

# **AN ABOMINABLE PLOT**

*A Memorandum containing Sir S. Subramaniam's letter to  
President Wilson*

THE COMMONWEAL OFFICE

ADYAR, MADRAS

1918

# AN ABOMINABLE PLOT

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SIR SUBRAMANIAM'S LETTER TO DR. WILSON

*A Statement to America by Some Indian Leaders*

(By ANNIE BESANT),

AMONG the cables which reached England from America, and came here among my English cuttings, were two from widely circulated journals in the United States, which informed American readers that I was interned for "heading a revolt against the British authorities". I could do nothing beyond instructing my lawyers in London to write contradicting it, as one cannot bring libel suits in America.

What is the origin of the American story? On that I have some evidence, but not enough to make a definite statement.

Sir George Cave, from his privileged place in the House of Commons, accused Lala Lajpat Rai of receiving money from Germany, and suppressed his telegram of indignant denial.

In America, once more, a woman, under the name of the Marquise de Fontenoy, stated last November, in *The Chicago Tribune*, that I was interned for "stirring up

trouble against the English authorities through pro-German pacifist propaganda”.

It thus seems that a very definite attempt is being made in America and here to alienate American sympathy from India by foul accusations. Who is at the bottom of this abominable plot? Is it part of the Sydenham falsehoods, and is the Indo-British Association behind it? I cannot think of anyone else sufficiently unscrupulous to originate such a calumny. All who read my writings know that from first to last I have approved the War, for I regard it as necessary for the protection of the world against autocracy. In addition to this, for reasons which weigh with me far more than any worldly and political reasons, I regard Germany as the embodiment of the Dark Forces of the 'super-physical world, and because of this I have called on all Theosophists to work on the side of the Allies. To me, the success of the Germans would be the setting back of evolution, the triumph of evil over good, what the Christian would call the triumph of the Devil over God. I said this in the beginning, I have repeated it many times since 1914, and I repeat it now, as the reason why I believe that the Allies will triumph, and why I also believe that victory is delayed by Britain's adherence to autocracy in this country. This view of the super-physical side of the War may be absurd to many; but it is my belief as a Theosophist and an Occultist, and it cannot be shaken. To me, to touch German money or to help to the smallest degree in German plans would be, in mediæval phrase, "to sell my soul to the Devil". I cannot express, in decent language, my loathing of the idea.

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In order to do what I can to counteract this detestable plot against the honour of Home Rulers—for it is aimed

at them—and in order to destroy the accusation of wrongdoing which is being secretly circulated in Madras against the revered Life-President of the Home Rule League, because of a letter he wrote to the President of the United States of America last year, I think it best to publish what he sent over, and a brief account of what has been done in America to counteract the false statements circulated there. Nothing beyond what is written below has been done, so far as I know, and there is nothing in it that all the world may not know. The papers have been in my hands for a considerable time; but I have withheld them from publication.

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Nothing was done in America until after my internment. A letter says:

“Upon getting news of your internment I proceeded at once to communicate with some of the most important newspaper editors and Government officials in this country, including among others Col. Roosevelt, President Wilson, and members of the President’s Cabinet. I wrote to each a personal letter telling them what the situation was, and asking them to read your little book, *India, a Nation*, a presentation copy of which I sent to them. I received courteous responses, and in one important case, that of Colonel House, I received an autographic acknowledgment in which he promised to read the book. In these and other ways I did what I could.”

This, and all that follows, was done after I was interned, and as a consequence of that Government action. I, of course, knew nothing of it, as it was not arranged until after I had left; but I have many powerful friends in America, and the spontaneous action taken by my

correspondent was natural. It antedated the work of Mr. and Mrs. Hotchner, who left India after my internment.

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*Madras, India, 24th June, 1917.*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT WILSON.

HONOURED SIR: I address this letter to you as Honorary President of the Home Rule League in India, an organisation voicing the aspirations of a United India as expressed through the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League. These are the only two bodies in India to-day which truly represent the political ideals of that Nation of more than three hundred million people, because the only bodies created by the people themselves.

