

Will the 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 good will and understanding for the future? Let not then the hand of the clock be held back. Advance in full confidence that what you do for India will be repaid to you a thousandfold from the people who know how to respond to generous sentiments.

Position of Indians overseas.

And now I start on a voyage outside my country under the ægis of the British flag. Under the protection it gave to its loyal citizens, Indians in search of wealth, adventurous people in search of enterprise, left their homes and their shores to find refuge in parts where freedom, justice, and peace were symbolized in the trident of the Red, White, and Blue. Indians found their way to South Africa, to Canada, to 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 their money, and settled down as peaceful citizens of the Empire. 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 the facts, and asked the question, What does that mean? Surely the answer cannot be the treating of any particular race as outcasts. 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 tie; 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. That is your business. We, on our part, do not wish 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 people to whom you are answerable. I assure you I appreciate the difficulty of your position. I, an Indian, have only tried to hold out my hand. I do not know if you and your people have the power and the desire to grasp it. Nothing hurts in the world more than the loss of *izzat*—humiliation. It is that one word which is the keynote of half the troubles of this world. It is certainly the keynote of the troubles of my country. Whether it is imaginary or real, Providence will judge; at least with open hearts shall we be able to approach Him, our Lord, on the Day of Judgment, and say, "We are your children. It was all a game; it was all the chequer-board of nights and days. We played our part; if it were ours for sacrifice, then we sacrificed that others might live."

Friends, I want to tell you that I have received messages from my country asking me that I should not work on the Conference, encouraging me to resign because India 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 forgo 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, that a great deal is gained by toleration and good will. Come what may, I am determined to exercise them to the last in this assemblage.

I have received wails 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 come 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.

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 alone a question that agitates the mind of British India, but it is one that is viewed with equal humiliation in the Indian States. Why? I was surprised myself to receive letters from my own subjects, one or two sentences of which I will read out to you. I hope you will not mind the 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, bereft of all sympathy with the outside world, has been passing her transitional days in trying circumstances, aggravated recently to a great extent by the Kenya decision." Again: "Whether the movement means for India a political set-back or a real awakening and a sure progressing State, towards building up a great national edifice, remains to be seen, but at present she looks to Your Highness with wistful eyes."

Kenya Settlement.

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 India than it is in two-thirds. 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 on an entirely 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