

#### Newfoundland's Confidence in Lord Robert Cecil.

So far as Newfoundland is concerned, we are not represented in the League of Nations, but we leave our interests with perfect confidence in the hands of Lord Robert Cecil.

### STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, AS HEAD OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION.

#### Support of League.

*Lord Peel* : I desire to associate myself generally, on behalf of India, with the views that have been expressed here by the representatives of the Dominions in support of the League of Nations.

#### Opium Question.

I think that I ought to make one or two remarks on the position of India in connection with the opium question. Some resolutions were passed at the last meeting of the Advisory Committee on Opium with reference to the traffic in opium, and we have been criticized, I understand, in certain quarters because our representatives could not fully accept those resolutions and were compelled to make a reservation on behalf of India. The reservation that was made on behalf of India was to the following effect : "That the use of raw opium according to the established practice in India and its production for such use are not illegitimate under the Convention." Those who are familiar with Indian habits and customs will realize how essential it was that the representatives of India should support such a reservation.

#### India's Position as regards Opium Traffic.

As there has been some criticism of Indian action on this point I should like to say, and I will say it very briefly, how very strong the position of India is upon this subject. First of all, let me remind the Conference that the Indian Government have made very great sacrifices in the cause of the restriction of this opium traffic. They have sacrificed no less than four million sterling per year by their restriction of this traffic, a very great sacrifice indeed in the case of a country with such a large poor population and such comparatively limited resources as India possesses ; but not only that, they have most loyally and faithfully and fully carried out—I was going to say to the letter—all the provisions of the Hague Conventions in connection with the subject of opium. I do not want to criticize other countries, but I could not say the same thing of many of those countries adjoining India who have a financial interest in the opium traffic. And not only that, but the Indian Government have been very careful to restrict all their exports of opium to the amount actually approved of by the Governments of the countries to whom their opium was exported. They have, in fact, only exported on indents, as you might call them, from those particular countries ; and I would like to add this point : that, as regards the consumption of opium, during the last three years this has become a subject which is domestic to the provinces rather than an all-India subject, because this question of the consumption of opium is now under the control of Ministers, Indian Ministers, in the provinces ; in fact, it is altogether under the control of Indian Ministers except in one particular province, and that is Assam. Those Indian Ministers are responsible to Councils, and those Councils consist of a substantial majority of popularly elected persons ; therefore we may assume that those Ministers responsible to those Councils are fully cognisant of the interests of their own people, and are fully competent, if they wish, in the interests of those people, to restrict the consumption of opium. I point this out because the situation, of course, has very largely changed in this respect during the last three years, and I am not sure whether some of the other representatives at the League of Nations were fully cognisant of the change that had thus taken place.

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## APPENDIX V.

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### POSITION OF INDIANS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE EMPIRE.

24TH OCTOBER, 1923.

### STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, AS HEAD OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION.

*Lord Peel* : Prime Minister, I should like to thank you, and to thank the Conference also, for giving the members of the Indian delegation the opportunity of bringing this question of the position and status of Indians in the Dominions before you. I think you will all recognize that this subject is one of very high Imperial importance, and I know that in approaching the subject I speak in a general atmosphere of good will.

#### Importance of Problem.

Now, at the outset of the 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