



India and the Imperial Conference of 1923

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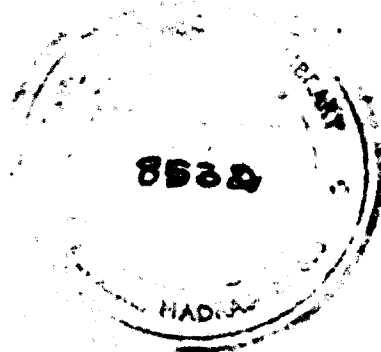
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Speeches delivered by				
Viscount Peel	..	..	..	1840
Sir T. Bouverie	..	..	..	1841
H. Martin	..	..	..	1842
The Duke of Devonshire	..	..	..	1843
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Indians' Status in the Dominions.

EMPIRE CONFERENCE DEBATE.

Full text of Speeches.

VISCOUNT PEEL.

Viscount Peel, introducing the subject, thanked the Premier and the Conference for giving the members of the Indian delegation an opportunity of bringing the question of the position and status of Indians in the Dominions before them, and went on to say : I think you will all recognise that this subject is one of very high Imperial importance, and I hope that in approaching this subject I speak in a general atmosphere of good-will. Now, at the outset of my observations, let me say that I wish to deal with the broad outlines of the subject because my colleague Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has some definite suggestions to make when he follows me. I propose to deal with this subject, not so much as it affects any Dominion or any Colony, but in a most general way. I want to show that if unity and strength are to be maintained and preserved, it is really essential and imperative that we should find a solution of the problem of the position of Indians in the Dominions overseas.

There have been, as the Conference knows, very great constitutional changes in the position of the Government of India, and these changes have brought into prominence what were possibly latent before, but are now clear, namely, the existence of various parties with various opinions and policies. But, however much those parties may be divided in their viewpoints on general political subjects, on the one point there is complete unity of feeling. For instance, there is no difference as regards the strength of this feeling between the party which has been giving general support to the Government in the Assembly and the various sections of what I may call non-co-operative parties.

Proceeding Viscount Peel said :—When I speak of Indian opinion, I am not referring, as is often suggested, to what is described as the opinion of the intelligentsia only, of a definite intellectual class, but I am also stating the views of a great many who are not really necessarily concerned with politics at all.

Let me pass from them for a moment. You have the opinions, we will say, of the Indian Princes, whose views will be given expression to-day by His Highness the Maharaja of Alwar. You have other men like my other colleague. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who, as we all know, was a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and who holds a very high place in Indian public affairs. Therefore, you have this singular fact, that politicians differing widely on all other subjects, and men of different shades of thought, are generally united on this particular subject. You have staunch supporters of our rule in India combining on this subject with the extreme types of politicians. You have business men and landowners combining with men of a very different class and point of view. I certainly do not exaggerate when I say that this subject more than any

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other, I think, is constantly impressed upon me, both officially and personally, by the Government of India and by Lord Reading. The Viceroy in his private letters is constantly explaining and impressing upon me how strongly the feeling of soreness and bitterness is growing on this subject, and how in many ways the task of wisely governing India is made more difficult by this divergence of feeling. Therefore, I want to place this first point before the Conference—the remarkable unanimity of feeling on the position of Indians in the Dominions. But I do not think when you come to ask the cause, it will be very far to seek. The reason why there is such unanimity among our fellow subjects in India is that they regard the disability under which their countrymen labour in other parts of the world as a brand of social inferiority. That is what cuts so deep into the consciousness of the Indian.

I am not necessarily, of course, associating myself entirely with that view, because I know quite well that there are other causes contributing to that. There are the questions of economic difficulty and political questions with which this question must necessarily be linked. But I have no doubt whatever that in what I am saying now, I do voice the general opinion of Indians on this question, that social status is a contributory cause. In history, many social and political movements have been disguised under more resounding names. Well, let me say a word about this great country feeling so strongly and so unitedly on the subject.

First of all, look at its contribution to the Great War. No less than fourteen hundred thousand from India took their part in service in the Great War. Their contribution in money was well over £200,000,000. We all remember the general enthusiasm from all parts of India, and how the Princes and others less distinguished, too, took their part in the struggle of the Great War. And here, if I may say so, there are installed at this very table representatives of the Indian delegation showing that India is sitting here on equal terms with the other Dominions in the great Council Chamber of the Empire. And again, at the League of Nations, representatives of India take their place with the other States, and are able to contribute their voice and influence just as much as others in the deliberations of that Assembly. Moreover, and I do not think this is always recognised, India, though it has been for centuries, for thousands of years, a great agricultural country, is now ambitious to become an industrial State. It has gone far along that road, because it has been accepted by the League of Nations as one of the eight greatest industrial States of the world. Now India, as the Conference knows, recently received a new political constitution, and that constitution, while giving Indians far more power than they had before in the administration of India, has also given them a great outlet for the utterance of their national sentiments.

GROWING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF INDIANS.

Now what is the position in India itself. Here is a policy of co-operation between Britons and Indians. Britons and Indians co-operate together in the Government of India, and Britons and Indians sit together on juries. They meet together in business and they are fellow-directors of great companies. They serve together on the Viceroy's Council. Many of them, of course, are Ministers in the great Provinces, and those Ministers command the assistance of members of the All-India Services, whether British or Indian. Now, what must be the contrast in the minds of these men, when they look abroad and see what their standard or status is in the States of the Empire. Members of this

Conference, with their great experience of the cumulative effect of these institutions and the position which India now occupies here and in the League of Nations, will realise how much all these changes have contributed towards the growing self-consciousness and sense of dignity of India. Now, I want to say this, and in the plainest way I can. If I thought, and if my colleagues thought, that this desire for equality of treatment was inspired in any sense by a desire not to be part of or take part in this Great Empire, neither I nor my colleagues would be pleading the cause at this table. It is indeed the desire and ambition of Indians (I will exclude the negligible class of extremists who can be found, I suppose, in any country) to share in the splendours, glories and traditions of the British Empire. They believe, moreover, that they can bring their own contribution of thought, culture and loyalty to this great combine.

There are those who suggest that these disabilities under which Indians labour in some parts of the Empire are of little importance, that they don't interfere with their liberty and that the denial of a vote does not very much matter one way or the other. Now these views are, as one knows, a common form of objection put forward, either here or in any other country, to franchise extensions and franchise grants. But though the question has importance from purely a material point of view, I should be very ill discharging my duty to this Conference if I were to represent this matter as one to be regarded merely from a practical point of view.

A MATTER OF NATIONAL SENTIMENT.

It is very largely with Indians a matter of national sentiment and feeling, and it is with this feeling that we have to reckon. Now, in all situations of Imperial activity in matters of Imperial defence, in matters of Imperial trade, in matters of Imperial communications or the development of Imperial resources, in all these, India plays a prominent part, and as we have granted a large measure of representative institutions, it is quite clear that in dealing with these matters we cannot disregard the opinions of the representative bodies which we set up, and, supposing they could be disregarded, how, after all, are you going to expect India to co-operate whole-heartedly in the great work of consolidating the Empire and how, without this co-operation, can the Empire attain its full measure of strength. We know, too, that an economic policy is very often influenced by political considerations, and I feel that both on the political and economic side the task of governing India may be greatly increased, and there will be, unless we settle this question, no real unity of Empire, not merely on the material side, on which I am not laying so much stress to-day, but on what is so vastly more important, the moral side. Moreover, the scope of this problem as regards many Dominions is not very great. For the moment, I am excluding from that general proposition South Africa, where I know there are a great many currents and cross-currents to complicate the issue. But, as regards Australia and New Zealand, where so much has been done, and as regards Canada, the numbers are very small. There are about 2,000 in Australia, in all that vast country, about 6,000 in New Zealand and about 1,200 in Canada, of which rather more than 1,100 are in the Province of British Columbia.

JUSTICE AND EXPEDIENCY.

I want to reaffirm what was stated at the Conference of 1921 as regards the complete acceptance by the Government of India and Indian

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opinion of the right of the great Dominions to determine the composition of their own community. May I read the words of that resolution. They are : "The Conference, while reaffirming the resolution of the Imperial War Conference of 1918, that each community of the British Commonwealth should enjoy complete control of the composition of its own population by means of the restriction of immigration from any other communities, recognises there is incongruity between the position of India as a member of the British Empire and the existence of disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some other parts of the Empire." Therefore, that principle is laid down quite clearly, and consequently there need be no anxiety on the part of the Dominions that there is any desire on the part of Indian feeling to go back on that decision. Thus, impressing this matter upon the generous consideration of the Dominions, I feel that, vast as are the implications of the problems, the solution of the practical question is perhaps not so difficult as it appears. Well, justice and expediency are often divided. Sometimes they approach one another, and when, as I think in this case, they combine and are merged with one another, the appeal is surely irresistible, and I am going to ask this Conference if the time has not come when these disabilities should specifically be removed.

I want to add this point about interest. Possibly some may think it an unnecessary interest which the Government and the Indian people take in the position of Indians in the great Dominions. Now, so long as to any great extent Indians in the Dominions may be regarded as a foreign body in the great body politic of those Dominions, so long is the Government of India bound to take an interest in their fate and assure themselves as regards the manner in which they are treated. But once they are absorbed, they cease to be a foreign body, once they are absorbed into the great corporation, as it were, of the Dominions. Then the interest of the Indian Government, of course, will cease, and there is nothing that the Indian Government or anybody connected with it, there is nothing the Secretary of State dislikes more than interfering or appearing to interfere with the domestic affairs of the great Dominions.

GRAVE DIFFICULTIES.

Now I am not insensible of course to the grave difficulties which stand in the way. I know how very difficult it is to bring home always to local opinion that local views and opinions are not necessarily coincident with the wider interests of the Empire, and I know quite well that those who are listening to me as representatives of the Dominions, whatever they may or may not have done, desire that a solution of this question should be found. And I most earnestly plead that when later in this Conference they take into consideration the practical measures which they may adopt for the solution of this question, they will bear in mind the intense feeling that has been aroused on this subject in India, and will bring home to their own people that in the highest interest of the Empire the aspirations of India should be respected. I know there are great difficulties. The Prime Minister in his opening address spoke of the contacts of civilisation. There are contacts, of course, here of more than one civilisation, and you have peoples differing in tradition and social habits, fashioned in the course of centuries, thousands of years. I may say, fashioned by the differences of national surroundings and by the differences of secular and religious thought. We have to deal, and we should never forget when dealing with India that we have to deal, with ancient races, full of pride of race.

We have to deal with ancient religions, full of pride of religion. That is, of course, one of the great differences we have to remember in dealing with the position of India as compared with countries further west.

INDIA'S GREAT TRADITIONS.

There are, for instance, 70 million Moslems in India, but in communion with them through religious ties and rites is a vastly greater body of hundreds of millions of Moslems stretching in the great belt from the gulf of Malaya right across to West Africa, hundreds of millions of Moslems, who in their hour of worship, all turn their faces to Mecca. We have the pride of the Hindus in their own history, in their recollections of the past. They look back to, shall we say the Mauryan Empire, memories of Chandra Gupta and his famous grandson, King Asoka. Their memories stretch to an even earlier time, when, scarcely noticed by history, their Aryan ancestors were moving down from the North-West Frontier, the traditional path for the invasion of India, along the plains of the five rivers, now called the Punjab. They look back to the dim far off times, to a date long before the Jutes, Angles, Saxons and Norsemen, the original elements of whom our race is composed, landed on these shores ; when Rome itself was a mere village, before the Roman legions were garrisoned behind the great wall which used to run from sea to sea in the north of Britain, a period even before the Druids reared the gigantic monoliths of the Stone Age. I press this subject on the Conference, and I hope that with the consent of the Prime Minister, they will listen to Sir Tej Bahadur while he deals with the subject in greater detail.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU'S SPEECH.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said :

Mr. Prime Minister, Let me at once say how deeply grateful I feel to you and His Majesty's Government, and may I thank you and His Majesty's Government and the various Prime Ministers for giving me this opportunity of a free and full discussion of the question in which India is to-day so vitally interested. I fear I may take some time, but I shall crave your indulgence for more reasons than one. Most important of those reasons is the importance of the subject. I am glad His Majesty's Government has decided to set apart a special day for this subject. That being so, am I not entitled to draw from it the inference that His Majesty's Government really recognises the importance of this question ? When it is known in my country that His Majesty's Government recognises the importance of this subject, and that that recognition is shared by the various Dominion Prime Ministers, that fact alone will inspire them with some hope. Before I proceed further may I also express my deep gratitude to Viscount Peel for the assistance he has given me in helping to bring this subject before the Conference, and for the speech which he delivered to-day, which filled me with gratification, and which I have no doubt, when it comes to be known to my countrymen, will fill them also with gratification. He has identified himself to-day completely and unreservedly with every sentiment of our national honour. That is what I appreciate more than the moving eloquence with which he delivered his great speech this morning.

I may well produce in some quarters the impression of being a fighter. I don't object to criticism of that kind. Really and truly I am fighting

for the cause of my country and the Premiers of the various Dominions who have in their day fought for the cause of their country, won't object if I fight for the cause of mine, but I do fight, let me tell you frankly, as a subject of King George. I fight for a place in his household, and I won't be content with a place in his stables. Let me tell you that the problem of Indians overseas is of vital importance, not merely to India but to the whole Empire. Whatever may be our position as regards self-government, howsoever distant, we may be from that cherished dream of ours, let me tell you that so far as this question of Indians overseas is concerned, we stand solidly united. We have our domestic quarrels. We have Moderates and Extremists. We have non-co-operators. We have Hindus and Mahomedans, but so far as this question is concerned let me tell you, with all the sincerity of which I am capable, that we stand absolutely united.

"IZZAT."

Don't be misguided by what appears in certain papers here which attempt to show that there is no feeling on this question. We attach far more importance to the honour of our Nationals in other parts of the Empire than probably you realise. We express that feeling in the vernacular of our country by a comprehensive and delicate phrase which will, no doubt, be readily understood by Lord Curzon and His Highness the Maharaja. That phrase is 'izzat'. There is not a man either among the Princes or the humblest subjects of His Majesty who does not attach great importance to the question of izzat. When izzat, which means honour, is at stake, we prefer death to anything else. That is our sentiment, and it is in that light that I present my case to you. Don't forget that my country, India, is the one country which makes the British Empire truly Imperial. I take a pride in that. I don't indulge in the slightest degree in reflection upon the dignity or honour of the position of any one of the Dominions, but I do claim that it is my country which makes the British Empire truly Imperial. One-fifth of the human race, with a far more ancient civilisation than your own, to which eloquent reference was made by Viscount Peel, joins with you in acknowledging the suzerainty of our common Throne. That allegiance with us is a real living thing. Shake that allegiance and you shake the foundations of the entire fabric with consequences which it will be difficult to over-estimate.

Might I explain to you here a consideration which will guide me in presenting my case. In my humble judgment the one function of this Conference, the highest advisory body of the Empire, is to bring about a good understanding between the various units that constitute the British Commonwealth, to strengthen the ties which unite, or ought to unite, the different units of the Empire, with their different outlook and their different religions. If this Conference fails to achieve that end then let me say it fails to justify its existence in the eyes of the Empire. But to achieve that end it seems to me that it is absolutely necessary that we should open our minds to each other with entire frankness. Any mental reservation on an occasion like this and round this table would, in my humble judgment, amount to nothing short of treason against the King and treason against the Empire. It is in that spirit of frankness and in that spirit of candour that I venture to present to you my case, and even though I may use now and again expressions to indicate the strength of my feeling and the feeling of my countrymen I beg the Dominion Prime Ministers not to misunderstand my spirit.

FEELING IN INDIA.

Let me tell you at once that feeling on this question in India is deep-seated and widespread. Let me also remove a very wrong impression, and I am glad Viscount Peel referred to this question, for I desire to reinforce his arguments as an Indian. For 27 years I have been in public life, for 13 years I have been connected with the Legislative Councils, and I have set in the Viceroy's Cabinet. I have never witnessed before what is happening in India to-day. Five years ago it may have been possible for you to say that a wide gulf divided the masses from the classes. Let me now give you this warning. The classes lead the masses as never before. India has rapidly changed, and that is the outstanding feature of the situation there. The intellectuals—or if you like to call them agitators—have gained ascendancy over the masses. What the intellectuals think to-day the masses will think to-morrow. This question now before us, let me tell you, affects the masses directly. For it is from the masses mainly that most of our population have gone to the Dominions. I belong to a Province which has supplied a considerable number of men to the various Dominions, and I know their feelings. You may condemn agitators, you may condemn the intellectual classes, I will not quarrel with that, but remember that they have got the power now with the masses. Do not forget the growing and increasing influence of the Vernacular Press. I do not justify or vindicate its attitude in every respect. I will, however, state facts. It now penetrates to the innermost recesses of our villages. Every village has got a reader who reads for the illiterate people the Vernacular newspapers.

I have been reading extracts from the Vernacular Press of my own country, and while I deprecate the wild language in which it indulges, let me tell you frankly that it is seething with indignation on this question, and that it is affecting the whole outlook of my countrymen in the villages. Any inequality of Indian nationals enters like iron into our souls. For Heaven's sake, whether you find a solution, or do not find a solution, do not dismiss this statement of mine as mere sentimental nonsense. It is absolute fact, and I am here to interpret to you the present position of my countrymen as regards the question. It cuts to the quick our national pride and our new consciousness. It permeates and sours our whole outlook as regards Imperial relationships. It derives impetus from the natural inclination to take a pride in being a member of the biggest Commonwealth that the world knows to-day. It makes the task of the Government of India, of which I had the honour of being a member until a few months ago, infinitely more difficult in dealing with their domestic problems than you realise.

