

## **The New Constitution by Saadat Hasan Manto**

The British Raj in India produced a grim story of cruelty and arrogance on the part of haughty English rulers who considered the Indians as a lower creation of God. There was no concept of basic human rights for the Indians. They had no legal protection; government, administration and law courts were a puppet in the hands of goras and they misused all these discretionary powers to terrorize and humiliate the natives. This story pertains to the era before the Second World War. The condition in the sub-continent was full of turmoil and chaos. The control of British Raj was weakening and the anti-Raj activities and violence was on the rise. The people of India were quickly getting awareness about their own rights, so they demanded to be treated as a “human being”. The anti-government parties were fuelling their activities up because of the changes in international scenario. The bomb blasts and arrests taking place in different cities of India were an observation of everyday. In these circumstances the introduction of the new law was taken to be a whiff of fresh air by innocent masses of the sub-continent. Ustad Mangu is one of the best characters portraying the innocence, sincerity and fervour of a common man. The incomplete knowledge and the innocent faith in the crooked ways of politicians make him expect good things and revolutionary changes in the state of his existence though all of them prove wrong at the end. Common people lead their lives in misery and then silently die without any of the promises of good life getting fulfilled. In this way Ustad Mangu is not an

individual character but he represents a whole class of naive masses who are befooled through different promises. Ustad Mangu being one of them was also very eager and enthusiastic about this act. He thought it to be a herald of salvation. Thus the Government of India Act 1935 was a lollypop for the enslaved masses of India.

Every day Ustad Mangu went out with his Tonga and overheard the discussion of different people about the anticipated results of the new act. He overheard some lawyers who were talking about the technical aspects of the law. His mind was in the seventh heaven by visualizing a free India and his expectations about the changes, being brought on the April 1st, were mounting day by day. On the April 1st he was out of himself with fervour and confidence of his assumed freedom.

He hated the goras and their ominous presence in his land. He called them human monkeys and white mice. He even called them lepers and disliked their white complexion equating them to the rotten dead bodies. The attitude of goras in general and the gora soldiers in particular aroused strong reaction in his heart and he said that they order Indians, as they were their father's servants. He was sick of the Urdu or Hindi spoken by them and contemptuously called it gitpit. More than a person he stands for the majority of people present in the third world countries who remain eternally disappointed and dissatisfied amidst the Herculean tempo and magnitude of exploitation and tyranny.

He thought that this act was going to change the fate of Indian people who were suffering heavily under the burden of slavery and unwanted rulers. His miscalculated hope gave him a new confidence and he dared to confront a gora soldier who had been insolent and haughty to him a year before. He misbehaved with the gora and infuriated him. He mercilessly thrashed him and was out of himself with rage bordering on madness. People tried to control him but he was hitting the gora and shouting that it was a new day with a new law for Indians. But the poor man was mistaken as some policemen came there and arrested him. Even behind the bars he was shouting about the new law. But he was silenced when they told him the reality of presence of same old law according to which the Indians were the subjects while the English were their rulers. This story explicitly establishes the conditions in which the wretched Indians lived during the British Raj. They had no rights and were exploited at every step without even the right to protest.

Edited for Students, Source

<http://notesforba.blogspot.com/2016/11/the-new-constitution-by-saadat-hassan.html>