

The Servant of India

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Topics of the Week.

Signs of Hope.

THE Viceroy's statement on the 9th July had cleared the atmosphere and re-captured the spirit of confidence and trust. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar were encouraged to interview the imprisoned Congress leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and the Pandits Nehru. The prolongation of the negotiations is unmistakable evidence that the ambassadors have not given up hopes of bringing about peace. They had publicly recommended that the Government should permit the Congress Cabinet to meet before reaching a final decision. They would not have publicly recommended such a meeting if they had not hopes of a settlement being arrived at thereby. The Viceroy is reported to have acceded to that request. In England the Labour Government have been putting up a valiant fight on behalf of India; fighting the Opposition with their backs to the wall. While they yielded to persuasion and pressure to include representatives of the Conservatives and the Liberals in the Round Table Conference, they set their face firmly against the inclusion of Sir John Simon. In taking that step they had in view the susceptibilities of Indian public opinion. Even Lord Russel told Lord Burnham in the House of Lords that the Simon Report would not be the principal basis for the Round Table Conference, and in resisting the nomination of Sir John Simon, the Government have virtually thrown his Report overboard. The Opposition Parties pressed for representation in the Conference because the Viceroy had said that the conclusions of the Conference would form the basis of the proposals that the Government would later place before Parliament, and they wished to take a hand in cramping the proposals in the formative stage rather than risk the odium and the responsibility of rejecting them later on. While allowing the representation, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald took care to say that the responsibility of the Government for the final proposals would be unimpaired and undiminished, so that however much the Opposition representatives may conspire to whittle down the proposals at the Conference, the Government might feel free to go farther, unhampered by the shackles of the Oppositionists. Mr. Lloyd George went so far as to complain that the Conference was

being manoeuvred towards an objective which had already been determined in India, if not here, and which was more than half concealed from English opinion, hoping that when it was reached, it might be said, "It is too late to return!" The Viceroy, with the full concurrence of the British Government, has said that the object of the Conference was to give as much autonomy as India can immediately handle. And the Labour Government are making heroic and gallant efforts to defeat the die-hard purposes of the Opposition Parties in Parliament by constitutional "dodging" and manoeuvring. They have to fight not only the diehards in England but those in India as well. The duty of all patriotic Indians at this juncture is to stand by the Government and the envoys of peace and give them every support.

The Week.

WE cannot too strongly condemn the action of the Government in demanding the heavy security of Rs. 1,500 from *The Week* published in Bombay. The facts of the case are as follows: *The Week* is a Roman Catholic weekly journal, run in the interests of the Indian Roman Catholics. The printer and publisher of the journal was printing it at the Fine Art Press which he had taken on lease. The lease expired and the printer bought another press, the Mahratta Printing Press, and the paper was to be published there. This necessitated a fresh declaration before the Chief Presidency Magistrate. In virtue of the discretionary powers vested in him under the Press Ordinance, the Magistrate demanded a security of Rs. 1,500! There was no change in the responsibility of the printer, publisher or the editor nor did the change of machines to print the paper provoke any change in the policy of the journal. Nevertheless, the Chief Presidency Magistrate thought it fit to demand a security! It is not a new paper, whose policy the Magistrate might have been uncertain about. Its policy is well-known and is of the Liberal persuasion. It is not a "seditionist" paper. The action of the Government comes as a shock; it is wanton and provocative. Are there no limits to the perversity of the Government? This is yet another instance of the gross misuse of discretionary powers vested in magistrates under the Press Ordinance. We trust the Government will see the error of its ways, will refrain from further alienating public sympathies and rescind the order for security.

Picketing.

ORIGINALLY confined to foreign cloth shops and liquor shops, picketing has since spread to educational institutions and is now intended to apply to the general elections. The papers are full of news of picketing in many parts of India, leading in several cases to ugly incidents, not unattended with violence. Schools and colleges have had to be closed in some places and examinations postponed. Whatever moral

justification may be urged for picketing liquor shops and whatever economic justification may be urged in defence of picketing foreign cloth shops, there is hardly any justification for picketing educational institutions and intimidating students and professors who wish to attend their classes. Those who, against their will, have been prevented from attending to their educational work are not likely to enlist themselves under the Congress banner and swell the ranks of Congress volunteers. There is no attempt to obtain general consent before the boycott of schools is enforced. Some students published a letter the other day in the *Leader* of Allahabad inviting the leaders of the picketers to call a meeting of the students and take their votes in the matter. Just a handful of people, students and others, have taken on themselves to enforce a boycott by picketing. The position is becoming well-nigh intolerable. It is incredible that the public should tolerate this state of things so long. There are those who profess that picketing is peaceful: it is just persuasion and no more, and that therefore it should not be interfered with. But in practice, peaceful picketing is rather the exception than the rule. "It may not be an exaggeration to say that this is a new species of terrorism which must alienate the sympathies of many from the Congress activities", say the *Leader*. "We see before our eyes a new tyranny being set up in the name of patriotism and as the means of achieving freedom." Picketing as is now practised and as it is hereafter intended to be practised is utterly lacking in moral justification either in its objective or its form. Nevertheless, we are opposed to direct Governmental interference to put it down, for the simple reason that such interference will only defeat its purpose. But it is time that public opinion asserted itself and put down this aggressive encroachment of individual freedom.

* * *

Whitewashing Patiala.

THE Government of India have issued a *communiqué* on the Patiala Enquiry conducted by the Hon. Mr. J. A. O. Fitzpatrick, the A. G. G., Punjab States. Therein they state that they are satisfied that the evidence that was made available to Mr. Fitzpatrick failed to substantiate any of the charges made against the Maharaja of Patiala in the publication, "Indictment of Patiala", and that the charges were the outcome of a conspiracy to vilify and disgrace the Maharaja in the eyes of his subjects and the world. We are not surprised with the Government's conclusion. It is quite possible that on the evidence that was placed before him Mr. Fitzpatrick could not have come to any other conclusion and the Government had no other alternative but to accept his finding. Nevertheless, we confess that the finding, based as it is on one-sided evidence, leaves us unconvinced. It is no reply that the Maharaja's accusers did not choose to appear before Mr. Fitzpatrick and lead evidence. As we have already repeated more than once, the character of the enquiry was such that it failed to evoke public confidence. In ordering the enquiry, the Government were guilty of the same mistake which they made in appointing the Simon Commission: they ignored public opinion. And it need not surprise the Government if the reception of the findings of Mr. Fitzpatrick is on a par with the reception that the Simon report had.

* * *

The Tilak Trust.

MESSRS. N. O. Kelkar and D. V. Vidwans deserve to be heartily felicitated on their splendid achievement in creating the Tilak Purse-Fund Trust. When the late Mr. B. G. Tilak lost his case against Sir Valentine Chirol and was involved

in heavy costs, the friends and admirers of Mr. Tilak raised a sum of nearly Rs. 3 lakhs and presented it to him, without, of course, any thought of recouping the money at any time. But Mr. Tilak in accepting the purse said that even if he had won the case and had been awarded damages, he had no intention of appropriating it for his personal purposes but that he had wished to devote it to public service, as he had already done with the sum of Rs. 1 lakh which was presented to him on his 60th birthday, and he added that he considered the gift of Rs. 3 lakhs as a "moral debt to be repaid in one way or another." Soon after he passed away. With an exalted sense of fidelity to his intentions his trustees decided to save the sum of Rs. 3 lakhs from the working of the trust properties and dedicate it for public purposes, and thereby to realise the wishes of the late Mr. Tilak. With great assiduity, self-sacrifice and devotion they set about this purpose for the last ten years, and on the 1st inst., the tenth anniversary of the death of Mr. Tilak, they took the public into their confidence and announced the formation of a new trust to administer the sum. Part of the funds is earmarked for use in the Central Provinces, and part in the Karnatak and the rest in Maharashtra proper. And subsidiary boards of trustees have been set up in the C. P. and in the Karnatak. We are particularly pleased that foreign propaganda is among the objects that the Trust has in view.

