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## The Political Unrest in India.

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AT a largely attended meeting of the Canadian Club, Sir Andrew Fraser, K.C.S.I., LL.D., Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, India, delivered an address on the "Political Unrest in India." Sir Andrew said:

*Mr. Chairman:* With your permission I'll do it this way (mounting a chair). I like to see some of the people to whom I am talking. I have been asked to say something concerning the political conditions existing in India. One thing I would like to say at the outset that it is absolutely essential to a knowledge of India to know more than the great cities. It has a vast agricultural community. To know India one must know thoroughly every Province, for the cities—large and prosperous though they are—do not give one the remotest idea of the facts which would justify anyone in claiming to be an authority on Indian conditions. India is not only large. It is a collection of large countries. A man who has visited France may just as well profess to know Europe as one who has only lived in Bengal may claim to know India. Burmah is altogether different from Bengal in nationality and interest—as different as the countries of Europe are one from the other. Each province is as separate and distinct from the others as can be, and in each province there are distinct tribes, and even nations, keeping themselves apart with great care from each other. Within the various creeds, as well as within the various races, are distinct and separate divisions, having nothing in common. One could travel all over India and use only the English language, but even then the traveller might not know much of the people. To get this knowledge it is necessary to know and understand the natives.

The people of the different provinces have a different history, different associations, different manners and customs and different religions. Each caste keeps itself separate from all other castes. All these things differentiate the different groups as widely as the various nations of Europe. It is absolute rot, under such circumstances, to talk of great national government.

It was my privilege to preside at a conference called by the government to discuss the further employment of natives. One leading native member kept continuously referring to the "national view" and the "national sentiment." Finally, another of the highly educated native members of the conference broke in: "What do you mean by national sentiment? Don't you know that if Britain left India now, in less than ten minutes the Ghurkas would cut your throat? Don't you know that you would not dare to enter one of the other provinces, and I certainly would not have you in mine."

The fact is, that there is no hope for what you understand as a National Government for India for ages to come. We know, and the natives know in their hearts that there is no possibility of national imperial government by the natives, even under the auspices of the British Government. If it comes in the future it will come provincially, and not as an Indian empire.

In India, as I have said, the people are a great agricultural community. To get to their hearts you must take an interest in them and in their interests. It was a mistake to locate the great Indian university at Calcutta, a large city. It is always a mistake to have a university in such places. Colleges draw the men from the country and put them out of touch with the real conditions. The government is now, however, establishing colleges in the agricultural districts all over the great country to draw them back, and have them educated near their own homes. There is nothing worse for young men than to be educated in universities in big cities. They encounter the worst conditions for education.

Calcutta gives no idea of conditions in the interior of the country. I remember with the keenest pleasure an incident which occurred when I was touring through Bengal. The natives were curious to know who the new Governor was who was to take charge of affairs. A great mass of people had gathered at the railway station to see the Governor's train pass through. I got out of the train and mingled with the people for a few moments, exchanging a little talk in the vernacular. Finally, one native put the surprised query, "Are you the new Lieutenant-Governor?" On my response in the affirmative, he turned to the throng and shouted, "This is the new Lieutenant-Governor." The enthusiasm of the natives was unbounded and showed the hollowness of the cry about them being disloyal. To say we have lost Bengal is sheer and unmitigated nonsense.

Yet I believe in the statement that there is unrest in India. But let me go more into detail. The unrest is not, as is generally indicated by those who do not know and do not understand, with the masses of the natives. It is due to economic causes. Changes which took long periods in England have been wrought in a few years in India.

The introduction of railways, telegraphs and machinery—in rapid succession—have somewhat upset old economic conditions in India, but these will right themselves after a time. The demand for a larger share in the government of the country is gradually being granted to the natives with good results, but we must remember that great care in these promotions is necessary. The wisdom of the passage in Leviticus still holds: "Though shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together."

I am strongly in agreement with two of the proposals of Lord Morley, the present Secretary for India in the British cabinet, namely, an increase in the native members of the Indian Council and also on the Executive Council. I could put my hand on two excellent men for the responsible office now. But Lord Morley suggests that two be appointed to each executive in every Province. I differ from that view. You might not always be able to find men capable of the position, and I would be opposed to appointing one because he was a Hindu and the other a Mohammedan. What is wanted in the Executive Council is men ready to look well after their departments, not men chosen because they represent a special section of the community. The appointments should be made solely because of ability, and not because of caste or race or creed.

Rest assured that the unrest in India is not widespread, is not as serious as has been represented, and will be quelled as fast as the Government can deal with that part of the press which lives by black-mailing. The leading organ of the disturbers, *The Bengali*, is owned by a native, who has been dismissed from a Government post for falsifying the accounts of his department.

Let me give you in closing a picture illustrating how much there is in these stories of unrest in India. It is an experience I shall ever remember—the last attempt to take my life in Calcutta. It was at a college entertainment and lecture at which I was to preside. I entered the door preceded by my aide-de-camp, while immediately behind me was a magnifi-

cent young native nobleman, the Maharajah, a young giant 27 years of age, highly educated, a powerful chieftain, called by the natives "King of Kings." When I reached the head of the stairs I was told that the lecturer had not arrived as his car had broken down. We went into a small waiting-room. A man who had been sitting at the right of the platform, rose hurriedly and entered the waiting-room. He pointed a revolver at my chest and drew the trigger. At that moment I felt a great arm envelope me. I was lifted as a child and turn right around so that the giant body of the young native nobleman came between the revolver and me. In an instant the students had knocked the weapon from the man's hands. He was handed over to the police and the lecture went on.

I shall never forget the tremendous ovation I received from the students that night and how I was escorted home by them for safety. The poor wretch who attempted the deed was a fanatic engaged by an anarchial society in Europe for the purpose of showing India that the life of a Governor was as easily taken as that of any other person and to encourage trouble in Bengal. But he found himself out of touch with the students, condemned by the whole population of Calcutta. At the very moment when an unfortunate creature was risking his life in an attempt to take mine, an educated and distinguished native was offering his life to save the life of his Lieutenant-Governor.

There may be those in India who would cause agitation to secure their wicked objects, but the vast majority of the natives are wholly and actively loyal. Like the young nobleman they are perfectly ready and willing to give their lives in defence of the Government they love and the friends they have made.