Over five thousand delegates of these two popular assemblies met at their Annual Convention in Lucknow last December, and they unanimously and co-jointly agreed upon identical Resolutions, asking His Majesty, the King of Great Britain, to issue a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date, to grant democratising reforms, and to lift India from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions.

While these Resolutions, Honoured Sir, voiced India's aspirations, they also expressed her loyalty to the Crown. But, though many months have elapsed, Great Britain has not yet made any official promise to grant our country's plea. Perhaps this is because the Government is too fully occupied with the heavy responsibility of the War.

But it is the very relationship of the Indian Nationalist Movement to the War that urges the necessity for an immediate promise of Home Rule—Autonomy—for

India, as it would result in an offer from India of at least five million men in three months for service at the front, and of five million more in another three months.

India can do this because she has a population of three hundred and fifteen millions—three times that of the United States, and almost equal to the combined population of all the Allies. The people of India will do this, because then they would be free men and not slaves.

At present we are a subject Nation, held in chains, forbidden by our alien rulers to express publicly our desire for the ideals presented in your famous War Message :  
 “. . . the liberation of peoples, the rights of nations great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their ways of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty.”

Even as conditions are, India has more than proved her loyalty to the Allies. She has contributed freely and generously of both blood and treasure in France, in Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, and elsewhere. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, British Secretary of State for India, said : “ There are Indian troops in France to this day ; their gallantry, endurance, patience and perseverance, were shown under conditions new and strange to them.” Field-Marshal Lord French said : “ I have been much impressed by the initiative and resource displayed by the Indian troops.” The London *Times* said concerning the fall of Baghdad : “ It should always be remembered that a very large proportion of the force which General Maude has guided to victory are Indian regiments. The cavalry which hung on the flanks and demoralised the Turkish army and chased it to the confines of Baghdad, must have been

almost exclusively Indian cavalry. The infantry which bore months of privation and proved in the end masters of the Turks, included Indian units, which had already fought heroically in France, Gallipoli and Egypt."

If Indian soldiers have achieved such splendid results for the Allies while slaves, how much greater would be their power if inspired by the sentiments which can arise only in the souls of free men—men who are fighting not only for their own liberties, but for the liberties of mankind! The truth is that they are now sacrificing their lives to maintain the supremacy of an alien Nation which uses that supremacy to dominate and rule them against their will.

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the official Government in India utterly failed to get a response to its recent appeal to Indians to volunteer for military service. Only five hundred men came forward out of a possible thirty million.

It is our earnest hope that you may so completely convert England to your ideals of world liberation that together you will make it possible for India's millions to lend assistance in this war.

Permit me to add that you and the other leaders have been kept in ignorance of the full measure of misrule and oppression in India. Officials of an alien nation, speaking a foreign tongue, force their will upon us; they grant themselves exorbitant salaries and large allowances; they refuse us education; they sap us of our wealth; they impose crushing taxes without our consent; they cast thousands of our people into prisons for uttering patriotic sentiments—prisons so filthy that often the inmates die from loathsome diseases.

A recent instance of misrule is the imprisonment of Mrs. Annie Besant, that noble Irishwoman who has done

so much for India. As set forth in the accompanying statement signed by eminent legislators, editors, educators and pleaders, she had done nothing except carry on a law-abiding and constitutional propaganda of reforms; the climax being her internment, without charges and without trial, shortly after printing and circulating your War Message.

I believe His Majesty, the King, and the English Parliament are unaware of these conditions, and that, if they can be informed, they will order Mrs. Besant's immediate release.

A mass of documentary evidence, entirely reliable, corroborative and explanatory of the statements in this letter, is in the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hotchner, who would esteem it a privilege to place it at your disposal. I have entrusted this letter to them because it would never have been permitted to reach you by mail. They are loyal Americans, editors, authors, and lecturers on educational and humanitarian subjects, who have been deeply interested in the welfare of India. They have sojourned here off and on during the last ten years, and so have been eye-witnesses to many of the conditions herein described. They have graciously consented to leave their home in India in order to convey this letter to you personally in Washington.