* * *

Sastri Nursing Home, Johannesburg.

WE have pleasure in acknowledging the following donations to the funds of the Sastri Nursing Home, Johannesburg:—

The Trustees of the Sir Ratan Tata			
Charities	Rs. 1,000
Sir Mirza M. Ismail, Dewan of Mysore.	"	"	50
S. I. S.	50
A Sympathiser.	5

* * *

Floods in Sind.

FOR the second year in succession comes the harrowing news of the devastations caused by heavy rains and terrible floods in Sukkur, Upper Sind Frontier, Larkhana and other districts in the province of Sind. Owing to the unprecedented and very heavy rains the whole of that part of the country has been flooded and though it is not possible at the present moment to compute the extent of damage done by the floods still it is certain that it has been enormous. Hundreds of villages have been washed off and abandoned, a number of towns evacuated and thousands of poor, helpless, homeless refugees are seeking shelter in big cities like Karachi. There has been a grievous loss of person and property and many unfortunate villagers have lost the whole of their worldly possessions. Relief work on a large and sustained scale is necessary and we notice that the Ramkrishna Mission in Bombay, among non-official organisations, has promptly undertaken it. We hope that the whole of India will rush to the help of Sind and soon set it on its feet, as it were.

* * *

Mr. Thakkar's Arrest.

IT is with deep regret that we learn that Mr. A. V. Thakkar, member of the Servants of India Society, and President of the Bhil Seva Mandal, Dohad, was arrested by the police at Memadabad on Saturday last on charges of picketing and incitement to picketing of liquor shops. The trial is expected to take place to-day.

* * *

THE REPORT OF THE SIMON COMMISSION.*

By THE RIGHT HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, C. H.

A HEATED debate has arisen over the place to be given to the report and recommendations of the Simon Commission at the forthcoming Round Table Conference. One side would give it no particular importance. The other would assign to it the leading position among the materials to be laid before the Conference and demands that its recommendations should form the basis of discussion. Certain far-reaching consequences of these recommendations must be set forth fully and their relation examined to the declaration made by the Viceroy in November last with the sanction of His Majesty's Government and since reaffirmed by him on the 9th of this month before the Central Legislature of India.

But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the statute of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

To show how deeply the present Government stand committed to this declaration, a passage from the speech of the Secretary of State for India and one from that of the Prime Minister may be quoted, both made on the occasion when Parliament debated the subject. Mr. Benn said:

They were proposing not to take a new step in policy but to take in effect administrative action, namely, to declare and interpret in unmistakable terms the existing policy. The Liberals were against it, the Conservatives were against it, and the Commission were unwilling to participate. What did the Government do? They governed. The Government published on the pre-arranged date the pre-arranged text. . . . Before I say why the Government acted as they did, I want to say one word about the declaration itself. The declaration was a re-statement and an interpretation of the Montagu policy.

The Prime Minister said:

I am not sheltering myself behind others; it is the Government's decision. The Government have come to a decision on advice. We came to the decision that it would not be inexpedient, that it would do no harm to the Commission, that it would be beneficial from the point of view of Indian public opinion, and by that decision we stand.

DOMINION STATUS.

The debate concluded, like the debate that preceded it in the House of Lords, by a withdrawal of the motion that originated it, and both Houses must be held to have acquiesced in the policy of Government. However much the meaning of Dominion Status may be changing, one aspect of it has for some years been accepted, not only as essential, but as forming the very bond and cement of the Commonwealth—viz., the right of secession. If the Commonwealth be in reality a voluntary association of free peoples and the peoples of India are to come within this category, their continuance as a component part must be based on their active consent, which cannot be said to exist so long as they remain without the power to effect a severance. The question then is, Do the Simon proposals tend to give the people of India this power? Do they keep steadily in view the development of India into a future Dominion? If it can be shown that, far from doing this, they are calculated to block that development for all time, they are a violation of the clearly enunciated purpose of His Majesty's Government and are not entitled even to ordinary consideration at their hands.

DEFENCE.

To rise to Dominion Status India needs to be placed in a position to defend herself both from external aggression and internal disorder. These twin functions are performed by the present army in India under British command, officered almost entirely by British personnel, and consisting, as to nearly a third, of British soldiers. It will no doubt take time to Indianize completely this army, without sacrificing efficiency; but the effort so far made in this direction is so trifling that the process can hardly be said to have begun. For two generations Indian politicians have condemned this policy as injurious to national honour, but the authorities have persisted in treating the people of India as a whole with distrust and suspicion. The principal test of the desire of the British Government to honour the Viceroy's declaration is, What practical steps are contemplated to reverse this policy and Indianize the army as quickly as may be possible. The Simon Commissioners have decisively ruled out all prospect of the present army either being wholly Indianized or passing under the control of a self-governing India. They propose to make the external defence of India an exclusively Imperial responsibility except as to the financial burden, a share of which might perhaps be made in future to fall on the British exchequer. The Imperial interest in external defence is brought out by the Commissioners in the following words:

But here, the external defence of India is a matter in which other parts of the Empire are also closely and directly interested. Imperial foreign policy, Empire communications, Empire trade, the general position of Britain in the East, may be vitally affected. And if operations on an extended scale in that region unhappily became necessary, involving the risk of conflict with a major Power, it is the Imperial Government, with its fuller knowledge of the international situation and its direct concern with all questions of Imperial strategy, which would naturally take the leading part. (Para 206.)

The necessity for maintaining the British units in the army and British officers is argued under the heading "Reasons for a British Element."

The evidence we have heard and what we have seen in the course of our Indian tours leave no doubt in our minds that, at least for a very long time to come, it will be impossible for the army entrusted with the task of defending India to dispense with a very considerable British element, including in that term British troops of all arms, a considerable proportion of the regimental Officers of the Indian army, and the British personnel in the higher command. (Para. 196.)

The continued maintenance of a British personnel involves in the judgment of the Simon Commission this necessary consequence—viz., that it cannot be placed at the disposal of a responsible Minister of the Government of India on occasions of grave internal disorder. On this subject the Commission's judgment is delivered in terms of absolute finality. It may be permitted, however, to an Indian to point out that, sound as this reluctance may be in ordinary circumstances to place the British soldier on a mercenary footing, British authorities should relax this attitude in regard to India, and in fact, feel themselves precluded from adopting it by reason of the persistent neglect of an important duty during a long series of years. Besides, could not the difficulty be overcome by inserting a provision in the new Constitution that, during the period of

*Being the paper read before the East Indian Association, London, on the 22nd July.

transition from existing conditions to full self-government, the Viceroy may have, as the Provincial Governors are to have under the Simon proposals, the "power to direct that action should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the advice of his Ministry" in order to preserve the safety and tranquillity of the country? The Simon Commission take a totally different view, and actually advise the creation of another army to be wholly Indian and under the control of a responsible Minister for the purpose of internal order. The additional expense, which must be considerable, they regard as a burden to which the Indian taxpayer must inevitably submit if he wishes to have the luxury of self-government. While the new army is being created, the Commissioners are willing that under safeguards the present army should continue liable to be called upon for purposes of internal security. One does not see, it may be said in passing, why under a safeguard of a somewhat different type the same arrangement should not continue on a permanent basis. The Commissioners are clear that responsible government can be given only when the new army is in full working order and Parliament here can be relieved of the duty of maintaining internal security in India. Their exact words are :

A self-governing India could not as of right demand the loan of troops of the Imperial Army for civil purposes nor would a British Government, which will control that Army under our scheme, need any justification for refusing such a demand, if made. One condition, therefore, of a self-governing India must be its ability to maintain without the aid of British troops the essential of all good government, viz. public peace and tranquillity. (Para 213.)

