been struggling for the last fifty years (Laughter). Now, ladies and gentlemen, we decline decisively

and emphatically to hold up Sir Austen Chamberlain's baby and invite our countrymen and countrywomen to kiss it.

Just one more observation if I have time. ('Go on'), There is need for me to apologise for the length of my remarks (No, no). There is need for me to be grateful for the attention with which you have heard me and the approval that you have extended to my remarks. I hope that, while I may have exhibited some warmth of which I am not supposed to be capable, you will not consider that I have exceeded the limits of propriety or in any way lowered the standard of dignity and decorum which has always characterised the proceedings of the Liberal Party. We are not supposed to show temper; we are not supposed at any time to be agitated; we are not supposed even to resent insult (Laughter). If I have tempted you this afternoon occasionally to forget your nature and show a little of those qualities, an exuberance and superabundance of which are supposed to mark the authentic patriot, I do trust, ladies and gentlemen, that you will acquit me of having abused your confidence and your kindness (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S VIEW.

The Joint Select Committee's Report formed the subject of consideration by the members of the Servants of India Society who met in special session last week at its head-quarters in Poona. The following resolution unanimously passed embodies the Society's views with regard to the Report :

Having taken into consideration the fact—

(1) that the Viceregal Declaration of 1929 regarding Dominion Status, subsequently endorsed by the Prime Minister and by Parliament, finds no mention anywhere in the White Paper or in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, and the proposals taken together do not appear to have been designed towards the attainment of that status by India ;

(2) that the proposed Constitution will in no way fulfil the expectations raised at the beginning of the Round Table Conference or the requirements of the situation today ;

(3) that, in spite of a memorandum submitted by the British Indian delegation proposing important modifications in the scheme, the Report omits to make satisfactory provision for the Indianization of the Army or transitional arrangements to prepare for the eventual transfer of the subject of 'Defence'; fails to make any proposals for future progress of the Constitution without reference to the Imperial Parliament; cumber the Constitution both at the Federal Centre and in the Provinces with numerous safeguards calculated to cripple the ministers and diminish their sense of responsibility; and proposes the composition of the Federal Legislature in such a

way that the anti-democratic and anti-national forces shall dominate it;

(4) that the Report of the Joint Select Committee, which is to furnish the basis of the Government of India Bill, is in several respects more reactionary than even the White Paper, which had met with thorough condemnation at the hands of all progressive political schools in India, e. g., in substituting indirect for direct election to the Federal Lower House, thus striking at the root of popular power; in making the constitution more conservative by proposing to establish second chambers in Bombay and Madras also; in encroaching on the Fiscal Autonomy Convention; and in making the Indianization of the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service more difficult—proposals, which, taken together, will reduce the little power that we now have:

(5) that, if the proposed Constitution is imposed on the country in spite of the protests of the progressive schools of political opinion, it is bound to promote communal and racial strife, to concentrate the energies of the principal political parties on a struggle for constitutional changes to the detriment of internal consolidation and economic and social betterment, and to embitter further the relations between England and India;

The Servants of India Society is constrained to record its considered opinion that the scheme embodied in the Report is wholly unacceptable and that, on the whole, it will be better to remain under the present Constitution than to have the new one.

LIBERAL FEDERATION.

RESOLUTIONS AT SIXTEENTH SESSION.

Following is the text of the resolutions passed by the National Liberal Federation of India in its Sixteenth Session held at Poona during Christmas last:—

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE'S REPORT AND INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

The National Liberal Federation of India records its profound regret at finding that the Joint Select Committee's report, instead of removing the glaring defects and shortcomings of the White Paper proposals that were pointed out by the Federation at its two previous sessions, has, in utter disregard of almost the entire body of Indian opinion of all shades including the British Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee, introduced further highly objectionable and reactionary features, rendering responsible government in the provinces and the centre which the British Government profess to give to India wholly illusory. The Federation is convinced that any Constitution based on the lines of the Joint Select Committee's Report will be wholly unacceptable to all shades of Indian political opinion and will, far from allaying, very much intensify the present deep political discontent in the country. This

Federation, therefore, does not want any legislation based upon the Joint Select Committee's Report.

INDIANS IN ZANZIBAR

(a) The Federation views with grave concern and resentment the sudden adoption some months ago by the Government of Zanzibar of several "decrees", the cumulative effect of which must inevitably be to make it impossible for the Indian community to earn its living in a land where it has been established for a long time prior to the establishment of the British Protectorate. These decrees place them at a disadvantage as compared with their European commercial rivals and create bitterness between them and the Arab and African communities. The fact that the Land Alienation Decree imposes even on Indians born in Zanzibar disabilities which do not apply to Arabs born in Arabia who are not British subjects clearly shows that the new legislation is aimed against Indians. Such differential treatment of Indians in a colony under the direct control of His Majesty's Government which insists on equality of Britishers with Indians in India gives rise to separatist feelings and tends to destroy the unity of the Empire.

(b) The Federation records its appreciation of the prompt action of the Government of India in deputing Mr. K. P. S. Menon, I. O. S., to investigate the situation on the spot. It regrets, however, that Mr. Menon's Report has not yet been published and urges its immediate publication and the announcement by the Government of India that they have full sympathy with the grievances of Zanzibar Indians and will strain every nerve to get them redressed and to have the status of Indians in Zanzibar placed on a permanently satisfactory footing.

(c) The Federation also urges the early publication of Mr. Menon's Report on Marketing Legislation in Tanganyika, which legislation is believed to be detrimental to Indian interests.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- CHINA'S PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTION. By WANG CHING-WEL. (China To-day Series, No. 2.) (China United Press, Shanghai.) 1934. 35 cm. 199p. \$ 4.50.
- THE INDIAN MONEY MARKET. By KRISHNA KUMAR SHARMA. (The Bangalore Printing Publishing Co., Bangalore City.) 1934. 22 cm. 292p. Rs. 2/8.
- WHEN MEN TALK TRUTH AND OTHER ESSAYS. By HANNEN SWAFFER. (Rich & Cowan.) 1934. 19 cm. 159p. 3/6.
- SCIENCE, RELIGION AND MAN. By WILLIAM JOHN JAMES CORNELIUS. (Williams & Norgate.) 1935. 22 cm. 387p. 15/—.
- WAGES POLICY AND THE PRICE LEVEL. By K. S. ISLES. (King.) 1934. 20 cm. 256p. 9/—.
- BRANCH BANKING IN INDIA. By C. H. DIVANJI. (G. A. Natesan, Madras.) 1934. 20 cm. 112 x xiv pp. Rs. 3.
- THE TANTRIK DOCTRINE OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. The Secret of Tantras. By ELIZABETH SHARPE. (Rider & Co., London.) 1933. 19 cm. 87p. 4/6.
- SHREE BHAGWAT SINHJEE. St. NIHAL SINGH. (Golden Jubilee Committee, Gondal.) 1934. 26 cm. 380p.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF
PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU
AT THE SIXTEENTH NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA
AT POONA ON 28th DECEMBER 1934.

FELLOW DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM profoundly grateful to the provincial Liberal organisations and the Reception Committee of the National Liberal Federation for conferring on me the highest honour in their gift. I deeply value the confidence which they have placed in me by asking me to preside over this session of the Federation. Their approbation is naturally a source of gratification to me but it carries with it a particularly onerous responsibility. When I think of the special importance of this session and the illustrious nation-builders, who have made Poona memorable in the history of modern India, I am weighed down with a sense of my unfitness for the high office to which the Liberal party has been good enough to call me, but I feel sure that I can rely on your generous indulgence. I trust that my shortcomings will be the measure of your good-will and co-operation.

We have to mourn the loss of Mr. A. P. Sen and Sir Provash Chunder Mitter who passed away recently from the scene of their labours. Mr. Sen was one of the staunchest supporters of the Liberal Party. His genuine patriotism and large-hearted generosity are a matter of public knowledge. He was keenly interested in all forms of public service and there was no good cause which did not benefit by his liberality. He was a lover of the fine arts and his poems made his name a household word in Bengal. For one of his position and attainments his modesty was remarkable. He never spoke of himself and was ever warm in appreciating the worth of others. His memory will never be cherished by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Sir Provash Mitter was one of the prominent members of the Liberal party. He used his ability and influence to strengthen it in Bengal. As a minister and a member of the Governor's Executive Council he took a prominent part in the working of Montagu-Chelmsford constitution.

INTRODUCTION.

The problem relating to India's constitutional future continues to overshadow all other questions. The outstanding feature of the year is the publication of the report of the Joint Select Committee. It brings to a close the discussions which commenced in 1930 and continued in various forms for three years. But it leaves the constitutional question more unsolved than the first Round Table Conference. The joint labours of British and Indian delegates in 1930 held out the hope that substantial powers would be transferred to Indian hands, and that India would at no distant date occupy a position of equality with the self-governing dominions. But the reign of conservatism which commenced in the latter part of 1931

brought a serious change in the situation and turned hope into anxiety. Every subsequent Conference instead of drawing Indians and Britishers nearer together threw them wider apart, and brought increasingly into view the serious divergences between Indian and British viewpoints with regard to the political objective of India and the immediate steps that should be taken to satisfy legitimate Indian aspirations.

