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SIR D. E. WACHA.

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NOTE

During a long and eventful career extending over a period of nearly half a century the Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha has been taking an active and strenuous interest in the public life of this country in all its varied activities. As a member of the Bombay Corporation, of the Mill Owners' Association and of the Bombay Improvement Trust, as the Secretary of the Bombay Presidency Association, as a leading Congressman, as a constant contributor to the press, and latterly as an elected non-official member of the Imperial Legislative Council, Sir Dinshaw, "a marvel of untiring energy, a living encyclopædia of experience and facts" has spoken and written on a variety of subjects covering a wide field—political, educational, industrial, commercial, and financial. His numerous speeches and writings besides serving as an interesting account and criticism of nearly fifty years of British Indian administration form also a valuable record of the various public movements of his time.

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In former days, when the Congress was held, we were told that it was a Hindu Congress and that the Muhammadans did not join in it. "Of course, when there is a difference of opinion, how can we agree to all the propositions urged by a Hindu Congress." So we were not unfrequently told by the Government. But the Hindus and Muhammadans are amalgamated. There is unanimity of thought, speech and mind between both communities. Government now trot out the question of Brahmins and non-Brahmins. That is the usual way with the bureaucracy, and there is nothing particular about it. I understand it to be intelligent enough, But what if there are Brahmins and non-Brahmins? There is the Charter Act which lays down clearly that 'proved merit and ability' shall be the only qualifications for the public service. One may be a Brahmin, or non-Brahmin, or an Australian, or a Canadian, or a Negro or a Hottentot, what of that? So far as the Service is concerned we are to have the best men for the Indian Government. There is nothing further to be said about it. " " " Why then should we have any more difficulty here with Brahmin preponderance or Muhammadan preponderance or Parsi preponderance or any other? The Charter Act is clear on the point; it says 'men of proved merit and ability' only shall be employed in the public service. Then it is laid down that there shall be no 'governing caste' in India. Where is the governing caste? The governing caste is the Civil Service; they are the governing caste, and yet the Brahmin is denounced. I cannot at all, Sir, understand that argument. p. 484.

The Civil Service has its traditions, and those traditions are, that they must be bequeathed from generation to generation. There is nothing new that from time to time these traditions are trotted out. It has gone on for the last 75 years. These Civilian interests have become vested and whenever vested interests are attacked the reply is 'This is impossible and that is impossible; you cannot do this and you cannot do that; the war is with us and we must not discuss this, that and the other.' They are all mere plausible pretexts to say non-possumus. I am sorry to have to say all this, but speak we must frankly and express our honest convictions on the subject. p. 495.

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