THE KENYA DECISION.

Here I must reinforce the arguments of Viscount Peel. This feeling runs right through our national life. Let me at once tell you that I am unwilling to enter at length into the merits of the Kenya decision, but my countrymen expect me, my Government expects me, and I am bound by all considerations of honour and duty, to put you in full possession of the sentiments of my countrymen and my Government as regards your decision. They have received that decision with the utmost possible dismay. I know the official view is that in certain respects our position in Kenya has been improved. That is not the view we share. We judge you by a standard which is admittedly very high. We were not fighting for little things, we were fighting for a big principle. I know and I feel,

and my countrymen feel, and my Government feels, that a serious blunder has been made. I know also that British statesmanship is wise, and wherever a thing goes wrong it begins to think, and I honestly believe that it will soon recognise the mistake which it has made. Let me tell you on behalf of my countrymen, that neither my country nor the Government which I have the honour to represent will accept this decision as final. Indeed there is nothing final in politics, and I want His Majesty's Government to recognise that position and indicate, if possible, that they do look upon this question in the light in which I have just presented it.

May I conclude this portion of my speech by assuring the Conference that, while on the domestic questions of Indian politics we, like most of you, have our differences of parties, groups and interests, yet upon this question which concerns the honour of our Nationals in Kenya and the honour of our Nationals overseas, there is no difference between us from the Viceroy downwards. May I remind you of what a distinguished and eminent statesman, with whom I had the privilege of working in close co-operation for two years, and to whom I hope my countrymen and his countrymen will do justice some day, said on a critical occasion in the Legislative Assembly when the announcement on the Kenya decision was published in India. I will quote from his speech: "The news of the decision regarding Kenya," said Lord Reading, "came to me and my Government, no less than to you, as a great and severe disappointment, for India had made the cause of Indians in Kenya her own. As His Majesty's Government has stated, this decision conflicts on material points with the strongly expressed views of my Government as laid before the Cabinet by the Secretary of State for India." That is the opinion of the Viceroy.

REPRESENTATIVE OPINION.

May I crave your indulgence for two minutes to read to you a few typical telegrams I have received in the last few days, some of them from absolutely unexpected quarters. They come to me from representative bodies of all shades of opinion. Mr. Sastri, who has been so frequently in the last few years connected with this matter, sends me a telegram supporting the proposals, not without misgivings, which I am going to put before you. The Swaraj Party, to which I do not belong and which does not see eye to eye with me, and from which I should never have expected to receive support, sends this telegram from Poona through its Secretary and leader, Mr. Kelkar: "The Maharashtra Swarajya Party offers you full support in any strong action you take to get redress of Kenya wrong." Let me tell you again that most of the telegrams have come from unexpected quarters. Well, here is a most remarkable telegram from a gentleman with whom I have worked in full co-operation until five years ago, but from whom I separated when differences arose. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya now belongs to the Non-co-operation Party, and three days ago, if you would have asked me, I should never have said that I would receive a telegram like this from that gentleman. It is from a man with 40 years of solid work behind him, and this is his telegram; it is sent to me from Simla: "Indians of all shades of public opinion are at one with you in demanding equality of status with their fellow-subjects throughout the British Empire. If the representatives of the other parts are not prepared to give practical support to this elementary right of Indians as citizens of the Empire, the participation of Indians in the Imperial Conference becomes a mockery and a deep national

humiliation, and I trust both you and the Maharaja of Alwar will withdraw." I have received two telegrams from Mrs. Besant, supporting me on her own behalf and on behalf of her entire party. Let me tell you that while I am her friend I do not belong to her party.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS.

Lastly may I give you a telegram which was handed over to me the day before yesterday, and which has come to me from the Government of India. It says: "We understand from Reuters that the Conference will discuss overseas questions probably on the 24th October. A resolution passed recently by a majority of the Bombay Corporation to boycott Empire goods wherever possible as a protest against the Kenya decision, and a resolution on the same lines of a Poona public meeting further indicate the importance attached to equality of status overseas, and we sincerely hope that the proceedings of the Conference will restore confidence and good feeling. As regards C. Mandates, we trust that the atmosphere will permit you to secure a favourable solution, otherwise India's right to revision of policy must be reserved. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's proposal in a letter to Sir Narasimha Sarma to reserve the right to challenge policy when India's interests are affected, though substantially the same as ours, is less elastic. We earnestly hope you have secured agreement with General Smuts to abandon or modify the segregation policy as suggested in our despatch. We attach very great importance to it. We hope also that the Dominions and the Colonial Office will consent to the appointment of agents to assist them and us in this difficult question, as suggested in our memorandum. Please send a copy of the telegram to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru."

INDIANS' DISABILITIES IN THE COLONIES.

I won't take up your time any further. I have tried only to reinforce the argument which Viscount Peel has put forward by showing how the different classes of our people are agreed on this question. Having explained the depth and implication of Indian feeling, I will now proceed to explain the circumstances in various parts of the world whereby this feeling is at present aggravated. I have been studying such official papers as are available to me, and for the sake of convenience and to save your time I propose to read to you a very brief summary of the position. There are about one and a half million Indians now settled in other parts of the Empire and in many parts they are subjected as Indians and quite irrespective of how well they shape up to local franchise standards, to grave political and even economic disabilities.

Let me start a brief survey of these grievances by paying a tribute to the Government of New Zealand, which is represented by my distinguished friend over there. That Government in its own territory at least treats Indians on a footing of equality with all other inhabitants of the country and my countrymen can live there among New Zealanders as their fellow citizens in honour. In Australia also the disabilities which Indians suffer are comparatively small. We hope that before long legislation will be passed to enable them to exercise Dominion franchise and remove the disqualification they at present suffer as regards invalid and old-age pensions. In certain provinces also there are minor disabilities, which I hope it will not be hard to remove. In Queensland they have

no State franchise and they have to undergo a dictation test for employment in the sugar and dairy industries which is apt to operate prejudicially. In Western Australia also they have no State franchise, while in Southern Australia they are disqualified for leases under the Irrigation Act. Let me tell you plainly that if I have failed in this statement to convince Mr. Bruce I hope he will at least extend to me the hand of fellowship on this question. I am willing to co-operate with him to devise methods for the solution of these difficulties. In Canada, of which Mr. Mackenzie King is the distinguished Prime Minister, there is a small population—I hope he will correct me if I am wrong—of not more than 6,000.

Mr. Mackenzie King : Over 1,200.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru : Thank you very much. In British Columbia, there is no dominion, provincial or municipal franchise. Now I come to the most difficult part of my task. I come to South Africa.

SOUTH AFRICAN OPPOSITION.

In South Africa the problem is very serious. Here there are 161,000 Indians, of whom all but a few thousands are mainly resident in Cape Colony. They have no political franchise. In Natal, besides this, they fear they will lose the municipal franchise. In the Transvaal there is no franchise of any kind. Nor is it only political subjection that my countrymen complain of. They are prohibited, either as individuals or companies, from acquiring land, and in the gold area they may not occupy land. To make their lot more miserable, laws governing the grant and regulation of traders' licences are administered in a manner which strikes directly at their own interests. Moreover, the Union Government, of which my friend General Smuts is the head, even now is contemplating legislation which will provide for the compulsory segregation of Indians in urban areas by restriction on the ownership and occupation of land.

May I be permitted at this stage to invite the attention of the Conference to a curious discrepancy between this very serious state of affairs and the sentiments enunciated in 1917. I believe in this very hall General Smuts then said, and I quote his very words : "Once the White community of South Africa were rid of the fear that they were going to be flooded by unlimited immigration from India (a fear removed once for all by India's acceptance of the Reciprocity Resolution of 1917) all other questions would be considered subsidiary and would become easily and perfectly soluble." May I also remind you what Mr. Burton said on a former occasion at the Imperial Conference, and I attach considerable importance to the testimony he has given as regards the character of my countrymen in South Africa. Mr. Burton said : "So far as we are concerned it is only fair to say, and it is the truth, that we have found Indians in our midst in South Africa, who form in some parts a very substantial portion of the population, good, law abiding and quiet citizens, and it is our duty to see" (as he expressed it) "that they are treated as human beings, with feelings like our own and in a proper manner."

From the self-governing Dominions I pass to the Colonies, and very briefly allude to our position there. In British Guiana I gladly acknowledge that our Indian population can live on terms of honour and equality of treatment. Their grievances are comparatively very much fewer. In Fiji my countrymen demand more adequate representation based on satisfactory franchise in the legislative bodies. They also ask for the

settlement of a minimum wage based on the cost of living. They ask for the removal of the poll tax which presses very hard on them. They ask further that land should be given to them for settlement. They ask, and I have received a cable from an important quarter, that if these grievances are not removed they should be repatriated. In Kenya Indians desire a common roll instead of communal franchise. They protest against the administrative veto which prevents them from acquiring land from willing European sellers in the Highlands, and they fear that the immigration restrictions may be employed in such a way as to prejudice the development of the Colony by Indians. In Uganda Indians are pressing for representation by election, rather than nomination, to the Legislative Council, and in Tanganyika which my countrymen helped to win for the Empire, they have certain grievances, which I understand are at present under the consideration of the Colonial Office, such as profits tax, pedlars' licenses, trade licenses ; and may I express a fervent hope that the Colonial Office will give very sympathetic consideration to those grievances before they arrive at any decision ? Thus, wherever we turn we see circumstances in the local status of Indians which are not to be reconciled with India's national aspirations, or with the position which she will obtain as a result of the declared policy of His Majesty's Government, a position which I hope she will achieve much sooner than some people realise. At this stage I will slightly digress from my argument and refer to C. Mandates in a very few words.

MANDATED TERRITORIES.

As regards the administration of what I will call C. Mandated territories which have been committed to the charge of certain Dominions I desire to say that my countrymen cannot acquiesce in any position which does, or may in future make their status inferior to what it was when those territories were administered by Germany. I have already read to you the views of the Government of India in a telegram. The matter is at present not of very great practical importance, as the number of my countrymen is very small, but I must, in fairness, enter a caveat against any action which may in future turn to our disadvantage. May I also in this connection remind you of the provisions of Article 22 of the League of Nations ? I will only quote material portions. After referring to Central African and other peoples it lays down that the Mandatory power, besides certain other duties, shall "secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other members of the League." I take my stand on that.

CONFERENCE RESOLUTION OF 1921.

Having thus reviewed the position of the self-governing Dominions and Colonies according to the information available to me—and I shall not object to any member of the Conference correcting me if I am wrong in any details—let me tell you the position taken up by this Conference in 1921. Viscount Peel has read us a portion of that resolution, but I propose to read to you the whole of the Resolution :—

"The Imperial Conference, while re-affirming the resolution of the Imperial War Conference of 1918 that each community of the British Commonwealth should enjoy complete control of the composition of its own population by means of the restriction of immigration from any other communities, recognises that there is incongruity between the position of India as an equal member of the British Empire, and the existence

of disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some other parts of the Empire. The Imperial Conference accordingly is of opinion that, in the interests of the solidarity of the British Commonwealth, it is desirable that the rights of such Indians to citizenship should be recognised. The representatives of South Africa regret their inability to accept this resolution in view of exceptional circumstances in the greater part of the Union. The representatives of India, while expressing their appreciation of the acceptance of the resolution recorded above, feel themselves bound to place on record their profound concern for the position of Indians in South Africa, and their hope that, by negotiation between the Governments of India and South Africa, some way can be found as soon as may be to reach a more satisfactory position."

You will thus see that the resolution divides itself clearly into three parts. I will take up the first part, which deals with the question of immigration. It gives each Dominion the fullest and freest right to regulate the character and composition of its own population. I am bound by that. You are bound by it. But just as I am bound by it, you are also bound in honour by the second part of the resolution, which really is the most vital part with which I have got to deal, except, of course, that portion which relates to South Africa. But before I proceed further let me make one point clear. Let there be no misgiving about the question of immigration.

There is a growing sentiment in my country that we should not send our Nationals outside anywhere, and I may perhaps make a confession, with the permission of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India, regarding my attitude when I was a member of the Government of India. I helped to draft the Immigration Act, and I was president of the committee which sat to consider it. I was probably the strongest exponent of the view that there should be no immigration from India to outside on any conditions whatsoever. We do not want our nation outside India to appear as a nation of coolies. We have had enough of that. There is plenty of scope for the conservation of the energy of my countrymen in my own country. We want them to rise to the full height of their stature in our own country. The Dominions, therefore, need have no fear on that account. I just said that as I felt bound in honour by the first part of the resolution, I consider, and I hope I am not demanding anything extravagant from you, that you are also in honour bound by the second part of the resolution. I will be absolutely frank. I will exclude South Africa on the basis of the second part of the resolution, but I will ask the other Dominion Prime Ministers what my countrymen and what my Government are asking in India, namely, what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to honour this three-year-old agreement? While every reasonable man must make allowances for practical difficulties in implementing that resolution, while I recognise the difficulties arising from local circumstances and prejudices, from slow changes in public opinion and from the exigencies of party politics, yet I must tell you that the question to us is one of vital importance and, in fairness to my country, I must say that she finds herself absolutely unable to acquiesce in the present position. I have, therefore, come to you in the name of my Government, in the name of the many millions of my countrymen to make an earnest and sincere appeal to you to join hands with me in devising some methods, such as your statesmanship will enable you to do, methods intended to give effect to the principle of equality embodied in the resolution of 1921. Do not

for a moment think that I fail to recognise your difficulties. I have held office and I know the difficult position of responsible Ministers. I am not blind to those difficulties, but pray let me ask you also to realise our national difficulties and my difficulties. I invite you to face with me in the broadest spirit of statesmanship this vital problem that Viscount Peel and I have had the honour of placing before you this morning, and I claim your co-operation in devising methods for solving the problem.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU'S PROPOSAL.

After long and careful consideration I have come to the conclusion that I must place certain definite constructive suggestions for your consideration. If you, on your side, can make any better suggestions to me, if you can offer any better alternatives to me, take it from me that you will not find anyone readier than myself to accept them. I earnestly suggest that what the occasion demands is a united effort if we are to find a solution for this difficult problem which threatens at no distant date to acquire almost the character of a problem of foreign policy. I appeal to the Dominion Governments and His Majesty's Government to take a united course. I will now tell you what my resolution or proposal is. I have reduced it to writing. It is :

"Let the Dominion Governments who have an Indian population, let His Majesty's Government in the areas under their direct control, such as Kenya, Uganda, Fiji and other places where there are Indians resident, appoint committees to confer with a committee which the Government of India will send from India and explore the avenues of how best and how soonest the principle of equality implicit in the 1921 Resolution may be implemented. And, lest the course of enquiry be prejudiced, I will couple with my proposal a request that any anti-Indian legislation which may be pending should be stayed until the reports of these joint committees are available."

That is my resolution. At once I propose to remove any misapprehension which may be lurking in the minds of anyone who has listened to me. I do not want a central committee. Let me tell you I want a committee appointed by each Dominion within its own borders, and I want a committee appointed by each Dominion to confer with a committee which will be appointed by the Government of India and which will go to each Dominion. That is my appeal to the Dominions, except, of course, to South Africa. Under the Resolution of 1921, I make the same earnest appeal to His Majesty's Government and especially to the Duke of Devonshire and the Colonial Office, in so far as the resolution relates to the Colonies.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSAL.

I will in a few words tell you what, in my humble judgment, are the advantages to be gained from my resolution. In the first place you gain time, and that will enable us to calm the angry passions that have arisen in India on this question. In the second place, India will be undoubtedly in a more hopeful frame of mind, if we can all bring all the moral forces available to us to bear upon the solution of this problem. In the third place my resolution absolutely safeguards your independence, I mean the independence of the Dominions. It places the initiative in your hands. And let me tell you it is not merely because I am anxious that the Dominions should have that independence that I have provided

for that safeguard, but also because of a lurking feeling of self-interest in my mind that you have received the rich inheritance of independence and the freedom of self-government in your territories, while I am still aspiring to it: I hope my aspirations will be realised very soon, and then, like you, I shall be jealous of any outside authority imposing its will upon me in my affairs. It is for that reason that I am anxious that the Dominions themselves should take the initiative as regards this committee which I suggested and the committee which we propose to send out from India to confer with you in your countries. I think, and I honestly believe, that if the problem is explored on those lines it will be found that it will not in the end prove insoluble.

APPEAL TO GENERAL SMUTS.

I now turn perhaps to the most difficult part of my work, and that is my address to General Smuts. I frankly recognise I cannot address him on the basis of the resolution of 1921. He was no party to it, but I address him on three specific grounds. Firstly, as a humanitarian, secondly, as an Imperial statesman, and, thirdly, as the Prime Minister of South Africa.

As a humanitarian, I say he cannot absolve himself of the moral duty which rests on his shoulders of elevating the status of my countrymen in his Dominion. Let it be granted that their standard is low. It makes his task all the more imperative and urgent that he must help them in raising that standard of my countrymen. Let him not forget my countrymen now when it lies in his power to raise their standard. He cannot permanently relegate them to a position of inferiority, for therein lies a menace not to his country or mine but to the Empire.