The White Paper showed how far the prospects of success had receded into the background since 1930. The chance of modifications being introduced in it in conformity with Indian opinion seemed remote from the outset, but the campaign carried on by the enemies of Indian reform in England and the information that reached this country with regard to the trend of discussions in the Joint Select Committee soon made it plain that, so far from meeting Indian objections, the Committee would advocate further restrictions on the limited powers accorded to them by the White Paper.

The Committee's report, which has not come as a surprise to us, has justified our worst apprehensions. It shows no trace of having been influenced by Indian opinion. The association of Indian delegates with the Committee has borne no fruit. Its report is as painful a demonstration as the White Paper of the melancholy fact that every succeeding step taken in the process of consulting Indian opinion in the last four years has further strengthened British unwillingness to recognise India's right and capacity to govern herself. The more the effort made by Indians to demonstrate the strength of their case the less the impression they produced on their British colleagues.

When Lord (then Sir James) Meston, giving evidence before the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919, stated that the reactionary despatch of the Government of India on the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was the outcome of a careful consideration of the criticism it had evoked in India, Mr. Montagu remarked that the Indian Government had shown their deference to Indian opinion by making proposals which no section of Indian opinion had put forward. This observation applies equally to the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee. It has acknowledged its obligations to its Indian associates by accepting nothing that they had suggested and recommending everything that they had opposed.

Lord Irwin told the Assembly in 1930 that His Majesty's Government conceived of the Round Table Conference "not as a mere meeting for discussion and debate but as a joint assembly of representatives of both countries, on whose agreement precise proposals to Parliament may be founded". The proposals of the Joint Select Committee, instead of

harmonising different views, have brought about the maximum of disagreement between the representatives of India and England. The committee has ignored Indian opinion and endeavoured to conciliate only the British die-hards. The modifications suggested by it in the White Paper are, in the words of Lord Snell, "constantly in the direction of further restrictions, never in the way of advance". Its recommendations have not been inspired by hope and courage. It has taken no risk. It has only conceded what it thought England could give with absolute safety.

Taking into consideration the purpose for which the Round Table Conference was convened, the task of Great Britain was to collaborate with India so that, in the words of Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Indians might feel that they had a "home in the Empire". It had to assure India that partnership with Britain implied no permanent inferiority of status. It had to devise arrangements to make Indians feel that sure and rapid steps were being taken to enable them to become masters in their own house and to achieve their political salvation. It had to invest Indians with the power to ameliorate the condition of the masses and to deal with those social and economic problems, the solution of which is necessary to the well-being and uplift of the people and the ordered evolution of society. We have to see how far its recommendations satisfy these tests.

DOMINION STATUS.

The declaration of 1917 was universally regarded in India as promising a line of development which would make India the equal of the self-governing members of the British Commonwealth, and the prospects of acquiring this status has been referred to in pronouncements emanating from His Majesty the King Emperor and in the speeches of British ministers. But doubts were cast on the validity of this interpretation by Lord Reading's Government, which in 1924 drew for the first time a subtle distinction between responsible government and Dominion Status. This created profound uneasiness throughout India and gave rise to suspicions regarding the sincerity of British promises about future Indian political development. The announcement made by Lord Irwin on the 31st October, 1929, that progress to equality with the Dominions was implicit in the policy enunciated in 1917 helped to ease political tension and revive confidence. It laid the foundation for the success of the first Round Table Conference.

The hostile criticism to which it was subjected a few days later in Parliament naturally disturbed India again, but Mr. Baldwin delivered a conciliatory speech, and so long as a Labour Government was in office, there was hope that the declaration would continue to influence official policy. Besides a year later its former critics accepted it as correctly defining the policy laid down in 1917. "We are united on the goal", said Lord Peel in the opening session of the first Round Table Conference. Lord Reading was even more explicit. "Speaking on behalf of those with whom I am associated", he said, "we must fully

accept the statement that the natural issue of the declaration of 1917 is Dominion Status, and that the implication of the words used is Dominion Status."

After the adherence of the representatives of the Liberal and Conservative parties to the declaration of 1929, it was expected that it would be regarded as the corner-stone of British policy and that every opportunity would be taken to reiterate this message of hope to the Indian people. But the resignation of the Labour Government and the overwhelming Conservative victory at the polls completely transformed the situation.

Notwithstanding the cardinal importance of the declaration in the eyes of Indians, the White Paper studiously avoided to refer to it. When the matter was referred to in the course of Sir Samuel Hoare's examination before the Joint Select Committee several members of the Committee took up an attitude which showed that in their opinion it was not relevant to the discussion of the White Paper proposals. One of them denied that the declaration of 1919 was a pledge, and another member boldly asserted that the words of the King's representative could be overruled by Parliament, and put on the announcement of 1917, which is embodied in the preamble to the Act of 1919, the interpretation which had caused trouble in 1924 and been repudiated for this very reason by Lord Irwin on behalf of His Majesty's Government. We are informed by Reuter that the same member, addressing recently a meeting of the members of the House of Commons held under the auspices of the India Defence League, went so far as to say that the grant of provincial autonomy was the only thing to which Parliament was committed by the preamble to the Act of 1919.

Similar views have been expressed by other opponents of India's freedom. Mr. Winston Churchill who, addressing the Prime Ministers of Dominions and representatives of India in 1921, had "looked forward confidently to the days when the Indian Government and the people would have assumed fully and completely their Dominion Status," explained away in his evidence before the Joint Select Committee the reference to Dominion Status in his speech as an instance of the flowery language which is customary on ceremonial occasions. He had in his mind only the equality of rank conceded to India, out of consideration for her susceptibilities, for formal purposes. He could not allow that the declaration of 1917 implied advance to Dominion Status. This contention, as shown by Professor Keith in the chapter contributed by him to "India Analysed" (vol. I) on the position of India in the Empire, has no force. "It has indeed become fashionable," he says, "to adopt the suggestion that between the promise of 1917 and Dominion Status there is a wide difference. Responsible government, it is argued, meant control of internal issues only, by ministers responsible to local parliaments; control of external affairs was a later development and those who determined on the policy of 1917 had no intention of including the wider powers in their assurance. The suggestion is plainly untenable. It is forgotten

that on no occasion had any attempt been made up to 1917 to discriminate between Dominion Status and responsible government. The term Dominion Status was not in current use at that time and what was promised was a definite system existing in the Empire, whose character was well-known as exemplified in the position towards the United Kingdom of the Dominions, the name given by the Colonial Conference of 1907 to the self-governing colonies."

The instance of the Irish Free State proves, as he points out, that this argument is unanswerable. "The treaty of 1921 assured that country," he says, "the same position as the Dominion of Canada. Nothing in the treaty expressly contemplated whether the promise referred to the status of Canada in 1921 or to such further developments in Canadian status as might be brought about in course of time. But equally from the first, the British Government never suggested that it in any way dissented from the view of the Irish Free State that it was entitled to the enjoyment of every concession made to the Dominion, and, in fact, the Free State was the first to exercise the right of legation which Canada had been promised in 1920, but of which she availed herself only in 1926, two years after the Free State had shown the way by stationing a Minister Plenipotentiary at Washington. It is clear, therefore, that the promise of 1917 has only been made precise, not enlarged in scope, by the later assurance of Dominion Status."

But the attempts that had been made to misinterpret the promise of 1919 cast on the Joint Select Committee the duty of reassuring India, to place the seal of its approval on the declaration of 1929 and to impress its importance on all those who might be called upon to deal with India. We are often told that nothing but our differences stand in the way of the attainment of our aspirations. Whatever truth there may be in this observation, there has been no difference of opinion among Indians regarding the importance of the promise of Dominion Status. The Princes accepted it wholeheartedly. As for the British Indian delegates, no matter to which community they belonged, there could never be any doubt about their attitude on this point. They stressed its vital importance in the Joint Memorandum submitted by them to the Joint Select Committee and, in view of the fact that prominent British politicians today question the inviolability of royal pledges and declarations made by Prime Ministers and Viceroys, asked that it should be embodied in the Constitution Act; but, notwithstanding the unanimity that prevailed among Indians, the Committee has ignored the demand and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was a member of the Committee, has suggested in the debate on the report of the Committee in the House of Lords that the use of the phrase Dominion Status which "was capable of infinite misunderstanding" should be abandoned. The proposals of the British Indian delegates had been objected to on the ground that, as Dominion Status is a vague phrase, not susceptible of precise legal definition, it cannot be given statutory recognition. What can be more indefinite than

the statement that "the Crown is the symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations"? One would have thought that a sentimental expression like this was more appropriate for a political speech than a legal document, yet it finds a place in the preamble to the Statute of Westminster. Besides, we may be sure that lawyers like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru would not have urged that the attainment of equality with the Dominions should be explicitly recognised as the purpose of British policy in India in an Act of Parliament, if the drawing up of a suitable formula had been beyond the resources of skilled draftsmanship, but even if the legal difficulties are insuperable there is no reason why the Committee should have failed to express its own allegiance to the objective of Dominion Status and to give, in the words of Lord Irwin, on behalf of all British political parties that "assurance of direction" which at least was contained in the announcement of October 1929. Knowing the importance which Indian opinion attached to the announcement and the unwillingness in influential political circles in England to respect its authoritative character, the Committee, if it valued the goodwill of India, should by declaring its own adherence to it have given added authority to it. The Labour members of the Committee deserve our thanks for having tried to persuade it to take this view of its responsibilities, but their proposal unfortunately did not find favour with the Committee.