To make this point indubitable we have only to think of the position of the Princes in the new régime. They will be under the care and protection not of the Governor-General in Council, but of the Governor-General in his capacity as Agent of the Crown. To carry out his duties in this capacity, the Viceroy will use the army of external defence. As it is not contemplated by the Simon Commissioners that at any time the paramountcy of India should be dissociated from the Crown, it follows that the "Imperial Army" can never pass under the control of a self-governing India.

The Commissioners admit that the present army is organized and equipped so as to be equal to the demands of external and internal security. If these two objects are to be separated according to their recommendation, why is it not clearly provided that in proportion as the new army comes into efficient being the original army should be reduced? Another observation must be made here. Even a tyro in public affairs can see how distant a prospect full self-government becomes if the Indian Treasury, already called upon both from the civil and military sides to carry more burdens than it can bear, must find the means for maintaining a second army. But supposing this far-off consummation is actually reached, the Imperial Army, as the Commissioners call it, will still be under non-Indian control. The Government of India would be under obligations to this non-Indian authority on account of "recruitment, areas, transport, and other matters" in respect of that army, and, "if and when the Government of India became responsible to a Central Legislature, it would first be necessary to ensure co-operation by definite agreement and to devise machinery for settling differences or resolving deadlocks."

Sufficient has been said to show that the Commissioners, in depriving India for all time of the means of defending herself, have denied her the power of exercising the right of secession and thus ruled out the possibility of her ever attaining Dominion Status. Moreover, it is obvious that even the

self-government in civil matters which they contemplate for India must be seriously crippled by the existence within her territory of a powerful striking force beyond her control.

THE INDIAN STATES.

Another serious obstacle erected by the Commissioners to the Dominionhood of India is the guarantee proposed on behalf of the Princes and Ruling Chiefs of India that their political relations should henceforth be, not with the Government of India, but the Viceroy as the representative of the Crown. They made no inquiries under this head, but are content to shelter themselves behind the verdict of the Butler Committee, which reported rather more than a year ago. This Committee conducted its proceedings *in camera*, would not give audience to the subjects of the States, and did not hear any exponents of British Indian opinion. Their judgment cannot therefore be accepted as truly balanced and impartial.

The right of paramountcy is independent of treaties and sanads, and the British Government have acquired it by reason of their being custodians of the welfare and prosperity of British India. It has accrued to them by virtue of necessity, and it is strange doctrine that, when the primary function is gone, the merely subsidiary function can subsist. Moreover, how could the new custodians of British India discharge their duties fully unless the paramountcy which was one of the conditions of the discharge were also transferred to them? When it is remembered that these States are nearly 600 in number and scattered all over India in patches of varying size, it is easy to imagine, not only the inconvenience and embarrassment, but the positive weakening which must be caused to the Central Government by an outside Power exercising the functions of moral persuasion, interference, and military protection.

In Bernard Shaw's recent play, "The Apple Cart, the king is presented by his Cabinet with an ultimatum. His promise to abdicate in favour of his son rather than face the ultimatum is welcomed by the Cabinet, but when he follows it up by declaring his intention to enter Parliament and make a party of his own with the prospect of being summoned to form the new Ministry, they perceive at a glance that the last state would be worse than the first. Is it intended to put the leaders of British India on the horns of a similar dilemma and compel them to take back their ultimatum? The Commissioners would continue for ever this direct connection of the States with the Crown and thus ensure for the British Power, supported by a standing Army and working through a large political and diplomatic establishment, the means of playing every now and then the part of mentor and defender of six hundred different entities. What would the Dominion Status of India be, if so restricted and hemmed in? The following passages taken from the Commissioners' Report leave no doubt that the self-government which they contemplate for India, involving the existence side by side of two final authorities in India, cannot be anything like Dominion Status :

The units of Federation would be (1) a series of Provinces each with its legislature and its ministry responsible to the legislature, with a Governor at the head of the Province; the internal government of the Province would be in the hands of the provincial ministry, and each Province would have its own provincial revenues and expenditure; and (2) a series of Indian States autonomously governed so far as their internal affairs are concerned, each with its ruling Prince in relations with the British Crown, and each with its own internal constitutional arrangements and its own system of

internal finance, but with no powers to impose customs duties at its boundaries. And over the whole would be the representative of the British Crown, as Viceroy in relation to the Indian States and Governor-General in British India. (Para. 231.)

Again, as the Provinces approach nearer to autonomy the question of providing for effective intervention from the Centre in case of breakdown assumes great importance, but while such arrangements might form part of the written Constitution of British India, the duty of the Paramount Power in extreme cases to intervene in relation to an Indian State is derived from a different source and carried out in a different way. (Para. 231.)

Let it be observed here that in proposing a federal structure for the whole of India the Commissioners have shown an even greater regard for the susceptibilities of the Princes than the members of the Butler Committee. These have only stated it as their opinion that the Princes should not be transferred from the irresponsible Government of India of today to the responsible Government of India of the future *without their agreement*. It would thus have been open for the statesmen of British India to conduct negotiations with the Princes with the object of obtaining their agreement. But the Simon Commission's proposal to establish on a permanent basis the connection of the States with the Crown would bar altogether the continued association of the Government of British India and the States as at present even if the Princes could be brought to agree to such association.

FEDERALISM.

The first of the foregoing excerpts from the Commissioner's report brings into view the idea of a political federation for the whole of India, including British India and Indian States. It has been hailed in many quarters as a substitute for Dominion Status, not less imposing, but much more practical. In India the Mahomedan community seems to welcome it; the Indian States see in it an emblem of their equality with British India. In fact, one of the main reasons which have weighed with the Commission in putting it forward is that it would enable the States to come in individually or in groups and take their place in Greater India. The necessity of two-thirds of India readjusting its constitution in order to make possible the accession of one-third of India would not appeal strongly to those who object on other grounds to the Commission's idea of federation. The Commission's idea is not stated with absolute precision. In making actual recommendations they have not proposed to take away from the Centre the large powers of All-India legislation and co-ordination which it wields at present. Certain All-India services are retained, though they have to serve in the Provinces. A power of interfering in cases of breakdown or deadlock is also contemplated. These powers and functions are somewhat foreign to the conception of a rigid Federal Centre. On the other hand, while arguing for the denial of responsibility to the Centre, emphasis is laid on the idea that the administration of purely federal subjects would not lend itself to a Parliamentary form of government. The Provinces and States, which will be the units of federation, are spoken of as the final repositories of power, holding all such functions as are not of common interest and enumerated as such in the Statute. The Indian States, being autocratically governed, would not come into a system in which the Centre had the large legislative and superintending powers and financial control that it now enjoys. For their sake the Centre must be shorn of these great functions, and the Provinces of British India must necessarily be exalted in similar fashion at the expense of the Centre.

Between these two types of Federation, both of which are put forward in the pages of the report, the likelihood is that the latter, that is, the rigid type, will be the more attractive to the ordinary mind. For reasons to be presently set forth, it is unsuited to India and may prove positively harmful. The Commissioners themselves recognize that to reverse the relative positions of the Centre and the Provinces would be to run counter to the process by which Federations have been set up in the past. No independent States exist in India to-day, anxious to surrender some functions common to all and put them into the hands of a federal power newly created for the purpose. What we find in India is a large unitary State which has slowly devolved some of its powers on local units of administration.

RESPONSIBILITY AT THE CENTRE.

Along this line lies the step by which Provincial autonomy will be brought into being, but when it has been completed it should still leave the Centre a powerful and imposing structure with the residuary power of the Constitution in its hands, co-ordinating, stimulating, and competent to restore stable administration where it has broken down. In order that the people of the country may be willing to entrust such large powers to the Federal Government, it would be necessary to rest it on the popular will. Responsibility must be introduced into its working. The mind of educated India is fully made up on this point, and no force can resist it. An irresponsible system at Delhi will not be allowed to work even for a brief period. Even if on theoretical grounds it could be proved that an irresponsible government at the centre would be better for India than a responsible government—a proposition which cannot be sustained for a minute—it would be unwise to thrust it upon a people who were resolved no longer to be kept out of the control of their own destiny. Nor is the proposal free from objection which would fill both the Houses of Legislature with representatives elected on the plan of proportional representation by members of the Provincial legislatures. It is hard to defend the establishment of two Houses if the members of both are to be chosen in the same manner by the same body.