Honoured Sir, the aching heart of India cries out to you, whom we believe to be an instrument of God in the reconstruction of the world.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

S. SUBRAMANIAM,

*Knight Commander Indian Empire, Doctor of Laws ;  
 Honorary President of the Home Rule League in India ;  
 Co-Founder of the National Congress of India in 1885 ;  
 Retired Judge and frequently Acting Chief Justice of the  
 High Court of Madras.*

THE FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT REFERRED  
 TO IN THE FOREGOING LETTER

In view of the internment of Mrs. Besant and of two of those associated with her in her political work, and having regard to the failure—nay, the refusal—by H. E. the Governor of Madras explicitly to specify the grounds on which such drastic action was taken, it is the duty of those who have been engaged with her in doing the work relating to the endeavour to obtain for India Self-Government or Home Rule in the near future, emphatically to assert and place on record that no phase of her activity or of the work of the organisations started by her has partaken of any dubious character, or has been aught but law-abiding and constitutional. The work has been pursued and will be continued consistently with those great traditions of English political agitation hallowed by the memories of men like Cobden and Bright, Gladstone and Bradlaugh.

The Indian Government, after having availed itself of a War measure to try to suppress peaceful agitation, is now, most unjustifiably, attempting to check the circulation of all news of what is taking place here.

Hon. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar,

Member, Governor-General's Supreme Council.

Hon. V. K. Ramanujachari,

Member, Legislative Council, Madras.

Hon. B. V. Narasimha Aiyar,

Member, Legislative Council, Madras.

- Hon. K. Sadasiv Bhat,  
Member, Legislative Council, Madras.
- Sir S. Subramaniam, K.C.I.E., LL.D.,  
Retired Judge, High Court, Madras.
- B. Sanjiva Rao, M.A. (Cantab.),  
Principal, Kayasth Pathshala College, Allahabad.
- L. A. Subbaramaiah, B.A., B.L.,  
High Court Vakil and Ex-Chairman, Municipal  
Council, Palghat.
- Benjamin Guy Horniman,  
Editor, *Bombay Chronicle*.
- Maujeri Ramier,  
High Court Vakil, Calicut, Malabar.
- K. Nageswara Rao,  
Editor, *Andhropatrika*, Madras.
- Konda Venkatappayya, B.A., B.L.,  
Hon. Secretary, Standing Committee, Andhra Con-  
ference, President, Fifth Andhra Conference,  
President of the District Association, Guntur.
- C. V. Venkataraman Aiyangar,  
High Court Vakil, Coimbatore.
- N. C. Kelkar, B.A., LL.B.,  
Editor, *Kesari* and *Mahratta*, Poona.
- A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, B.A., B.L.,  
Editor, *Swadeshamitran*, Madras.

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[The name of Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar did not appear on the above document, because the projectors thought that his political work was so closely identified with my own that his name would not add weight to it. Consequently, it was not shown to him; and he knew nothing of it till I showed it to him a few months ago.]

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## AMERICA LISTENS TO INDIA'S APPEAL

(BY HENRY HOTCHNER)

WASHINGTON, D.C., *October 20th*—Since America's entry into the War few events have so stirred the best public opinion here as the letter just-handed to President Wilson from Sir Subramaniam, Honorary President of the Home Rule League in India, in which he offers ten million men to the Allies, provided England grants autonomy to India on the same basis as Canada and Australia.

President Wilson has sent this document to Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, for consideration; and a copy of it has been placed in the hands of every one of the 533 members of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The essential features of Sir Subramaniam's offer were telegraphed far and wide by the Associated Press and the International News Service; and they appeared in all of the principal newspapers in America, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. It is estimated that this information has been published in no less than 1,500 newspapers, with an aggregate circulation of not less than 20,000,000 readers.