I appeal to him next as an Imperial statesman. Ever since the days of the Armistice, what is it that General Smuts has stood up for? He has stood up for peace, peace to all the world, and he has stood as a protector of minorities. He has acquired a unique position as an Imperial statesman. It has given him worldwide fame. What is it that we have observed during the last three weeks' sitting of this Conference? General Smuts has been trying to devise means to bring peace to a distracted world. Is he going to exclude from that happy mission, his country and mine? For let me tell you that there can be no peace unless he includes his country and my country within the ambit of his big proposals. I do not address him on the basis of the Resolution of 1921. I do not wish to interfere with his very natural desire to be consistent. I appeal to him independently of that resolution, and I say to him: "Won't you join hands with me, as I have appealed to the other Dominion Prime Ministers, in devising methods for the solution of this problem now and for all time?" I do not indulge in any threat. That is not my line, and I hope General Smuts will not misunderstand me. However powerful he may be in South Africa and however weak we may be in India you cannot relegate my countrymen for all time in King George's Empire to a position of inferiority.

I will now address General Smuts as the Prime Minister of South Africa. Does he fully realise the implication of his present policy? I doubt whether he does. Will he not aggravate trouble, not merely in South Africa but throughout the world, by putting White people on one side and coloured races on the other side? I tell him frankly that if the Indian problem in South Africa is allowed to fester much longer it

will pass, as I said just now, beyond the bounds of a domestic issue and will become a question of foreign policy of such gravity that upon it the unity of the Empire may founder irretrievably. I therefore earnestly trust he will not refuse to co-operate with me in attempting to discover a solution; and I also hope that, in view of the present seriousness of the situation to which my Government and people have referred more often than I can repeat here, he will agree to the appointment of a diplomatic agent to be sent by the Government of India to South Africa who will protect our Nationals there, who will act as an intermediary between them and the South African Government, and who will put our Government in full possession of the facts relating to our Nationals.

REPLY TO GENERAL SMUTS' MEMORANDUM.

I will very briefly make reference to the proposals which General Smuts has been good enough to circulate in a memorandum among the members of the Conference. I have read them with very great care, and all the attention and weight to which a memorandum of General Smuts is entitled. Let me tell him and let me tell you all that it is a document of remarkable subtlety, such subtlety as I have always been accustomed to associate with the name of General Smuts. In the first place General Smuts takes exception to what Mr. Sastri has been saying or doing. I hold no brief for Mr. Sastri. He has been an intimate friend of mine and a fellow-worker in public life during the last 20 years. If the only objection General Smuts has got to find with him, and if the only crime to be attributed to him is that he in the Dominions frankly and freely pleaded for equality for his countrymen, then let me tell General Smuts that he is indicting not merely Mr. Sastri, but 320 millions of my countrymen. We all plead guilty to that charge. I will refer no more to that personal issue, but I will ask you first of all to consider the implications of that important memorandum. General Smuts compares the British Commonwealth to the League of Nations, but I say emphatically that the analogy may hold good up to a certain point, but after that it breaks down. The League of Nations has no common Sovereign. The British Commonwealth has a common Sovereign and we are united by our allegiance to him. But if the British Commonwealth is to be compared to the League of Nations, you cannot stop short of the full extent to which that analogy must be applied. What is it that the League of Nations has been created for? Was it created, as I understand it, to settle disputes between the various Governments by conference and by consultation, and to do so unless they refuse to come to that conference and that consultation? But it is just this consultation and conference which General Smuts, as I understand, is refusing. What is it that a resolution like his comes to? It asks the Dominion Prime Ministers who participated in the Conference of 1921, and agreed to that resolution, now to treat it as a scrap of paper and join him in passing an absolutely new resolution which, on the face of it, has for its object the reservation of the fullest freedom to each Dominion to pass its own laws regarding franchise.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND THEIR LIMITS.

Nobody has doubted that constitutional right, but there are limits to that constitutional right, limits which are prescribed by prudence. Let me illustrate that. The British Parliament is the Sovereign Parliament and the Free State Parliament in Ireland is an independent Parliament.

Suppose the Irish Free State Parliament passed or intended to pass legislation to the effect that it would not recognise the right of any protestant or Englishman to the franchise in Ireland, and suppose, on the other hand, the British Parliament intended to pass legislation to disenfranchise all Irishmen settled in Scotland. Well, if you looked at it strictly from a legal view point you might say that these Parliaments would be within their right, but prudence would at once prescribe limits to the exercise of that power and that constitutional right. First the impulse of the two Parliaments would be to confer to devise methods of avoiding a conflict. Would they not do it? Yes, I recognise the constitutional liberty and constitutional rights of the Dominion Governments, but let me tell you this, that constitutional rights can only be exercised with prudence and discretion up to a certain point and beyond that point you have to allow those constitutional rights to be subordinated to statesmanship, to prudence and to discretion as well. I don't wish to raise a legal argument. I hope no legal argument will be raised, because this is not a legal body. There is only one thing I will say. General Smuts has said that the one binding tie between the Dominions and other parts of the Empire and India is our common allegiance to the common Sovereign, but he coupled that statement with a further proposition, namely, that from that allegiance political rights did not follow. Well, I will not have a duel with General Smuts on a point of constitutional law, but I will venture to tell him one thing. Allegiance to a Sovereign is a very living thing. It is not a mere figure of speech, and whenever you pass any law which affects that allegiance of a subject to his Sovereign and the corresponding duty of the protection of the Sovereign to the subject, you tread on very dangerous ground. If a constitutional position like that is argued, let it be argued before a legal body and, speaking for myself with all humility, I have no fear of facing that constitutional issue on legal grounds, but I do not wish to raise that legal argument at this Conference.

I have practically reviewed the whole position and I will now make an appeal to the Conference itself. I will appeal to the Conference to realise to the full the implications of the Indian problem. I have placed before my colleagues from the Dominions and His Majesty's Government here certain specific proposals. I believe, and honestly believe, that the British Empire stands for justice and equality in the eyes of the world. Will you make a place within it for India? Think for a moment of the present position. Ancient and modern history provides no parallel to it. Three hundred and twenty millions of my countrymen, whose religion is different from yours, whose colour is different from yours, whose race is different from yours, and whose history is different from yours, are united by the common tie of allegiance to a common Sovereign. They are members of a Commonwealth the like of which never existed before, and let me tell you that while I do not wish to interfere with your absolute independence inside your own borders, I am one of those men who say that the British Empire can never be described as exclusively a White Empire. Within its borders it comprises a large number of populations of coloured races. Now, how are you going to keep Indians, or for that matter, all other coloured races within the Empire? Force? Never. Because, apart from the obvious limitations of force, you cannot be untrue to your own traditions of liberty, justice, and equality. You cannot afford to ignore and neglect world opinion on this question. By preserving our sentiments? Certainly. That will be the strongest tie you can have, and it remains for you to make use of it. Fulfil our aspirations within our own country for self-government, fulfil our aspirations

for a position of equality inside the Dominions and Colonies, and India will stand shoulder to shoulder with you through thick and thin. It is by preserving that sentiment that you can keep India, and I pray, with all the sincerity I am capable of, that this Conference may come to some decision which may strengthen the bonds between the Empire and India, for I do believe in that connection. Make no mistake, it is by sentiment and by observation of that sentiment that you will retain us, and enable us to achieve self-government and satisfy our other national ambitions outside our own country. Think for a moment what India means to you. More than 300 million men are closely allied to other Asiatics, constituting almost the entire half of humanity. They are placed within the ambit of the British Empire. If we are incorporated within the Commonwealth, think what we shall mean to the peace of the world with our ideals of self-government, bridging as we do East and West and shouldering the burdens which are yours as well as ours for the service of humanity. Think again of the ties which bind us together if you will allow them to do so. King George is your King, but our Sovereign. Devotion to his person and his Throne is a very real thing, notwithstanding what some men may say in my country. I claim, and let me be very plain, not as a matter of grace but as a matter of right as the King's subject, to have an honourable place in the household and a position of equality and honour within the Empire wherever it may be, for to us our position in his household overseas is of far greater importance than any other questions which are at present agitating our minds. I am fighting in this spirit, fighting as a firm believer in the connection of India with England, fighting as a loyal and devoted subject of the King. Before you all my plea, indeed the plea of all my countrymen, is for equality within the great King's Empire including his Dominions. On that there can be no faltering or weakening on my part. I invite you to devise means with me to give effect to this cherished ambition of my countrymen.

APPEAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

May I now make an appeal to the Prime Minister? Sir, you are head of His Majesty's Government. Let me tell you that every single word that falls from you on this occasion will be read, re-read, and analysed in my country from one end to the other. I now want to make an appeal to the Prime Minister and his colleagues. Don't send His Highness the Maharaja, don't send me back to India to say that I attempted to seek justice at this, the greatest advisory council of the Empire, and that I failed. I speak with all earnestness that one single gesture from His Majesty's Government, one single expression of sympathy put into practice, one honest attempt made to try to find a solution will allay the situation in India in a manner which you do not realise. I am afraid that I have trespassed too much on your time and I beg your pardon. I also thank you for the patient and courteous manner in which you have listened to me, but the cause of my country demanded that I should put my whole case before you frankly and to the best of my ability.

MAHARAJA OF ALWAR'S APPEAL.

His Highness the Maharaja of Alwar said:—

MR. PRIME MINISTER AND FRIENDS,—I join in the echo of thanks to the Prime Minister for having set aside a day specially for discussing the problem of Indians overseas, a question which, I believe, will be tackled with all the goodwill that I see around me and which will help when

it reaches the final stages to allay a great amount of the feeling that at present is rather prominent in the minds of my countrymen. To-day is India's day, and, as these words come before my vision, thoughts and ideas of all kinds surge through my mind, some of emotion, some of patriotism, and others of unity of Empire. But, coloured as they are by comparatively narrow ideas of nationalism, citizenship, political rights and freedom, they pale into almost insignificance before the dominating sunlight of the feelings and ideas of common brotherhood. But I have to speak to-day of mundane affairs, sordid affairs of the political arena, and about the very life and existence, in this material world of some unprotected communities. I must perforce descend from high exhilarating heights and leave my pedestal, which is yours also by birthright as of every individual either inside this room or outside it, nay, of all fellow beings within the four corners of the Empire. I do so, Sir, I hope, only temporarily to try and find my level again in the life of love where we were all intended to live and sometimes try to get to it.

INDIA'S TWO PARTS.

Now, before going further, I will briefly halt to touch in passing on a subject that is known to many of you already, but which I know is unknown to some of you. Know that India is divided into two parts, or rather more correctly speaking into two administrative spheres. Two-thirds of that country is called British India under the direct sovereignty of His Majesty the King Emperor and his Government with all its machinery of Parliament, Cabinets, and Government of India, and so forth. There is the other one-third which is governed by Indian Princes and Chiefs, whose subjects are subjects of their own rulers, and who have, not from to-day but from six to eight generations, been in alliance by means of treaties, sanads, engagements, etc., originally formed with the British East India Company, but the responsibilities of which were taken over by the Crown in 1859. These systems are not the growth of yesterday, but the survival of a regime of hundreds of centuries, yet able to imbibe, to assimilate such progress as is compatible with our traditions, religion, ideas, and environments. I have trespassed on your time with regard to these matters as they will bear an important part on what I have to say later.

I intend to speak to-day not merely as the representative of the Princes, but also and even more so as an Indian, than whom I believe no one regards his Motherland as more sacred and who wishes nothing more than that she should receive justice from the British Government, in whose hands her destiny is placed and co-operation from her sister States who form the comity of nations in our Empire. Let me say at the outset that I have no vain threats to place before you, for the simple reason that they go against the very principle of co-operation which I placed before myself on entering the precincts of this room the first day of our Conference. I will say, furthermore, that while on the one hand I have nothing to beg, and I will not beg, I also make no demands as I have no demands to make, but the Motherland whose salt I eat, the land whose soil has given me birth tells me that it is my duty to place in plain, unvarnished, and candid words before you all the facts of our case such as I know them.

And now, Mr. Prime Minister, I have one request to make, and that is that every word I utter or have uttered to-day in my statement may be cabled in full to my countrymen and in no hashed or pruned form. I do not desire this because I seek to have cheap notoriety by making gallery shots, but because my countrymen have a right to know every word I say

in their name. They may have some things to criticize, and others which they may not entirely like. It is in justice to them, speaking not as their representative but as one of them that I therefore do not wish to say anything behind their backs 7,000 miles away, which I would not gladly say to their face.

THE GOAL OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.

I will now proceed. We believe that the greatest assets to the British Empire lie in its championing the cause of freedom and justice. It is because I feel, and my country feels, rightly or wrongly, that freedom and justice are at stake, as exercised or perhaps as understood, that I want to speak these words. I hope they will be in the interests of the Empire, and it will be something done, nothing more. If misunderstandings and misapprehensions that do exist are somehow removed, it will be all the greater glory to you all—and I speak of no tinsel glory but the glory of the East. If the British Government and the great Dominions will show by words and prove by action that they mean to assist one of their sisters who is old in age but also at present the weakest member on the chess-board of the political game. I hear wails from India itself, and now I speak principally of that two-thirds, conveying the feelings of deep dolor and the words of my fellow brethren of my country.

Are we going to progress steadily and progressively, yet not too slowly, towards our goal which the other sister nations have been more fortunate in already achieving, the goal of having the power to govern our own country as a loyal and integral part of the Empire? Are we going to be helped affectionately and with kindly feeling to the goal which has been pronounced publicly by the British Government—and to more than which we do not aspire—of being a loyal self-governing Dominion within the Empire? Is everything going to be done to accelerate our progress, or is our progress under various pretexts to be restricted and delayed? Have we a long number of years before us of the great furnace to pass through from which Ireland has only just emerged? Sometimes I am afraid this despondency has been seen to give rise to despair which resulted in giving exhibitions in many places of those hideous atrocities at which the British Government, as custodians of our country, do not feel happy, and of which we, as its sons, are certainly not proud. If India had some more definite proposition before it than having to wait every ten years for its destiny to be enhanced, if it had a reasonable assurance of rapid but progressive advancement, I believe that self-government, which is the goal of us all for two-thirds of India, would be achieved early and smoothly.

I add this, despite anything that may be said to the contrary. That achievement is possible within a very much shorter period than some people would like us to believe. I know, and I do not need to be told, that it depends to a great extent on India's capacity herself. I agree. But surely you do not desire to throw India entirely on her own resources? Does not she look to Britain to give her periodical and sustained assistance so that my country may be, as it has been in the past, a really genuinely grateful and loyal partner in your wonderful heritage? I am speaking of self-government for two-thirds of India, and in dealing with this subject I hope I may seek your indulgence for another few moments.

EAST AND WESTERN PRINCIPLES.

The solution, I firmly believe, will not lie in grafting Western principles of political government on the East with a stroke of the pen. Already

many old bottles have cracked into which this new wine has been poured. I would much rather you got India round a table in confidence and worked out with her sons plans and methods that would be the best suited to her environment, by which she can obtain her goal very rapidly, but at the same time in a very peaceful and very loyal manner. I say it is possible and probable of early success, and you will be doing something for 300 millions of human beings that will cement them to you with gratitude and brotherly feelings. The world was not built for academic or pious assurances spread over a number of years, the fulfilment of which may well pass over a life-time, but what seems to me is this, and that is why I mentioned this subject, and in connection with it I will say no more than that the whole problem, if viewed with breadth of vision and imagination, is really oh! so simple. It is not so much of a hedgehog as may be conceived by those who do not come in close contact with it, and is really still capable of a solution which will leave a stronger England and a loving India in the end.

And remember, my friends, that this question does not affect British India only, but our Indian States subjects also are involved in this overseas problem. It is not a question that agitates the minds of British India alone, but it is one that is viewed with equal humiliation in the Indian States. Why, I was surprised to receive letters from my own subjects, one or two sentences of which I will read to you. I hope you will not mind portions in which, out of affection and loyalty, personal references are made to me. This is certainly not the reason why I quote these sentences:

"The Imperial Conference is drawing near. Your Highness is a member of that important assembly. India is bereft of all sympathy of the outside world and has been passing her transition days in trying circumstances, aggravated recently to a great extent by the Kenya decision. Whether the movement means for India a political setback or a real awakening and sure progress towards the building up of a great national edifice remains to be seen. But at present she looks on Your Highness with wistful eyes."

I say no more, and I regret having mentioned this portion of the letter. I have read the main portion of it to illustrate that the question is viewed with no less concern in one-third of India than it is in two-thirds.

MISTAKES ON BOTH SIDES.

I will only say this much. Many unpleasant incidents have taken place in India during late years. I have no desire to lift before you the veil or disclose a tale of woe or wails and lamentations. Many mistakes have undoubtedly been made on both sides. So far as India's side of the picture is concerned it will be a regrettable spot on India's fair name, and I say this in all solemnity, that any grievances which India may have had and did have were allowed to be involved in interfering with the welcome given to the Royal Heir to the British Throne, the Prince of Wales, when he was touring in British India. Will British Royalty, you British statesmen and people not overlook this blunder and let it be past history? Can we not bury what has happened and rise in mutual goodwill and understanding for the future? Let not the hand of the clock be held back. Advance in full confidence that what you do for India will be

paid to you a thousandfold from a people who know how to respond to generous sentiments.

IDEA OF BRITISH CITIZENSHIP.

And now I start on a voyage outside my country, under the aegis of the British flag, under the protection it gives its loyal citizens. Indians in search of enterprise left their homes and their shores to find refuge in parts where freedom, justice, and peace were symbolised in the trident red, white and blue. Indians found their way to South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and, I am not personally aware, but perhaps some of them to Newfoundland. They went as citizens under the Union Jack, established their homes, invested money, and settled down as peaceful citizens. I have been told, and perhaps rightly so, by General Smuts that the idea of British citizenship has changed from what it was a few years ago. I have forthwith applied myself to facts and asked the question: "What does that mean?" Surely, the answer cannot be the treating of any particular race as outcast?