But there is a more fundamental objection. In a country of the size of India there is grave danger of a Central Government, however exalted its office and functions, becoming a mere abstraction to the people. Direct election to one House is the only means by which the general population could be taught to feel that the organization at Delhi was their own in much the same way as the organization close at hand. The large size of electorates is without doubt a drawback, but those who frame a constitution for India with the magnitude and variety of its people must be prepared to violate some of the requirements commonly laid down in books. Improved communications and the general rise of literacy may be trusted to mitigate the evil in some measure.

Besides, the Provinces of India are large and populous, and might tend to fall away by virtue of the notoriously fissiparous tendencies of the Indian character, unless they were held together by a Central Government, strong not only in the possession of constitutional powers, but in the sentiments of the people. No one will take serious exception to federation kept within limits, but a federation carried to such length as to eviscerate the Centre is fraught with danger in India. That Mahomedans are attracted to this extreme type of federation is due to the fact that they expect under it to control several Provinces along the north-western border and thereby acquire the means of exerting pressure in emergencies on the Government of India. If this is so, it is a consideration more against than for the Commission's proposal.

I must recur at this point to the withholding under the Simon proposals of responsible government at the Centre. The elaborate and learned arguments by which this part of the Simon case is buttressed will carry no conviction to the Indian reader, who cannot but think that they are a cover for the desire to keep the British in supreme control of Indian affairs for an indefinite period. What are the arguments? We must await the decision of the rulers of Indian States upon the question whether it will suit them to come into the federal structure which will have been adapted for their reception. How long will this take? Then the new army for internal defence must be in full readiness to take over its duties before self-government can be thought of. The combined effect of these two conditions will be to postpone the day of India's freedom so far that for all practical purposes we may dismiss it as an idle dream.

BRITISH INSTITUTIONS DESIRED.

Then the Commissioners are puzzled by the vagueness of the future; they would wait till the Provincial Governments had established themselves as stable organs of freedom; they would watch the political skies for any clear signs that may be disclosed as to the best method of organizing the federal executive; they wonder whether British Parliamentary institutions will thrive in India; and it is only when these doubts are resolved that the first decisive step can be taken. We hear frequently of the failure of the Cabinet system among foreign peoples. Do we ever hear of these peoples abandoning that system? Evidently they are satisfied that it suits them as well as any alternative they can think of. Besides, the Britisher knows only his own system of government. How can he trust himself to devise or teach another? The educated classes of India and those sections on whom the duties of public life are likely to fall know only British institutions and hanker after them. What is the good of waiting on chance to throw up the ideal plan for India? If with the Indian agency that is available responsible government can be started in nine different Provinces, surely that agency can sustain some responsibility at the Centre. The combination of incongruous elements, a bureaucracy at the Centre and democratic administrations in the Provinces, will certainly make for constant friction and instability. No, this will not do. Whatever the internal differences may be, all the parties in India and all the communities, even the Princes, are united in the demand for responsible government. To postpone or deny it is to ignore human nature.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

One is glad to be able to give hearty approbation to the chapter of the report on the Provinces. The Commissioners claim that they "have carried the development of self-government in the provinces to the furthest practicable point" (para. 177). This claim must be allowed for the most part. Though great powers are reserved for the Governor, the cases in which he may use them are carefully defined. They are: "(1) In order to preserve the safety or tranquillity of the Province; or (2) in order to prevent serious prejudice to one or more sections of the community as compared with other sections." Exception may be taken to the second category of power as being likely to create occasions for its own exercise. But if it is necessary to induce a sense of contentment and security in the minority communities, we must bring ourselves to acquiesce in it. Of a far more drastic order is the power vested in the head of a Province to gather up the administration, as it were, into his own hands when it has broken down. In view of recent events in certain Provinces, however, full justification exists for this provision to come into force in a state of emergency. In a well-

reasoned paragraph the Commissioners turn down decisively a suggestion made on behalf of various religious and racial minorities and by commercial and trading interests that safeguards should be inserted in the Constitution against what is described as "discriminatory legislation." The extension of the franchise recommended in the Report errs, if anything, on the side of caution.

CABINET APPOINTMENTS.

Omitting some small grounds of quarrel, which there must be in a large scheme, there is one suggestion of some constitutional importance from which I must emphatically dissent, though the Report defends it at great length. It is that the Governor should have the power, when he thinks it necessary, to appoint to his Cabinet an official, whether British or Indian by nationality. The reason for this somewhat novel idea is given in an inconspicuous place. It is to the effect that law and order may be entrusted to safe hands. The experience and firmness which officials possess can always be commanded by the Minister in charge of that subject, and the advantage of placing an official in direct charge of the subject will certainly be outweighed by the disadvantage of introducing an incongruous element in the composition of a unitary Cabinet. Nor is it certain that the prospect of Cabinet office will succeed in placating the services.

The appointment of a Chief Minister and the entrusting to him of the task of choosing his colleagues should be the invariable rule. No doubt the Governor's detachment and wide outlook will enable him to give valuable guidance to the Chief Minister, but it is going beyond any conceivable necessity to divest the Chief Minister of the right of choosing his colleagues. If the Governor were entrusted with the choice of the members of his Cabinet, it is difficult to see how the principle of the Cabinet's joint responsibility, to which the Commissioners attach just weight, can be maintained.

THE SERVICES.

In an earlier part of this paper approval was given to the continuance of what are called security services on an all-India footing. This does not mean, however, that the future control of these and other civil services should vest in the Secretary of State. Those who demand that the Central Government should become responsible to its own legislature cannot approve of the present arrangement by which the Secretary of State for India recruits to the services, regulates them, and is responsible for their prospects and pensions. In these respects the Government of India should take the place of the Secretary of State. If recruitment in Great Britain should be continued, the High Commissioner should take charge of it. The India Council, which has been unnecessary for some years, would then become an expensive anachronism. The Viceroy, as the Crown's representative, would be in charge of the subjects of defence and foreign and political relations. The Secretary of State controls the Viceroy in these matters on his own responsibility and will not need the advice of the India Council. This body therefore should be abolished.

CONSTITUTIONAL GROWTH.

Extravagant praise has been given to a certain proposal of the Commissioners on the ground that it would make the further constitutional advance of India a matter of smooth and spontaneous growth. Their own claim is much more modest. In the provincial sphere they have made certain important improvements dependent on the resolution of the local Legislative Council and the sanction in turn of the Governor and the Governor-General. These improvements are worth enumerating: (1) "Changes

In the number, distribution or boundaries of constituencies, or in the number of members returned by them; (2) changes in the franchise or in the method of election; or (3) changes in the method of representation of particular communities." The Governor's overriding and emergency powers are not alterable by a similar method. Perhaps the answer will be that they should drop off by disuse. If not called into play over a certain number of years, statutory repeal may follow, but is by no means essential.

There is only a small matter in the Central sphere which is described as an instance of this easy growth. The Executive Councillors of the Viceroy who are now appointed by the Crown would henceforth be appointed by the Viceroy himself. Changes in the mode or conditions of appointment would not require Parliamentary legislation, but could be secured by amended rules which must be sanctioned

by resolution of both Houses of Parliament. This process may be less cumbrous than the enactment of a law, but it cannot be described as easy. Nor can it be called spontaneous when it has to travel beyond India for efficacy. Every other matter of development at the Centre or in that part of the Government of India which functions in Whitehall will have to go through the ordinary process of bitter and acrimonious controversy. Seeing what a wide stretch of ground will have to be covered before India can acquire Dominion Status, there is little reason to congratulate ourselves upon the diminution of occasions for the manifestation of mutual ill-will. In fact, by refusing the greater part of the demands by educated Indians, the Report has added to the causes of contention. To flout the intelligentsia while satisfying the Princes, the British, the minority communities and the Services, is to involve Britain and India in strife of which no one can see the end.