Addressing the Legislative Assembly on 9th July, 1929, Lord Irwin said, "It was also evident that looking ahead it was hardly to be expected that India, rightly sensitive of her self-respect, and growing every year more conscious of national feeling, should of her own free will desire to remain indefinitely a partner in the political society of the British Empire upon terms which implied a permanent inferiority of status. It was for this reason and with the object of removing avoidable misunderstanding on this vital matter that His Majesty's Government last year authorised me to declare that, in their view, the attainment of Dominion Status was the natural completion of India's constitutional growth." The separatist feeling in India is largely due to a complete mistrust of British policy with regard to the future position of India. The Committee by its deliberate silence has given good grounds for suspecting the sincerity of British statesmen in this matter, and has seriously injured the cause of goodwill and unity. As all those who can see beneath the surface will testify, the promise of Dominion Status would have gone a long way to arrest the progressive deterioration which is taking place in the relations between India and Britain, by satisfying India's self-respect. The Committee's approval of the Labour Government's announcement would have amounted to an assurance that whichever party might be in power it would respect the binding character of the declaration. It would have shown that the promise of 1929 was made not on behalf of a party but on behalf of the British nation, but the Committee has indirectly told us that there is neither magnanimity nor good faith

in politics, and that in future we should expect to get nothing but what we can wrest from unwilling hands.

The Committee, which fought shy of defining its attitude towards the general question of the future of constitutional development in India, could not be expected to indicate any period of time within which this development should be completed or the means by which this consummation should be attained. When Major Attlee asked Sir Samuel Hoare what were the conditions which should be fulfilled before the control of foreign affairs could be transferred, his question led to an exchange of interesting observations among some members of the Committee, and Sir Austen Chamberlain remarked "that in any future which I can conceive the foreign relations of India will involve this country and this country must have its say in its own affairs." As there is a close connection between military policy and foreign affairs, it is obvious that if our foreign relations cannot be placed under our control much less can the subject of defence, which is by itself supremely important, be transferred into Indian hands in any conceivable future; and that the Committee could formulate no policy, the object of which was to end the period of Indian tutelage. If England has nothing to give, silence with regard to the future is obviously the only course possible for her.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

In considering the constitutional proposals, I shall devote myself largely to an examination of the new features introduced into the White Paper by the Committee. The outlines of the constitution adumbrated in the White Paper are well-known. Responsibility at the centre will be conceded only if an all-India federation embracing the States is established. The States will be entitled to one-third of the seats in the Federal Assembly and forty per cent. of the seats in the Federal Council of State, and their representatives will be nominated by the Princes. The British Indian representatives in the Federal Assembly will be returned in accordance with a system of election based on communal electorates and the Governor-General will be asked to include in the ministry representatives of Indian States and the minorities. The lower house will not be supreme even in financial matters. The upper house, whose size relatively to the Assembly will be much larger than that recommended by the Indian Franchise Committee, will have equal authority in respect of financial legislation and will have the power, on the initiative of the ministry, to take into consideration demands reduced or rejected by the Assembly and to annul its decision. The ministry will owe a shadowy responsibility to the legislature, and, in view of the financial powers of the upper house, it is needless to add that even this nominal responsibility will not be owed exclusively to the popular house, if one may dare call the Federal Assembly by that name. Neither the executive nor the legislature under this system will be prone to indulge in rash innovation or undue self-assertion; but to guard against all possible dangers the Governor-General will be armed with extensive powers to overrule both. He will have

the ultimate authority in all matters relating to law and order and he will virtually guide financial and commercial policy though finance and commerce are transferred subjects. The administration of railways will be practically under his control, and special measures intended to develop Indian trade and commerce may be vetoed by him on the ground that they appear to discriminate against Britishers. To assist him in the exercise of his financial authority, he will have at his elbow, in addition to the I. C. S. Financial Secretary, a financial adviser who will be independent of the ministry, and who, like the British advisers of the Egyptian Government, may draw all real power into his hands. With necessary modifications, the election of legislatures and the formation of ministries in the provinces will take place in accordance with the system at the centre. Three provinces are to enjoy the privilege of having second chambers which will be formed on a communal basis and elected on a high property franchise, so that they may be specially qualified to champion the interests of the masses. The Governor, as far as practicable, will have powers similar to those given to the Governor-General except in respect of finance and will be specially responsible for the internal administration and discipline of the police. The Indian Civil and Police Services, the iron frame on which the Governor-General and Governors may always lean for support, will remain, as at present, under the control of the Secretary of State, and Britishers will continue to be recruited to them in existing proportions. Even orders relating to the transfer and posting of officers belonging to them will, as now, require the personal concurrence of the Governor. The system of recruitment to both these services will be enquired into five years after the commencement of the Constitution Act, and action on the results of this enquiry will be subject to the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

A cabinet minister recently said that the new machinery of government contained every safeguard that the wit of man can devise. How true this is is shown by the brief description which has just been given of the White Paper scheme. It is admirably devised to encourage inaction and prevent change. Whatever the intentions of its authors may have been, it embodies a static conception of society and is afraid of the unknown future.

Not satisfied with the formidable barriers opposed by these arrangements to the growth of nationalism and the advance of democracy or the development of a spirit of independence in ministers and legislators, the Committee makes suggestions which will destroy the national character of the Federal Assembly, curtail its powers, further strengthen the forces of privilege and conservatism, humiliate the provincial ministries, and make the Governor the virtual dictator of his province.

With regard to the central constitution, the Committee recommends indirect election to the British India section of the Federal Assembly, the election of the Council of State by provincial upper chambers or bodies analogous to them, a novel method which has been rightly described as fantastic

by Lord Salisbury, and the elevation of the Council of State to a position of equality with the Assembly in the matter of the voting of demands. The Council of State will not be subject to dissolution. Its members will be elected for nine years, but only one-third of them will retire at a time.

In the provincial domain, while making it clear that it should not "be understood as reporting against the introduction of the system of indirect election in the future" for the popular house, it agrees to direct election but recommends the establishment of second chambers in the Madras and Bombay presidencies. Besides, it makes three proposals for increasing the already enormous powers of the Governor and giving him additional control over the maintenance of law and order. Any alteration of the Police Act and such of the regulations made under it as "in his opinion relate to or affect the organization or discipline of the police" should require the previous sanction of the Governor. The records of the provincial Intelligence Department should not be shown to any officer, not even to the Home Member of the Government, outside the police force without the permission of the Governor. It is instructive to note here that it has been proposed that the Central Intelligence Bureau, which is now under the Home Department, should be attached to one of the Governor-General's reserved departments.

Even without assuming control of the entire government, the Governor may in order to cope with crimes of violence, the object of which is to overthrow government, take charge of such departments as he thinks necessary and appoint an official to be his mouthpiece in the legislature. In the case of Bengal, it has been recommended that, unless the situation improves before the introduction of provincial autonomy, the Governor should be directed in his Instrument of Instructions to exercise immediately the powers referred to above. The Committee further contemplates that, in the event of a breakdown of the constitutional machinery, the Governor should have the power even to suspend the legislature and administer the province without it.

In addition to this, the convention which conceded fiscal freedom to India in principle in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919, has been virtually abrogated. The Governor-General is to be empowered by statute to prevent imports from England from being treated in a manner which he may regard as discriminatory.

As regards the Indian Civil and Police Services which will be the guardians of British power in this country, the obligation to institute an enquiry into the system of recruitment to them five years after the inauguration of the new constitution has been done away with, and as regards the Army, the Committee makes the startling observation that "the problem of Indianisation does not appear to us to be essentially related to the constitutional issues with which we are concerned."

CENTRAL LEGISLATURE.

Of the retrograde recommendations made by the Committee the proposal for the election of the repre-

sentatives of British India to the Federal Assembly by the provincial lower houses is easily the most retrograde. The abandonment of direct election was recommended by the Simon Commission. The Government of India, however, after a full examination of the matter, arrived at a conclusion unfavourable to this proposal. They were so impressed by the disadvantages of indirect election, confusion of electoral issues, danger of corruption, etc., that they wrote to the Secretary of State in their despatch on the Simon Commission's report: "On the sum of these considerations we would ourselves incline to the conclusion, that a method whereby the Assembly would be wholly or mainly constituted by indirect election would not be suitable. The certain objections do not seem to us to outweigh the possible disadvantages." They dissented from the Commission's view that if the centre was to develop on federal lines, the representation of the provinces as such in the Federal Assembly was almost necessary for the participation of the States, and held that "even if the States did enter the Assembly, it does not appear to us to be necessary that the method of representation of the States and the provinces of British India must be uniform." While, admitting the disadvantages arising from the unwieldy size of the constituencies, and pointing out that direct election had not yielded all that was expected of it, they still believed that "the balance of the argument is in favour of the maintenance of direct election" and added that "in any case, we feel that the method of election is essentially a matter on which the considered judgment of Indian opinion should have great weight."

When the matter was considered by the Round Table Conference, the delegates from British India were unanimous in desiring the retention of the system of direct election. The Lothian Committee, after examining all possible bases for the revision of the franchise, endorsed the Indian view and the White Paper retained direct election for the Federal Assembly.

