

Indian Opinion

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Indian Opinion

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1908.

On Closer Union

THAT man is a gregarious animal is no new discovery. And he never evinces this primal characteristic so unmistakably as when he fears attack and takes precautions for defence. It is this fundamental motive that is to-day working as a leaven in the mass of discordant elements in South Africa, and bringing the white races closer together, if only by way of a species of life insurance.

And how does this affect the coloured races, and especially the British Indian settlers of the sub-continent? A Conference is to sit within the next few weeks, whereat will be discussed all the vast problems agitating South Africa—shipping-freights, customs dues, railway-rates, labour, the *modus vivendi*, the Native question, Asiatic policy, and the franchise. How will the coloured people emerge from the melting-pot? Let us see who and what are the

participants in the Inter-Colonial Conference.

First and foremost there is the Cape, which will have the largest number of representatives. A majority of these will be Government supporters, of whom a proportion are direct Bond representatives. Whilst both political parties have publicly confessed their adherence to the present Constitution of the Colony, whereby the coloured franchise is admitted, there are, nevertheless, reactionary elements at the Cape much influenced by the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and which are not over anxious to see the retention of this coloured franchise. It is certain that powerful arguments in favour of restriction will be brought to bear upon those members of the Conference who are not actuated by any very deep-rooted sentiments of abstract justice, so far as the coloured races are concerned.

Next, there is the Transvaal. Our Northern neighbour sends eight delegates, four of whom are to be Dutch and four English. Of the English members, three are Colonial-born. Two are frankly hostile to the aspirations of colour, and another is not animated by any broad sympathies towards non-whites. The past history of the Transvaal is notoriously reactionary in regard to the colour-problems of the Colony. The old Grondwet forbade equality between white and coloured, either in Church or State, and the ideal of the brotherhood of man has never had anything like its due recognition with Transvaal politicians; and this is true of both political parties. Negrophile members of the Assembly are almost non-existent, and whilst, for party reasons, or because of the crying injustice of the principles involved, one section of the community may combat the anti-colour proposals of another, both are quite capable of combining, as, in fact, they have combined, for such purposes as the refusal of the political or municipal franchise to the non-white population. There is, obviously, nothing to hope for from the Transvaal.

Much the same may be said of the Orange River Colony, where the Dutch element of the population, with its reactionary views on the colour question, predominates, though it is but fair to add that its anti-colour policy is admirably seconded by the other section of the white community.

Lastly, we have Natal, which is sending its quota to join in the deliberations of the protagonists of closer union, in one form or other. We need say but little of the native policy of this Colony. Its history is

writ large in the Report of the Native Affairs Commission, than which it would be difficult to find a more unfavourable criticism of Natal native administration. We can, however, speak with some authority on Natal's treatment of the Indian problem. It has been consistently retrogressive, from an ethical and a humanitarian point of view. First, there was the introduction of chattel-labour, resulting in gross injustice and cruel inequality to the wretched victims of the system. Later, when it was found that the freed serfs actually sought to earn an independent livelihood within the Colony, instead of returning to their homes whence they had been torn, often by false pretences, a tax upon freedom was imposed upon Indian men, women, and children alike, the object being to hunt them out of the country, or compel them, in unfavourable circumstances, to revert to the position of helots—a policy which, on the one hand, leads to suicide and immorality, and, on the other, to poverty, disease, and starvation. There was once a political franchise for free Indians. To-day that is virtually taken from them. To-day there is a municipal franchise for free Indians. To-morrow, if the Natal Government can hoodwink the Imperial authorities cleverly enough, even that privilege will be taken from them. There is a Licensing Act creating Municipal Courts of Appeal and District Licensing Boards, upon which no Indian may serve, and which are empowered to refuse an Indian licence arbitrarily, without the possibility of appeal to the Colony's Courts of Justice; a power which, in the case of the Municipalities especially, is far too often exercised. And now we are threatened with two more licensing measures designed to utterly destroy Indian trade throughout the Colony. With such a record of public immorality, we know what to expect of Natal.

It must be frankly realised that the South African Colonies are not approaching the forthcoming Conference with any altruistic motives. Their main object is to consolidate the interests of the white races in such a manner as to admit of no possibility of questioning on the part of the coloured peoples. Where at present a coloured franchise exists, desperate efforts will be made to withdraw it. Where such a franchise does not exist, everything will be done to maintain the *status quo*. The trend of South African policy, almost certainly, will be towards the curtailing of the liberties of the coloured peoples, who are destined, in the view of the dominant caste, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, for all

eternity. Whether the coloured races will be content to remain Gibeonites in perpetuity is quite another matter.

Meanwhile, what is the Indian community in South Africa to do, and what has it done? To begin with, it is one community. It has already realised the need of closer union. For the last three years, at least, it has been on the defensive. In Natal, all the local committees accept the benevolent rule of the Natal Indian Congress. Similarly, the British Indian Association charges itself with the guardianship of the peculiar interests of the Indians in the Transvaal. The Orange River Colony is a negligible quantity. Rhodesian Indians are united, in their small numbers, to fight the present menace. And, at the Cape, a Conference has recently sat, whose object was to consolidate the Indian forces there, in order the better to front the increasingly frequent attacks upon the liberties of our brethren even in that comparatively free Colony. But the main thing to observe is that Indians all over South Africa are uniting to help each other wherever danger threatens, for it is realised that a blow aimed at one section of the community is a blow aimed at all Indians wherever resident. What affects Rhodesian Indians equally affects their brethren elsewhere in South Africa, and all unite to proffer aid in various forms when the necessity arises, in similar manner to that given at the height of the Transvaal struggle. Though some Indians be disfranchised and others enfranchised, community of interests forbids any barrier to mutuality.