No formal governmental action has yet been taken upon the letter itself; but it is violating no confidence to say that its immediate military significance has already been presented unofficially to a number of the members of

the Senate Committee of Military-Affairs. The leaders of public opinion in Washington are showing the usual diplomatic courtesy of waiting a little time in order to give the President an opportunity to express his opinion first. But already the drift of public judgment can be discerned in the press comments, as well as in the statements made by one or two prominent men.

Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, and one of the most important members of Mr. Wilson's Advisory War Council, said in discussing the situation: "I see no reason why India should not have Home Rule on the same basis as Canada and Australia." He added that he was personally familiar with Annie Besant's work for the cause of Labour, and remembered her assistance to the Matchmakers' Union in London in the early days.

William Jennings Bryan's face broke out into a broad smile when the letter was handed to him. "I told you so" is a well-worn phrase, but it applies truly to his case. Years ago he advocated Self-Government for India; and, so accurately did he depict the plight of that poverty-stricken, subject race, that his book was proscribed there; and it was made a legal offence to buy, to sell, or to have his book in one's possession.

India's offer will have an immediate and powerful effect upon War sentiment in America. How England acts upon it will determine whether America will be solidly pro-British or not. One of the most irritating influences which President Wilson has to combat in his War measures is the strong and fearless anti-British party which is continually questioning England's sincerity of purpose. Her administration in Ireland and in India has given them an unanswerable argument,

they think. The Irish question is in process of solution. But the question of India, with 315,000,000 souls, now looms big on the international horizon. Even the heavy cloud of the War can no longer obscure it.

Will England grant India's prayer for Home Rule? An overwhelming majority of Americans believe she will. They believe that Viscount Grey accurately voiced British War aims when he said :

"We wish the nations of Europe to be free to live their independent lives, working out their own forms of Government for themselves and their own national development, whether they be great States or small States, in full liberty. This is our ideal."

Naturally Americans ask: Why should not this be applied to India also? Now that the opportunity has arisen to justify these words with deeds, America is looking to England to act, and to act with speed and thoroughness. Meanwhile Americans have been very much gratified to read the first expression of British sentiment on India's offer, the interview with Bishop Wedgwood of London, a cousin of Commander Wedgwood, M.P., D.S.O., which appeared in New York's largest daily paper, and which reads as follows :

"I have lived in India and am acquainted with the venerable jurist and publicist who sent this offer to President Wilson. I believe it will be accepted with gratitude by all Englishmen. Immediate steps should be taken to arm these splendid fighters. To add this huge army to our present forces would unquestionably end the war in our favour in the near future.

"Ten million Indian troops, because of their low pay and simple diet, could be maintained in the field for

one-half the cost of a similar number of English and Americans. It will mean a tremendous sacrifice for us to give India Home Rule, for we shall lose some of the enormous revenue which English merchants and officials have derived from India. But no sacrifice is too great at a critical time like this; and India, by reason of her already generous contribution of men and money for this War, has won the right to Home Rule."

A typical editorial comment in one of our dailies, states the case thus:

"There is consistency and force in the cause that India pleads for. If it is true that England is fighting for the rights of humanity, to preserve liberty and freedom to all the peoples of the world, then the complaint of India is just and competent. The official communication from the leader of the Home Rule movement to President Wilson states: 'At present we are a subject nation, held in chains, forbidden by our alien rulers to express publicly our desire for the ideals presented in your famous war message.'

"That is wholly at variance with the present professions of England in this war for democracy, the liberation of peoples, the rights of nations great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their ways of life and obedience.

"As we all must come to the court of final resort, public opinion, with clean hands in this contest for democracy, wouldn't it be advisable for Great Britain to be looking to washing hers, if she would achieve consistency for herself, while fighting for justice for others?"

It is the fond hope—nay, the expectation—that England will rise to this opportunity. It is in that spirit that Americans interpret Mr. Lloyd George's sending to that far eastern Empire his new Secretary

of State for India, Mr. Montagn. It is said that Mr. Montagn is to ascertain the true situation there, and to report whether Home Rule may be granted to India; in fact, Mr. Montagn declares that a larger measure of Self-Government is actually to be given.

