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AGITATE MUCH MORE, ORGANISE BETTER, THAN AT PRESENT

"The 36th Anniversary of the *Sant Samaj Sangh,* a spiritual association of the Depressed Classes, was celebrated at Poona on Thursday the September 27, 1930 when, in the absence of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar for a time owing to a previous engagement. Mr. B. G. Jagtap, Principal of the Shivaji Maratha High School. presided.

In addressing the gathering Mr. K. G. Patade, the Secretary of the Depressed Classes Mission Society, Poona, gave a short history of the Sangh, the special feature of which, he pointed out, was the spreading of the gospel of social equality among the Depressed Classes. The *Sant Samaj Sangh* organisation was a moral force for uniting the masses and the Depressed Classes. He paid glowing tributes to the work of Dr. Ambedkar and Subhedar Ghatge and thought that the nomination of the latter to the Bombay Legislative Council on behalf of the Depressed Classes would be for their good.

Dr. Ambedkar, who had arrived by this time and taken the chair, was given an ovation when he rose to address the meeting. In the course of his address he pointed out that his personal activities were not sufficient to bring about the redress of the grievances of the Depressed Classes who, he said, must agitate much more and orgainse themselves better than they were at present organised. Dr. Ambedkar emphasised that he would do his best to bring home to the British at the Round Table Conference the grievances of the Depressed Classes and secure as many rights for them as possible"[1]

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[1] : The Times of India, dated 29th September 1930.

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.....OTHERWISE ADVANCED HINDU CASTES WOULD REMAIN IN POWER AND RULE THE MINORITIES

"About ten thousand men and women of the Bombay Depressed Classes assembled on the *maidan* (ground) outside the Damodar Thackersey Hall, Parel, Bombay, on Thursday, 2nd October 1930 evening to wish *bon voyage* to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who is proceeding to England on Saturday to take part in the Round Table Conference as a representative of the Depressed Classes. There was great enthusiasm at the meeting which was presided over by Dr. P. G. Solanki.

The Chairman, at the outset, referred to the services rendered by Dr. Ambedkar to the Depressed Classes in various ways and assured the audience that if there was any man who was best qualified to represent them at the Round Table Conference it was Dr. Ambedkar. He wished him, on their behalf, a pleasant voyage and success in his great mission.

Mr. Shivatarkar then read an address from the people expressing their good wishes to Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar addressed the meeting at great length. He spoke of the necessity of carrying on propaganda among the Depressed Classes with a view to keeping their interest alive in matters relating to their political and social welfare. He announced that it had been decided by the leaders of the Depressed Classes to revive their old journal under the new name of *Janta* (*i.e.,* the "People,")

Referring to his forthcoming visit to England, Dr. Ambedkar said that they were being told by the Congress people that it was no use going to the Round Table Conference; he, however, thought something good was sure to come out of the Conference and the Depressed Classes were bound to benefit by it. He could not associate himself with the methods that were being adopted by the Congress people in Bombay, because they had

led to the unemployment of thousands of poor working people without doing any good to the country.

He would at once say that he and the members of the Depressed Classes wanted self-government just as much as the Congress people, but what they said was that they and the other minorities in the country should also have their fair share in the new constitution. If, as the Congress seemed to desire, the British had simply to go away under the new constitution, leaving the system of administration as it was, then the result would be that the advanced Hindu Classes would remain in power and rule the minorities. That was what the Depressed Classes objected to. He declared that if the Round Table Conference failed owing to that attitude of the advanced classes, the blame for such failure would lie on the Congress and the advanced Hindu Classes. He hoped the Hindu delegates, who would attend the Round Table Conference, would bear in mind the claims of the minorities if they wanted to make it a success.

Proceeding Dr. Ambedkar said that he intended to extend his stay in England to carry out another object he had in view. The two main grievances of the Depressed Classes were that they were debarred from serving in the police and the military and his idea was to bring that grievance to the notice of the War Office and the British Cabinet with a view to its being removed. He also intended to go to Russia, Germany, America and Japan, and carry on propaganda on behalf of the Depressed Classes. They knew that the Congress had been carrying on propaganda in those countries against England and he thought that he would be perfectly justified in securing the sympathy of the people of those countries for the Depressed Classes by making them acquainted with the conditions under which they lived in this country.

Mr. Keluskar and Mr. Naik then addressed the meeting."[1]

[1] : The Times of India, dated 3rd October 1930.

However, there were additional dimensions in the speech of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, which were covered by Keer. The dimensions were as under : Editors.

"Replying to the address, Dr. Ambedkar said what little he had achieved, had been done with the co-operation of his numerous workers and colleagues. He praised the work and sincere help of Dr. Solanki in the Legislative Council, and, styling Deorao Naik his right hand, added that he would guide the movement on proper lines in his absence. He gratefully thanked Shankarrao S. Parsha, who had expended large sums on his movement.

As regards the Round Table Conference, Dr. Ambedkar said it was definitely advantageous from the point of view of the Depressed Classes. "As regards myself," continued Dr. Ambedkar, "I will demand what is rightful for my people, and I will certainly uphold the demand for *Swaraj*". In the end he promised, if possible, he would place their problem even before the League of Nations. He concluded his speech with a warning to his lieutenants and his people to keep themselves aloof from internal quarrels ; otherwise the greed for leadership would weaken their strength, worsen their position and mar their goal" [1].

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[1] : Keer. P. 145.