

INDIA

Timely from Westminster comes news of a Cabinet commission to India. Sir Stafford Cripps in company with Mr. A. V. Alexander will ~~accompany~~^{2 &} the Secretary of State, Lord Pethick Lawrence. They will confer with Indian leaders in conjunction with the Viceroy, ~~to~~^{Lord Wavell} attempt² settlement.

Bombay, as more than once in the past fifteen years, is today the scene of serious rioting. Ratings of the Royal Indian Navy have mutinied. Perhaps the most critical situation since the historic Indian ~~mutiny~~ mutiny now confronts the government. Hindus and Muslims unite in demanding complete freedom from British rule. Unless the authorities can persuade the people to await the result of the forthcoming elections and rely on peaceful negotiations the Cabinet commission ^{when} difficulties almost insuperable may face them when they arrive at the end of March.

Meeting Indian leaders at the Viceroy's lodge Lord Wavell conveyed to them last September British plans for the independence of India, but despite almost general confidence in the Viceroy himself the British proposals fell short of the rising demand of the people. India, particularly since the war years, is an awakened country. Western ideas, modern institutions, mingle disturbingly on oriental soil. Immeasurable ^{material} benefits conferred on India by nearly a century of direct British rule have tamed her rivers and planted in this once wholly pastoral country great industries, many of them

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~~much~~ ^{much} developed during the war. One effect of rapid change in a country whose material life had been unaltered for centuries, has been to make the people restive and impatient of all foreign control.

Change has crept into even the oriental attitude towards women. The purdah is going. Unveiled women appear in the cities and join ~~with men~~ in the demand for ~~political~~ reform. The lifelong campaign of Mahatma Gandhi against British rule is bearing fruit. It was

~~unimaginable~~
^{large} to a considerable extent his influence that made it impossible for Sir Stafford Cripps to succeed ^{in 1942} when he conveyed the British offer of post-war Dominion Status to ~~India in 1942~~. ~~There is not prominent in~~

^{In} the present unrest Pandit Nehru, Hindu leader, is no less insistent than the Mahatma in the claim to independence.

^(T/V) ~~Mr. Jinnah, head of the Muslim League~~ ^{to} ~~speaks for millions who would oppose Hindu control of India.~~ Upon such rocks split the hopes of Sir Stafford four years ago.

Any sudden withdrawal of British forces would leave India almost defenceless against ^{its} invasion from the north.

The four hundred millions who are spiritually as the poles apart from the western world have yet nothing to ^{from} gain/a violent breaking off with Great Britain. May the Cabinet mission to India bring peace and settlement.