THE SIMON COMMISSION & DEFENCE OF INDIA.*

By SIR P. S. SIVASWAMY AIYER.

THE Report of the Simon Commission has been lauded to the skies by the whole of the Press and the public in England and has been acclaimed as a most statesmanlike document and an important constructive contribution to the problem of Indian constitutional reform. On the other hand, it has been universally denounced in India as a reactionary document intended to put off indefinitely the attainment of the goal of Dominion Status. The test by which the value of the scheme recommended by the Simon Commission must be judged is whether it will lead to the fulfilment of the pledge given by the British Parliament in 1917 and re-affirmed by Lord Irwin in a more unequivocal manner within the last few months. The features of the scheme which it is material for this purpose to consider are those relating to the Central Government. There is no doubt in the mind of any Indian who is capable of reflecting on the subject that the proposals of the Simon Commission with regard to the Central Government are of a thoroughly retrograde character and cleverly contrived to retard and obstruct the attainment of the goal of British policy. Their recommendations with regard to the defence of India are alone quite sufficient to justify the condemnation of the Report by the Indian public. In complying with the request of the Editor to express my views on this portion of the Report, I feel a certain amount of embarrassment. Though I belong to the Liberal Party in India, I have no right to speak for my Party. If I offer any constructive suggestions on this important problem, it should be entirely on my own responsibility.

It will be convenient if I deal first with the survey of the problem of defence contained in volume I of the Report and then proceed to examine the specific proposals which have been made by the Commission in the second volume. The Commission recognise that responsible government cannot be realised unless India is enabled to undertake her own defence; and they profess that they do not gloat over the difficulties which now prevent India from undertaking this burden and which, in their opinion, will continue to do so for a very long future. They remark that all who accept the declaration of India's constitutional goal are bound to repudiate a *non possumus* attitude. They admit that the Indian reformer would be justified in telling his British critic that the latter must be prepared to see great changes in the army in India or else cannot be sin-

cerely pursuing the goal of Self-Government in India. They point out also that the problem cannot be satisfactorily handled by merely searching for temporary expedients wrapped up in soothing generalities, which will only serve to foment suspicions of the *bona fides* of British policy on the one hand and divert attention from the ultimate and fundamental difficulties on the other.

One may agree with the statement that the problem of defence on the N. W. land frontier of India is far more serious and complicated than the one with which the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire are confronted. It follows that the burden of the military expenditure is very heavy compared with that incurred by the British Dominions and in relation to the resources of British India. The cost of the army primarily depends upon its size and the composition of its personnel. It is well known that a British soldier costs about five times as much as an Indian. The size of the army must be determined by considerations as to its adequacy for the purpose for which it is maintained, and it may be said that this is a matter for the decision of military experts. I do not belong to the school of the pacifists who believe that the chances of war will be completely averted by the efforts of the League of Nations and that it is not therefore necessary to maintain any army. No advocate of disarmaments has gone the length of proposing the abolition of all armies and no nation is prepared to disband its army. Whether preparedness for war provokes war, or is really a preparedness for peace and an insurance of national security, the difference between the rival schools of thought will be found to resolve itself into a question of the extent of the preparedness which should be maintained by a nation. Even the most fanatical opponents of preparedness are not ready to abandon all organisation for the defence of their country.

It may be said that the composition of the personnel of the army is also a matter for military experts and that we must take their *ipse dixit* as to the necessity for British troops and officers and the proportion of the British element to the Indian. The views of the military authorities upon this question cannot be accepted without a heavy discount owing to their interests and prejudices. For the benefit of the lay reader, it may be stated that the purpose of the army in India is defence against external danger

* Specially written for the *Trivani*, Madras.

and the maintenance of internal security and that it is divided into three sections, the covering troops on the frontier, the field army and the internal security troops. It will be a matter of surprise to the reader that, while the ratio of the British element to the Indian in India as a whole is about 1 to 2.5, the ratio of British to Indian in the covering troops which have to resist the first onslaught of the invader is 1 to 6.7, and in the internal security section it rises to 1.24 to 1, or in round numbers, about 8 to 7. The extraordinary disparity in the proportion of the British element required in the internal security calls for explanation. The only reason attempted to be given by the Simon Commission is that, owing to the communal tension which prevails in India, the British troops of the army are called into requisition for the purpose of putting down internal disturbances almost universally and that this is due to the fact that the neutrality of the British soldier, unlike that of the Indian, is above suspicion. For various reasons this explanation of the high ratio cannot possibly be accepted as convincing. In the first place, the primary agency to be employed for maintaining internal order and tranquility is the police force. The neutrality and loyalty of the Indian police forces have never been questioned. On the contrary, tribute has often been paid to the faithfulness with which the police have discharged their arduous duties in the most trying circumstances of civil disorder. Otherwise, one would have expected a proposal to have been put forward for high admixture of the British element in the police force also. If a requisition is made for the employment of the regular troops, it is not because the neutrality of the police cannot be depended upon, but on account of the fact that they are not adequate in numbers and armament. There is no real ground for suggesting that the Indian soldier who has gone through a severer training and discipline than the police officer is not dependable in dealing with communal disturbances. But it is urged that, though the Indian soldier may be quite as reliable as the policeman or the British soldier, his neutrality would be suspect in this country. It has been also urged that as a matter of fact requisitions have been made for the employment of British troops. No figures are given as to the manner in which these requisitions have been complied with by sending British or Indian troops alone, or both combined. It has to be remembered that the requisitions are made by the local governments and not by any responsible ministry and that they cannot be used as evidence of the want of popular confidence in Indian troops. That the local governments may have more confidence in the British troops is beside the question. Moreover, even assuming the undesirability or inexpediency of employing troops likely to be swayed by partisan feeling or local attachment, it should be quite easy to send Indian troops free from any probable bias to the affected area. Granting even that the use of British troops may be necessary for the purpose of dealing with internal disorder, one would be disposed to think that there is no justification for the enormous disparity in the British ratio between the internal security troops and the field army. The only credible explanation is that this enormous British element is maintained not for dealing with inter-communal strife, but for the purpose of putting down any national uprising against the Government.

The next feature of the military situation to which attention is called by the Commission is the varying military capacity of the different races in India and the limitations of the sources of recruitment. Such differences as may exist in military capacity are largely due to past military policy in confining recruitment to particular areas and classes.

As against this explanation, the Commission draw attention to the figures of recruitment during the war when no discouragement was offered to recruitment in any area. According to the figures on page 97 of the first volume, while Madras occupies the third place in the number of recruits furnished, it occupies only the eighth place in the figures relating to the composition of the army. The Madras Sepoy has borne a good record and has played a valuable part in the early history of the South Indian army. The success of recruitment is affected not merely by the presence or absence of military qualities, but by economic causes and various other reasons. A government which was really national would have considered it a duty to develop the soldierly qualities of the different races and communities under its charge. Military qualities are not altogether innate but are capable of development by suitable training and under appropriate conditions. The menace to the security of particular provinces, which the Commission point out as likely to arise from the present composition of the Indian army, would and could have been avoided by a national government by a process of distributing recruitment over various provinces and communities and levelling up the general standard of military qualities. If this argument of the Commission is good for anything, it would show that British troops and British officers would be necessary in India for all time to come for the purpose of preventing the fighting races from overrunning the non-martial provinces. It is not possible to accept the statement of the Commission that the army authorities are taking their share in the work of reducing the disparity in military qualities between different communities. The Urban Battalion scheme to which reference is made by the Commission was recommended by the Territorial Force Committee in 1925, but it took nearly four years for the scheme to materialise, the result being that only one Urban Battalion (and not four) has been brought into existence and at a time when the circumstances were altogether unpropitious, owing to the political unrest and the Gandhian agitation. We have no wish to shirk the recognition of any difficulties; but there are various ways in which the difficulties may be overcome. The solutions to which all the arguments of the Commission converge are not the only ones and display no evidence of statesmanship or any anxiety for the national advancement of India.