The Committee has however taken a different view and decided, contrary to experience, the weight of authority and the wishes of Indians, to reverse the system of election which has been in force since 1920. Broadly speaking, it will be true to say that we owe this to the Conservative members of the Committee. The objections to a system of direct election have been considered over and over again during the last four years. Full weight has been given to them at every investigation, but as the Committee itself says, the system "has worked on the whole reasonably well." And for the present at least, the increase in the strength of the Federal Assembly will make the constituencies more manageable and contact between the candidates and the voters easier. Future difficulties may well be left to be dealt with by Indian ministers themselves. If the problems created by size and numbers have been solved by Australia and the United States, there is no reason to suppose that they will prove insoluble in India.

In any case, the disadvantages of indirect election are at present graver than those of direct election, and indirect election for the lower house is

without a parallel in existing federal constitutions. In view of the shifting composition of the provincial legislature, the members elected by them will not in practice be accountable for their conduct to anybody. In the best of circumstances, they will owe less responsibility to their electors than what the members elected under the present system owe to theirs. Besides if a party captures the provincial council, it will automatically control the election of the provincial representatives to the Federal Assembly. Again, the fear of corruption cannot be regarded as imaginary. As eight or nine votes may suffice for securing election to the Assembly, there will be a strong temptation to employ improper methods. It is stated in a recently published book that in the old days when the Senate of the United States of America was elected by the state legislatures corruption, open and organised, was consequently rife, a member of this august body, on a roll-call, answered "Not guilty." This ludicrous incident contains a warning which it will be perilous for us to ignore.

The gravest objection to the proposal of the Committee is that, if it is adopted, the Assembly will cease to be a symbol of national unity or a force making for the consolidation of national strength. If the Assembly becomes the representative of provincial interests, the country will be morally split up into isolated parts and there will be no organ for the expression of the national will. Besides, it is our experience that in matters concerning our political status, the views of the elected Assembly alone have counted for anything. For instance, when one or two provincial councils declined to co-operate with the Simon Commission, their action scarcely created a ripple either in India or England. Its effect was purely local. But when the Assembly adopted the same course, the blow it struck for the self-respect of the nation resounded throughout the country and Great Britain. It is because it draws its strength from the people that it has the moral authority to speak for the nation. If direct election, which is the source of its vitality, is done away with, its power and prestige will come to an end, and the only weapon which the constitution places at our disposal for carrying on the national fight will be broken. Indirect election will thus be a national calamity of the first magnitude. It will disperse our forces and leave us without a rallying centre. We shall have no means of keeping the attention of the nation fixed on issues relating to the realisation of full self-government and bringing pressure to bear on the authorities to make them yield to the national will.

All sections in the country are united in condemning the Committee's retrograde recommendation. Its disastrous consequences from the point of view of Indian interests are realised by all political parties. In fighting against it we would be fighting for the life of the nation. I feel that if direct election goes all is lost. It is much better for us to remain as we are than be under a constitution which adds to other objectionable features the heavy handicap of indirect election for the Assembly. Such a constitution can-

not bring us freedom. It can only lead to our further enslavement.

The Council of State, as constituted in accordance with the Committee's scheme, will be one of the most oligarchical bodies known to any constitution. It may have a better title than the old United States Senate to be known as the Millionaires' Club. It will represent double-distilled conservatism. Ideas of political independence or social justice, if at all able to cross its threshold, will never thrive in its atmosphere.

It has been proposed that such a body should be the equal of the Assembly in every respect and have co-ordinate authority with it even in respect of the budget. This will certainly not be an aid to the development of responsible government. In France, says Finer, such a system has not led to the growth of an adequate sense of responsibility among the popular representatives or encouraged the formation of stable and well-defined parties. Party ties are loose, owing to the weakness of the Chamber of Deputies which cannot have its way in regard to the budget; and the deputies can always throw the responsibility for their failure to fulfil their promises on the Senate.

It is doubtful whether responsible government, properly so called, will develop under the White Paper scheme. At any rate the impediments to its growth will neither be few nor insignificant. It should not be completely smothered by being surrounded with additional safeguards.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT.

Indian public opinion has been opposed to the establishment of second chambers in the provinces. It is unfortunate that the Provincial Constitution Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference recommended their creation in the U. P., Bihar and Orissa and Bengal, but it advised that this should not be done in any other province unless opinion in the province favoured such a step. A resolution recommending the creation of a second chamber in Madras was placed before the Madras Legislative Council in November, 1932, but it was defeated. Opinion generally in the province also appears to be opposed to a second chamber. The opinion of the Bombay Legislative Council was not invited on the subject, yet the Joint Select Committee has saddled Madras and Bombay with second chambers. Conservatism has been buttressed up everywhere.

The White Paper conferred large powers on the Governor in relation to provincial administration and endowed him with full authority to deal with matters relating to the maintenance of law and order and efficiency of the police. It seemed hardly possible to go further without making law and order a reserved subject, but the White Paper proposals did not satisfy the Indian Police Service, which with the help of the die-hards carried on a vigorous agitation in order to have the powers of the Ministers further curtailed. It placed its views before the Committee and in its Memorandum put forward proposals which amounted to the supersession of the future Home Member by the Inspector-General. The

most important of these suggestions have been accepted by the Committee.

In several provinces Indians have been in charge of the Police department and no complaint has ever been made that they did anything to undermine the discipline and efficiency of the police force or misused the confidential information which they obtained in their official capacity. If they have shown a full sense of responsibility in administering the Police department, there is not the slightest excuse for treating them as political suspects in future. It may be desirable that the internal administration of the police should be left in the hands of the head of the department. But that the Governor should be given a special power to refuse his assent to the amendment of the Police Acts in force in the province, or of such rules made under them as in his opinion affect the organization or discipline of the police, is a gross reflection on Indian capacity and character and highly undesirable in the interest of discipline. The Inspector-General of Police will have free access to the Governor and will thus have an opportunity of influencing his mind. The Governor's decision to act against the views of the ministry will presumably be based on representations made by him. The Inspector-General would thus be sitting in judgment on the Home Member and the position of the latter would be intolerable.

The recommendation that the Governor should be asked in his Instrument of Instructions to direct that no records relating to intelligence regarding terrorism should not be disclosed to any officer outside the provincial police force without his sanction, is another eloquent indication of the position which provincial ministers will occupy under the new constitution. They are to be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, but they must obey unquestioningly the behests of the Governor. The excuse that the informants and agents would not feel secure that their identity might not be revealed if the minister immediately concerned could send for the records of the Intelligence Department will not bear a moment's examination. Indian Home Members have as a rule refrained from finding out the names of the persons through whom the Intelligence Department obtained information. But they have a right to examine the records and have sometimes done so. It has never been hinted yet that this has hampered the Intelligence Department in obtaining secret information. There is therefore no reason to suppose that the continuance of the existing practice will cause any trouble hereafter. To place a restriction of this kind is to lower the future Home Member in the estimation of his subordinates and to make the situation galling to a minister with the least self-respect.

The analogy of England where the names of the informants are not communicated even to the minister most directly concerned cannot be applied to India at present. The Prime Minister who, it is understood, has access to all secret records is the head of the Cabinet whose members stand or fall together. The Governor is in a very different position in relation

to the ministry and action taken at the instance of the Governor by the minister responsible for law and order would seriously compromise his position with the Legislative Council. The Committee's recommendations are a triumph for the I. P. S. I have good reasons to believe that, encouraged by its victory, it is trying to secure acceptance of the rest of the proposals it placed before the Committee.

The Central Intelligence Bureau, apart from co-ordinating the information received from provincial Intelligence Departments, works for various departments of Government such as the Army and the Foreign Affairs Departments, but it is controlled by the Home Department of the Government of India. The Committee recommends that it should in future be removed from the control of the Home Department and attached to one of the reserved departments. This is another proof of the inveterate distrust with which the authorities regard the future Indian ministers, whether at the centre or in the provinces.

It has been proposed by the Committee that the Governor may assume charge of any department of the Government if he thinks that it is necessary to do so to put down terrorism. The implications of this proposal have not been clearly pointed out. At present if the Governor is not satisfied that the ministers are taking such action as circumstances require, it is open to him to ask them to make room for another ministry. If he cannot find any ministry which will support him a constitutional crisis will have occurred, and he will have the right under the Constitution Act to assume to himself all such powers as may appear necessary to him to carry on the government. But the Committee appears to contemplate that the ministers will remain in office even after the Governor has withdrawn any department from their control. How any ministry can retain the confidence of the legislature by accepting so humiliating a position it is hard to see. It is to be hoped that the ministers will have sufficient self-respect not to remain in office when they are distrusted and slighted.

The existence of terrorism in Bengal should not be allowed to interfere with the normal operation of provincial autonomy. The existing unrest is due largely to the dissatisfaction in the country with the present form of government. The satisfaction of the aspirations of the people is the only way of putting an end to it. The speedy transfer of power to Indian hands is therefore urgently required in Bengal. To make the abnormal conditions that prevail there an excuse for the retention of control over essential branches of administration by the Governor would be to play into the hands of the terrorists. The Committee's recommendation is based on a very short-sighted policy. The denial of provincial autonomy to Bengal will be no remedy for the present situation.

FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS.

As neither the central legislature nor the ministries under the new regime are likely to be imbued with a passion for reform they might have been trusted to discharge their responsibilities with fairness and prudence, but their financial powers have been severely restricted. No bill relating to coinage or

currency can be brought forward except with the previous sanction of the Governor-General. The White Paper placed the same restriction on the introduction of a bill dealing with the powers and duties of the Federal Reserve Bank in relation to the management of currency and exchange. The Joint Select Committee has gone further and recommended that "any amendment of the Reserve Bank or any legislation affecting the constitution and functions of the bank . . . should require the prior sanction of the Governor-General in his discretion." The Governor-General will have the power to overrule the ministry to preserve the financial stability and credit of the Federation. He will be empowered to appoint a Financial Adviser to help him in the discharge of his responsibilities, who will take the place of the European Finance Member, for whom there will be no room in the new constitution.