I am well aware of the fact that several of the questions with regard to Indians overseas lie almost outside the direct concern of the Imperial Government. They are really within the purview of the self-governing Dominions, who are connected with the main centre by silken ties, and I will leave it at that. I want to address a few remarks directly to my Dominion colleagues, and I will say this. One of your links in the chain is weak. If one link in it is weak and further weakened perhaps you can do without it. We want to have you with us. Let your inclinations decide. I know, my friends, how difficult it is for you to make any personal promises. For your positions depend, your authority depends on the people to whom you are answerable. I assure you I appreciate the difficulty of your positions. I, as an Indian, have only tried to hold on to my hand. I do not know if you and your people have the power and desire to grasp it.

"COUNSELS OF DESPAIR."

I want to tell you that I have received messages from my country asking me not to work in the Conference and urging me to resign because India has suffered humiliation in Natal and Kenya. But I paid no attention to these counsels of despair. It may, perhaps, be thought that I sought honour and glory and could not forego such a lure as the Imperial Conference. But the reason that kept me here, rightly or wrongly, was because I felt that nothing in this world was achieved by ill-feeling, and that a great deal is gained by toleration and goodwill. Come what may, I am determined to exercise them to the last in this assemblage.

I have received mails from the Fiji Islands saying that the poll tax was causing Indians grave injustice, and that they desired to be repatriated if no other gratification could be given to them. I have received tales of woe from Natal, complaining that a law was going to be introduced segregating them as outcasts. Similar stories came from Basutoland and other places which I need not go on reciting. How all this sounds to your ears I do not know. How it sounds to mine, is it necessary to speak? How it is going to affect India if these questions are not solved is a prophecy that I shudder to make.

I can give you innumerable instances, but I will not waste your time. The question of Indians in the Dominions is one that concerns the Dominion Premiers and their Parliaments primarily, but the question of Kenya as a Colony stands entirely on a different footing. I believe I am right when I say that many Indian settlers went to Kenya long before it was discovered as a suitable place for colonization by the white people. They took lands, invested money, and, to a great extent, helped in developing the prospects of that country economically. So long as the colony was administered by the Imperial Government difficulties, I understand, did not arise until the question of franchise to the residents came under consideration. It has now been decreed in the last decision that recent white settlers, who are the minority, are to be given the majority of votes in relation to the Indian population, which is the majority, thus leaving the latter at the mercy of the former, to be gradually ousted if necessary and, as seems possible, by means of legislation.

THE AFRICANS OF KENYA.

I do not mean to enter into the pros and cons of this case. What Lord Elgin said or Lord Milner recommended are side issues, because from my own 20 years' experience of administration I know how easy it is to produce arguments with all the power in one's hands and records and papers at one's disposal in favour of one case against another, arguments it would be unwise of course for me to adopt, for understandings are not always reached by argument. I know that there are some noblemen and gentlemen of influence from this country who desire to settle there, if they have not already done so. But the principal argument that has been advanced is that the Colonial Office holds Kenya in trust on behalf of the African races who are the original inhabitants of that country. Now if I may say so it strikes me as being peculiarly grotesque that a country, held in trust on behalf of a people who are backward and who have yet to grow under the ægis of the British flag, should actually have the franchise given to anyone else to develop the country during the interregnum. Does this mean that when the original tribes and people awaken from their slumber they should be given primary consideration in relation to those who have invested money for several years past and who now govern the country not under trust but under franchise?

I do not wish to enter into any further arguments. The whole question of Indians overseas seems to be one which does not mean flooding different portions of the Empire with Indian immigrants, claiming rights and privileges merely by their number in order to oust others who may have the rightful heritage. Mr. Mackenzie King, in one of his utterances in this Conference, said, as regarded Canada, that it was possible to restrict immigration from Japan by mutual agreement, not necessitating the introduction of law.

A MUTUAL RIGHT UNDERSTANDING.

That was a mutual right understanding which did not cause any humiliation to either side, and allowed the Dominions to grow in accordance with their own environments. Yet, at the same time, it made no strictures or asked for no strictures to be passed on people who settled there as peaceful citizens. I believe the Indian Government—and I am open to correction if I am wrong—to be equally prepared to enter into

a mutual understanding with the various Dominions and Colonies to prevent immigrants flooding these countries. Under such circumstances, is it not possible to modify laws and enforce them in a manner, that they do not pointedly chafe any particular community thus causing them humiliation? What I want to know is whether my countrymen as citizens of the British Empire have any right to settle in these countries, not for exploitation, not by way of peaceful penetration, but as peaceful traders, to live their unobtrusive existence. General Smuts, in talking about the question of Indians who come to his country, suggested, I think in a casual way one day that they might be sent for settlement to British Guiana. I believe the British flag has been planted at the North Pole. So I wonder if that would not be a suitable solution of the problem if it was desired to exterminate them. But I really came to know of General Smuts, after my brief knowledge of him, that, although he has been called, I am sorry to say, the arch-enemy of India, yet we have in him, if I may be permitted to say so to his face, a sagacious statesman who sees far ahead, unlike ordinary mortals, what is in the interests of our greater Empire. From my personal conversations with him I would really reverse the epithet and say that I regard him, since I came here, and I speak in no platitudes, as being in his heart of hearts personally a staunch friend and supporter of India.

PREMIERS' DIFFICULTIES.

I may assure you, friends, that I quite appreciate the difficulties that exist in the solution of this great problem. I realise that though individually most of you may be prepared to look at the matter from a broad Imperial view, you have to return to your Parliaments which may hold different opinions. All I have to say, therefore, is that while we are conferring in this Imperial assemblage can we not put our heads together to solve a difficulty which surely human beings were meant to solve, not for the sake of the individual but for the sake of the Empire. I have said this much, because I feel that the problem is much greater than what appears on the surface, relating merely to Indians overseas. If you can enable India by real action to feel that her humiliation is removed, that she can take a pride in the Empire to which she has the privilege to belong, you will have achieved something which will be a lasting credit to yourselves and a benefit to the chain whereof we all form loyal links. Particularly since I came here I have realised how wholeheartedly and with single purpose Lord Reading and his Government have given their utmost help to our cause. Things do not always appear in public or in the Press which enable India to see what part the Government of India is playing in our cause. All glory, however, is due to them for their assistance. We shall not easily forget it, and hope that some day we may repay them for their effort and goodwill. Regarding Viscount Peel, it is more difficult to give him thanks since he sits beside me. I thank him, however, in the name of India, if I may do so, and thank him with a grateful heart for his powerful championship of our cause. To-day my heart has been softened by the words he has spoken of our nationality and our religion. I hope every word of his statement will go to India, so that my country may not despair and think it has no one to support it.

When discussions take place, similarly, I hope the Prime Ministers of the Dominions will allow their goodwill and proposals to go to my country, for that, I am sure, will have a very happy result.

THE INDIAN PRINCES' MESSAGE.

I have very little more to say to you, Prime Ministers and friends. It is now my pleasurable task to read a message I received from my order in India. The Chancellor of our Chamber of Princes, the Maharaja of Bikaner, conveyed it to me by cablegram. Had the Chamber of Princes been sitting at this time the Indian Princes would have desired to send a message to this Conference in view of the important question of Indians overseas, including Indian States subjects who are affected, specially in Kenya. But as the Chamber is not sitting the Princes of India by cablegram "convey a cordial message of true friendship and goodwill to His Majesty, the Government and the British nation, to the Dominions and Colonies, and their distinguished representatives at the Imperial Conference, with whom the Princes are united by the common ties of loyalty to His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor." The cable continues as follows:—

"We give expression to our hope that the united efforts of all concerned at the Conference will yield some satisfactory result, drawing closely together into bonds of good fellowship the great comity of nations forming the British Empire to which the Princes and States are firmly attached, and securing Indians, including the subjects of Indian States, an honoured position in all parts of the Empire in keeping with India's rightful place in the British Commonwealth, and in conformity with the assiduous and constant efforts of the Viceroy and the Government of India."

Friends, I convey this message to you, coupled with my own hope, that its aims and objects may finally be achieved before we leave England at the termination of the Imperial Conference. The subject is undoubtedly large and certainly complicated, but surely with goodwill we will overcome the difficulties and if, as we believe, we are firmly determined to see that every portion of the British Empire is strengthened, then I by no means despair. But, on the other hand, I hope for the possibilities of arriving at a settlement which will make you all more respected and loved in the eyes of those whom you help, and will leave those grateful to you to whom you extend the hand of assistance. I hope that it will be possible for you to consider also whether it will not be advisable hereafter to allow India to be called a Dominion, not a self-governing Dominion, until she becomes so, but a Dominion, especially when making reference to her in relation to her sister Dominions.

Gentlemen, I think I have said all I wish to on the subject of my countrymen overseas. On India's day it has been a great pleasure to me to meet round this table the great statesmen who are my colleagues from the Dominions, and I have had the pleasure of making their personal acquaintance. May I thank them for their kindness and courtesy to myself which I take as a token of their goodwill to my country? If at any time any of my colleagues think of visiting India I hope he will give us the opportunity of showing and proving that we do not always speak words but act on them, and that we can give you as cordial a welcome to our country as it is possible to do within our capacities.

THE HUMAN TOUCH.

I said one day to my friend, General Smuts—and I speak sincerely

and in no conventional language, because he who was our enemy a few years ago is to-day one of our best friends and a great statesman of to-day—I said to him I hoped he would come some day to India. He replied that he would be viewed with suspicion. I hope India, with all her political quarrels and difficulties, has not lost her human touch and response to appreciate great statesmen and prove to them that beyond our domestic disputes, beyond our domestic quarrels lie sentiments of humanity. I believe, and I will with this conclude, that India came into the comity of nations within the British Empire with a definite purpose. It is a link that was soldered by the hand of Divine destiny. It was a means of enabling the West to understand the East, and *vice versa*. But it also came in order that two civilisations, with their spiritualities, their material advancement and progress, might, by their association together, evolve a civilisation of great humanity, of God's children playing their individual parts in the cause of God. When that day comes before us, and, figuratively speaking, we stand before the judgment seat of Him who sent us here, we shall each have our accounts to render. India may differ from you in race, she differs in religion and creed, but she does not differ in point of humanity. Personally, I say this: If you give us your assistance in time of need—for a friend in need is a friend indeed—we shall give you not merely our gratitude, but also our cordiality and practical assistance. But if it is destined to be otherwise, then I say this: That we shall be in a still higher position; for India will be able to say that she sacrificed herself in order that others might live. She prided herself in her political weakness in order that others might be strong. We gave our little best for the higher purpose, the Divine purpose which is our common goal, common brotherhood, and the salvation of humanity.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

Resuming the debate on the 29th October the Duke of Devonshire said:—

At the outset in the few remarks I have to offer I cannot refrain from stating that India has been exceedingly fortunate in the spokesman selected to represent her case at this Conference. That case was eloquently stated by Viscount Peel and His Highness the Maharaja of Alwar, and was developed by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in a speech, the closely reasoned argument of which was greatly reinforced by its studied moderation. I particularly noticed that the proposal which he submitted was outlined in, rather than reduced to, the special terms of his resolution. In this, if I may say so, I think he was very wise; because while he made the general purpose of his proposal perfectly clear, he left the precise form to be moulded in subsequent discussion. Let me state as shortly as I can the gist of that proposal as I understood it. Two years ago this Conference, with the exception of the Prime Minister of South Africa, agreed that the rights of Indians domiciled in parts of the Empire other than India should be recognised. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has now proposed that the question of how and when effect can be given to this agreement should be made the subject of inquiry and discussion between committees representing the several Governments and a Committee representing the Government of India.

SETTLED QUESTIONS NOT RE-OPENED.

That is what Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru asks. But before I proceed

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I must also invite you to note that there are various matters already settled which he is not attempting to re-open. He does not question the right of each community of the British Commonwealth to control the composition of its own population. He is not, in a word, asking the self-governing Dominions to re-open the question of Indian immigration. He frankly recognised the autonomy of the Dominion Governments within their respective territories. What he asks is that the Governments concerned will agree to discuss with the Government of India the steps necessary to give effect to the resolution passed by the Conference of 1921. It is, of course, in the last instance for each Government to decide for itself, but because in certain matters such decisions are not limited in their effects to the countries by which they are taken the issues to which they relate may be brought for mutual discussion here.

In so far as the British Government is responsible for the Colonies and Protectorates, I can only say on behalf of the British Government that we certainly accept the principle of the request put forward by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. In saying this, you will not understand me to mean that we are prepared to re-open matters which have been made the subject of a recent and most carefully-considered decision. I refer more especially to the Kenya settlement, the terms of which were placed before and accepted by the British Parliament in July.

While I would not propose that the area of discussion between the contemplated committee and the Secretary for the Colonies should be limited I should only be misleading India if I were to say anything to suggest that the Government could consent to reconsider the decisions embodied in the settlement of July last. To use the words of the White Paper, the constant endeavour of the British Government throughout the deliberations was to relate the principle which must govern the administration of a British colony in tropical Africa to the wider considerations of general Imperial policy as enunciated in the Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1921. I have also to remind the representatives of India that, so far as British Colonies and Protectorates are concerned, the ultimate responsibility rests with the British Government, and it is with the Government, and more particularly the Secretary for the Colonies, that any question affecting British Indians domiciled in these Colonies and Protectorates should be discussed, in the first instance, by such a committee. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru suggested it will then be for the Colonial Office to consult, as may be necessary, any colonial Government concerned in these discussions before any decisions are taken by the British Government. I am hopeful that the area to be covered by these discussions will not, in fact, prove wide.

I recently circulated to the members of the Conference in response to their general wish a memorandum upon the political status of British Indians in the Colonies, Protectorates, and Mandated Territories. I studiously confined the memorandum to facts, and perhaps I may be permitted to summarise quite briefly what that memorandum contains. It shows that in the West Indian Colonies, British Indians are under no political or legal disability of any kind. They have the same franchise and the same opportunities of becoming members of elective bodies as any other British subjects. The West Indian Colonies, in which there is a considerable British Indian population, are British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica. In British Guiana and Jamaica an elective system already exists, and it will be introduced into Trinidad at an early date.

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When you turn to eastern Colonies the memorandum shows that in Ceylon, under the revised constitution about to be issued, qualified British Indians will be eligible for the franchise and election to the Legislative Council in the same manner as all other British subjects. Again, in Mauritius there is no distinction between Indians and other British subjects as regards eligibility for the franchise.

In East Africa you will find out from the memorandum that in Uganda the Legislative Council is not elective, but there is no restriction in the number of unofficial members who may be nominated to the Council, while in Tanganyika there is no Legislative or Executive Council. I am glad to say, on behalf of the British Government, that the proposal of the representatives of India as far as the Colonies and Protectorates are concerned.

THE CANADIAN ATTITUDE.

MR. MACKENZIE KING'S STATEMENT.

Mr. Mackenzie King said:—I would like to say that I think Canada fully appreciates the magnitude and seriousness of the problem with which the Government of India and the Government of Great Britain are confronted in dealing with any question affecting the status of Indians, and that our attitude from the beginning has been, and at present is, one of being exceedingly anxious to be helpful to the solution of any problem that may arise. His Highness the Maharaja, in speaking last week, referred to the manner in which we had recently taken up, through the Conference, some questions respecting immigration with Japan, and he said that in his opinion any of those questions of the status or political rights respecting resident Indians could be best settled by adopting a similar method. He referred particularly to an attitude of goodwill being more important than anything else in the solution of these difficult questions. I think the Maharaja was entirely right. Attitude in these matters is all-important.

As far as the Canadian attitude is concerned it gives me pleasure to say that we are most anxious to deal with the whole question in a spirit of mutual understanding and goodwill. I have in my hand the report that I made to the Government of Canada in 1908. It relates to immigration to Canada from the Orient and immigration from India in particular. It was the result of the visit which, at the instance of the then Government of Canada, I paid to England to confer with the Secretary of State for India as regarded the question of immigration from India to Canada.

If I may be permitted I would like to read the concluding paragraph of this report because it sets out the attitude at that time, 15 years ago, which we took towards questions affecting our fellow British citizens from India. "Nothing could be more unfortunate or misleading than that an impression should go forth that Canada, in seeking to regulate matters of domestic concern, is not deeply sensible of the obligation which citizenship within the Empire entails. It is recognition of the obligation which has caused her to take a course which, by removing the possibilities of injustice or friction, is best calculated to strengthen the bonds of association with the several parts and to promote greater harmony of the whole."

SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING.

In this, as was to be expected, Canada has had not merely the sympathy and understanding, but the hearty co-operation of the authorities in Great Britain and India, as well. I should say, perhaps, that after conferring with the Secretary of State for India in London at that time as regarded this question I subsequently, at the instance of the Canadian Government, went to India to take up with the authorities there the question of migration of Indians to Canada, with a view to seeing whether we could not work out a solution which could avoid anything in the nature of legislation which might be misunderstood or regarded as invidious in India and I am happy to say that we were able, as a result of our conferences, to come to an understanding between the two Governments which was as satisfactory to the Government of India as it was to the Government of Canada. If it was possible to do that as regarded the difficult question of immigration, I think it ought to be possible for us similarly to effect a satisfactory solution in respect of any of those other questions that may arise, and it is from that viewpoint that I hope that my colleagues from India will feel that the Canadian Government is approaching this particular subject.