The apologetic tone adopted by the Commission with regard to the 8-Unit scheme, which was condemned by the military witnesses as well as by the publicists who appeared before the Skeen Committee and by the two European members of the Commission as well as the Indian members, and their failure to probe the reasons for the adoption of the scheme are characteristic. Their endeavour to make out that the recommendations of the Skeen Committee have been nearly all practically carried out will strike everyone as futile. Nor can it be said that they have succeeded in justifying the refusal of the Government to carry out the recommendation for the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst.

Having criticised the postulates of the Commission in their survey of the problem of defence, we may now pass on to the constitutional aspects of the problem of defence. During the course of a debate in the Assembly on the constitutional reforms, I observed that none of the colonies was in a position to assume its defence at the time when a self-governing status was granted to it. The Commission have inferred from this passage that the difference between India's defence problem and that of the self-governing Dominions has not been fully apprehended. They point out that it is necessary to understand the difference in the urgency of the risks faced by the

colonies and by India with regard to defence. They have missed the point of the argument. That there is a great difference in the magnitude of the burdens of land defence in India as compared with the colonies may be conceded. But the point of our argument is that the principle of self-sufficiency for defence was not insisted upon as a condition precedent to responsible government when the colonies obtained Dominion Status, and that for some time thereafter, not merely were Imperial troops stationed in the colonies, but the cost of their maintenance was also borne by the Imperial Government and the burden of defence against external aggression was undertaken by the Imperial Government. If this is what has happened in the case of the self-governing colonies, what is the duty of England towards India? The Commission tell us that the moment complete self-government is attained in India, British troops and officers will be all withdrawn and that it is a mistake to suppose that large bodies of British soldiers or British officers would remain available for the purpose of maintaining order. We are under no delusion in regard to what will happen after the attainment of full Self-Government. Nor do we desire to rely upon British arms. The really important question is what is to happen in the interval preceding the attainment of full responsible government. In the first volume of the Report the Commissioners remark that it does not necessarily follow that India's attainment of Self-Government must be postponed till India recruits and officers from men of Indian races a complete army for external defence by land, any more than it has proved necessary to postpone Self-Government in the Dominions until each Dominion provided its exclusive defence at sea. They observe that the time may come when an intermediate solution may be considered and that one such solution might be the creation of a Dominion army, recruited for the purpose of internal order and sharing with Imperial troops the burden of external defence, the Dominion troops being under the control of a popular minister and the Imperial troops under the Governor-General. From the anxiety which they profess in another passage that the road towards the goal of complete self-government should not continue to be indefinitely blocked by the military difficulty, one would have been disposed to infer that the Commission might perhaps have thought of some real solution of the military problem. A perusal of their recommendations on the subject leaves no room for doubt that, instead of solving the problem, the Commission have dexterously devised a scheme which will keep India in perpetual bondage and tied to the chariot-wheels of the Imperial Government.

The views of the Commission may be put in a nutshell. There can be no full responsible self-government without an effective Indian Army, manned and officered by Indians. A policy of Indianisation cannot be carried out unless India obtains self-government. British troops and British officers for the Indian Army will continue to be indispensable for a very long time, more especially as British troops are the natural guardians of peace in India. A completely Indianised army cannot be brought by the Commission even within the range of telescopic vision. It could be envisaged only if a bold policy of Indianisation were adopted. But no such development can take place until (1) sufficient Indians have attained the experience and training requisite for the officers for some Indian regiments at least, (2) such units have stood the only test which can possibly determine their efficiency, and (3) Indian officers have qualified by a successful Army career for high command. The second test must clearly refer to the test of war and it is certainly not within the power of Indians to bring about a war. Unless high milit-

ary officers and the Government resolve to take steps to that end Indians cannot arrange for the crucial experiment.

Let us now see how the Commission propose to remove the barrier to constitutional advance. Their proposal is that the responsibility for external defence must be regarded not as the business of the Indian Government in touch with an Indian Legislature, but as an Imperial concern to be managed by an Imperial agency. One would have expected that, as a logical corollary of this position, the Commissioners would have recommended that the cost of this Imperial agency and Imperial military organisation should be borne by the British exchequer. But the Commissioners shrink from drawing this conclusion and propose that the burden of expenditure should be the subject of an adjustment between the Government of India and the Imperial Government and the Government of India should pay the stipulated subsidy year after year without submitting it to the vote of the Legislature. India is to face this liability to a heavy annual contribution, but to have no voice in the management of this Imperial concern. She is only to have a seat on an advisory committee. Machinery is intended to be provided for enforcing the co-operation of India with the Imperial agency for defence when the Government of India becomes responsible to the Central Legislature.

What will be the character of the Government of India from the constitutional point of view when it is divested of its responsibilities for external defence? As a matter of commonsense, one would think that the functions of the Government of India having become divided and the responsibility for the civil and military functions having been entrusted to different agencies, the Government of India would assume a dyarchic character. The Simon Commission, however, point out that this separation of the civil and military functions of the Government of India cannot be regarded as a dyarchic arrangement. (See the foot-note on page 138 of Vol. I of the Report). With a strange inconsistency they protest that, whatever form the Government of India may hereafter take, it must continue to be a unitary government (not as opposed to federal, but as opposed to dyarchical).

It is not very clear what are the successive stages contemplated by the Commission in the evolution of the Government of India. Apparently in the next or the first stage, the Government of India will have no responsibility to the Legislature in any department. The external defence of India will be removed from the purview of the Legislature and treated as an Imperial concern for which the Government will pay a non-votable subsidy. In the last stage, when the Indian Legislature becomes responsible, and India becomes self-governing, she must make arrangements for the maintenance of internal order and tranquillity and will have no right to demand the loan of any troops from the subsidised Imperial army. At no stage is it contemplated that the Indian Legislature should have any part or lot in the control of the Imperial army which she must subsidise. The treaty obligations of the Crown towards the Indian Princes make it impossible for the Crown ever to transfer control of the army to the Indian Legislature.

It is needless to say that no Indian with any sense of patriotism or self-respect will look at the scheme. However good may be the intentions with which it has been paved, it will be regarded as utterly rotten and mischievous. The defence of India is a matter either of Indian concern or of Imperial concern or both. If it is a matter of Imperial concern, the best course for the Imperial Government

would be to occupy the tribal area between the Frontier Province and Afghanistan and govern it as a buffer State and meet the cost of the whole concern out of British revenues. Should any occasion arise (which God forbid) for the Government of India to requisition British troops from the tribal area, the cost of such troops when serving in British India may be met from the Indian exchequer, in the same manner as the Indian troops are now paid for when requisitioned by the Imperial Government. If absolutely necessary, the Indian Government may contribute to the cost of the Imperial troops. But the amount of her contribution should bear the same proportion as her revenues bear to those of Britain. The liability to contribute to the cost should carry with it a voice in the management. These suggestions may well claim to be less fantastic and more equitable than those put forward by the Commission. As a matter of fact, the late Lord Haldane adumbrated a proposal to make the British troops in India a charge on the Imperial revenues alone. If, on the other hand, the matter were treated as one of joint concern to India and the Empire, the most proper course would be to leave the management in the hands of the Government of India, a subsidy being paid by the British Government to the Indian. Thoughtful Indians recognise that, thanks to the British military policy in India, they are not in a position to ask for the immediate transfer of the subject of defence to the Legislature. And this is the reason why they are willing to accept such transitional arrangements as may be necessary for safeguarding the security of India against external danger.