Alas, how many such declarations have been made in the past, and how few carried out! More than half a century ago Queen Victoria in a Proclamation promised equal rights to Indians. To-day, so complete is the despotism, that English Governors may refuse to answer questions put by Indian members of the legislature and may veto resolutions or even decline to put them to the vote.

No wonder, then, that the *Times Picayune*, of new Orleans, says editorially:

"It remains to be seen whether these promises will be kept, or share the fate of previous promises no less solemn which the official hierarchy managed to pigeon-hole.

"But certainly India cannot be ruled in the old way, when peace returns. Can a population of more than three hundred millions be expected to tolerate this vassalage much longer? India has been astonishingly loyal throughout this crisis and should promptly get the reward she deserves.

"India is paying taxes levied without her consent. That such an autocracy will endure beneath the British flag is unthinkable; but the British Government cannot too quickly forestall the demand for absolute independence, by establishing complete autonomy in domestic affairs.

"The Hastings-Clive system is out of date; the 'iron proconsul' may govern India scientifically, but cannot keep her loyal."

Americans will be keenly interested to observe whether Mr. Montagu will receive his impressions of India through the distorting medium of the bureaucratic ring, as did his predecessor Mr. Chamberlain, or whether he will go to the true leaders of India like Mr. Wacha, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Subramaniam, of the Muslim League and the Congress, and especially Mrs. Besant, who is to preside at the next Congress in Calcutta.

Americans know that these popular assemblies have already approved a scheme of reforms for a larger measure of Self-Government in co-operation with British administrators. The least Mr. Montagu can do is to grant these reforms *in toto*. They are very moderate. This will allay Indian unrest, and stem the strong tide of complete independence.

And as to India's martyr, Annie Besant, what will Mr. Montagu do towards wiping out the humiliation and injustice of her internment by the Governor of Madras? America was thrilled with joy by the news of her release, even though it was clear that this was obtained only by pressure brought to bear in the British Parliament.

Will Mr. Montagu reinstate Mrs. Besant publicly in the eyes of the world by admitting that she but upheld British ideals of free speech and human rights in the face of un-British rule in India? Or is this venerable, social, religious and political leader, beloved in every land, to go unrequited and unrewarded after half a century of unselfish public service, to be struck down by her own people, like Joan of Arc, and to be left to a later generation for a just appreciation of her worth?

The friend who carried the letter for us said that he had been visiting the White House for fifteen years; and this was the first time that he passed through the door

unchallenged. Four men usually guard the President ; but this time only one man was there, and he stood, some distance away, looking across the garden, with his back to the entrance.

Our friend entered with the precious letter, gave it to the President's personal factotum, and it was carried into his private study. The next day, in accordance with diplomatic courtesy, we placed a carbon copy of the letter in the hands of Mr. Lansing, Secretary of State. The following day we learned that the President sent his letter to Mr. Lansing with the notation that it was a delicate matter, but should be looked into.

The next day a printed copy of the letter was placed on the desks of 533 Senators and Congressmen in the Capitol. The Press was attracted by the military significance of the letter, and both the Associated Press and the International News, which supply news items daily to a large number of papers, sent out telegraphic accounts of the offer of ten million men. The attached cutting from the *Washington Herald* is typical of the story which appeared in about fifteen hundred daily newspapers, read by many millions of people throughout America. Editorial leaders, pro and con, are naturally following, and a wave of interest in India is spreading all over the country. The interview with Bishop Wedgwood was printed through the same channels, and further propaganda is in progress.

We were also invited to meet a number of members of the Senate Committee on Military affairs in the Capitol, and we have explained to them India's position and its offer. They seemed profoundly impressed. The matter was also laid personally before Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour, who was familiar

with Mrs. Besant's early work for unions in England. All the editors in Washington were personally visited and informed. Mr. Bryan has also been informed personally. Mr. Roosevelt has been indisposed recently, but an interview with him is now being arranged.

