

one example only, the great project of the Sukkar barrage on the Indus is calculated, if all goes well, to lay open some 4,000,000 acres of fresh cultivable land for agricultural purposes.

It is a matter of satisfaction that recovery from post-war conditions has advanced so far as to render feasible the initiation of large development projects of this nature.

I will not enter into questions of inter-Imperial trade, as those will form the subject of detailed discussion later. I will content myself by saying that we Indian delegates welcome on behalf of our Government all practical measures for fostering inter-Imperial trade. We believe that close commercial ties not only are of mutual economic benefit, but increase mutual knowledge and appreciation of the political and economic difficulties peculiar to each member of the Empire.

Value of Personal Intercourse.

Another factor, which is not unimportant in fostering India's growth as an integral part of the British Empire, is the promotion of personal contact between her representative citizens and those of the Dominions, and, so far as may be, the encouragement of closer relations between her Government and theirs. As long ago as the Conference of 1921 the Government of India expressed their desire to encourage personal intercourse as a means to better mutual understanding. They instanced the interchange of parliamentary delegations and visits of representatives of the Press or of Chambers of Commerce as possible methods of such *rapprochement*. I am happy to feel that progress has been made in this direction. For example, two members of the Indian Legislature have been associated in a visit to Australia recently organized by the Empire Parliamentary Association. More important still, the Government and people of India have been delighted by South Africa's cordial acceptance of an invitation to send to India a delegation representative of the Union Government and Parliament as guests of the Government of India, and I see from the newspapers that the members of that delegation have reached India and have been given a cordial reception. Such visits cannot fail to increase mutual knowledge and sympathy and to foster the spirit of harmony, friendship, and good will.

Negotiations between India and South Africa.

As the Conference is aware, a problem of great importance both to India and to South Africa and of great difficulty has been the subject, almost continuously in recent years, of direct negotiations between the two Governments. These negotiations, both by correspondence and subsequently through a deputation sent by the Government of India, have been conducted on both sides with courtesy and patience, and as a result a round-table conference has been arranged which is to meet in South Africa this year. That result is largely due, if I may say so, to the high statesmanship and sympathetic recognition of the Indian point of view shewn by the Union Government. The atmosphere in which the problem will be discussed has been sensibly improved, and the auspices for the meeting between the two Governments are at the present moment propitious.

I am particularly fortunate in finding that, although there are many important matters which are likely to be discussed by us with the representatives of His Majesty's Government and the representatives of the great Dominions, which form an integral part of the British Empire and which are a glory to the British race, there are no very great controversial matters relating to the position of Indians in other parts of the Empire.

While, therefore, congratulating the Conference in not having upon its agenda on this occasion the position of Indians overseas, I feel sure that it is the earnest desire of every one here that the meeting between the Governments of South Africa and India will lead to a satisfactory and enduring settlement of this problem, and will mark the beginning of close and friendly relations not only with South Africa but with the Empire generally; for India, being the juniormost traveller on the high-road of self-government, not only has to draw many an inspiration from the great Dominions, but can emulate to her advantage many of their examples in the fields of agriculture, industry, trade, and commerce to enable her to be raised to that high position in the British Empire which she is destined to fill by the British nation itself, and by the free and good will of the British people themselves. If this achievement is completed—which, however, must naturally take time, and which will depend on the Indians themselves when they realize how the whole world is watching their uplifting, their political progress, and their capacity for self-government—it will be the greatest glory to the British race. It is therefore natural that every Indian worth his salt, every Indian who has a real stake in the country, should realize and feel proud of the British connection, and firmly believe that India's connection with England can alone make India a no mean partner of the great British Commonwealth to which she is justly proud to belong. We have come to this Conference in a spirit of good will, and we look to ever increasing good will based on mutual knowledge and understanding as affording the most potent force for solving our difficulties as they arise and for ensuring the welfare of this Empire, the maintenance of which is of such vital concern to each one of us.

Tribute to Lord Curzon.

In conclusion, I should like to associate myself with what has fallen from the lips of my colleagues regarding the late Marquess Curzon and Mr. Massey. The latter I did not know, but Lord Curzon was well known to us in India. It is true I had not the honour of meeting him in his sphere of activities in the politics of the United Kingdom, but I do know, Sir, what a giant intellect he had, what wonderful imagination he had, and what a great Viceroy of India he was. In him the British Empire has indeed lost a true Imperialist of a kind very hard to replace, and indeed a great figure has been removed from our midst.

To my colleagues I should like to say that, as an Indian and a representative of the Government of India, not only do I feel myself greatly honoured at the great opportunity afforded me to meet the modern Great Empire builders of the British Empire, but that I feel indeed proud at being associated with them in the great work that lies before us, and, lastly, I associate myself wholeheartedly with the message of loyalty to our beloved King-Emperor and Queen-Empress which we have just passed, for in India the Sovereign and his Consort have niches in the hearts of Indians only below Divinity itself.