We cannot understand why the Commission have not explored the possibility of entrusting the portfolio of defence to Indian ministers responsible to the Viceroy during the period of transition. The Viceroy may be entrusted with the power of restoring any grants for military expenditure which may have been refused by the Legislature. To entrust the portfolio of Defence to the Viceroy during the transitional period would not be open to the objection of introducing dyarchy any more than the scheme of the Simon Commission. Above all, it is essential that the Imperial Government should undertake measures to Indianise the commissioned ranks of the Indian army according to a time-table and within a reasonable period. If Britain refuses to undertake this duty, she must allow us to import French or German military experts for the purpose.

In the first volume, the Commission were good enough to suggest the formation of Indian troops on the Dominion pattern. In the second volume, they propose that this Dominion army for India should be developed with the magnificent resources that may be left after a heavy contribution to the maintenance of the Imperial army and the demands of a progressive civil administration. The grim humour of the suggestion is an excellent illustration of the spirit in which the problem has been approached by the Commission and it really adds insult to injury.

BRITISH PRESS AND THE VICEROY.

TO realise the full extent to which Lord Irwin has lost caste with his own countrymen in England for sympathising with Indian aspirations, one must make oneself familiar week by week with the writings in the British Press. Those received by the last mail deal with his address to the Central Legislature on the 9th July. Some of them seem to have known its contents beforehand and took occasion to warn the British public of the serious consequences following upon the Viceroy's reiteration of Dominion

Status as being India's goal. Considerable anxiety was also exhibited that there should be no "going beyond" or "shelving" of the Simon Report which there was a tendency in some quarters to regard as the political Bible. Mr. J. L. Garvin in a three-column article in the *Observer* on the eve of the Viceroy's address expressed surprise that "the Home Government as well as the Government of India are already prepared to go far beyond the recommendations of the Statutory Commission", "though the Second Volume of the great Report requires longer and more concentrated study than Ministers can have had time to give to it." He also takes the Home Government to task for their declaration that they have an "open mind" with regard to the report and condemns the Viceroy's declaration of last November as "a far-reaching mistake." "From the outset we predicted in these columns that Lord Irwin's words would aggravate every misunderstanding he meant to remove; would inflame every feeling he hoped to allay; and would make every extremist more extreme. This is what happened to worse extent even than we feared." But the mistake then committed "would be nothing by comparison with the mistake that lies ahead." That he should plead for an all-party handling of the Indian problem is not surprising; but he goes further and insists that "every effort should be made to bring consultation to agreement." The price will of course be "sufficient concessions at every further step in Indian policy." He also does not lose the opportunity to remind the Labour Government that they are a minority Government, representing directly only a third of the country and warns them of the grave risk they would be running by their handling the Indian problem in their own way. It must have been something of a shock to Mr. Garvin that his suggestion for a "Vote of Thanks to the Statutory Commissioners both for their long labours and for the masterly ability, the searching thoroughness and the incomparable clearness of that unanimous document of exposition and advice which they have now submitted" should not yet have been acted upon. He further develops his idea in the following words:—"But further in the course of the debate on the Vote of Thanks it could be stated, and more impressively than in any other manner available, that Parliament, while bound to attach the utmost possible weight to the advice of its own Commissioners, is necessarily not pre-committed by it. That the Report in any case must play a vital part right through is a truth that ought not to be shirked for a moment unless all nerve and grip and sense have gone out of us as a people." He concludes his attack on the Labour Government by complete disapproval of "the present mixture of sentiment and repression" which "tends to lose every friend we have in India without conciliating a single enemy."

In an article headed "Stand by the Report", the *Sunday Times* warns this country against supposing that the Report "can readily be superseded." While it grants that the Conference will be free to discuss what it chooses, it emphasises that "in the nature of things the Simon Report is bound to hold the centre of the stage" and must be the "text book" of the Conference. Then follows the usual rigmarole about Simla's "serious error in its announcement regarding Dominion status for India before the Commission had reported", ending with the assertion that "Dominion Status is a meaningless misnomer."

On the day of the Viceroy's address the *Daily Telegraph* wrote a one-column article on the impending announcement which it concluded as follows: "The scheme of the Report may be altered and modified by give and take at the Round Table Conference, but if there is any talk to-day of

"going beyond it' or finding 'a new objective' or planning the road to 'Dominion Status' through other stages than those broadly laid down in this document, nothing but *new confusion is certain both here and in India*. Even the most sympathetic statesmanship is useless unless accompanied by fixity of purpose and the capacity to say and mean 'Not Yet.'" (italics ours.) In the same issue that well known authority on India, Lord Birkenhead, utters a "Warning of India's peril." Herein we are told that left to himself, His Lordship would not have favoured the Round Table Conference idea but in that matter he surrendered his judgment to that of Sir John Simon, who started it. Much less does he approve of the talk of a general amnesty, which is to him a sign of "imbecility." He is magnanimous enough to credit Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his associates with a desire not to lose India; but he is "deeply alarmed lest a great lack of experience operated upon by heedlessness, coming from those alike in India and this country, whose primary duty it is to offer them advice, may not be preparing for us and for the Empire a tragedy of inconceivable magnitude."

But there are some English papers which do not take such a tragic view of this reported going beyond the Report on the part of the Viceroy and the Government of India. The *New Statesman* e. g. hopes that the report is true. "But, of course," it points out, "the suggestion has caused alarm and irritation among die-hards and doubters, and the cry of "defeatism" has been raised in the press. (A pretty word this, implying as it does that we are engaged in India, not in a friendly effort to carry out a policy to which we have pledged ourselves, but in a war!)" In the next issue it takes note of the fact that "the overwhelming majority of thinking and articulate Indians want—and are determined to have—a genuine scheme of self-government." It voices Indian feeling correctly when it says: "But to refuse responsibility at the centre is to make a mockery of the whole scheme. The retention of all the central power in the hands of the Viceroy and a body of ministers chosen by himself does not leave open the path to the goal of Dominion Status, it erects a barrier against it." Again, "for our own part we do not believe that this retention of autocracy at the centre will add one iota to the "safety and tranquillity" of the provinces or of all India or of the British Empire."

It is also well to refer here to the last despatch of Mr. George Slocombe to the *Daily Herald* prior to his departure from India after a two months' close study of the situation. He wrote before the Viceroy's last announcement and in describing the situation said: "When one sees the enormous crowds that flock to meetings, or march in processions under the Congress flag, and hears the same opinion, sympathetic to Congress and hostile to the Government, from Sikh or Mohammedan, Hindu or Parsee, high-caste Brahmin or sweeper of depressed classes, one wonders where that "vast majority of law-abiding and peace-loving citizens", so often referred to in Government declarations, may be found." He also tells the English people how the relations between Englishmen and Indians have been steadily deteriorating: "Hostility towards Britain is steadily growing", but except for one or two trifling acts of hooliganism the tiny English community is living in "perfect safety." He then proceeds: "At one time Indians' attitude to us was about equally compounded of fear, respect, and dislike. Then the second factor in their attitude disappeared. The first is rapidly disappearing, and soon, unless the situation is dramatically altered, dislike alone will dominate in the bearing of Indians towards Britain.

Such is my profound and melancholy conviction on the eve of my departure from this country." Mr. Slocombe is an honourable exception to the general run of special correspondents from his country whose descriptions of what they see in India cannot be said to be as faithful to facts as his. It is a pity he could not be here during the critical times that are ahead; but we cannot allow this occasion to pass without recording our appreciation of the services he rendered to India by his dispassionate and impartial narration of events for the benefit of the British public.