The assumption underlying the controlling power of the Governor-General in matters relating to currency that the financial and commercial interests of India will be safer in the keeping of the British Government than in Indian hands is not supported by facts. The disastrous results of their exchange policy in 1920 which cost India heavily is too recent to require mention. The currency policy forced by the Secretary of State on India when England went off the gold standard, apparently against the views of the Government of India, is another illustration of the manner in which our trustees have looked after our interests. India was not allowed to do what England had done in order that the existing relation between Indian and British currencies should be preserved. The authorities fear that if India were given financial freedom she might alter the present policy, if a change appeared desirable in the interests of her trade and industry and the economic welfare of the people. This apprehension is justified, but it is idle to claim that the supervision of the Governor-General is essential for safeguarding the stability and credit of the Federation when its object is to prevent the framing of a policy in accordance with India's financial and economic circumstances. In any case there is no justification for preventing the consideration of legislation relating to currency or the Reserve Bank without the Governor-General's previous sanction, as the Governor-General will have the power to veto any measure which he considers unsound.

The powers given to the Governor-General in regard to the budget are so wide as to leave only a nominal authority to the Indian Finance Minister of the future. The Governor-General will have full control over every feature of the budget. Lord Reading said in justification of this in the debates which took place in 1930 and 1931 that what he had in mind was that intervention should take place only when it was proposed to raise an internal loan, at a rate of interest which would be financially burdensome and would injure the credit of India or when the budget was unbalanced. Here again the record of Government is not so clean as to justify

their claim that they will be better guardians of the financial interests of the State than Indian ministers. Their policy with regard to loans has more than once caused dissatisfaction in this country and it is feared that the control of the Governor-General may be used in such a way as to prevent the full development of the Indian money market. The Round Table Conference has shown how powerful is the political pressure which British capitalists can exercise on the authorities because of the foreign investments in India. In order to protect our future the Indian Government may legitimately consider itself bound to take all prudent measures to enable India to rely as far as possible on her own resources. The fear that an unsound policy may be deliberately followed for political reasons appears to be unwarranted. Indians themselves have lent hundreds of crores to Government and are interested in the maintenance of its credit. Indian ministers therefore will not be tempted to follow unwise policies merely to injure England because their mistakes will recoil on their own heads and ruin the indigenous investor.

As regards the balancing of the budget it cannot be seriously contended that the Indian Government will follow the suicidal course of habitually exceeding its means. A budget may occasionally have to be left unbalanced. Sir Malcolm Hailey placed unbalanced budgets before the Legislative Assembly in three consecutive years and depended on loans to meet the deficits. But it cannot be supposed for a moment that the future Government will as a matter of policy persistently leave the budget unbalanced.

No reasonable grounds have been put forward to show that the Indian ministers will disregard ordinary canons of financial prudence and inflict irreparable injury on the country just in order to spite England. The restrictions placed on their power are manifestly due to political distrust which is to be found in every part of the constitutional scheme.

COMMERCIAL RESTRICTIONS.

It is inevitable that the prospect of transfer of power from British to Indian hands should rouse apprehensions in the minds of British capitalists with regard to the protection of their trading rights and the capital invested by them in India. The matter was discussed at considerable length in the conferences and committees that took place in 1930-32, but it was considered almost entirely with reference to the rights of individual Britishers or British companies, trading in and with India. The question of trading relations and tariff arrangements between India and England never came within the purview of serious discussion. The report of the Minorities Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference contained a paragraph which referred to the desire of the British commercial community that a commercial treaty should be concluded between Great Britain and India. But the Committee of the whole Conference substituted for it another paragraph in which the reference to a commercial treaty was dropped and only the rights of the British mercantile community trading in India were

sought to be safeguarded. When the subject of commercial discrimination was discussed in the Federal Structure Committee of the second Round Table Conference the representative of the Associated Chambers of Commerce included trade relations between the two countries among the points on which in his opinion a settlement was necessary. This was objected to on the ground that it had nothing to do with the question of discrimination against a commercial minority. It does not appear that the matter was referred to again in any of the subsequent discussions. The White Paper was silent on the subject. The Associated Chambers of Commerce in their evidence before the Joint Select Committee made no reference to it. The Secretary of State for India placed a memorandum before the Committee revising and enlarging the White Paper proposals relating to commercial discrimination, but there was not the faintest suggestion in it that Indo-British trade should be accorded special protection. This question figured only in the evidence of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

The Committee has added to the resentment, deep and wide, which the excessive commercial restrictions placed by the White Paper on India's power to develop her economic resources in the interests of her children gave rise to, by recommending interference with the fiscal autonomy of India. It has recommended that the Governor-General should be empowered by statute to prevent the adoption of measures, "legislative or administrative, which would subject British goods imported into British India from the United Kingdom to discriminatory or penal treatment." The assurance that the Governor-General's power to intervene would be limited to restrictions the object of which was not to promote the economic interests of India but to injure those of the United Kingdom, does not in any way lessen the gravity of the step taken by it. The limitation affects the constitutional status of India and has rightly been resented throughout the country. Besides the memory of the complete economic subservience of India to England for nearly half a century and the fierce controversies roused by the dictation of our fiscal policy by British interests is too fresh in our minds to permit us to accept the Committee's assurance. It is to the fiscal autonomy convention that we owe such industrial development as has taken place recently in India. We cannot, therefore, allow it to be interfered with on any ground. We are entitled to have the same power as the dominions to regulate our tariff policy as seems best to us.

A flood of light is thrown on the meaning of the word "penal" by the evidence of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. In the memorandum submitted by it a demand was made for the insertion of some safeguard in the constitution against the possibility of legislation "unduly penalising the British export trade." In reply to a question whether the Committee had in mind action "spitefully intended to do injury to British interests or which is political in its motives," its representative said,

"We did not necessarily mean spitefully, sir, but we meant some legislative enactment such as the specific duty on plain grey goods which is now $4\frac{3}{8}$ annas per pound, which entirely prevented our competing in those goods in the Indian market." This shows that the Chamber wishes that the British Government should intervene not merely to disallow measures deliberately intended to injure British commerce, but to secure a position of advantage for Lancashire in the Indian market.

The Committee desires that the principle of reciprocity should govern commercial relations between India and England. The conception of reciprocity in its opinion implies that "when either partner is considering to what extent it can offer special advantages of this kind to a third country without injustice to the other partner it will have regard to the general range of benefits secured to it by the partnership, and not merely to the usefulness of the partnership in relation to the particular commodity under consideration at the moment." This means that the reciprocity of which the Committee speaks is only another name for Imperial Preference, and what assurance have we that the power given to the Governor-General will not be used to further this policy? This, as has been said both by Indian political leaders and the representatives of Indian commercial interests, may be agreed to by a self-governing India, but it cannot be conceded so long as we are unable to bargain on equal terms with England.

The proposals of the Committee, which deal with the future interests of the British commercial community, are based on the principle that Britishers domiciled in the United Kingdom and companies incorporated there shall have the same rights as Indians and Indian companies and shall be regarded as if they belonged to India. They will be subject to the same conditions in regard to trade and taxation. No differentiation will be permitted between Indian and British merchants and firms with regard to the purchase of stores or the allocation of contracts or the right to benefit by a policy of protection. The Governor-General and Governors will be given power to disallow, in their discretion, measures, whether legislative or administrative, which they regard as discriminatory in form or fact. Individuals and companies engaging in trade in India in future will be on the same footing as those that are already engaged in it, except in one case. If the State grants bounties for the development of an industry, companies which engage in it after the passing of the law, which authorises the payment of bounties, may be treated differently from those already engaged in it, and they may as a condition of eligibility for the grant be required to comply with the conditions laid down by the External Capital Committee.

In normal circumstances, it is a sound policy to place no restrictions on the development of trade and industry, except such as are in the interests of social justice, and leave private initiative and enterprise free but special circumstances call for special

measures. The economic backwardness of India requires that special steps should be taken to further her interests.

The External Capital Committee, while not in favour of placing restrictions on the inflow of foreign capital, thought that discrimination might be made between foreign and indigenous capital in regard to the exploitation of wasting assets. "Where a concession is granted," it wrote, "to exploit a wasting asset, such as a mineral concession, no definite rules can be prescribed. It must be a question in each case whether it is better from the point of view of the national interest that a concession should be developed by external capital or left until indigenous capital may be prepared to develop it. Such concessions should only be granted to external capitalists, when it is clearly in the national interest that they should be developed."

The principle underlying this recommendation has the support of all Indians. Owing to the policy of the British Government in the past, India's commercial and industrial development has been greatly retarded. She has a great leeway to make up and is faced with the competition of interests, which owe their strength to the assistance and influence of Government. Unless she is allowed to give special encouragement to her nationals, she will have to wait indefinitely to achieve adequate progress.