Lord Peel, in his remarks said I think very rightly, that what Indians felt more than anything else was that the disabilities under which their countrymen lived appeared as a brand of social inferiority. The extent to which that is true depends very largely upon the nature of the disabilities and the circumstances which account for any that may exist. May I say at once as regards Canada that in eight provinces out of the nine which comprise the Dominion, I am not aware of any legal or political disability under which any Indian resident in Canada suffers, and, as regards the ninth province, I am not aware of any legal disability of any kind.

CANADIAN PROVINCIAL RIGHTS.

The Federal law relating to franchise sets it down that any Indian who served in His Majesty's forces—military, naval, or air—is entitled to the franchise. I mention this as evidence of the fact that our citizens appreciate the services that India has rendered to the Empire, and desire to acknowledge them wherever possible. May I say a word with regard to the way our franchise has been developed? The Dominion is the result of the bringing together of a number of Provinces, and the party to which I belong, the Liberal party in Canada, has taken the position that it is necessary, whenever it is possible, to recognise the wishes of the Province in matters pertaining to the Franchise Act, which for many years recognised for federal purposes only the franchise prevailing in the Province. We had not a separate franchise for the Dominion. We took for the Dominion the provincial franchise as it existed, with the result that in some Provinces some classes had the right to vote who had not the right to vote in others, not on account of race, but owing solely to the fact that for their own reasons certain Provinces thought it well to limit the franchise. Views in some particulars changed somewhat, and the Government altered the franchise law a few years ago, and endeavoured to enact a Federal franchise, which might be applicable generally throughout the Dominion. They provided that women, for example, should have the right to vote on Federal matters. Those of us who held to the recognition of Provincial enactments opposed that attitude. We said it should

still be left to the Provinces to determine, as regarded the franchise to be given to women, as in all else, what they thought best. However, the Government of that time did carry the provision which made the law applicable to this matter of the exercise of the franchise by women generally applicable.

DANGER OF COERCION.

Notwithstanding this, that very Government, having regard to the conditions of the province of British Columbia, and, in order to avoid a serious situation arising there which might have been misunderstood in other parts of the Empire, found it necessary, as regarded certain provisions affecting the Federal franchise in the case of British Columbia, to make an exception to this general application. I mention this because it discloses how in one province a particular question may become a political issue; for the Federal Government, in trying to deal with it in a manner which might be regarded as coercing any province, would give rise to an entirely new question. For example, if the Federal Government had tried, in respect of all persons resident there, to impose in the province of British Columbia certain obligations, such, for example, as the right to vote under the Federal franchise, the issue would not in public discussion have been a question of franchise at all. It would have been a question of coercion by the Federal Government of a provincial Government, and you would have had a political battle fought on the basis of what we speak of as provincial rights.

I am sure all around this table will appreciate that a time of political conflict is one of the most dangerous that a country can be faced with. It is as though Great Britain were trying to impose certain obligations on Canada or some other part of the Empire. In dealing with the provinces we of the Federal Government seek, as far as we can, to prevent anything in the way of coercion. I think it is as well to mention this because it helps to explain why in one province it has not been possible hitherto to concede the franchise to the Indians who are there.

As to how Canada's action may be viewed in India seems to me to be very much a matter of interpretation and the spirit of the interpretation. I could go to India and say with truth that every citizen coming from the State over which the Maharaja of Alwar rules has rights of citizenship in my province which I have not in his. That is a point which cannot be brought out too clearly. In eight Provinces out of nine in Canada every Indian resident there has the same right as other Canadian citizens, but that is not equally true of Canadians resident in India. If this aspect is put before the people of India they will see that a reciprocal method of dealing with this question, as pointed out by General Smuts, is one which perhaps presents the line along which we can proceed most satisfactorily.

So far as Canada is concerned, we would not ask for our citizens resident in India any right which we are not prepared equally to concede to Indian residents in Canada. I think you may take that as the fundamental basis on which we would be prepared to deal with this question. We hold to this reciprocal point of view, because in all things we have found it to be one of the most satisfactory methods of dealing with questions of this kind.

ECONOMIC FACTOR IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

So far as British Columbia is concerned the problem is not a racial one. It is purely economic. The labour forces in British Columbia are very strong. That Province has industrial problems of a character which no other Province in the Dominion has, and what the labour people are aiming at is, I think, to maintain certain industrial standards which they sacrificed much to acquire. As regards some of those who come from other countries they are rather fearful until at least they have resided some time in Canada, and acquired our method of living, our customs, habits, and so forth, that to give them rights of franchise in full may mean that the standard already maintained may be undermined.

I would like to make this clear. It may seem that I am straining a little in emphasising the possible political consequence of giving the franchise to resident Indians in British Columbia. But take the actual situation as it is in Parliament to-day. When we came into office I had a majority of one behind me in the House of Commons. I think we have a majority of three at the present time. Many constituencies were very close. It is conceivable that in British Columbia a difference in the result might be brought about by increasing certain votes in some constituencies. In other words, were the subject to become one of political discussion, I think it would be possible for a political orator to make it quite apparent to the people of British Columbia that the fate of the Federal Government might depend on the vote cast by Indians resident in that Province. It would not be an exaggeration, it would not be a figure of speech, it is the literal and absolute truth, that it is conceivable that the complexion of Parliament as it is to-day might be entirely changed as a consequence. It might be that one Government rather than another would be in office by the vote of those who neither in their own country nor Canada have ever exercised the franchise.

THE SITUATION AT THE MOMENT.

That is the situation which exists at the moment. I do not expect it will exist very long, but it all helps to show the difficulty with which we are confronted when we contemplate in any immediate way the results which we all hope will be effected in the course of time. It is for that, among other reasons, that I appreciate the method of approach which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has adopted in bringing his suggestion before the Conference. He has appreciated, I think, our difficulties, as well as his own, and in suggesting that there should be a conference between representatives of India and representatives of Canada I think he had in mind enabling the citizens of India to appreciate just the kind of circumstances which governed our actions, quite as much as having our citizens appreciate his difficulties. That is the sort of approach and attitude which permits us to get together, and I should be surprised, if, dealing with this question in that spirit, we could not work out a thoroughly satisfactory solution.

EFFECT OF 1921 RESOLUTION.

There is one point I ought to make quite clear, and that is the extent to which my hands are tied in dealing with this question. The resolution passed by the Conference two years ago in the minds of some present committed the Dominions to giving the franchise to Indians. It was,

it alleged, in the nature of a general commitment. It is all important that we should know whether that was the intention of the resolution or not. I think, in the first place, we should be very careful of the resolutions that are introduced or passed, and I think when once they are passed we should do our utmost to see that any hopes to which they may give rise are not destroyed. In the House of Commons I asked my predecessor and neighbour his interpretation of the resolution of 1921. I have before me "Hansard" of the 29th June, 1923, which contains the record, and, with the permission of the Conference, I shall read from it:

Mr. Mackenzie King: May I ask my honourable friend one question? The resolution of the Conference, or at least one clause, is as follows:—"The Conference accordingly is of opinion that, in the interests of the solidarity of the British Commonwealth, it is desirable that the rights of such Indians to citizenship should be recognised." The Member for George Etienne Cartier, Mr. Jacobs, has said that those words imply an undertaking on the part of this Parliament, or rather on the part of Canada, to see that the Federal franchise is granted to Indians in British Columbia. Is that correct or not?

Mr. Meighen: The words are English, and the words are simple. I understand them fully, and if the Premier does not, I must leave him just where he is.

Mr. Mackenzie King: I think the house is entitled to an answer from my Right Honourable friend. He has represented this country at the Imperial Conference. He knows better than anyone else what interpretation he placed on these words. I ask him, seeing that he represented Canada at the Imperial Conference when the resolution was passed, whether Canada was giving an undertaking to Indians in British Columbia to the effect that they should be entitled to the franchise.

Mr. Meighen: No human being understood anything of the sort. The words are very plain, and there is no misunderstanding about them. I should be taken very seriously to task if, when I returned to Canada, it could be said that I had placed an interpretation on that resolution which the Prime Minister of Canada, who was present at the time it was passed, was unwilling to have placed upon it.

HOPES RATHER THAN A PLEDGE.

Mr. Mackenzie King, continuing, said: I think Mr. Meighen has taken his attitude from the words "It is desirable that the rights of such Indians to citizenship should be recognised." If that means we would all like to see it done, that we hope it may be done, I think I can agree with him in the expression of such a wish. On the other hand, as to its constituting an actual pledge I am bound to take the interpretation which Mr. Meighen himself gives and places upon it. I should perhaps say that I presented that point of view to Mr. Sastri when he was in Canada, and my recollection is that Mr. Sastri did not maintain that the resolution constituted a pledge which obliged the Federal Government to give the franchise to resident Indians, but rather that it expressed what the Conference hoped would be done by the different Dominions as opportunity offered.

MR. SASTRI'S VISIT.

May I say just a word in regard to Mr. Sastri's visit? We were pleased to welcome Mr. Sastri to Canada, and we sought to give him the

fullest opportunity to speak publicly, wherever he wished to do so, to confer with any persons whom he might wish to meet, and we were glad to have him in conference with us in the Cabinet, so that we could explain very fully all the considerations of which we had to take account. I think Mr. Sastri appreciated our situation the better, in view of having seen the conditions for himself and having talked with many persons in different parts of the Dominion.

I cannot do better, in setting forth our Government's attitude, than read to the Conference and place on record the letter I wrote to Mr. Sastri just as he was leaving the Dominion. It is dated Ottawa, the 5th September, 1922, and is:—

DEAR MR. SASTRI,—In reply to the representations made by you at the interview with my colleagues and myself on Friday last week, and which were the subject of further conference between us yesterday, I desire to assure you that at the earliest favourable moment the Government will be pleased to invite the consideration of Parliament to your request that natives of India resident in Canada be granted the Dominion Parliamentary franchise on terms and conditions identical to those which govern the exercise of that right by Canadian citizens generally. The subject is necessarily one which Parliament alone can determine. It will be submitted to Parliament for consideration when the franchise law is under revision.

In conveying to the Government of India an expression of the attitude of the Government of Canada in this matter we hope you will not fail to make clear that at the present time, in eight of the nine provinces of which our Dominion is composed, the general franchise is granted to natives of India resident in Canada on terms which are identical to those applicable generally to Canadian citizens.

Yours sincerely,

MACKENZIE KING.

You will observe that we have promised Mr. Sastri that when our federal franchise law comes up for revision we will take care to see that Parliament is fully informed of his representations and wishes, and we will seek to have those representations and wishes given every consideration. It is probable that the Dominion Franchise Act will come up for revision at the approaching session of Parliament. I told Mr. Sastri that it was hardly probable that it would come up last session, but that I thought it would come up next session.

Mr. Mackenzie King added:—If the course we anticipate is followed, the Franchise Act will be referred to a Committee of the House and that Committee will be in a position to hear any representations that may be made to it. My friends from India will have to decide for themselves what is likely to be most to their own interests in the matter of having the Committee visit Canada and take up this matter anew. I say that for the reason that I am not so sure that Mr. Sastri's visit made it easier for us to deal with this problem. I would put it this way. Mr. Sastri's visit helped to direct the attention of the country to something which I imagine a greater part of the country knew nothing about. I doubt if the majority of the people of Canada were aware that in the

province of British Columbia, for example, Indians had no franchise. They may have known in other provinces that they had the franchise, but the question of the few in British Columbia not having the franchise would hardly be known to any extent outside that province. Once, however, Mr. Sastri began delivering speeches, Labour Councils from one end of the country to the other began to receive communications from Labour organisations of British Columbia, asking them to take care to see that such standards as Labour had won in British Columbia were maintained. Forces that were opposed to granting the franchise to Indians became organised in a way they had not been before. Whether that same result might follow the visit of a deputation from India I cannot say. It might or might not. But, should our friends from India think it will help them to have a delegation come to Canada to confer on the subject, we shall be most happy to appoint a corresponding group to meet and confer with them. If it were their desire to have their delegation given the opportunity of meeting the Parliamentary Committee to which the matter will be referred for consideration, I should be glad to see, if time so permitted their visit, that they were given a chance to meet the members of that Committee and confer with them at Ottawa. In other words, we would be only too happy to give any group which may come from India or any person she may send most ample opportunities to discuss with our public men all the aspects of this particular question. I say this, having regard to the method of approach Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has presented to us here. He made it clear that a Committee would come for the purpose of exploring the avenues and ways and means to reach an ultimate result. He should recognise that we may have to take time over this matter, but I would like him to believe that we are sincere in hoping that we will be able to meet his wishes. In seeking so to do we may have to proceed step by step, but the Canadian people as a whole are, I am sure, really desirous of meeting our fellow British citizens from India in every reasonable particular. I have not the slightest doubt about that.

THE EVOLUTION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Perhaps I may be permitted to say just one word in conclusion. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru spoke very feelingly the other day about political freedom and the desires of India in the matter of self-government. When I was in India I heard a good deal of the discussion that was going on. Let me say that I have a natural sympathy with the desire of people to have the right to manage their own affairs. Were I a citizen of India, and this is what I felt most at that time, I should feel above everything else that in India, being a part of the British Empire there lay the surest guarantee that this desire for self-government will be realised in the course of time in a manner which, to India herself, would be most effective and helpful. It is inconceivable that the opinions represented at this table and the views of the different Dominions represented here should not accord with the aspirations of self-government. There is this, however, which I think we have to remember, and which those of us in the Dominions have had occasion to realise, that our Dominions have been peopled largely by citizens who have come from the British Isles, and that those who have been most active in effecting reforms have themselves come with ideals which it took their ancestors many many years to work out in this old land. Our struggle for responsible government in the Dominions was

largely a continuation of the long struggles of several centuries in the British Isles, and I think the evolution of self-government in the Dominions has become what it is largely because of the long process of political training through which in previous years the peoples of the British Isles passed. For that reason, I hope our friends in India will appreciate that here again time may be a helpful factor in working out what, in the long run in the interests of India herself, will be the surest and best guide to complete self-government.

AUSTRALIAN OPINION.

STATEMENT BY MR. BRUCE.

Mr. Bruce, Premier of Australia, said :

Mr. Prime Minister,—I would like to preface the few remarks I wish to make by congratulating the representatives of India on the very eloquent and temperate manner in which they stated the case which they have presented. This question is not one which vitally affects Australia as it does South of it. I desire, however, to refer to the resolution on the position of Indians adopted at the Conference of 1921. The resolution commenced by re-affirming the previous resolution of 1918 that the Government of each community of the British Commonwealth should enjoy complete control of the composition of its own population by means of the restriction of immigration from any of the other communities. It then went on to recognise that there was incongruity between India's position as an equal member of the British Empire and the existence of the disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some other parts of the Empire. The resolution recorded the opinion that in the interests of the solidarity of the British Empire, it was desirable to recognise the rights of such lawfully domiciled Indians to citizenship in their countries of domicile. This resolution was concurred in by the representatives of Australia.

The object of the representatives of India at this conference in bringing forward the question of the status of Indians is, I understand, to further the investigation of the question of means for giving practical effect to that part of the resolution which refers to the recognition of the rights of citizenship of Indians lawfully domiciled in other parts of the Empire. As far as Australia is concerned, this question has been the subject of considerable public discussion, and representatives of every shade of political thought have shown sympathy with the claim that lawfully domiciled Indians should enjoy full citizen rights. As the question did not figure in the preliminary agenda of the conference, I have not had an opportunity of consulting my colleagues or my Parliament upon it. I believe, however, Australian public opinion is ready to welcome, so far as the position of Indians domiciled in Australia is concerned, any measure which is conceived in the interest of the Empire.

As the whole number of Indians in Australia is small—there are only 2,000 of them—from the purely Australian view-point the problem is a small one. But it is recognised that this is part of a larger Imperial problem. It is not a question of admitting fresh Indians within our territory. That would be contrary to the fundamental principles which

animate the people of Australia, and must govern the policy of any Australian Government. Nor as I fully understand it, is there the slightest shadow of suggestion that the immigration of Indians into Australia is desired by the Government or by the people of India. It is simply a question of satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the few Indians who are already lawfully domiciled in our midst, and contributing by this action to the solution of an Imperial problem by the removal of anomalies which, as I understand, are felt very keenly in India in view of her new status as an integral part of the Imperial Commonwealth.

INDIA'S WAR SERVICES.

India is no longer a mere dependency, but one of the component members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. We have the greatest admiration for the efforts put forth by India in the late war, whereby she won her new status. I need only refer to her contributions in men, money and material, her recruitment on a voluntary basis of something like one and one-third million men, the services which her army rendered by sending more than a million Indian troops overseas to all theatres of war, and her free gift to the Imperial Exchequer which added, as I am told, over 30 per cent. to her national debt at that time. Apart from these material aids, the moral value of the part played by India in the War cannot be overestimated. The vast masses of Indian people have always been conspicuous for their loyalty to the British Throne, but their wholehearted and voluntary participation in the world conflict undoubtedly afforded a striking proof of this to both foes and friends alike. Even, apart from that the welcome evidence that in its hour of need the Empire may rely on India as a strength and support instead of a source of weakness as our late enemies dared hope, I wish to emphasise that the people of Australia have always had the greatest respect for India's traditions, her culture, her literature and her arts, her attainments in the world of thought and achievements in action, in a word, for her civilization which, while reposing on such ancient foundations, has at the same time shown itself capable of progress and adaptation to the needs of the modern world. That civilisation is not identical with ours. It is older and it is the civilisation of the East rather than the West. It is not a policy founded on the feelings of race or colour, but it is motivated by economic considerations which appear to be clear and cogent.

