

any colony, but in the most general way. I want to show that if the unity and the strength of the Empire are to be maintained and preserved it is really essential and imperative that we should find a solution of this problem of the position of Indians in the Dominions overseas. There have been, as the Conference knows, very great constitutional changes quite recently in the position of the Government of India, and these changes have brought into prominence what was possibly latent before, but is now clear—the existence of various parties with various opinions and policies. But, however much these parties may be divided in their points of view on general political subjects, on this 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 the non-co-operative parties. 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 to-day by His Highness the Maharajah 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 picture, that politicians, differing widely on all other subjects, and men of differing 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.

Feeling in India.

I certainly do not exaggerate when I say that this subject, more than any other, I think, is constantly impressed upon me, both officially and personally, by the Government of India and by Lord Reading, the Viceroy. The Viceroy, in his private letters, is constantly explaining and pressing 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 intensity 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 that it is very far to seek.

The reason why there is such unity among our fellow-subjects in India is this: 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, that there are questions of economic difficulty, 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.

This question of social status is a contributory cause in the history of many social and political movements disguised under more resounding names.

India's Services to the Empire.

Well, let me say a word about this great country, feeling so strongly and unitedly on the subject. First of all, look at its contribution to the Great War. No less than 1,400,000 men from India took their part in the service of 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 princes and others less distinguished all alike took part in the struggle of the Great War.

Her New Status.

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 the representatives of India take their place with the other States represented there, and are able to contribute their voice and their influence just as much as others to the deliberations of that Assembly.

Her Industrial Position.

Moreover—and I do not think this is always recognized—India, though it has been for centuries, for thousands of years, a great agricultural State, is now ambitious to become an industrial State. It has gone far along the road, because it has been accepted by the League of Nations as one of the eight greatest industrial States of the world.

India's New Constitution.

Now, India, as the Conference knows, has recently received a new political constitution, and that constitution, while giving the 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. Now, what is the position in India itself? In India itself there is a policy of co-operation. Britons and Indians co-operate together in the Government of India; Britons and Indians sit together on juries; they meet together in business; they are fellow-directors in the 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