

## India and the Empire

*British Justice in India has been Answered by India's Wonderful Rally in Defence of the Empire, and the Indian Political Situation has Remained Remarkably Quiet*

By W. W. SWANSON.

The German Kaiser has had more than one disappointment since he mobilized his hordes for a kultur-war against the Allies, but assuredly none has been more bitter than the action and conduct of India since the conflagration broke out in Europe. Various United States journals to the contrary notwithstanding the great Dependency has remained superbly loyal and generous to the British cause since the first early and feverish days of August, 1914. For some hidden and inscrutable motive, nevertheless, the British Government has permitted to remain uncontradicted various malicious reports concerning alleged insurrection and sedition in India that have found currency in the United States and even in Italy and France. The truth is that at no time within the past decade have Indian politics and affairs been in so untroubled a condition as at the present moment. Whatever agitation there may be, has been caused by a group of revolutionaries, and intellectual visionaries and malcontents, that have found asylum, for the present, in the State of California, and from that vantage-ground have carried on a campaign of vilification and slander against the cause of Britain throughout the United States. That they have linked themselves up with German plotters and dynamiters in the Republic and have had their nefarious operations financed by German gold, sufficiently demonstrates their worth as impartial commentators on events that are transpiring at the present time in India. That India on the political side has remained absolutely calm and unmoved since the beginning of hostilities is a sufficient refutation of the charges made by such as the Hon. W. J. Bryan, who took occasion to attack British rule in India with the utmost virulence, merely, we presume, by way of showing how much better the Great Commoner could have managed the job himself. Be this as it may, and with a full and ready acknowledgment of mistakes made in the Dependency in the past, nothing could so strikingly testify to the innate justice and firmness of British government in India during the past two hundred years, as the manner in which Indians of all classes have acted during this struggle, and their unprecedented outburst of enthusiastic loyalty at its inception.

### Indian Aid to Britain.

When the Indian contingent landed at Marseilles in the autumn of 1914, welcomed with cheers and garlanded with roses, a new epoch dawned in British history and, indeed, in the march of the world's civilization. It is now known that England did not ask for these troops — they were thrust into the European field of battle by the Indian nation itself, determined as it was to stand by Anglo-Saxon ideals of liberty and justice and to fight for them to the bitter end. Notwithstanding the occasional friction that was manifest in the working of the government machinery in the Dependency, and despite injustices that had been perpetrated from time to time during the long two hundred years of British rule, it was recognized, almost intuitively by the Indian people, that Britain stood for something that was very precious to them and to the whole world — namely, the reign of law, order and liberty. There had been a certain amount of dissatisfaction in India with the existing order of affairs; but a dissatisfaction, be it noted, that was one of the direct and most fruitful products of British rule. England had gradually equipped India with railways, canals and roads; she had practically eliminated the possibility of widespread suffering for the future through a failure of crops in any one district, by constructing at enormous cost great irrigation works; she had given the Indian people domestic peace, and protection on their frontiers; and last, and perhaps most important of all, she had built up a great educational system comprising not only elementary schools, but technical institutes and colleges from which, each year, thousands of young men emerged to play their role in the upbuilding of the nation's material and intellectual structure. Unfortunately, there was not room in the civil service as hitherto constructed for all graduates of the higher institutions of learning; and hence the very natural demand on the part of native Indians for wider opportunities in govern-

ment service. More and more, however, posts were being found for Indians in the administrative work of their own country, and tens of thousands found scope for their abilities and training in that direction. Others entered the various learned professions; many found their way into journalism. And as the Government placed practically no obstacles in the way of free assembly or free speech there was, naturally enough, a good deal of criticism, among the young intellectuals, of British methods and of British rule. Nevertheless, we must insist upon the point that such an outcome of England's policy was not only natural but inevitable. The seeds of self-discipline and of self-government had begun to bear fruit. The teaching of the lessons of liberty gained through a study of the glorious pages of English history was not lost upon the young Indians; and therefore, in great measure and degree, the political and social ferment engendered by that teaching, as has been said, was not only inevitable but to be welcomed. It only remained to guide it into the right channels.

For these reasons, among many others, nothing so touched with emotion the British people in those first few weeks of war — not even the spontaneous manifestation of loyalty on the part of the Colonies, deeply felt as that was — as India's outburst of almost passionate devotion to the Empire, and its cause. There had been doubts and misgivings among Englishmen, so prone to self-criticism and self-deprecation in every period of national crisis, concerning India's attitude. But these were swept aside by the availance of offerings of men and money from India — in the loyal and devoted service extended by prince and peasant throughout the length and breadth of the entire Peninsula. It is not too much to say that British military operations in Gallipoli, in Egypt, and in Mesopotamia would have been impossible without Indian aid. The Dependency has furnished not less than 200,000 troops for the furthering of the Empire's cause. Nothing like it has been known in the world's history. And nothing could demonstrate more clearly the inherent justice of British rule in India.