That the rights of British and Indian traders should be regulated on the basis of reciprocity seems *prima facie* to be a fair demand. But it is to be noted that the power of initiative will rest with England. India cannot adopt special measures for the benefit of Indian trade and industry unless the British Government accord preferential rights to Britishers in England. To call such a relation reciprocal is to misuse words. There are so few Indians carrying on business in England and British trade and industry are so highly developed that England will never feel the need of special measures to protect her interests *vis-a-vis* India. Reciprocity between England and India will therefore mean the subordination of the interests of the latter to those of the former.

We do not desire that any injustice should be done to British interests, but we have every right to ask that vested interests shall not constitute a permanent barrier to our development. So long as attempts are made in the name of equality of opportunity to enable Britishers to retain the privileged position which political power has enabled them to hold, so long friendly commercial relations between India and England will be impossible. An understanding between them is possible only on condition that practical steps are taken to enable Indians to occupy the position to which they are entitled in their own country. As the Government of India wrote to the Secretary of State in their despatch on the report of the Simon Commission in September, 1930, "The possibility of reaching an agreement on these difficult matters depends largely upon the spirit in which they are approached. Notwithstanding the unfortunate history of the last few months we believe that there is sufficient goodwill on both sides to overcome the difficulties if they are frankly faced. The impor-

tance of reaching a permanent settlement of the question can hardly be exaggerated. More perhaps than any other single factor, it would help to create harmonious relations between Great Britain and India on the strength of which we could look forward with confidence to the future in which Indian and British enterprises could work together on terms of mutual advantage and respect." Had the British business community co-operated with Indians in finding out methods by which the desired result could be achieved the existing tension would have been considerably eased. But unfortunately, during the last six years, while they have denounced all measures suggested with a view to enabling Indians to get a foothold in those activities in which they enjoy a monopoly, they have shown no disposition to join hands with them in promoting their interests.

CIVIL SERVICES.

The Services Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference recommended that recruitment and control of the Indian Civil and Police services should in future be in the hands of the Government of India and that judicial officers should be excluded from the cadre of the Indian Civil Service. The White Paper rejected both these recommendations. It laid down that the Secretary of State for India should continue to be the recruiting and controlling authority for these services, and as regards the appointment of civilians to judicial offices, it not merely kept up the existing system but made the Indian Civil Service officers eligible for appointment as Chief Justice of a High Court. It maintained the status quo even with regard to the recruitment of Indians. Indians and Europeans were to be recruited to the Indian Civil and Police Services in the proportions laid down by the Lee Commission. It however made two new proposals in this connection. A statutory enquiry should be held into the question of the future recruitment for these services five years after the introduction of the new constitutional order, and action on the results of this enquiry should be subject to the approval of both Houses of Parliament. The Committee has endorsed the recommendation of the White Paper regarding the system of recruitment but has proposed that the question of the recruitment of Indians in India in the prescribed proportions for both these services should be considered by His Majesty's Government. As regards the statutory enquiry it has recommended that no date should be fixed for it. It should be left to the Government of the day to decide whether the proper time for an enquiry has come.

The White Paper made the further progress of Indianisation more difficult than before. Under the Government of India Act it is entirely within the discretion of the executive authorities to lay down the methods of recruitment to the above-mentioned services and to determine the proportions in which Indians and Europeans should be recruited. The effect of the proposals in the White Paper will be to take away this power from the Secretary of State for India and to make any increase in Indian recruitment dependent on the approval not merely of the

House of Commons but also of the House of Lords. In consonance with the spirit of the constitutional changes made in 1919, the rules relating to recruitment to the Indian Civil Service were revised in order to provide for the admission of Indians in substantial proportions. The necessary changes did not require the approval of either House of Parliament and were made by the Secretary of State in Council on his own authority. Again when the Lee Commission reported its recommendations were given effect to by the executive which was under no obligation to consult the legislature. Under the White Paper proposals, the Government of the day would have no power to take such action as it thought proper without first obtaining parliamentary sanction. The composition of the services is a matter in which we are vitally interested. It was expected that following the precedent of 1919 steps would be taken on the inauguration of the new constitution to bring the recruitment to the Indian Civil and Police Services in harmony with the spirit of the constitution, but what has been actually proposed is that simultaneously with the introduction of constitutional reforms steps should be taken to make the admission of Indians into the service more difficult than before. It is not difficult to understand the reasons which lie behind this policy. The White Paper shows that the only persons whom the higher authorities have confidence in are the Governor-General and the Governors. If as the trusted agents of Parliament they are to have adequate power to exercise their authority, the system of recruitment must be of such a character as to enable them to control the officers connected with those services on which the administration of the country depends in a special measure. As full reliance can be placed only on European officers, it has been thought essential that the proportion of British recruitment in what are known as the security services should not be reduced. The proposal that no change should be made in future without the approval of Parliament is probably the result of the fear that if the power of the executive is not curtailed, a Socialist Government may be so unpatriotic as to weaken the pillars on which British rule rests in this country. It ensures that no action will be taken which the Conservatives are opposed to. The White Paper however made a revision of the existing proportions of recruitment possible after the expiry of five years from the commencement of the new constitution, but the Committee is not prepared to go even as far as this.

The maintenance of the existing proportions was justified by the Secretary of State for India in his examination by the Indian delegates on the ground that a change in the composition of the services when a new constitution was to be introduced would be to expose the progress of India to an unnecessary risk. It has become the fashion for the authorities to resist our demands for the Indianisation of the army and the security services on the ground that it would be risky to undertake two experiments at the same time. Mr. Montagu made a radical departure from the old method of recruiting the security services on

the eve of the introduction of the new constitution, but his rashness was followed by no disastrous consequences. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that if a similar step were taken now it would not prove equally safe. Indeed a change in the constitution is the strongest argument in favour of a change in the recruitment of these services. To change the constitution but to maintain the structure of the services unchanged is to follow two contradictory policies.

The other services, the future of which was considered by the Committee, are the Indian Medical Service, the superior Railway Services, the Indian Forest Service and the Indian Service of Engineers (Irrigation). In the first two as in the case of the security services the existing situation has been left unchanged. There is to be no advance in the position of Indians and notwithstanding the repeated demands of Indians of all parties and communities for the formation of a superior Civil Medical Service distinct from the military Indian Medical Service, the I. M. S. will continue to have a virtual monopoly of the higher posts and to dominate the provincial medical departments. Roughly speaking, the Committee has recommended the continuance of the status quo in regard to all services which have an all-India character. However much they may differ among themselves some reason has been found for maintaining the British element intact in each case.

The Indian Forest and Irrigation Services which will operate in the transferred field will be provincialised. But the Committee observe that "our recommendation that the Forest and Irrigation Services should in future be recruited in India does not, of course, imply that the Governments in India should abandon the recruitment of necessary personnel from England." Strong Governments will doubtless profit by this observation.

ARMY.

As already stated, the Committee has expressed the view that there is no essential relation between the problem of Indianisation and the constitutional issues with which it is concerned. Such a statement has been made for the first time by an authoritative body like the Joint Select Committee. It is true that the history of the grant of self-government to the colonies shows that internal autonomy was conceded to them before they were able to defend themselves. But owing to the friction which subsequently arose on the question of the control to be exercised over the imperial forces stationed there, the colonies were given to understand that they must make their own arrangements for their defence, and it is recognized now that self-rule and protection by an outside power are incompatible. In any case we may be sure that the colonial precedents will not be followed in the case of India. We have been repeatedly told by those in authority that our inability to defend ourselves is an obstacle to the achievement of full self-government, and that full powers cannot be conceded to India so long as the Indian army contains British troops and a considerable proportion of the regimental officers is British. It is evident therefore

that the question of defence has a vital bearing on the future status of India. The first Round Table Conference recognised this by appointing a Sub-Committee which made recommendations regarding the appointment of Indians as King's commissioned Officers and the examination of the strength of the British army in India.

It being clear that at least for all practical purposes self-defence is the life-blood of self-government, the Committee should have made constructive suggestions for the preparation of Indians for the defence of their country. But, instead of doing so, it has denied, as stated above, any essential connection between questions relating to the constitution and the creation of a national army, and only pointed out the difficulties which impede India's progress to military autonomy. It asks Indian political leaders to be "realists" and to face the fact that Indianisation cannot be carried out in accordance with a fixed time-table. It refers with approval to the conclusion of the Statutory Commission that the practical difficulties involved are too great to justify "a precipitate embarkation on a wholesale process of substituting Indian for British personnel in the Indian army" and adds that an additional difficulty arises from differences between the martial and other races of India. It tells us in other words that we must solve three problems—the training of Indian officers for the higher grades, the substitution of Indian for British soldiers and the development of the martial capacity of the people—before our ambitions can be realised.

