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India's Position in the British Empire.

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ADDRESSING the Canadian Club on the subject, "India's Position in the British Empire," Mr. Saint N. Sing, a native journalist, of Rawal Pindi, Punjab, said:—

Mr. Chairman and Brothers,—When I travelled through the United States I was impressed with the fact that every member of that great republic is either an author or wishes to write a book. In Canada it is different. During the whole of my trip from Vancouver to Montreal, calling at all the leading cities, I came to the conclusion that the Canadian is a business man. The first thing I noticed on arriving at Vancouver was a 'phone. Of course we have 'phones in India, but I was interested in the sign over this Canadian 'phone. It read, "This is a busy 'phone. Talk business." So, as I understand you allot thirty minutes for the speaker on an occasion like this, I am going to talk business.

When I was travelling on the western coast of the United States I met a gentleman from Boston. You know that gentlemen from Boston believe that all culture and refinement are centred around their town. It is the spirit needed in young countries. He said I must be finding it a disagreeable climate, it had been raining without a break for ten days. But in my country it rains eternally. When the Boston man heard I was going to visit the country that Rudyard Kipling describes as "My Lady of the Snows," he said I'd freeze to death, but I told him we had it colder in India. I told him we had in north-west India a small mountain that would compare favorably with any mountain around Boston. Then he held his peace. Yes, India is the country of a great many climes and races and nationalities. India is a living museum. It is hard to understand India; it is hard to understand any country that is passing through a state of transition. And India is rapidly changing. The literature issued from India, about India herself, is of such conflicting nature that the task for arriving at a sound conclusion is appalling to one who wishes to be independent and conscientious in his findings. The diversity of climate, the multiplicity of races, the Babel of languages, and the never-ending banes of caste, single out the



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great British dependency as a living museum, which appeals to the sense of humor in some and to that of pity in others, according to the nature of the people who pronounce the "sentence" upon modern Indian institutions.

The press in India and the Indian press are two distinctly different things. Unfortunately in the outside world these two are mixed up with each other and the resultant confusion is great. There is, to start with, the Anglo-Indian press. This title is a great misnomer. This section of the press consists of people who are accused of being morbidly pessimistic, and who, in season and out of season, are alleged to decry the educated and politically-trained natives of India, as rabidly revolutionary people. This portion of the press is controlled by Englishmen in India. Besides this is the native Indian press, which is both larger in extent and influence. The daily and periodical organs comprised under this head are edited, managed, financed and controlled by the Indians. Some of these are printed in English, but a great many in different native India vernaculars. This section of the press in its turn is accused of very pessimistic views. In addition to these sections of the press are the papers and booklets issued by the "Home Rule" party, which has evolved within the last few years, and, as its name signifies, is ultra-radical.

Between the labyrinths and ramifications of these sections of the press it is hard indeed to decide whether it is meet to glory in the marvels wrought by the Britishers in India, or mourn over the intricate problems with which India is confronted at the moment.

But, even the worst fire-eating detractor will gladly concede that Britain has wrought a miracle in India. It may be hard for the outside world to notice and admire it, but we educated sons of Hindostan are at one in rendering unstinted appreciation of what Britain did for us. India, at the time of British occupation, was a land reft with internal feuds. It was the metaphorical "bone of contention." It kept half a dozen European dogs constantly barking for the prize.

Instead of this, peace, law and order reign supreme in India. Internally there are no mutinies or civil wars; externally there is no danger. India feels delighted that the European bogey, which kept the world in constant consternation, is wiped off the chess-board, for a time, at least. People of my country—in fact of all the Orient—talk of Russia as a dead man, past all danger and molestation.

Internal peace and freedom from external attacks are valuable assets to any country. India is proud to have them. It

is India's good fortune to enjoy these privileges. When law reigns supreme in a land under such conditions it cannot stand still. It has got to get a move on itself, to use your expressive slang. That is what India has been doing during the last few years.