### India Not a Nation.

Now and again there have appeared utterances in the press and on the platform, even in England itself, from visionaries and ultra-radicals like the late Keir Hardie, that Britain's day is done in India; and that the Dependency is at last ready for home rule. It is difficult to listen with patience to such words of wisdom from self-appointed mentors of empire. Everyone knows that India is not a nation; that it will take years to build up a national self-consciousness; and that England has been, and is, engaged upon this, more than upon any other, task. Lord Morley, who only resigned his office as Secretary of State for India in August, 1914, has done more, perhaps, than any other British statesman in this direction. He made it forever impossible to establish a military oligarchy in India; and laid wide and deep the foundations for a future great democracy. He destroyed the autocratic principle in India's government; and combined India and the United Kingdom in a limited liability partnership, for assuming the rights and obligations of guiding the destinies of 300,000,000 of the human race. He recognized the justice of the claim of native Indians to be admitted to a large and more important share in the government of their country; and put that principle into practical effect. A larger measure of local self-government was extended to the Dependency, and Indians were given a greater voice in the affairs of the Imperial Council. But this most liberal-minded of men also knew quite well that the power and prestige of the United Kingdom would be required for generations to come to maintain internal order and harmony in India itself, as well as to protect it from possible foreign aggrandizement. It is recognized by responsible men that India is not a country, but a continent; not a nation, but a congeries of tribes and races. There are forty-three distinct races within her borders, and nine separate and distinct religions. There are more than two thousand five hundred different castes, with their offshoots, each with its own customs and peculiar-

ties. Moreover, within that swarming mass of people there are more than 60,000,000 Mahomedans — a nation within the nation, themselves. Above all, these peoples and races are kept apart by the multiplicity of dialects and languages that are found between the Himalayan Mountains and Cape Camorin — a hard fact that is too often overlooked by superficial travelers who skim the surface of Indian life and then return to descant upon English autocratic rule. By the irony of fate, indeed, the Indian National Congresses, that have been foregathering these thirty years past, are compelled to use the English tongue in their deliberations, in order that the delegates may understand one another! In a word, it is quite accurate and fair to say that, because of religious, racial and linguistic reasons, the great main groups in the Dependency are kept farther apart than Danes, Poles, Prussians, French and English are in Europe.

### The Native States.

An astonishing outcome of the war has been the assurance given by the rulers of the Native States of their loyalty and friendship to the British Government. It is sometimes forgotten that one-third of India is still under native rule; and that there is in the Dependency about 700 Native States, comprising a population of more than 62,000,000 souls. It is astonishing, we repeat, that such unanimity of opinion has been felt and expressed regarding British over-lordship in India. This is due, no doubt, to the fact that in 1858, just after the Mutiny, Queen Victoria issued a proclamation guaranteeing to the Native Rulers all their accustomed rights and privileges, together with the assurance of protection from foreign foes. All treaty rights with the Princes of these States have been scrupulously observed. For these, and other reasons, the outbreak of war found the Native States rallying to the defence of the Empire. The Nizam of Hyderabad gave out of his private purse \$2,000,000 for the equipment of war; the Maharaja of Gwalior donated \$1,500,000 for the equipment of a hospital ship; the Maharaja of Mysore and other rulers followed with like princely gifts. Even independent border States, like Nepal and Tibet, sent offers of aid for the British cause, as expressions of gratitude for English justice and protection. Even the enemies of the Empire must be compelled to admit that British rule in India rests upon something more enduring than force.

### The Secret of British Success.

There is no secret to the success of British administration in the great Dependency. In last analysis the Government of India is based upon the trust of the people, and not upon force. Even in normal times, England maintains only 80,000 white troops in India, and 160,000 native. Since the outbreak of hostilities half of the white troops have been replaced by Territorials from England — men who are much inferior, whatever undeveloped qualities may be in them, to regulars. At least half, also, of the native troops, have been withdrawn for active service elsewhere. It is a truly remarkable achievement that England has been able to protect successfully the lives and property of 300,000,000 people with a force that, at its greatest, does not exceed 240,000 men, more than half of whom are native Indians. In proportion to population this is a much smaller army than is possessed by the pacific United States. Were the Indian people united and resolved, and convinced that English rule is unjust, the English troops would be swept into the sea.

### The Loyalty of India.

But India is convinced that British rule is rooted in justice and in impartial benevolence. Only so can the present situation be explained. Sir S. T. Sinho, the President of the Indian National Congress, which has just held its thirtieth annual meeting, paid a glowing tribute to British rule in India, and pledged the unqualified support of the people to the cause of the Empire. The All-Indian Moslem League has also, in unmeasured terms, praised the role that Britain has played in the Dependency, and pledged the support of 60,000,000 Mahomedans to the British Government — this, too, despite the attempts made from Berlin and Constantinople to foment trouble through the proclaiming of a Holy War in India. The Nizam of Hyderabad, head of the Indian Mahomedan, has not only furnished men but — as mentioned before — added a princely gift in money for the service of the Empire. During these twenty months of war India has remained firm, resolute and tranquil, notwithstanding all the machinations of Germany and Turkey. Little more than ordinary precautions have been taken to preserve the peace. There have been slight disorders and outbreaks, it is true; but not a

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