We have already given public lectures on this subject and commenced a campaign of widespread Indian sympathy in both Washington and New York. In Washington we incorporated the League for World Liberation, which is to work for universal Self-Government and the art of civilisation. Its ideals are those which Mrs. Besant has proclaimed for the world's political and social regeneration.

We are emphasising the fact that the Government in India is un-British, that the people in England are unaware of the real conditions there, that it is a bureaucratic ring of commercial and political interests that is sapping India of its strength and preventing the facts from becoming known, and that England will be grateful for having this situation brought before her, will be the first to set matters right, and will spring forward to take advantage of this military offer. We are showing, also, that if England grants India's prayer for Home Rule, the very example of such a huge self-sacrifice will assure Russia that she is not seeking conquest and aggrandisement, and will again bring Russia's millions actively and aggressively into the War. England's sacrifice will also have its influence on the internal situation in Germany, where many have been told that England is self-seeking and will dominate Germany if she can. This one act of renunciation would do more to counteract that feeling in Germany than tons of press despatches and tons of munitions; and it would

do much to bring about the democratisation of Germany, the overthrow of the Kaiser, and the end of the War. These are some of the lines along which we can work as loyal Americans standing behind President Wilson in his ideals for a world that is completely self-governed and therefore safe for democracy.

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#### ANOTHER LETTER

(BY MRS. HOTCHNER)

Through the influence of friends we have been able to reach the supporters and personal friends of President Wilson. Chief among them was the Hon. Henry Morgenthau, former Ambassador to Turkey, and Financial Director of Mr. Wilson's two presidential campaigns. Mr. Morgenthau's brother is a personal friend of Mr. Hotchner's; in fact, the latter was general manager of one of his large business corporations. Mr. Morgenthau was deeply interested in India's demand for Home Rule and in the fact that the people now seem united. He asked for an extra copy of Judge Subramaniam's letter to President Wilson. Even while Mr. Hotchner was talking with him in his office, he was called to the telephone to Mr. Wilson, as he is one of Mr. Wilson's closest friends. You can understand how delighted we were that India's case was thus clearly and sympathetically placed before him.

Mr. Morgenthau then gave Mr. Hotchner a personal introduction to Colonel House, who is President Wilson's confidential representative, and adviser on international affairs. Colonel House is now in England insisting upon

a better co-ordination of the Allies' resources, and a restatement of their War aims to conform to President Wilson's ideal of "the rights of nations" to Self-Government. An important part of Colonel House's work in America is to collect and classify the facts regarding all subject nations, so as to lay the just and wise basis for an enduring world peace that shall permit each nation to develop along its own natural lines. These data will then be laid before President Wilson and used by him in carrying out his plan for a League of Nations on the basis of world liberation through Self-Government and democracy.

When Colonel House left America for England, he carried with him the facts as to India. Even before then, President Wilson had sent our statement to the American Ambassador in England, in connection with Judge Subramaniam's letter.

England's changed attitude toward India can easily be linked with these vital facts. We were also told more, by some one who has unchallenged *entré* at the White House and who is in touch with vital War matters of the moment,—a man of power who is helping us. He said that Colonel House had been instructed to take up India's case with the Premier in England and to enquire why some steps could not be taken to grant Home Rule, so that more of the man-power could be utilised in the War, and especially in Mesopotamia. Colonel House was also to enquire the extent of England's participation in the War policy of Liberation of the world through Self-Government. England's renunciation of India as a subject nation and as a source of economic profiteering would do much to end the War; so leading men here believe. England would then *stand before* the world as

an example of unselfishness and as an apostle of democracy.

We understand that this has had a great deal to do with the conciliatory attitude toward Indian ambitions which is now held by England, Mr. Montagu and the Viceroy, and that further developments may be expected. We therefore feel that the work we did in Washington has exceeded our highest hopes. We placed the important facts in the hands of the people who are at the head of things and who could act. And they did act.