But even to the most superficial of observers it is patent that India is fast becoming an "Ireland." The agitation for self-government has been waged for more than a quarter of a century with relentless vigor and has assumed a very aggressively progressive form. There is no use mincing matters by hiding the fact that the political agitation in India at the present time has reached the acutest stage, and, if the demands of those who are constitutionally agitating are not met in a liberal and square way, England shall have to face, in a political sense, another "Ireland" in India, much larger in number and area.

Western countries have been apologetically told that it is the small minority of the educated people in India who are carrying on this political agitation. It is not the first time in the annals of the history of the world that great progressive movements which in later years have had wonderful influence on the world, have been branded as the disgraceful emanations from the discontented set of the over-educated.

Educated men have always been the leaders of the masses. And, when the number of the literates reaches a point where it can boast of being fully three or four times that of the entire population of Canada, it is no use denying that it represents a good deal of latent, reserve force. The percentage may be small, which is deplorable, but that the millions of the educated people are there and despite the larger section of the ignorant people, are a living force is undeniable. So it is in India. The uneducated and unlettered people have the proverbial "mobbish" tendencies, take their cue and blindly follow the educated few. That this does not always work for the good, and has in a number of instances produced lamentable effects, may be admitted. But, the fact remains that the tendency and trait of the illiterates to follow the educated leaders are not mere hallucinations, but cold, stern, everyday realities.

Any one who has followed the trend of political struggle in India knows that India is not fighting to dismember herself from the Empire. India has reached that stage of evolution when she can not remain gazing with indifference, that although belonging to one and the same Empire, India should be governed by an altogether different and inconsistent policy

from that employed by England towards the other members of the Empire. But, friends, a constitutional struggle for self-government is not disloyalty. The loyalty of India towards the Empire is admittedly unexcelled by any other unit of the Empire. Why should not the average educated Indian resent the surveillance of the huge standing army? The Boers who fought the Empire less than six years ago, have already been found trustworthy of being granted self-government, and if India is still unworthy of being given the privilege of administering its own internal affairs, why should not the educated natives of India, who can hold their own against any nationality and in any part of the globe, feel mortified at the grossest insult to their native genius, education and loyalty? The cry for self-government in India, instead of being a disloyal movement, is the greatest compliment, which it is in the power of the people of India to give to the education that England has placed in the reach of the Indian young men and women. Without entering into the prophecy of the future it may be said that the next few years will see the reversal of the present political order in India which allows no voice in the government of the country to the sons of the land. That it should be so is natural. That, like the Canadians, India should agitate for autonomous government; that, like the Canadians, Indians should wish that the Englishmen, instead of retiring after service to England with all their earnings and the pension and compensation, should spend their time and money in India, where they earned them; are sentiments that should be easily understood and sympathized by people in Canada who have waged for years and are still waging similar struggles.

Gentlemen, India suffers from military aggrandizement. Fully 31 times the money expended on education of the people is spent on the upkeep of an unnecessarily large army. Russia is dead, so far as India is concerned, and Indians are pre-eminently loyal. Comparisons are odious, but they eloquently speak volumes. Any educational success that has been achieved in India pales into insignificance when the figures of the literates in India are put side by side with those of Japan. While Japan has been able in less than forty years to rank as high as any other European country, in the number of men and women who can read and write, there are nearly three hundred millions of people in India who can neither read nor write.

The people in India have learned during recent years the great blunder committed by those who were responsible for

the framing of the educational policy in India. While the primary education has been woefully neglected in India, with the result that the number of the literate men and women in India is out of all proportion to the entire population, education that will teach the people to employ the modern methods of agriculture, manufacture and trade, has received the scantiest of attention.