So far about writings in the British Press before the Viceroy had spoken on July 9. Comments on the speech itself vary according to the political colour of the journal concerned. But we are particularly glad to read the *Times'* castigation of Lord Birkenhead for his reading into the Viceroy's words any "disparagement" of the Simon Report and of his interpretation of the idea of general amnesty as the emptying of the gaols of "law-breakers in order to equip the Round Table with witnesses." The *Times* gives expression to the feeling, apparently widespread in Tory circles, that the Labour Government takes its Indian policy, ready made as it were, from the Viceroy. The article also gives one the indication that the reservations upon which insistence will be placed on the British side will include, besides those which Indian opinion has in mind, the protection of minorities.

The *Morning Post* does not look upon the Viceroy's address as "well calculated for the restoration of peace to a distracted country and of respect for its hardly less distracted Government." The Viceroy's attitude towards agitators reminds the paper "of one of those unhappy schoolmasters who threatens severity in an unruly classroom and produces no effect because previous weakness and repeated surrenders of prestige and authority have demoralised the schoolboys." It then goes on "to remind the Viceroy and the British Government, very sadly and seriously, that the real test of the success or failure of a Governor General lies in the order or disorder of the country he governs. By this test Lord Irwin has failed; he found a population which, generally speaking, obeyed the law and respected authority; he neglected to enforce the law; he placed politics in the seat of justice; he and certain of his Governors paid court to the agitators and neglected a primary duty in trying to satisfy their demands." According to it, Lord Irwin made "his indeterminate offer of "Dominion Status" under threats, and speaks of the Simon Report "in terms of studied deprecation." It accuses the Government of a desire to sidetrack the Report "in deference to the clamour raised by the National Congress" and is aghast that it "is to be invited to assist in settling a future form of government for India." With a pathetic faith in the ability of the Simon Commission to find a panacea for India's ills, it exclaims:—"As we have stated already, we are prepared to implement them (Simon conclusions) with some necessary emendations. To go further would be ruinous. Lord Irwin seems ready to subordinate Parliament to the Congress. The electors of this country "won't have it." The last decision is placed, by the Act of 1919, on the Imperial Parliament."

"The Viceroy's address", says the *Daily Telegraph*, "will be read with a deep sinking at the heart by all who believe that the qualities most wanted at the head of affairs in India at this moment are sharp precision and iron resolution." With reference to the Viceroy's assurance that proposals to Parliament would be based on agreement at the Conference, the paper asks, "But if no agreement ensues, what then? And what earthly chance is there of agree-

ment?", and prophesies certain failure for the Conference.

The *Daily Express* characterises Lord Irwin's address as a "Retreat." To Indian minds the meaning may be difficult to comprehend; for there is nothing in his speech to justify the accusation that he has in any way gone back on what he has previously said or done. But what it means is this. Last November he uttered the "unhappy words" viz. Dominion Status. The Commission's Report followed several months later but made no mention of that phrase. "Instead, the whole findings of the Commission were cumulative evidence that Dominion Status was out of the question." The paper's complaint is that it is from this position that he has "retreated," as if he had ever committed himself to it! The remedy is simplicity itself. "We must rule with firmness and justice in India, having no compromise with sedition, and refusing to placate violence by holding out the bait of an illusory ideal which every clear thinker knows to be impracticable and unattainable while the social, racial and religious complexities of India remain as they are to-day."

The *Manchester Guardian* takes a level-headed view when it says that the speech "should serve to quieten both those who feared that the Government of India intended to shelve the Simon Report and those who feared it was to be the Report, the whole Report and nothing but the Report." But we do not think it is enhancing the chances of success of the Conference when it expects the Indian delegates to it to realise that "all talk of immediate Dominion Status for India is out of the question." We can only hope that in voicing these sentiments it is not representing the Government of the day. For if it were, the Conference may as well not be held. The *Manchester Guardian* ought to know that Indian aspirations have by now so far advanced that immediate Dominion Status is the cry not only of persons like Pandit Motilal Nehru whom it has in mind in making the above remarks but even of the Liberal and other political parties in the country. We do not think the Liberals will be satisfied as the next step in constitutional reform with anything short of Dominion Status minus agreed reservations for the transitional period and if when it says "They want self-government for India too, but they are prepared to accept the process of evolution" it means they would be content to wait for the attainment of full Dominion Status for several generations, we may say it is under a grievous misapprehension. The fact of the matter is that the Simon proposals do not satisfy anybody in India and unless British statesmen are prepared to look upon immediate Dominion Status for India as a matter of practical politics, the Conference will end in a fiasco.

A number of Englishmen interested in India also expressed themselves in mail week on the Viceroy's speech. Their views deserve to be known in India as showing how much out of touch they are with present-day Indian aspirations. But we shall only select Lord Brentford, "Jix," as a typical Conservative for mention here. He describes the agitation in India as "rebellion" and attributes it to the Viceroy's "unfortunate pronouncement" of last November. He also held out the warning that any repetition of the same would make Government in India impossible—a prophesy which yet remains to be fulfilled. While India is decidedly unwilling even to look at the Simon recommendations, they seem to him to go further than he, for his part, would have been prepared to go and even the provincial autonomy proposed

by the Commission is causing him "grave anxiety." In his *Morning Post* interview he makes it clear that the Viceroy's last November declaration was unacceptable to the Conservative party and says that it "caused a great deal of the rioting, bloodshed and murder from which India has suffered in the last six months." But "the Viceroy", to borrow His Lordship's words, "has apparently learned nothing by this violent rebellion, although most men who have lived in India regard it as distinct proof that India is nothing like fit for Home Rule and has put back that consummation for possibly a century."

The *Daily Herald* of course defends the Viceroy against the attacks of the Conservatives who have, apparently because it suited them now thrown to the winds their slogan "Trust the man on the spot." According to it, he is publicly accused of "rashness" and of "mischievousness". "In the whispering campaign that goes on privately the accusations are more vicious." "These attacks," it declares, "are part of a game which the diehards are playing over India; and are designed to destroy the prestige of both the Secretary of State and the Viceroy." "The fulsome eulogy" of Sir John Simon by the Conservatives, is also part of the same game; and "they want themselves to take part in the Round Table Conference in order to destroy any hope of its finding a solution acceptable to India" (our italics.) The *Daily Herald* Political Correspondent tells us how this demand was manoeuvred: "There is reason to believe that this demand has been pressed on the Government by Lord Reading in conferences behind the Speaker's chair with the firm support of Mr. Lloyd George. Sir Austen Chamberlain, in rather bellicose fashion, lent his weight to the Liberal Leaders' demand, but Mr. Baldwin has been more or less non-committal, it is said."

In a situation otherwise gloomy the Sapru-Jayakar peace mission alone provides a ray of hope. But what is that to the *Morning Post* which will allow "no terms with lawbreakers." Nothing about the mission finds acceptance with it. "Two volunteers, of the indeterminate order known as moderates, request permission of Lord Irwin to see Gandhi and the two Nehrus in prison." Their disapprobation of civil disobedience in their letter to the Viceroy is nothing but "conventional" in the eyes of the paper. Objection is taken even to such an obvious fact as that "Gandhi and the Nehrus represent the people of India" and the opinion is expressed that it is the Government and not the Congress which represents the people.

In his letter to the *Times* of 18th July Sir Francis Younghusband neatly turns the tables upon Lord Winterton. Apparently the latter had expressed the view that Dominion Status carried with it "both the right and the obligation" to undertake military defence. "If that be so" rejoins Sir Francis, "then neither Canada nor Australia could claim Dominion Status: for if either of them were attacked, for example, by Japan, they would depend upon the Empire as a whole for their defence. And on behalf of India's claim for a status equal to that of Canada or Australia it might well be urged that she permanently maintains an Army which is on the instant available for Imperial purposes. Canada and Australia had to set about organizing an Army in 1914. India had an Army Corps at Ypres at the crucial moment and taking part in the defence of the Channel ports. This much should be put to her account in considering her claims for status."

D. V. A.