EASTERN CIVILISATION.

I have said that the civilization of the East, though older and possibly in some respects superior, is different from that of the West and, among other things, this implies a well marked difference of economic standards. Asiatic immigrants would be able to work and support life with what to them would represent a high degree of comfort, under conditions and for wages which would make it impossible for workers of European descent, accustomed to European standards, to compete with them. If, therefore, Asiatic immigrants were admitted it would be impossible to provide employment for Europeans. They would inevitably be ousted from the labour market and our population and with it our institutions and our civilisation would gradually lose their original European character, which we are naturally determined to do all in our power to preserve. It is for this reason that the Commonwealth Parliament has passed enactments which effectively prohibit

the immigration of Indian or other Asiatic settlers or labourers, and it is for this reason we welcomed the resolution of 1918, reaffirmed in 1921, whereby the Imperial Conference recognised the right of each Government to control the composition of the population of its country by means of restriction on immigration from other communities of the Empire. That resolution was accepted by India, and the Government of India have never swerved in their loyal acquiescence and co-operation with us in our policy.

But viewing the relations of India with other parts of the Empire as an Imperial problem, we appreciate that the maintenance of the immigration policy is only one side of the question. On the other side we have the desire of India to see the grant of political and other rights of citizenship accorded to her sons who have already, and in some cases for many years past, been legitimately domiciled within Australia. The object of both resolutions, as I regard them, is to foster the cohesion of the Empire as a single unit, comprehending within itself not only certain communities of the European race, all inspired by Western ideals and civilisation, but also uniting in one system the different ideas and elements of strength and potentialities of progress towards the common good which the Empire is happily able to draw from Eastern as well as Western sources.

In view of the position which exists in Australia and the consideration which has been given to the question, there is no necessity for a committee further to discuss the matter such as has been suggested by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. While I appreciate the spirit in which it is put forward, I do not think, in the special circumstances of Australia, there is any necessity for such action.

MR. MASSEY'S SPEECH.

POSITION IN NEW ZEALAND.

Mr. Massey said:—I should like, and I have no doubt other members of the Conference feel as I do, to express my appreciation of the eloquent speeches delivered by the representatives of India. I am especially impressed by the fact which was very evident, that while they were insistent in looking after the interests of India they spoke as patriotic British citizens. I do not think there will be very much difficulty in the plan. I am thinking now of the proposals that committees representing the Dominions should meet a committee representing India. I am speaking more particularly for my own country, and I would like to endorse that, so far as New Zealand is concerned, we are practically giving the natives of India resident in New Zealand the same privileges which are enjoyed by the people of the Anglo-Saxon race who are settled there. There is practically no difference between them. If there is, or ever has been at any time, any objection to the natives of India coming to New Zealand, those objections have been raised for economic reasons, such as have been referred by the Prime Minister of Australia. The workers in New Zealand are naturally anxious to maintain the present standard of living, and, if there happened to be a large influx of the natives of India at any time, they have

an idea that such standard might become lowered. They are naturally anxious, and I am bound to say the New Zealand Parliament is also anxious, to prevent anything of the sort happening. There is no such thing as race prejudice or anything of that sort. So far as the aboriginal natives of New Zealand are concerned they are in exactly the same position as European residents in New Zealand. They have the same privileges in regard to Parliament and in connection with local affairs. I have heard it stated as a matter of fact that there is an impression in India that the representatives of the Indian Empire at the Imperial Conference do not occupy the same position as the representatives of the Dominions or other parts of the Empire. Now I think that ought to be contradicted emphatically. We who represent the Dominions, and I know I can speak for those who represent the United Kingdom and the Colonies as well, are anxious that the representatives of India sitting round this historic table should enjoy all the privileges that we enjoy, and should have exactly the same position. I think that ought to be made perfectly clear in India.

AGITATION IN INDIA.

I know this that India has become during recent years a fruitful hunting ground for agitations. I am not thinking of Indian agitations when I say that because I know, and it is nothing to be proud of, that some of the people of our own race have taken a prominent part in fomenting trouble in India, and not only India but in those British countries where a number of the natives of India have become located. There are not many opportunities in my own country, but I have known the people of our own race to be doing their level best to stir up trouble with the natives of India. Fiji is our neighbour, and there is a large number of Indians there. I am not speaking for Fiji, but would only say this that I have the best of reasons for knowing—I know it officially—that Europeans frequently have been doing their level best to foment disturbances in Fiji. I am simply speaking of labour troubles and difficulties of that sort. Once troubles are started, and when strikes take place, we, who have had experience of these industrial troubles, never know when and where they are going to end, and they sometimes stir up trouble, which is not forgotten for a very long time afterwards. My opinion—I speak as a British citizen and not only as the representative of New Zealand—is that we should do everything possible to make the natives of India feel, whether here or in India itself, that we want to treat them with justice, and that we want to do everything that is fair, right, and proper as far as they are concerned.

I know perfectly well that when we think of government by Indians we have to remember, and I think it was the Maharaja who expressed this opinion, that if development is to take place it will not be quite by what is called Western methods. We can understand that when one remembers the huge population of India, the number of races which are there, the number of languages that are spoken, and the different religions. I have often thought that it might be desirable when the time comes to let India be divided into a number of dominions rather than remain one State or Empire as it is at present. I have not been to India, and I only look at it from the outside. The

European residents of India and the representatives of India themselves know very much better than I do what will be necessary in time to come to enable Indians to attain the position they desire to occupy.

I was very much struck with the concluding remarks of Lord Peel, and I have not forgotten that when the destinies of the British Empire were trembling in the balance there was no hesitation on the part of India to do her duty, I will not say to come to its assistance, because when they were fighting for the Empire they undoubtedly did their duty in a way which was admired in every part of the Empire and by everyone of its races. The Prime Minister of Australia has mentioned the number of men who were sent and the amount of money contributed by the Indian Empire itself, and on that account I am quite sure the representatives and the patriotic British citizens to whichever part of the Empire they belong will always be desirous of upholding the wishes of the people of India and assisting in the development they so ardently desire. I do not know whether it can be done for some time or not. Probably hurrying up matters might do more harm than good. So far as the committees are concerned, when Mr. Sastri was in New Zealand he had an opportunity of meeting both branches of the Legislature, and an opportunity of saying everything he chose to say to them. He said that so far as New Zealand was concerned he then had practically no fault to find. I hope later on the same thing may be said of the residents in the other parts of the Empire. I was present, of course, when the original arrangement was made in 1918. I was present when it was re-affirmed in 1921, and by that we desire to stand. If any improvements can be suggested with regard to what is in operation at present I have not the slightest doubt, but that the representatives of the Dominions and other representatives of the British Empire here will consider them. I do not know whether anything of the sort is intended at present, but I want to assure the representatives of India that, so far as they are concerned, there is no desire to keep them in the background, but to give them all the privileges that British citizens in other parts of the Empire enjoy. I should like to say that I do not intend to interfere in the matter of Kenya. The position in South Africa stands by itself, and I am not able to judge of it. I only say that I should like to do anything I possibly can to bring about a better understanding between the two races in South Africa, those representative of the European race and those representative of the Indians. If we can do anything at all we shall only be too glad to do it.

GENERAL SMUTS'S SPEECH.

General Smuts said:—I desire to pay my tribute also to the earnestness, eloquence, and ability of the speeches that have been made here by representatives of India. The proposal which has been made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru does not concern South Africa, and therefore I do not think it necessary for me to detain the Conference for any length. As, however, the subject is a very difficult one I may perhaps be allowed to say a few words in reference to the general

situation. The Maharaja has said very rightly that what this question requires is an understanding not only of the difficulties and special position of India, but also the difficulties and special position of other British communities, and I think a few words of mine might not be out of place here. So far as I can judge the atmosphere has really become worse in the last two years for a solution of this question. In South Africa undoubtedly it has become worse. That is due partly to the visit of Mr. Sastri and his speeches in various parts of the Empire to which I do not wish to refer with any particularity. The Prime Minister of Canada has said what the effect of the visit has been in Canada, and in South Africa it has undoubtedly emphasised the difficulties that existed before. That was one of the reasons why I thought it might not be wise for Mr. Sastri to come to South Africa. Our difficulties are great enough as they are.

SOUTH AFRICA AND KENYA.

There was another circumstance which has affected the attitude and atmosphere in South Africa very considerably, and that is the Kenya question.

There is no doubt that in South Africa a profound sympathy was stirred up for Kenya. Here you have a very small British community, a handful of settlers who find themselves pitted against the mighty empire of India, who find themselves against overwhelming forces, and who, although they are the most loyal community in the British Empire, consisting mostly of ex-army men, had in the end to go to the length of almost threatening force in order to maintain their position. The sympathy that was aroused and stirred for Kenya in South Africa has had a very serious repercussion there on the Indian question as a whole. I have no fault whatever to find with the attitude either of the Colonial Office or the India Office here. I have nothing but praise for the way they handled this very difficult situation, and the settlement that was come to was, I think, a wise compromise and, so far as my influence went, I used it with the people of Kenya to get them to accept the settlement as they have accepted it. But I must say quite frankly that I have been very much perturbed over the attitude adopted by the Indian Government in this matter. They pressed the case against Kenya in a way which seemed to me to exceed the limits of prudence and wisdom, and when a settlement was ultimately made, of language was used with regard to it which I think would certainly not help the cause of loyalty either in India or anywhere else in the Empire. The whole incident, as I say, has had a very bad effect in South Africa.

EUROPEAN CIVILISATION.

The difficulties from the African viewpoint are very great. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has said, and quite rightly, that the majority of the population of the British Empire are coloured. That is so, but let me make this remark. All through the very able and moderate argument of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru he referred to this colour question, and the indignity which was either openly or by inference inflicted on those British subjects who have colour. Well, I wish to say that so

far as we in South Africa are concerned, it is not a question of colour. It is a different principle that is involved. I think that every thinking man in South Africa takes the attitude that an Indian is not inferior to us because of his colour or on any other ground. He may be our superior. It is a case of a small civilisation, a small community finding itself in danger of being overwhelmed by a much older and more powerful civilisation, and it is the economic competition from peoples who have entirely different standards and viewpoint from ourselves. From the African viewpoint what is the real difficulty? You have a continent inhabited by a hundred million Blacks, where a few small White communities have settled down as pioneers of European civilisation. You cannot blame these pioneers, these very small communities in South Africa and Central Africa if they put up every possible fight for the civilisation which they started, their own European civilisation. They are not there to foster Indian civilisation. They are there to foster Western civilisation, and they regard as very serious anything that menaces their position, which is already endangered by the many difficulties which surround them in Africa. In South Africa our position in a nutshell is as follows: in the Union we have a native population of over six million. We have a White population of over one and a half million, and we have an Indian population of something like 160,000, mostly confined to one Province, the most British Province in the Union, the Province of Natal. Mr. Sastri, in one of his somewhat outrageous statements referred to this as a Boer Empire, an Empire which is swamped by Boer ideals. Well, the fact is Indian difficulties have mostly arisen and continue to grow in a part of South Africa where there are almost no Boers at all, in an almost purely British community. But you have in this province of Natal a majority of Indians and a minority of British settlers, and whatever the mistakes of the past may have been, the grandchildren of to-day do not plead guilty to the errors of their ancestors, and they want to right the situation and safeguard the future for themselves and their children. What is the position? In the Cape of Good Hope and the Cape Province we have a franchise, a property and income and literary franchise, and in that Province Indians are on exactly the same footing and have the same franchise as the Whites. No difference is made, but in the other three Provinces of the Union we have a manhood suffrage.

MANHOOD SUFFRAGE.

In the two Provinces of the interior, the Transvaal and the Free State, that franchise was laid down by the British Government and not by ourselves. When we received a constitution after the Boer War many years ago, this constitution contained a manhood suffrage and that has remained the state of affairs up to to-day, and will probably remain the state of affairs for a long time. The tendencies in South Africa, just as elsewhere, are all democratic. You cannot go back on that manhood suffrage. Once it has come you will probably pass on from manhood suffrage to universal suffrage. That was the act of the British Government and not the people of South Africa. How are you going to work that in with an Indian franchise? If an Indian franchise is given it has to be identical. No differentiation would be allowed by Indian public opinion and quite rightly. Well, the result

would be that in Natal certainly you would at once have an Indian majority among the voters. But our difficulty is still greater. You have a majority of Blacks in the Union and if there is to be equal manhood suffrage over the Union, the Whites would be swamped by the Blacks. You cannot make a distinction between Indians and Africans. You would be impelled by the inevitable force of logic to go the whole hog, and the result would be that not only would the Whites be swamped in Natal by the Indians but the Whites would be swamped all over South Africa by the Blacks and the whole position for which we have striven for 200 years or more now would be given up.

So far as South Africa is concerned, therefore, it is a question of impossibility. Sir Tej Bahadur and his colleagues say quite rightly that for India it is a question of dignity. For South Africa, for White South Africa, it is not a question of dignity, but a question of existence, and no Government could for a moment either tamper with this position or do anything to meet the Indian viewpoint. That is why, I think, the resolution passed in 1921 was a mistake. I thought it then. I still think it a great mistake. We got on the wrong road there. For the first time we have passed a resolution through this Conference by a majority. It has never been done before, and I do hope it never will occur again. Our procedure in this Conference has been by way of unanimity. If we cannot convince each other, we agree to differ, and to let the matter stand over. But for once we have departed from that most salutary principle which I consider fundamental to the whole Empire, and we passed that resolution by a majority. I had to stand out, but that has made things worse in South Africa. South Africa now certainly sees that she has to stand to her guns much more resolutely than she would have done otherwise. I think we made a mistake in 1921, and that is why I suggested the other alternative consideration of this subject.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said I was subtle, that my memorandum was a subtle one. I am not subtle, and my memorandum, I thought, was a truism. All I said was this. There is one British citizenship over the whole Empire, and there should be. That is something solid and enduring, but we must not place a wrong interpretation upon that. We must not derive from the one British citizenship the rights of franchise, because that would be a profound mistake. The attitude has been that franchise does not depend upon British citizenship. It is only in India this position is not understood. Indians go to the length of deriving from their British citizenship the further notion of equal franchise rights, too, and they claim they may go from India to any other part and enjoy the same franchise rights as other portions of the Empire. I think that wrong, not only as regards India but as regards every part of the Empire. I do not think that an Australian, for instance, should come to South Africa and claim franchise there as a matter of course. He is a British subject, and in that footing we are equal in the eye of the law, but when it comes to the exercise of political franchise rights I think there is a great difference and distinction and we should recognise that. And where a distinction is carried into actual practice, as it is in South Africa, it should not be looked upon as an indignity, as a reflection on the citizens of any Dominion, including India, who come to us and who do not get those rights. That is really all I wish to say about this matter.

I noticed in Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's statement a remark which almost looked like a threat—that if India fails in forcing on us the view which she holds so strongly then she may be compelled to make of it a question of foreign policy. Well, I would say this. You cannot have it both ways. As long as it is matter of what are the rights of British subjects it is not a matter of foreign policy, it is a matter entirely domestic to the British Empire. If it becomes a question of foreign policy, then Indians cannot claim on the ground of their British citizenship any more the recognition of any particular right. Once they appeal to a tribunal, whether it be the League of Nations or whether it be outside the British Empire, they can no longer use as an argument the common British citizenship. I want to keep it there. I want it to be recognised that you must not derive from that citizenship claims you cannot uphold. Let me just say this in regard to what fell from the Maharaja. He said that if we do not invite him he will invite himself.

The Maharaja of Alwar : I did not quite say that.

General Smuts : Let me say this, Maharaja. Nobody would be more welcome in South Africa than you would, and I would welcome nothing more than that you should come as a great representative of India to look into conditions in South Africa yourself, convince yourself of the situation there, and convince yourself also that, apart from the far-reaching political difficulties we have, our fundamental attitude towards our Indian fellow citizens is one of justice and fair-play. I do not think our Indian fellow subjects in South Africa can complain of injustice. It is just the opposite. They have prospered exceedingly in South Africa. People who have come there as coolies, people who have come there as members of the depressed classes in India have prospered. Their children have been to school. They have been educated, and their children and grandchildren to-day are, many of them, men of great wealth.

MR. C. F. ANDREWS'S ADVICE.

I noticed the other day the Rev. C. F. Andrews, who is a great friend of the Indian cause in South Africa, publicly advised Indians in South Africa not to go back to India. The Government of South Africa actually pay for their tickets, give them pocket-money, and other inducements in order voluntarily to return to India, and thousands avail themselves of that policy and return to India. That gentleman, who is a great protagonist of the Indian cause, has publicly advised Indians not to fall in with that policy. He says : " You will be worse off in India." I quote this to show that there is no unfairness, no injustice to our fellow-citizens in India, but when they come forward and make claims which, politically, we cannot possibly recognise, our attitude of friendliness will worsen and the position as regards them will become very difficult and complicated.

The Maharaja of Alwar : I should just like to get my mind a little more clear on one point, and that is with regard to settlers in Natal who have built their houses, invested their money, and spent their lives there. What would you propose about them ?

General Smuts : They have all the rights barring the rights of voting for parliament and the provincial councils that any White citizens in South Africa have. Our law draws no distinction whatever. It is only political rights that are in question. There, as I explained to you, we are up against a stone wall and we cannot get over it.

IRISH FREE STATE'S VIEWS.

MR. FITZGERALD'S SPEECH.