Coupled with other causes, these defects and failures in the educational system of India are responsible for the appalling poverty that exists in India. It is a historical fact that when Great Britain took over the reins of administration of India, India occupied pre-eminently the foremost position in the entire Orient, being at the head of spiritual as well as the material civilization. The industries that not only existed, but flourished, in India then, have died out or are fast dying out. Aggressive countries of the West, with their scientific and modern methods of manufacture and marketing, have literally killed the old industries of India, while the new Indian industries being unprotected with favorable tariffs and suffering from the lack of technical education in India, have not achieved the success they could have otherwise scored.

It is not only the political reform that has assumed such an aggressive form in India, but the industrial and commercial regeneration of the country, as well. The eyes of the educated Indians were opened by education and their attention of late years has constantly been drawn to the fact that India employs old, antiquated and cumbersome methods in business, manufacture and agriculture; and, while the Indian workingmen are dying of hunger, and the Indian capital remains either unemployed or brings small returns, India by sending out raw material for manufacture abroad, not only wastes money on useless double freighting and importation duty of the finished products, but supports the laborers, workingmen, engineers and machinists and capitalists of the Occident at the expense of her own.

The result of this is that while the agitation is on foot to make the Indian Government give additional attention to popular education, to render the university education more practical and scientific, and to make provision for the technical, industrial, commercial, agricultural and special education, instead of wasting money on military aggrandizement, the natives of the land are setting worthy examples for the Government to follow.

Nationalization in India is the result of the modern education and of late years its propagation has received a great

deal of attention from the people of India. As education advances, and the roads, telegraphs, newspapers, and post-offices offer additional facilities of communication, the caste, creed and religious prejudices are dying out of India. Hindustani, Hindi and English are taking their places as the common mediums of exchanging thoughts and views. Different Provinces, nationalities, races and creeds are learning to know one another better. With the better understanding of each other, amity and toleration, instead of religious and caste feuds and prejudices, are becoming the order of the day. An Indian nation, which respects neither the caste nor the creed line is fast evolving, while education and intermixing are leveling up the differences and prejudice. True that every now and then you come across instances which impress upon you that the caste and creed line, instead of becoming extinct, is getting all the more rigid. But this, like the old oil lamps, is shedding a stronger though evanescent effulgence of light before getting altogether extinct.

The sentiment of the present generation of the people of India can be gauged from the "Made-in-India" movement, which is gaining sympathy and support from every section of the people. The Made-in-India sentiment in India will supply the place of the protective legislation which is acknowledged to have been the great building factor of the industrial and commercial wealth of Japan. The greatest deficiency of the India of yesterday was the lack of patriotism. The India of to-day is on the right road when it conceived the Made-in-India sentiment and is assured a bright future when it shows unmistakable signs of fostering this spirit.

The India of yesterday was infested with internal, intestine troubles and in constant danger of invasion, both by sea and land. The India of to-day stands for order and constitution and is past being ever at the mercy of any foreign invasion. The India of yesterday tended towards isolation and formation of small cliques. The tendency of the India of to-day is distinctly towards nationalization. The India of yesterday was content with glorifying in the success achieved at a period when the present enlightened nationalities of the West were worse than the savages of the most savage regions of to-day. The India of to-day seeks to know itself; laments its defects and deficiencies; is proud of its wonderfully good heritage, but is anxious to put forth its consistent and best effort to the glorification of the India of to-morrow. The India of yesterday lacked intense patriotism, and in joint and organized effort, in political, commercial, industrial agricultural and na-

tional undertakings. The India of to-day pertinaciously sticks with its ancient traditional and religious sentiments of loyalty to the Empire with which its fate was linked in the years gone by.

Gentlemen, it has been my purpose to present to you briefly and lucidly, I hope, the achievement of Britain in India, and the political, social, national and industrial reforms that have been and are going on in my country. India is a gem in the crown of the British Empire. As years move on, India's bonds, which unite it to the glorious Empire over which the sun never sets, will grow tighter. India is bound to be a self-governing country. The Empire is bound to get more consolidated, compact and impregnable. India and the other units of the Empire in days to come will be confreres and will vie with each other in friendly emulation in the regard, sentiment and loyalty to the common Sovereign.