Our hearing before the Senators on the Committee for military affairs also had good fruit and helped in bringing pressure to bear upon England. We showed them the need for India's whole-hearted military co-operation and how it could be secured. The collapse of Russia and the Italian defeats have brought to a head the need for greater man-power, and this is reviving the Indian question. The six hundred other Senators and Heads of Departments to whom we presented the facts, as well as Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, Mr. Gompers (Head of the Labour Party) and others, are all interested in this question. All of the editors of the Washington papers were personally interviewed by Mr. Hotchner; and the leader of them asked him for another personal interview. All these people now know India's case, and many of them have brought pressure to bear upon the leaders here and in England.

Of our press work we wrote you in an earlier letter. It suffices to add that items about India's demand for Home Rule have appeared in newspapers aggregating more than 30,000,000 in circulation. Editorial leaders have appeared in many of them. Canadian papers have taken up the discussion of India's man-power. The

leading English papers have also been sent a memorandum of the facts by us.

This newspaper propaganda makes the papers and the public more interested in any other items about India, and it helps to account for the large space they are giving to these items. Where before they used to give an inch, they are now apt to give half a column or more. *The Literary Digest* is one of the weeklies that we have kept informed of developments; you will note from the enclosed cutting how much publicity they now give to Indian items. Such work is cumulative. If we had the funds to employ a secretary and to answer the hostile leaders, as well as to comment on the favourable ones, that are appearing all over the country, we could do a great deal to expedite the campaign of educating America's public to the Indian situation, which ought to be done to expedite your work. As it is, we have already done a great deal in this direction, and have to a considerable extent counteracted the bad effect of the bureaucratic press reports which have been sent out from India against you. We shall continue this work as much as we can.

*Colonel Roosevelt.*—An intimate friend of the Colonel's took us to visit him in his home at Oyster Bay, New York. We were received there socially by the Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt. We had tea with them and with some distinguished diplomats and friends who were there. The Colonel then asked us to sit next to him and to tell our story. For an hour they all listened intently as we pleaded for India. Colonel was deeply interested. He said he was especially pleased to hear that, at their last Conventions, the Muslim League and the National Congress had reached a harmony of agreement as to their

ideals. He was certain that India would participate in the world's advance towards democracy. His exact words (which he has put in writing for us) are: "India must certainly participate in the world's advance towards democracy, which is another way of saying the right of well behaved peoples to Self-Government."

*The League for World Liberation* is to spread literature about India throughout America, according to its financial means. It will be assisted by local representatives in many of the States. Its main office is in Washington, D.C. The League was incorporated there by a number of native-born American citizens who are cordially in favour of President Wilson's ideal for a democratised world, and for the liberation of subject nations; they are especially in favour of the liberation of India according to your ideals.

We spoke for India and for you at the Convention, and the members were cordial and enthusiastic about our work. In the *Theosophic Messenger* for November a résumé is given of our remarks. Members have written to us from all over America asking about further particulars, and we shall enlist their support.

#### THE WORK OF THE MOMENT

Influential leaders in New York and Washington have asked me to prepare an up-to-date *Brief* on India's case. The data they now have is in a number of books, and pamphlets that are very voluminous, and that require much reading and time to disclose the salient facts. So Mr. Shibley and Mr. Hotchner worked for weeks over books, pamphlets, latest London newspapers, etc., in the Washington and New York public libraries, culling the salient

facts—quoting especially the English statesmen who have expressed your ideals and called attention to India's plight. We have brought all the data out here, where we also have the books which you gave us in person, and which we did not dare take to Washington on our trip east. For the next few weeks we shall classify and condense this mass of data, and put it into a form that will meet the demands of the present situation in America and from the American point of view.