Mr. Fitzgerald said :—Mr. Prime Minister.—In our country I do not need to say we have no racial distinctions at all. Indians in Ireland have the same position as Englishmen or South Africans. It seems to me that this matter falls more or less into two classes. There are the Indians in the Dominions and Indians in the Colonies and mandated territories, etc. Now we recognise the Dominions as independent sovereign countries, having a perfect right to look after their own affairs, and we really have no right to interfere there ; and in the mandated territories and Protectorates they are controlled by the British Government, and we have no responsibility. So all I can do really is to give an opinion. We have no responsibility in the matter, but if we had responsibility we should have to protest very strongly against any racial distinctions being made. We, who are not Anglo-Saxons, have suffered a good deal in the past from being treated as an inferior race. Putting myself in the position of an Indian I do not think the Indian representatives here are of an equality with us, because they are not really here in a representative capacity. They are not really sent by an independent Indian Government, and they cannot really be regarded as equal with the rest of us. If I were an Indian putting myself in their position I would recognise that this hyper-sensitiveness that they have about their treatment outside India arises really from the fact that they have not so far reached the degree of self-government that the rest of us have reached.

With regard to Indians in the Protectorates and so on the Government which is primarily responsible for those places, being the Government which is also responsible for India, it seems to us unjust that there should be any distinction drawn between Indians and other British subjects in those places. At the same time, it seems to me that the only solution of this trouble which comes from racial sensitiveness is for Indians to be in a position to make real reciprocal arrangements and make bargain for a bargain. The only way this Indian trouble is really going to be solved is for that progress towards self-government, whatever form of self-government they consider suitable for themselves, for that progress to be hastened with all speed so as to avoid what Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Maharaja have indicated as revolutionary methods taking the place of evolutionary methods. We in our country must necessarily sympathise whole-heartedly with the Indians, both in their protest against their inferior race treatment and in their feelings as to the freedom of their country. We also recognise quite plainly here that we have no right to dictate to other Dominions as to what they do in their own areas. That is all I have to say Mr. Prime Minister.

INDIANS IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

MR. WARREN'S SPEECH.

Mr. Warren said :—I must add my congratulation to the Indian delegation upon the eloquence and the force of the speeches they made. As far as Newfoundland is concerned we have no distinction whatever. As long as an Indian is a British subject he can vote in Newfoundland in the same way as an Australian, Canadian, or New Zealander, or anybody else.

We have no restriction on emigration, and I may say that if an Indian is a British subject the mere fact that he is an Indian is no bar to his becoming naturalised and obtaining a vote in that way in Newfoundland. I do not want to express any opinion upon the internal affairs of any other sister Dominion.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU REPLIES.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said: Mr. Prime Minister.—I must tell you, and, through you, your colleagues in His Majesty's Government and the Dominion Prime Ministers that I could not have hoped to have had, a better hearing here. Therefore, my thanks are due to one and all of you, even though it may not be that I see eye to eye with you in some of your remarks. I will, first of all, refer to the speech delivered this morning by His Grace the Duke of Devonshire. I listened with deep interest to his speech, and let me express to him my thanks for the manner in which he has expressed sympathy with our general aspirations in this matter. His Grace was good enough to say he did not want to mislead India in regard to Kenya, and therefore he spoke frankly. I hope His Grace will pardon me if I also desire to be equally frank in giving expression to our position. I did not expect at any moment during the last few days that I have been working over this question that I would go back with the Kenya decision reversed. That was not what I was aiming at. But I want to make it abundantly plain that I do not wish the substance of my proposition to be affected. The language of the resolution is a matter for settlement, but it is of the very essence of that resolution that Kenya must come in. Secondly, I want to explain that while His Grace has said His Majesty's Government are not prepared to accept the resolution in regard to Kenya my country will refuse to accept that decision as final. Thirdly, I will make it plain that the committee I have proposed should in conferring with the Colonial Office, have the widest scope. That is to say, it must discuss not only questions affecting other Colonies, but also those relating to Kenya. Otherwise I do not see how you can possibly satisfy my countrymen. This is all I wanted to say with regard to the committee and its dealings with the Colonial Office here. Well, I will now pass on from the Duke of Devonshire and the Colonial Office to the Dominion Ministers. I have listened with very great interest to the speech of Mr. Mackenzie King, and must thank him heartily for supporting me and accepting the substance of my proposal. There are just one or two words with regard to his speech I would like to say. He referred to his view, or rather the construction put in his Parliament on the resolution of 1921, and he read out a passage from Mr. Meighen's speech. Now let me tell him that we are here sitting not as lawyers, nor are we sitting in a court of law. Our functions are quite different. I suppose we would claim that the functions of a statesman are very much higher than those of a lawyer, although I myself happen to be associated with that noble profession. Now that resolution of 1921, I believe, was not drafted by a conveyancing lawyer. It was probably drafted by some one of the statesmen around this table, or by someone similar to a statesman, and I would like you and your Parliaments to approach it from the point of view of statesmen.

I know that as a Prime Minister and as a party politician it may be safe to rely on certain phrases, but let me tell him that it would be a great

mistake to dispose of those words "it is desirable" as not morally binding upon him. I do not care whether they are legally binding upon him or not. I am inspired by the hope, and particularly by the manner in which Mr. Mackenzie King has spoken, that the result of the conference of the committee which we propose to send to Canada with the committee going to be appointed there to consider the questions of franchise cannot but lead to satisfactory results. I will not anticipate the verdict of the conference of two committees which Mr. Mackenzie King has, to a certain extent, attempted to do. I will leave it entirely in the hands of the committee to come to their own conclusions, and then will be the time for us to discuss how far we are in agreement or how far we are separated. But I recognise his spirit of support and sympathy with me, and I appreciate that. I do thank you, Mr. Mackenzie King, for the spirit in which you have spoken this morning.

From Mr. Mackenzie King I shall pass on to Mr. Bruce, and let me express my unreserved admiration for the manner in which he has spoken this morning, and the tribute he has paid to my countrymen and our civilization. I note that he considers it unnecessary for my Government to send any committee to his country, because he thinks the problem is such that it may be settled without any discussion. Well, that is encouraging to me, but I do venture to express a hope that if we do decide to send a committee, just to place our case before him and his Government, he will not refuse to accept that committee. We do not want to send a committee to create any agitation in his country, or, for the matter of that, any agitation in any country; but if it is necessary for us to explain our position to you and help you in the problem, for Heaven's sake do not refuse to accept a committee like that. We want simply to help you, and if without receiving a committee from my Government and my country you can solve the problem so much the better for you, and so much the better for us, and so much the more creditable to you and your Government.

Well, my thanks are also due to Mr. Massey. I hope Mr. Massey will recognise that in my speech on Wednesday I thanked him. I very much appreciate his reference to the services of India during the War, and I do sincerely hope such grievances as there may be in his country will receive sympathetic treatment at his hands. I do hope he will accept the substance of my resolution. We wish to help him in every possible way. We do not want to harass him in his own country or in his Government.

Now from Mr. Massey I propose to pass to General Smuts. I am sorry to miss him here. But I will say he has never replied to the points I raised. He referred to my description of him as subtle. Well, if he objects to that, I will withdraw it; but I will say that his present speech is remarkably illusory and evasive. I raised questions with regard to the specific grievances relating to residence, acquisition of land, and trading licenses in his country, and I find no expression of opinion upon these questions. He then said my resolution had nothing to do with him. It has primarily to do with him. I made it abundantly plain in the course of my speech that I did not make an appeal to him on the basis of the resolution of 1921, but that my appeal was made to him independently of that resolution, and that I wanted him to join hands with me in investigating facts, and trying to devise some methods of solving this problem which he probably thinks insoluble, but which does not appear to me insoluble. Again, he referred to Mr. Sastri and the prejudice he has caused

I have already said what I felt about Mr. Sastri, and I do not want to say any more. If Mr. Sastri's fault was that he pleaded for his countrymen in the Dominions then it is a fault which can reasonably be found with 320 millions of his countrymen.

Now I will come to one particular portion of the speech which struck me as based on an entire misconception, legal and constitutional, that is, the question of citizenship. He said India was the only country which probably claimed all political rights, merely from the fact that Indians were British citizens. Let me warn him that India is not the only country which holds that view. There are other countries which hold those views. Well, he absolutely confuses territorial law with personal law. In other words, his position really is this: "That if in my own country I did not enjoy the full rights of citizenship when I go to his country I must be under a disability." I will put to General Smuts what would have happened if an Irishman, before the new constitution came into force, had gone from Ireland and settled down in Natal or any other part there, and was told: "Because you are not a free nation within your own borders you dare not claim those rights, although you are qualified, according to our franchise law to claim them." There is essential confusion in the position which General Smuts takes. Really the fact of the matter is this, that you cannot, according to the modern law of citizenship and according to the latest development of thought on this subject, have two kinds of citizenship in the same Empire, a higher and a lower. When I go to your country and I do satisfy the requirements of the law of franchise you have no right to tell me that because I am an Indian subject of His Majesty I shall not be entitled to exercise my Parliamentary rights. Therein lies the whole position General Smuts has taken, and, with regard to the disability of Indians in the purchase of town-lands and in respect of trade licenses and other things, General Smuts, as I said before, had not a word to say in his speech this morning. Therefore the position remains this, that while I receive support, substantial and general, from His Majesty's Government and all the Dominion Prime Ministers, I have received no support from General Smuts; on the contrary, he has expressed a desire that the resolution of 1921 should be repealed. I hope, for the reputation of this Conference, for the great reputation of the Dominion Prime Ministers and for the reputation of His Majesty's Government, nothing of the kind will be done, and that though you may tell my countrymen that the problem is undoubtedly a difficult one I request you also to say you are trying to discover means of solving it. If you will do that, you will change our attitude with regard to the great Imperial questions.

There is only one more remark I will make with regard to General Smuts's speech. He referred to the desire for repatriation and the advice of Mr. Andrews. Let me tell you that if any one understands Mr. Andrews, or knows him intimately, I do. There are hundreds and thousands of my countrymen in South Africa who cannot even speak their mother tongue. They have settled there. Their fathers have settled there, and it is very easy to understand how difficult they will find it to leave a land in which they and their fathers and grandfathers have lived. It is for those reasons Mr. Andrews advised, and it is for those reasons I should advise them not to leave that country, but fight their battles until their position is recognised some day or other as that of

equal citizens. General Smuts said that as a British subject I could not claim that this problem would pass from the stage of a domestic problem to that of a foreign problem. He misunderstood me. It is not difficult to foresee the stage being reached when even the Government of India, to whom he has attacked over its attitude in regard to Kenya, but which I must admire for the very same attitude which it did take, may find it necessary to appeal to His Majesty's Government and say that one part of the Empire is standing against the other, and it is for you and His Majesty's Government now to treat this problem inside your own Commonwealth as you would deal with a problem of foreign policy. That is what I meant, and I do anticipate a stage like that being reached at no distant date, in so far as the relations of India with South Africa are concerned.

Lastly, I will pass on to what my friend Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald said. No one would be more happy or contented than myself if he could help me to get self-government for India to-day. But that is a matter between us and His Majesty's Government. I see no reason, however, why, until we get complete self-government in India, we should be treated on a lower footing in King George's Empire outside India. We have strong sentiment on that point, and there can be no weakening in that sentiment so far as I am concerned and so far as my fellow-countrymen are concerned. There is no one who believe more strongly than I do, or is working harder than I, to win self-government for India, and, God willing, I do hope to win it, notwithstanding any doubts that may be entertained by members of His Majesty's Government. But I will not allow those considerations to affect my position in regard to the status of Indians overseas. Suppose we get Dominion self-government to-morrow in India the problem will still have to be faced. Therefore, let us not mix up the two. I should be very glad, indeed, if the Conference would endorse a resolution in favour of self-government, but I want them to endorse a resolution also in regard to Indians and their position overseas.

I must also thank Mr. Warren for the support he has given me. Only one word remains for me to say. When I moved that resolution I, perhaps, did not make it quite clear that I was moving it. I merely said: "My resolution is as follows." I wish the Conference to understand that I definitely moved that resolution. I have already said I am open to argument with regard to the phraseology of it, so long as the substance remains and so long as Kenya finds a place therein. That is a matter which lies between me and the Colonial Office, and could be sent up to you later on. But I do wish to move that resolution, and I beg your support. At any rate, I am entitled to ask for support of the general idea embodied in that resolution. I do wish it to be understood that, as far as I am concerned, I stand by the resolution of 1921, and by the principle of equality. I do not wish to put any larger interpretation on the resolution than is justified or just. But do not let me give you the impression that there is any weakening on my part so far as the resolution of 1921 is concerned, or so far as the supplementary resolution which I had the honour to put before you on Wednesday last is concerned. I thank you Mr. Prime Minister and all the other Prime Ministers.

VISCOUNT PEEL'S REVIEW OF SPEECHES.

Viscount Peel said:—I desire to thank most sincerely the members of the Conference for the very cordial and sympathetic way in which

they have received our proposals about the position of Indians in the Empire. I thank them also for the high place they have assigned to this question among the Empire problems. I thank them for the complete grasp they have displayed of this difficult business, not as an isolated or local or Indian question, but in its Imperial aspect, and am grateful to them for the complete frankness and fullness with which they have explained the views of those they represent. In opening this discussion I explained that the intensity of feeling aroused in India was due to the opinion widely held there that the disabilities of Indians were based on the distinction of colour, and were badges of racial inferiority. I did not associate myself with that view. I believed it to be a mistaken course. This discussion has shown I was amply justified. Any impartial person reviewing the statements made will find it impossible to prove that any general ban is maintained against Indians in the Empire, or that throughout the Empire they are placed in an inferior status, or again that such disabilities as they may suffer from are based on colour or racial grounds.

The Duke of Devonshire has shown that in the West Indian Colonies, British Guiana, Jamaica, and Trinidad Indians enjoy the same rights as other British subjects. The same, I believe, is true in Ceylon and Mauritius. Mr. Mackenzie King has told us that in eight out of the nine provinces in Canada Indians enjoy the full rights of citizenship. If in one province there are exceptions to the general rule these exceptions are based not on colour distinction, but on a rather complicated social and political consideration. Mr. Bruce has told us that representatives of every shade of political thought in Australia have shown sympathy with the claim that lawfully domiciled Indians should enjoy full citizen rights. He believes Australian public opinion is ready to welcome, as far as the position of domiciled Indians is concerned, any measure which is conceived in the interests of the Empire as a whole. General Smuts said: "It is not a question of colour. It is a different question. It is a case of a small civilization a small community finding itself in danger of being overwhelmed by a much older and powerful civilization. It is economic competition from people who have entirely different standards and viewpoints from ourselves."

The same sentiments have been expressed by representatives of the other Dominions, notably Mr. Massey. These opinions are so remarkably similar in tone that this great body of Empire statesmen must surely bring conviction and comfort to any Indian whose feelings may have been injured, or whose sense of dignity has been impaired by a contrary view. Let their suspicions and doubts be allayed by these declarations of Empire leaders sent out to the world from this Conference. Let me now consider whether any action should be taken on the definite proposals placed before the Conference by my colleague, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. He was not concerned, nor was the delegation concerned, so much with his concrete proposals as with the attitude that would be taken up by the Prime Ministers in their different Dominions on this subject. I consider the position of Indians within the Empire has been most notably advanced in this Conference. Mr. Bruce has stated that he thinks further inquiry unnecessary, but that on his return to Australia he will consult his colleagues and see what action can be taken. Mr. Mackenzie King has reaffirmed his statement about the revision of the Federal law, and he is quite willing, if it is thought desirable, for a delegation to come to Canada and to appoint a group to meet and confer with such a delegation. I rather gather, however, that passing this particular resolution might not

necessarily assist in obtaining the result we desire. General Smuts, I am afraid, will not be able to support the resolution. General Smuts, it is true, did not support the resolution of 1921.

AN APPEAL FOR JUSTICE.

I should like to say I do not rest my case entirely on that resolution. If there had been no resolution of 1921 this problem would still be urgent and pressing. The resolution of 1921 stands, but I rest my case not merely upon a formula, but upon the broad equities of the case and an appeal for justice and Imperial unity. I am quite aware of the difficulties of South Africa, but I hope General Smuts, when he returns, while alive to his own difficulties, will retain a vivid consciousness of our own. It has been said that the Empire Conference should be unanimous in its resolutions. I think if this resolution is pressed, some members might be disposed not to vote for it, not because they do not sympathise with the end to be attained, but because they think this particular means either unnecessary or perhaps not desirable. Such a vote, therefore, might create a totally false impression in India of the real situation. I ask my friend Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru whether he might not consider it advisable not to press his resolution. But I am very anxious that it should be made quite plain in India what are the results that have been attained. I think it would be most valuable if a short note could be added to the report of the Conference showing clearly what are the practical results of this discussion and what India has gained.

MAHARAJA OF ALWAR.

The Maharaja of Alwar on Wednesday stated:—In this world of ours a great deal, if not everything, depends on how far and how we are able to control our human nature and in what channels we can guide it in order to achieve successful results. It is easy enough to see dark patches, to brood over difficulties, exaggerate and enlarge upon them. They will be overcome with remorse, repentance or despair, but History teaches us a great lesson that the world advances and does not recede when, without eluding ourselves, we are able to buckle our determination to throw our vision beyond the clouds on to the silver lining. Humanity, after all, behind which shines the radiance of the Godhead, is not so black as our imaginations, our unfulfilled desires and hopes are likely sometimes to paint it. Stone upon stone can steadily be built into an edifice with a single-hearted purpose and with help to cement our goodwill and toleration. I conceive our Conference of members of the British Empire has assembled in order to shed light over dark patches and exercise our determination, substituting our quota to solve the difficult problems and instead of hypnotising ourselves with pessimism enables us to look ahead to the dawn which must invariably follow the night.