It is unfortunately too true that India is as yet not capable of assuming responsibility for her defence, but her helplessness is entirely due to the policy pursued by England since the fifties of the last century. It is well known that in the Indian army as reorganised after the upheaval of 1857, the number of British officers in a regiment was limited to seven and troops and companies were commanded by Indian officers, but the progressive increase in the number of British officers led to their being gradually ousted from the office which they occupied under the system adopted in the reconstructed army. While there was an advance, however slow and inadequate, in the position of Indians in the higher branches of the Civil Services in the sixty years that followed the insurrection of 1857, in the army we actually lost ground instead of going forward. This set-back was not due to our military incapacity. Lord Lawrence, who gave evidence before the Select Committee on East India finance, in 1873, admitted in answer to a question put by Mr. Fawcett that the non-appointment of Indians as King's commissioned officers notwithstanding the Queen's Proclamation was due not to any want of ability or education in them but to "the pride of race of the English officers". When asked whether in that case he could say that the promise of equality made in the Proclamation of Queen Victoria was being translated into practice, he gave an answer which for its frankness and importance deserves to be quoted in full. "I say," he said, "that it is not, but then I think that the res-

possibility of that must be upon those who put forward the Proclamation. I think it would never do for those who are in authority in the present day and who see that there are serious objections to carrying out certain promises absolutely to shut their eyes and say, 'Well, it has been once laid down, and no matter what happens, it must be enforced'. The wiser way (I say it in all humility), it seems to me, is not to carry out such promises; to do as much in that way as you can do safely and securely and do it with a liberal and kind spirit but still not to do what you think politically evil. I think our hold in India and our position in India is a very peculiar one, and a very little, one way or other, might do a great deal of harm." Lord Roberts appeared to hold the same opinion. When Sir George Chesney, Military Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, pleaded for the admission of Indians to the higher grades in the army Lord Roberts strenuously opposed him and said: "I would resist the beginnings on however small a scale." More illustrations of the same character can easily be cited, but these two instances will suffice to show that the exclusion of Indians from the higher commissioned grades was not due to their incompetence but was the result of a policy deliberately and systematically followed by the British Government for political reasons. Those who ask us to be realists should ponder this carefully. If they realise the grave responsibility which rests on their country in this connection they will perhaps be less disposed to emphasise difficulties and more inclined to recognise their duty to undo the grievous wrong which has been done to India.

As for the pace of Indianisation it is a matter of common knowledge that the Assembly resolved with the concurrence of the Government of India in 1921 that not less than 25 per cent. of the King's commissions granted every year should be given to Indians. This resolution which related to the infantry and cavalry alone, as Indians were not eligible then for admission to the higher ranks in the artillery and other units, required that 30 Indians should be appointed as King's commissioned officers annually. Government have now agreed to double this number but owing to the change in the system of officering the Indian units requiring the appointment of the King's commissioned officers as platoon officers, about half of them will only replace the Viceroy's commissioned officers who are at present in charge of platoons. Not more than 30 Indians will thus be available for the replacement of English officers, which is the true meaning of Indianisation, and as from this small number Indian officers will be provided not merely for the infantry and cavalry but also for the newly created artillery and technical units, it is clear, that notwithstanding the apparent generosity of Government we are not yet getting what they promised to give nearly 14 years ago. There are certain other facts also which should be borne in mind in this connection. The Military Requirements Committee, appointed by Lord Reading's Government in 1921 and presided over by Lord Rawlinson, not

merely approved of the resolution passed by the Assembly but recommended that the commissions to be granted every year to Indians should be increased by $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. every year so that Indian and British officers might be recruited in equal proportions in 10 years. Lord Reading's Government appointed another committee in 1922 to consider a scheme for the complete Indianisation of the army. It reported that if no untoward circumstances intervened, it would be possible to carry out this policy in 30 years, and its report received the support of the Governor-General in Council. It is true that subsequently both Lord Reading and Lord Rawlinson, for reasons which we do not know, threw their own proposals overboard, but we may be sure that they would never have accepted the recommendations referred to above even temporarily had they been dangerous or impracticable from the military point of view. If our critics will bear this in mind our demand for the Indianisation of the Army within a fixed period of time will not appear as outrageous to them as it does at present.

The recommendations made by the Defence Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, which was presided over by Mr. J. H. Thomas, created the hope that the question of more rapid Indianisation would be considered in a sympathetic spirit by a committee specially appointed for the purpose. This committee was appointed in 1932, but notwithstanding the assurances given by Mr. Thomas it was neither furnished with the material that would have helped it to arrive at a sound decision nor allowed to discuss the matter. The question was withdrawn from its purview and it was curtly told that the number of Indian cadets to be trained annually had been decided already by His Majesty's Government, and that its only task was to consider the details relating to the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst. The fact that the Government went so far as to break faith with Indians in order to avoid consultation with them on this vital question shows that the political motives which guided their policy in the past continue to influence them still. It cannot be adequately emphasised that it is not military but political considerations that bar the way to quicker progress in the Indianisation of the army.

It has been observed that proposals for the replacement of the British army of occupation in India by Indian soldiers excite even greater opposition than those for the rapid Indianisation of the army. We are told that the subject is too grave to be dealt with lightly, and that a hasty substitution of Indian for British personnel would jeopardize the safety of the country. The illuminating reports of the Commissions which were appointed to consider the organisation of the army in India in 1859 and 1879, however, make it abundantly clear that the British army is maintained in this country not to protect us from foreign aggression but to overawe us and to keep us down. Its purpose is to serve, in the words of Lord Lawrence, as "a grand counterpoise" to the Indian army. Besides, its size has varied from time to time. To take only one instance, it appears from the report of the Indian Retrenchment Committee that the number of British

soldiers in India was about 80,000 when the Great War broke out. The financial difficulties of the Government of India led to its reduction. It is today about 60,000, but a diminished British army has not imperilled the safety of the country. One thing however has remained fairly constant during the last 75 years. Whatever the changes in numbers, the proportion between the sizes of the Indian and British sections has broadly speaking remained the same. It has been the policy of the British Government throughout this period not to allow the British army to fall below 40 per cent. of the Indian army, and roughly speaking this relation between the strength of the two armies was prescribed by the Army Commission of 1859, whose recommendations were intended solely to maintain British supremacy unchallenged. It is useless to talk of the progress of India towards self-government unless the policy of utter distrust which actuated the authorities in 1859 undergoes a radical change.

In view of its importance this subject received the attention of the Defence Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference. Mr. Thomas, who recognised the force of Indian opinion, said: "You cannot talk of Indianisation without keeping in mind that it presupposes a reduction in British troops. That is obviously a part of it." The Maharaja of Bikaner, who took part in the discussions, said that the Princes had never authorised Sir Leslie Scott, who placed their case before the Butler Committee, "to put forward the suggestion that British troops could never be withdrawn or Dominion Status granted because of the treaties with the States". He went on to say, "That is a view to which I personally and many others of us do not subscribe: we do not subscribe to that view because we do not want to stand in the way of the advance of our country, which is our motherland, in regard to these matters." The Sub-Committee recommended that the question of the reduction of the number of British troops in India should be subjected to expert investigation. The experts who examined the matter, after considering the question of efficiency and the probable effects of a programme of Indianisation, came to the conclusion that no immediate reduction in the number of British troops was possible. The argument on which this view is based is an insult to India. Doubts have been expressed by interested parties with regard to the capacity of Indians to become efficient commanders, but there have never been two opinions with regard to the fighting qualities of the Indian soldier. Given proper training, he has never been found unequal to his duties. Notwithstanding the baneful effects of British policy in regard to the recruitment of the Indian army in the past, India was able to supply about a million soldiers during the Great War, and the pages of official publications testify to their efficiency and bravery. There may be political objections to the substitution of Indian for British soldiers, but the change cannot be opposed on military grounds.

The theory that only certain classes are fit for enlistment in the army is of comparatively recent

origin. In the days before the consolidation of British rule the army of India was recruited from a much wider area than it is today. With certain exceptions, it was fairly representative of the country as a whole. The Bengal army which was responsible for the conquest of the Punjab was largely recruited in the U. P. and Behar. Three-fourths of it consisted of Brahmins and Rajputs who were the pride of their officers. As a punishment for the part it took in the Mutiny it was drastically overhauled and the previous policy in regard to recruitment underwent a great change. The classes which were formerly prominent in the army were reduced to a position of insignificance and the field of recruitment was steadily shifted northwards owing to the greater political reliability of the Punjab. It was precisely the martial qualities of the higher castes in the U. P. which led to their being looked upon as a danger and to their exclusion from the army. The Great War showed that, notwithstanding the policy followed for two generations, the old spirit lived in the excluded classes. Apart from this, the epithet "martial" has been applied to different classes at different times, and a perusal of the literature on the subject leaves little room for doubt that the changes that were made were based on political grounds. The Punjab, it appears, supplied not more than 10 per cent. of the army in 1856 but supplied 45 per cent. of it a few years later. This change could not evidently have been due to a sudden recognition of the soldierly qualities of the Punjab. Coming to more recent times, about one-fourth of the army was composed of men from northern India, excluding the Punjab, immediately after the Great War. The proportion when the Simon Commission reported was only about half of what it was 10 years earlier. It is impossible to believe that this reduction could have been due to deterioration in the martial qualities of the people concerned. As a rule national consciousness is regarded as a danger, and those classes are preferred which are easily led. And, as far as possible, even these classes are not allowed to develop a sense of unity. The Army Commission of 1817 regarded fusion as a danger to British rule, and said: "In working out the details of our proposed division of the Army, our main object has been to define the territorial formation of the Army of India with due regard to the great principle of *divide et impera*". That this policy has had its effect on the people is unfortunately true, but there is no reason to doubt that if nationalism is not frowned upon and suitable steps are taken the spirit of the people can be roused and a national army created within a comparatively short period of time.

BURMA.

The separation of Burma from India did not receive adequate consideration at the Round Table Conference. The delegates were not given the necessary time to consider so important a question. The matter was rushed through in a few minutes. The British Government seem to have made up its mind before the Round Table Conference met that Burma should be separated from India, and the Government

of Burma have openly encouraged propaganda in favour of separation. It is for Burmans to decide the question, but there are differences of opinion among them on the subject, and they have not given a clear verdict either in favour of separation or of the maintenance of the existing union.

