

States that for the first time a leader who has served as Chief Minister in one of these States will serve on the Ministry at the Centre.

#### MR. NEHRU'S CABINET

THE new Ministry at the Centre is in form as well as in substance a more homogeneous body and—it may be hoped—a more workmanlike body too. It is, unlike its predecessor, a party Ministry without admixture of men belonging to other parties or no party. To the extent that this means that the Government at the Centre feels that the country has settled down sufficiently to allow of free play for the party politics that is inseparable from Parliamentary democracy, it may be regarded as an index at once of confidence and of sureness of purpose. No doubt the development has been aided by the emergence of an Opposition, numerically not very strong and rather miscellaneous in composition, but animated by a common impulse to make things none too easy for the Government. Since the Communists happen to be the biggest single group we may expect to see repeated at Delhi some of the fireworks of which the States have had fair samples already. But, after the preliminary skirmishes, the Opposition at the Centre may be expected to take a rather more responsible view of its proper functions, partly because it is too small and diverse to find the chasing of snap votes a profitable bargain, but even more because there are quite a number of men on that side of the House who are experienced in affairs and genuinely interested in toning up the quality of the administration and alleviating the lot of the common man.

The new Cabinet, whose enhanced strength of fifteen cannot be regarded as excessive in view of the many positive tasks which it has set for itself, contains not only debating talent of a high order. All the newcomers have considerable experience of affairs or of business, while some of them have close and detailed knowledge of the subjects which they will be called upon to administer. If it is remembered that the main emphasis in the next few years will be on economic development the distribution of portfolios will be seen to have been planned with adequate care. But on one innovation there is bound to be some difference of opinion. To the three original categories of Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers, a fourth one has now been added of Ministers of Cabinet rank who will not be in the Cabinet. It has been stated that in status and probably emoluments they will not be differentiated from their Cabinet colleagues and that they would be free to attend Cabinet meetings when subjects in which they are interested come up for discussion. In the circumstances the distinction between the two seems so tenuous as to be not worth preserving. In Britain, it is true, the practice has long been established of having junior Ministers with no seat in the Cabinet. The posts are filled by comparatively young men of considerable promise and the subjects assigned to them are outside the range of key-subjects. Judged by this test, two at least of the subjects assigned to Ministers of Cabinet rank—Rehabilitation and Information and Broadcasting—are important enough to be given representation inside the Cabinet. That apart, the new Government may be regarded as striking a just balance between the claims of different interests to representation and the overriding need for harmony and efficiency. There will be particular satisfaction among B Class