India did not figure on the agenda of our Conference when we assembled, but as an Indian I thank the Prime Minister and the British Government for having agreed to our suggestion to set aside a day for discussion of the important problem of Indians overseas. We owe acknowledgments for your letting the discussion extend to a much longer time than was originally conceived, in order to give everyone an

opportunity to unburden his mind and put forward points of view. In my own personal capacity I said at the commencement of the Conference that, rightly, or wrongly, and I believe rightly, I came with the determination of sinking differences, giving co-operation and goodwill, and I am happy to be able to acknowledge to-day that during our discussions we found full measure thereof.

SYMPATHY OF THE PREMIERS.

I thank the Prime Minister of Canada for having given a very welcome lead in viewing our problem relating to his Dominion from a broad point of view.

On behalf of my Order I thank Mr. Bruce for his sympathy and the Prime Ministers of New Zealand and Newfoundland for their very warm and cordial support to India in so far as it related to their Dominions. From Ireland came a very warmhearted response towards their fellow-citizens in the Empire in my country. I hope I may even thank General Smuts for such kind references as he made to my countrymen. I thank him for extending to me personally an invitation to come to South Africa to see for myself the problems and difficulties that exist. I sincerely hope I may be able to accept his very kind invitation. I almost wish I was going back with him to his country, but at the present moment this is not feasible; but that invitation will certainly not pass into oblivion but remain in a tender corner of my heart, and, I hope, for the sake of my country, I may be able to respond to it at no very distant date. I make it clear, however, that I should like to come in a personal capacity, not as a representative of my country or my Order, for that is the best way to enhance my own personal knowledge of difficulties that exist and understand problems that exist in that country which are, perhaps, the main sources of the whole question having come up so prominently. General Smuts will appreciate, however, that, although I may deprive myself of coming as a representative I shall still come as an Indian and as one in whose heart these questions undoubtedly rankle, but who, for his personal satisfaction and if he can be of any use and is desired to be of any use to his country, will be able to do so, while at the same time keeping in mind the broader view of trying fully to appreciate the difficulties that exist on different sides.

Now, what is the position of Indians overseas as we see it to-day. On the bright side, if you look, Mr. Mackenzie King told us that in Canada there are eight provinces in which no legal disability exists with regard to Indians, and where I understand they have equal rights of franchise. Mr. Mackenzie King interposed that there were nine divisions in which they had no legal disabilities. There is political disability in one; that is all.

INDIANS IN AUSTRALASIA.

In Australia, although domiciled Indians amount only to about 2,000, we have the promise of the Australian Premier that they will be treated sympathetically and that this question has been the subject of considerable public discussion, and representatives of every shade of political thought have shown sympathy with the claim that lawfully domiciled Indians should enjoy full citizen rights and, finally, that so

as the position of Indians domiciled in Australia is concerned, any measure which is conceived in the interests of the Empire as a whole could be welcomed.

In New Zealand the number of Indians is small, but a spirit which recognises no difference of race, colour or creed is, indeed, one that should inspire not only our admiration but also our gratitude, and the Prime Minister of New Zealand has told us they will give Indian residents privileges which are enjoyed by people of the Anglo-Saxon race and that practically there is no difference between them.

It is even a happy augury to hear words come out of the mouth of this responsible statesman that the aboriginal tribes of New Zealand are in exactly the same position as the European residents and that they have the same privileges in Parliamentary and local affairs.

In New Foundland the numbers of Indians are smaller still, but we are glad to see the same spirit prevailing there as in New Zealand.

In Ireland the problem does not arise, but we, nevertheless, appreciate and welcome the sentiments on behalf of its representatives.

In South Africa General Smuts has told us in the Cape of Good Hope and the Cape Province Indians are exactly on the same footing as the Whites and have the franchise. General Smuts has hinted that in the Transvaal and the Free State the franchise was not laid down by South Africa but by the British Government. And now after the Dominions I come to the Colonies.

His Grace the Colonial Secretary has told us that so far as the British Colonies and Protectorates are concerned and in the West Indian Colonies British Indians are under no political or legal disability. This includes British Guiana, Trinidad, and Jamaica, where there is a considerable Indian population. In Ceylon qualified British Indians will be eligible for the franchise in the same way as other British subjects. In Mauritius there is no distinction between Indian and other British subjects as regards eligibility for the franchise. In East Africa there is no restriction on the number or race of unofficial members who may be nominated to the Councils.

LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE.

Now, gentlemen, I have to say this that I know some people who read what I have said so far may consider that I have spoken empty platitudes, and that in doing so I am seeking favours or honour. How far that vision is from my mind it is unnecessary to state. But if looking on the bright side of things is wrong in appreciating facts that are already before us then I gladly stand open to the charge and have no bones of contention to pick. But the primary reason why I have taken up your time in emphasising these facts is in order to condense what I have already seen, that the whole British Empire is not such a dark patch for our countrymen as some would like to believe, and that there is much ground for improving the situation by showing our goodwill and co-operation. This does not mean that I do not appreciate difficulties where they lie, and they do lie. It is not difficult for human nature to bite or sting, but those are qualities which do not appeal to me in such an atmosphere as this.

The difficulties that exist with regard to Indians overseas exist, I know, and all know, in British Columbia, in Canada, in Natal, in South Africa, and have reached a climax in Kenya. In British Columbia Mr. Mackenzie King told us very frankly that it was a question of provincial franchise where the Federal Franchise Act supports it, which places Indians in a position of disability. In British Columbia, we are told, the problem is not a racial one but an economic one, and that Mr. Mackenzie King welcomes the proposition made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for a committee to discuss the question with his Government. Responsible statesmen of Canada have been good enough to say that they welcomed Mr. Sastri and gave him a full opportunity to speak and confer with any persons he might wish in order to meet the difficulty and, finally, that when the Federal law comes up for revision that Canada will take care to see that Parliament is informed of India's wishes. We sincerely hope that they will pay very favourable consideration to this important point regarding our people.

NATAL.

In Natal General Smuts, equally candidly, explained that if he gave Indians the right of franchise on equality it could not then be withheld from the native population of South Africa, and would, under the circumstances, flood this portion of the country and demolish the work of the White settlers of 200 years. This is, indeed, a potent argument, and I appreciate the difficulties; but the question as regards Natal, as also of other places where such disabilities exist, does not hinge on future migrations for flooding this country, for with the right understanding I believe the Government of India's co-operation can be achieved to solve this difficulty. But the question is with regard to Indian settlers who have lived in Natal and who have invested their property and settled there for several generations. Is it likely that without the franchise laws will be passed by those who possess the franchise to oust Indians from their rightful heritage since they went to that country under the British Flag as peaceful settlers? General Smuts gave an assurance in answer to my question that Indians would have full rights of citizenship, and the only question concerned with the difficulty was with regard to the franchise. I hope South Africa will give this question favourable consideration, not from a local but from an Imperial point of view, in order to see that no disabilities exist which would hamper the peaceful existence of my countrymen there. It would, indeed, be a useful advance in conciliatory methods if General Smuts could see his way to asking his Parliament to welcome our committee to go there from India in order to discuss frankly and candidly and, if necessary, quietly the whole problem as it affects India.

KENYA.

Now I come to Kenya. I believe from what I am informed and from what I have seen myself that no question of Indians overseas agitates their minds and gives them more feeling of racial discrimination and loss of self-respect than Indians in Kenya. I believe it is mainly due to the fact that while it has been asserted by previous Imperial Conferences that the Dominions have the right to settle their own population, Kenya is not a self-government Dominion, but a Crown Colony, administered by the British Government. It is to the British

Government, therefore, that Indians look to see that their position which has already become very awkward in Kenya by the minority of white settlers having been given a majority in votes is not further jeopardised, and that they are not placed under disabilities by laws being passed by a majority segregating them, or eventually ousting them from positions in which they have invested money in the country, which, I understand, they helped to improve for many years back. I understand, and if I am wrong I hope I will be corrected, that His Grace at present holding charge of the Colonial Office has been good enough to agree that a committee of Indians would be welcomed to discuss with him the whole problem, and that the entire question will be fully and sympathetically considered by the Imperial Government from points of view put forward by the Indian Committee. May I thank His Grace, and through him the British Government, for this assurance, and earnestly hope that the final results will be an advance on the present situation to give cause for my countrymen to be grateful for assistance.

On this important problem of Indians overseas I have little more to say, but I wish to add this that my position as a delegate from India is likely to be misunderstood in some quarters even in India. Therefore, I would like to make it clear. I do not come here as an elected or a selected representative of British India. I have not even been elected or selected by my brother Princes or have their mandate. I think you know that I am not an employee of the British Government; but, in accordance with past precedent, I come here as a nominated representative of the Indian Princes and have been invited to work here by the Government of India and the Secretary of State. But, although I carry no mandate for what I say for my order, I nevertheless happen to be one of them. I am an Indian. I belong to a family who have been loyal and faithful allies of the Crown and its Government. I have, therefore, primarily expressed my own and its views; but I hope, also, what I feel to be the views of my Order and my countrymen, or, at least, some of them. I much appreciated the compliment of having been asked to work on this Conference, but for the sake of my country I hope my successor at the next one will be even more fortunate in being elected by my Order to come to this distinguished gathering in consultation and with the approval of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. I should welcome, indeed, if our member for two-thirds of India should be privileged to enjoy the same position, but on this topic I will not attempt to speak as it is outside my purview and because I would be charged with treading on ground on which angels fear to go.

Now, in conclusion, I say this. The whole question of Indians overseas is, we are told, in many places an economic problem, but it is not a racial one and was not designed to impress upon anyone inferiority of any particular race. I, at any rate, welcome that sentiment and feel now that this goodwill and co-operation is prevailing on sides and the whole of this difficult problem will be set at rest, and the earlier the better, within the domains of possibilities, so that India can turn her mind towards her own domestic problems and work out her salvation to be a loyal and integral part of the British Empire.

In conclusion, may I thank the Dominion Premiers for the words that have fallen from their lips, and one of whom said that he certainly

desired to see India go ahead, and that the 1921 Resolution passed by the previous Conference is regarded as a pledge which all concerned seem anxious to fulfil and uphold. Mr. Prime Minister and gentlemen, I thank you one and all for having created in this room that favourable atmosphere towards my country which I hope will soon bear practical and tangible results, not only for the sake of the British Empire, but for the sake of one-fifth of the human race. Mr. Harvey, in giving his views recently when Lord Curzon presided, said: "We have preferred settlement to argument." That exactly sums up my conclusion, and I hope I may be permitted to express my final sentiments, although it is in poetry. I think the words exactly express my views:—

What then shall be the guerdon
A great and priceless barden
Of tautening up our grand old Empire's chain
It shall be for us the glory
To prove in full the story
Our brotherhood does not exist in vain
Don't criticise and grumble,
Don't sneer at every stumble,
Let each one try and see the other's aim,
And if at first we fail
To hear the friendly hail
Let us hear in mood the birthright of our land,
Like them we'll pull together
Rose and Wattle, Maple and Heather,
Our own bright star is rising with the morn,
Aye, let's sail the ship together,
Thro' storm and stress of weather
Onward, ever onward, to the dawn.

" A VITAL PRINCIPLE."

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE'S SPEECH.

The Duke of Devonshire regretted that the Home Secretary was unable to be present, but as the statement had been circulated to the whole of the Colonies, and would be eventually published, he would like to make the following observations on his behalf:—"This interesting and frank discussion has brought out in high relief a distinctive characteristic of the British Empire or Commonwealth, namely, the essential unity for attaining realisation in varying and independent methods and practices under a great variety of conditions. At the core lies the vital principle of common British nationality, on which the representatives of India have justly and eloquently laid great stress, and which finds expression in General Smuts's words. Common kinship is the binding link between all parts of the Empire. It is not inconsistent with this principle, as it has always been recognised that every part of the Empire is free to settle its own domestic concerns, including questions with regard to the rights to be enjoyed by any person or classes of persons within its territory. In considering problems arising out of this right of freedom, it is important not to confuse the issue by any ambiguous use of such words as 'citizen' or 'citizenship.' If those words are

used as they rightly may be as having local significance and connoting the status or right which it is within the power of any self-governing Dominion to confer on persons within its territory, they should not at the same time be used as though they are almost synonymous with the Imperial conception of nationality. Imperial nationality is one and indivisible. Local citizenship, and rights and privileges attached to it, may be diverse. If we keep these two conceptions clearly in our minds, it ought to be possible, despite difficulties in detail and practice, to maintain the principle of action consistent with Imperial unity and local autonomy."

OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF RESULTS.

Mr. Baldwin said:—After what has been said on behalf of the Dominions and by the Duke of Devonshire on behalf of the British Government I have little to add. I should like, first of all, to read to the Conference a statement which has been drawn up as a result of the informal discussions since our last meeting. It sets out for inclusion in the records of the Conference the results of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's proposal as far as it relates to the Colonies and Protectorates. The statement is as follows:—

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, cordially accepted the proposal of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru that there should be full consultation and discussion between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and a committee appointed by the Government of India upon all questions affecting British Indians domiciled in British Colonies and Protectorates and Mandated Territories. At the same time the Duke was careful to explain that before decisions were taken as a result of discussion with the committee consultations with the local Colonial Government concerned, and in some cases local enquiry, would be necessary. Further, while welcoming the proposal the Duke of Devonshire reminded the Conference that His Majesty's Government recently had come to certain decisions as to Kenya which represented in their considered view the very best that could be done in all circumstances. While he saw no prospect of these decisions being modified he would give careful attention to such representations as the Committee appointed by the Government of India might desire to make to him. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, while taking note of the above statement of the Duke, desired to make plain that the recent Kenya decisions could not be accepted as final by the people of India.

Mr. Baldwin proceeded:—I am glad to think that on this occasion we have been able to arrange for the speeches made at this table to be published. This constitutes a departure from the procedure at the 1921 Conference, when only the resolution which has been quoted here more than once was made public. We shall, of course, include a brief summary of the proceedings when a report on the work of the Conference comes to be prepared. I hope the Indian delegation will feel, as I feel, that the discussions we have had on this subject have been most

helpful and encouraging. There has not merely been goodwill and an earnest attempt to meet India's wishes as far as varying political and economic circumstances in differing parts of the Empire permit, but we can record quite definite results. These are due to the growing sense of partnership among all the many peoples and races who owe common allegiance to the Crown. It is this sense of partnership which I should like to stress. India's value to the Empire and the Empire's value to India are becoming every day more clearly seen. The British Commonwealth of Nations rests upon a narrow basis. It is the greatest association known to the world of many races bound together ever more intimately by common interests and a mutual desire to help each other. Here at these Conferences we can with full freedom learn each other's problems, each other's points of view, and India can, I am sure, feel that the magnitude of her share in our common partnership and of her contribution to the common weal is being realised in an increasing measure. I am confident that members of the Conference who have spoken for India will feel both from the manner in which their representations have been received and from actual results achieved that mutual goodwill can and does help each and all of us to solve our common problems. I think the Conference, as a whole, can congratulate itself on what has been effected.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU'S SUMMING UP.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said :—Before the Conference leaves this important subject I desire to take up just two minutes of your time in making my own position quite clear. I am completely satisfied with the kindness of my colleagues from the Dominions. I am sure that Indians throughout the Empire will derive new hopes and encouragement from their attitude. This, of course, does not apply to South Africa, regarding which country I had my say on Monday last. As regards the Colonial Office I am very glad to notice that the committee to be appointed as I suggested is not to be restricted in scope to certain specified Colonies. To me as an Indian, it is, of course, disappointing that the Duke, speaking last Monday, saw no prospect of modifying the Kenya decisions, which, as I have already made clear, can never be accepted in India, but his agreement with the principle of my scheme, and his consent to give careful attention to such representations as the committee may lay before him, inspires me with the hope that the door is not barred and that the Colonial Office may be shown the way to an acceptable solution. I shall recommend those with whom I have any influence, both in India and elsewhere, to work through this committee to obtain amelioration of such conditions as they and every Indian regard as incompatible with our national dignity and with our position as equal subjects in the Empire of our common Sovereign.

May I here just also refer to the expression of opinion made by Lord Peel to-day with regard to the resolution that I intended to move on the last occasion. I thoroughly appreciate the advice that has been given to me to-day by Lord Peel. I have noted with great pleasure the spirit of cordiality shown by my colleagues from all over the Empire, except General Smuts. I take their speeches as very encouraging and I note that what I wanted really has been achieved, namely, that they recognise the character of the resolution of 1921, that they have given

me a hope that they would do something material to achieve the end we have in view, namely, accomplishment of the principle of equality. Most of them have accepted my suggestions about committees. Mr. Bruce thinks he can do without the committee. As I said on a former occasion so much more honourable and creditable to him and to his country. It is because I have this support from the Dominion Prime Ministers, excepting one against, it is unnecessary for me to move my resolution formally.

Lastly, will you allow me to say one word about Lord Peel. Throughout the anxious days I have had to spend upon this question within the last two weeks I received nothing but unreserved support and encouragement from him and I am sure that when my countrymen come to know how strongly he stood by me they will realise that not only the Government of India and the great statesman who presides over that country have identified themselves with our national sentiment, but that the Secretary of State also has done the same. May I thank you, Sir, on behalf of myself and those whom I represent.