Separation having been decided upon, it is only proper that the interests of Indians residing in Burma should receive the consideration to which they are entitled. Indians who are asking for complete financial and commercial autonomy for themselves cannot deny this to Burma. We do not want that the power to pursue a policy calculated to promote its prosperity should be unjustly withheld from Burma, but we cannot allow any discrimination to be made between Indians and Europeans in Burma in regard to employment in the public services or of carrying on trade or following a profession. Indians should be treated on an equal footing with Britishers. The Committee however is in favour of restricting the right of Indians to enter Burma freely. When the Burma question was discussed at the Conference, it was pointed out that the discriminatory legislation which was passed against Indians in Sir Harcourt Butler's time had caused great resentment in India. It is with this knowledge that the Committee has come to a decision in favour of restricting the entry of Indians into Burma. This has caused considerable dissatisfaction among Indians, specially in Burma. Apart from this the Indian commercial community in Burma are of opinion that they have not received the same measure of protection as Britishers. We must see that they do not receive less favourable treatment than the latter and that their legitimate claims are not disregarded.

ADEN.

Aden too is to be separated from India notwithstanding past promises. A few years ago both the Township of Aden and the Aden Protectorate were under the control of the Government of India. Rumours about their intended transfer to the Colonial Office caused uneasiness in India and questions were put on the subject on various occasions in the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State. The Government of India repeatedly assured the legislature that before a final decision was arrived at the Indian legislature would be given an opportunity to express its opinion. But in 1927 the Aden Protectorate was transferred to His Majesty's Government without giving the Assembly any opportunity to discuss the matter, and it is proposed now that the Township of Aden, which the Commander-in-Chief said in 1927 "is peopled to a very great extent by our fellow Indian subjects", should be taken away from the Government of India. It owes its development largely to the Indian commercial community, but the Committee have proposed its separation from India, making however at the same time certain suggestions for the protection of Indian rights. The Committee have based their decision on two grounds. Aden occupies an important position in the scheme of imperial defence and the Arabs who form the majority of the population have made representa-

tions in favour of its transfer to His Majesty's Government. As regards the first argument it is enough to point out that as India is not even within sight of Dominion Status the continuance of existing arrangements need have caused no apprehension. As for the wishes of the Arab population, it appears from a speech delivered by Sir Phiroz Sethna last year in the Council of State, that the real people of Aden desire no change and that it is only a few Arabs belonging to the hinterland who sent a petition to the Viceroy asking for the separation of Aden. We do not know what additional representations Government have received since last year, but we shall not be surprised if it is found on investigation that they do not express the views of the people really concerned.

INDIANS ABROAD.

Notwithstanding our preoccupation with the urgent problem of our future, our countrymen abroad have the right to expect from us that we shall continue to watch over their interests and give them such help as we can wherever they stand in need of it. The Indians in Zanzibar are greatly agitated over certain laws passed by the Zanzibar Government which they are afraid will spell ruin to them. One of the laws will deprive Indians of their rights to acquire agricultural land, although the connection of India with Zanzibar is as old as that of the Arabs, and it has been admitted to be discriminatory by the Attorney-General of Zanzibar. Zanzibar which had never been guilty of racial legislation or of discriminatory treatment is now, it appears, following in the footsteps of Kenya. Mr. C. F. Andrews, to whom India is deeply indebted for his deep interest in Indians overseas and his readiness to make every sacrifice to help them, recently visited Zanzibar at the request of the Indian community. He holds that the laws above referred to will work to the serious detriment of the Indians, and has tried his best through his writings in the Indian press to enlighten both Government and the public and to urge them to take the strongest action possible to protect the Zanzibar Indians.

The Government of India who, I am glad to say, are at one with us in supporting the just demands of Indians overseas, deputed Mr. Menon to Zanzibar to report on the legislation complained of by Indians. His report has not been published yet. I have no doubt that the Government of India are taking action on it, but I hope that they will publish the report in order that the country may know the true facts and give them its full support. Meanwhile we should be informed of the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Menon and the steps taken by the Government of India to have justice done to the Indian community. The situation requires the utmost strength and watchfulness. I trust that neither the public nor the Government of India will be found wanting in their duty. If racial distinctions are allowed in a place like Zanzibar we can well imagine what will happen to our countrymen elsewhere.

The situation in Kenya continues to give cause for anxiety. The settlers withdrew their demand for

responsible government when the Labour party came into power, but they have not yet abandoned their efforts to acquire control over the administration of the colony. Their demand for political control has now been replaced by a demand for financial control. Another disturbing factor in the situation is the recommendation of the Carter Committee regarding the reservation of highlands for Europeans. Indians are already administratively prevented from acquiring land there. But the acceptance of the Commission's recommendation will, it appears, make the discrimination statutory. It is well known that the Indian agitation in South Africa was due to legislative discrimination against Indians. I hope that the lesson of that struggle will not be lost on the British Government. Should any attempt be made to place on the statute-book any measure discriminating against Indians as such, I am sure that the entire country will support the Indian community of Kenya in any protest that they may make, as it supported the Indians who fought heroically for the honour of their country under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

CONCLUSION.

If I have correctly surveyed the principal features of the constitutional proposals, they bear no likeness to the vision which we saw for a while when India participated in the Round Table Conference. The purpose of the Conference was to frame a constitution, which would be a broad highway leading to the promised land of Dominion Status. But the Committee has shunned the words Dominion Status. This is the cardinal defect which disfigures its report. This fundamental omission is a sufficient justification for its recommendations being regarded with profound suspicion. It is a deliberate denial of the pledge which Britain gave us through its representatives in 1929. The attitude of mind which this indicates is traceable in every feature of the report. Acknowledging no objective, it could not recommend any period within which Indian constitutional development should be completed; nor could it propose any method by which the constitution might expand and progressively adjust itself to changing political and economic circumstances. Under its proposals no advance will be possible except through parliamentary intervention. And it will doubtless be preceded by prolonged enquiries. We have been assured that the new constitution will contain within itself the seeds of growth. That political conditions in India will not remain stationary is, of course, true. New forces will arise but they will receive no welcome from an accommodating constitution. They will only meet with resistance, and progress will come about in the future as it has in the past only after a prolonged conflict with the authorities.

The Committee, which has left the future uncertain, gives no satisfaction even as regards the immediate present. Its proposals neither satisfy our political self-respect nor give us adequate powers so to shape our economic future as to enable us to come to the assistance of the poverty-stricken and starving masses. If we are not allowed to have our own

currency policy, if we are debarred from giving preference to the interests of our people over those of outsiders, if control over measures relating to taxation and borrowing is withheld from us, how can we deal with the urgent problems of poverty and want? The insistent demand of the masses for a more bearable life has raised stupendous questions which *will not* be ignored; but we shall have no power to give a satisfactory answer to them. Economic problems are today the essence of politics, but it is specially in dealing with them that we shall find that our hands have been tied behind our backs. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald promised that the new constitution would be so framed as not to impede our advance to full power, but by prescribing indirect election for the Assembly, the Committee strikes at the root of our power and by encroaching on our fiscal freedom it takes away from us a right which we won after a severe and prolonged struggle.

The constitutional proposals concede the minimum of power and betray the maximum distrust of Indian legislators and ministers. The Governor-General and the Governors will be the despots of the new constitution. The higher district and police officers, on whom they will have to depend for the execution of their policies, will remain under their control and contain the same proportion of Britishers as before. The army which is the foundation of power will not be touched. Our destiny will be entirely in the hands of God's Englishmen.

We cannot accept such a constitution. I wish to indulge in no exaggeration, but I am clear in my mind that owing to the alterations made by the Committee, we shall be in a worse position than at present. The recent debate in Parliament has made it clear that the scheme before us has no chance of being improved. We have no power to put off its consideration, but if we could have our way I confess that I would ask for nothing at present but, realizing our weakness, wait for better days.

Our defeat will not be in vain if it makes us turn the searchlight inwards. We claim to represent

the people, but we have yet to identify ourselves with their interests, and, by devoting ourselves to their service, to earn the right to speak on their behalf. We must bend our energies to the task of evolving a new social order which will be founded on justice and fellow-feeling and the dignity of labour. To introduce the light of hope in the darkness which surrounds the lives of the masses and to make them conscious that there is latent in them a force which can deliver them and their country from bondage—is a duty which we must not neglect any more.

An equally imperative obligation is the removal of conditions which tempt us to subordinate the general good to that of the little groups we belong to. The problem is not easy to solve and the attitude of the Government has added to our difficulties. As Lord Salisbury said in the debate on the Committee's report in the House of Lords, the communal award was based not on justice but on a 'jerry-mandering' policy dictated by political considerations. But we cannot deny our own responsibility for our communal dissensions or shirk our duty to find a remedy for them. Bearing in mind that our squabbles in the Round Table Conference humiliated the whole country, we should assiduously cultivate a spirit which will urge us to arrive at a friendly settlement. We have to convince our opponents that we are a nation.

But communal concord is not enough for the achievement of complete unity. The recent discussions regarding constitutional reforms, however disappointing their results, have done us one good. They have widened our vision and made us think of India as a whole. They have enabled us to realise the unity of India and the identity of the interests of all Indians in a new sense. It is to the Greater India that we have seen that our thoughts must be increasingly directed in the future. The people of British India and the Indian States are one. The salvation of India depends on them both.