One thing which has greatly hampered our work in preparing this *Brief* is that a great many of the books and pamphlets which have been written about India have neglected one important necessity—when quoting statistics favourable to their case, they have failed to give the exact reference as to the origin of their figures. To say that Gladstone made this or that remark, that England “bleeds” India to this or that amount, etc., etc., without giving the book and the page from which the facts are taken, makes it impossible to use those unauthenticated quotations. It is first necessary to spend hours or days trying to verify the quotation in order to state its origin; and as many of these books cannot be found in America at all, a great many valuable statistics have to be omitted from this *Brief* which would otherwise be of vital use.

Perhaps you can speak of this to our Indian brothers who are writers or speakers. When submitting India's case (or any case) to an impartial tribunal, no quotation can be included which does not give the page and book of its origin, so that it may be verified easily. Perhaps our brothers will bear this in mind in future publications.

Our *Brief* on India's case will be printed, if we can get the money. If not, Mr. Hotchner will probably take a typed copy to Colonel House in Washington when he returns from

Europe. Colonel House welcomes such help, and therefore we shall do for India what Paderewski is doing for Poland, and other authorities for the remaining subject nations. We wonder if anyone is presenting Egypt's case?

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## SPECIMEN EXTRACTS

### INDIA APPEALING FOR HOME RULE

TEN million soldiers will be India's contribution to the Allied cause, according to a letter presented to President Wilson yesterday.

It came from Sir S. Subramaniam, leader of the Indian Home Rule Movement, and declares the soldiers will be provided if the British Empire will accord India civil privileges such as those accorded to Canada and Australia.

The letter was brought to Washington by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hotchner, American writers and lecturers, who have lived for ten years in India.

Last December the Indian Congress and the All-India Muslim League held a joint Convention of 5,000 delegates in Lucknow, the letter asserts. This meeting passed a resolution asking King George to promise in a proclamation that India would no longer be treated as a subject nation after the War.—*Washington Herald*.

[This is one of the leading Washington papers. A somewhat similar version appeared simultaneously in about 700 other newspapers, while a shorter account appeared in perhaps 800 other papers, reaching about 7 million readers.—H. H.]

England ought to accept India's offer to provide ten million men for the Allies, and Edwin Montagu's trip to India probably has for its most important

object the consideration of Home Rule there, in the opinion of the Right Rev. James Ingall Wedgwood. He has just arrived in this city after a tour of the United States and is about to sail for his home in London. Bishop Wedgwood said :

“I believe immediate steps should be taken to arm and munition these splendid fighters. Indian regiments helped to stop the German advance at the Marne, and they have done heroic work in France and Mesopotamia.

“To add this huge army to our present forces would be a mighty aid to the Allies and would unquestionably end the War in our favour in the near future. It is a significant financial fact that ten million Indian troops, because of their low pay and simple diet, could be maintained in the field for one-half the cost of a similar number of English and Americans.

“It will mean a tremendous sacrifice for us to give India Home Rule, for we shall lose some of the enormous revenue which English merchants and officials have derived from India. But no sacrifice is too great at a critical time like this, and India, by reason of her already generous contribution of men and money for this War, has won the right to be granted her loyal aspirations to be an autonomous partner of the British Commonwealth on the same basis as Canada and Australia.

“I have lived in India and am acquainted with Sir S. Subramaniam, the venerable jurist and publicist, who has sent to President Wilson this offer of military assistance. I believe it will be accepted with gratitude by all Englishmen, whose sentiments were voiced by Viscount Grey a few days ago, when he said that we were in hearty accord with President Wilson's policy of Self-Government for all peoples.

“Why should not India, with its three hundred million people, be granted this boon, and its enormous man-power and resources be utilised?”

“My cousin, Commander Wedgwood, D.S.O., Gallipoli, who is a member of Parliament, has already introduced this matter of perfectly constitutional agitation for Home Rule.”

Bishop Wedgwood is the presiding dignitary of the Old Catholic Church in the British Empire. He is the great-great-grandson of Josiah Wedgwood, the founder of the Wedgwood pottery, and is the great nephew of Charles Darwin.

[This appeared in a New York paper having a circulation of 500,000 readers, and it will doubtless appear in many other papers.—H. H.]