It is, then, for the united Indian communities of South Africa to make it plain to the delegates of the Inter-Colonial Conference that Indian interests may only be decided upon with due reference to Indian views. That is the lesson taught by the Transvaal struggle, and unless the lesson be thoroughly learned, we very much fear that similar struggles will take place all over South Africa, a contingency that, we are sure, all thoughtful people will hesitate to contemplate with any satisfaction. We claim, indeed, that British Indians in South Africa have set an admirable example in the direction of peace and closer union. On the whole, they have, for political and municipal purposes, put aside all differences of race, faith, caste, and condition, and have coalesced for the furtherance of their common good. The motive may not have been a very lofty one. Primal emotions seldom are, judged by the highest ethical standards. Yet self-defence has compelled them to stand shoulder to shoulder, and, from the primitive selfishness of the original instinct will spring effects as beautiful, as ennobling, and as patriotic as anything which the sub-continent may have to show in the generations to come.

Savage!

It is no exaggeration to say that the sentences pronounced upon the Natal Indian leaders and their companions by the Volksrust Magistrate are savage. And this we feel no hesitation in saying, although their solicitor asked for the severest penalty. But, though we have used a strong adjective to describe our sentiment regarding the sentences, the Magistrate could perhaps hardly be blamed. To him, sitting as a Court to assert the majesty of the Law, the re-entry of the brave Indians was an open defiance. And he no doubt considered it his duty to visit such an act with a severe penalty. But there is no excuse for a Government which manufactures crime in this manner, and imposes needless and cruel suffering on innocent people. However, British Indians have chosen the path of suffering for redressing their wrongs. And they cannot cavil at what they have elected to take or receive. We congratulate Mr. Dawad Mahomed and his friends, therefore, on their rare courage and love of their fellow-men, and tender our sympathy to their wives and relatives. Three of the most distinguished Indians in South Africa, men who have not known hard labour, are now probably breaking stones on the Transvaal roads. The fifteen men who are now in His Majesty's Gaol at Volksrust are a unique company. They represent merchants, educated men, and hawkers. They all claim the right to enter the Transvaal. They include Mahomedans, Hindus, and Parsees. A movement that has such a solid backing will take more than one General Smuts to crush.

And why are they in His Majesty's Gaol? There is the rub. They are admittedly British subjects. Some of them have served in the Volunteer forces of South Africa. Others have helped these forces in another manner. They were at one time "sons of the Empire after all." They have committed no offence against the common law of the Empire. They have dared to claim the rights that should inherently belong to British subjects. But, because they wear a brown skin, it is an offence in them to claim the rights of a British subject. The "white man's burden" has been sung by Kipling. But the brown man's burden has yet to be wept over.

IN ANOTHER COLUMN, WE REPRODUCE from the *Times of Natal* an account of **Homeless and Destitute** a poor Indian girl who was found at the Maritzburg railway station, suffering from disease and without a protector. The Chief Constable applied at no less than four Hospitals in the City, and all refused to take the poor child in. The District Surgeon, Corporation Medical Officer, and the Chief Clerk of the Court were also approach-

ed, but without avail. It appears from what the Chief Constable said before the Magistrate, to whom he had taken the child for direction, that the Government some time ago promised to erect a special ward for such cases, but had failed to do so. Where was the Protector and why was he not asked to use his protective powers? Are the Government so engrossed in passing Bills to deprive Indian traders of their licences that they cannot find time to look after destitute and diseased Indian children? We trust that this incident will open the eyes of the Government to the need for action in the matter.

THE MASS MEETING HELD IN DURBAN, under the auspices of **The Old Prescription** the Congress and the Natal Indian Patriotic Union respectively, were

significant of much. The Congress represents the community as a whole, and the Union specially represents the interests of the Colonial-born and bred section of the community. The inauguration of the petition to the King-Emperor is an excellent idea. But, as was pointed out at Saturday's meeting, petitions are valueless unless there is the power and determination to follow them up with something more convincing. It must not be forgotten that the Imperial Government, to whom, in the ordinary course of events, the petition will be referred, have expressed themselves to be impotent in the face of the application of a self-governing Colony, but it is useless to disguise the fact that, in the Transvaal, moral pressure has been brought to bear upon the Colonial Government, owing to the self-sacrifice and suffering willingly undergone by the Transvaal Indians. A similar inducement to the Imperial authorities must be held out by the Natal Indians. Like Heaven, the Imperial Government helps those who help themselves, and if, in regard to the £3 tax and the licensing law, the Natal Indians are willing to assume the burden and responsibility of initiating and carrying on a "passive resistance" campaign, they will have done more good than by the sending of half-a-hundred petitions without that influential backing.

SWAMI SHANKERANAND. Mr. Mokamchand informs us that he has received a cable from England stating that Swami Shankeranand is sailing to-day by the *Carisbrook Castle* for Natal. A notice will shortly be issued calling a public meeting to discuss the appointment of a reception committee.

PLAGUE IN INDIA. Last year's record of deaths in India from bubonic plague has been published. The estimated number of deaths was 1,204,194.

The Volksrust Cases

Vindictive Sentences

Natal Leaders in Gaol

[SPECIAL TO INDIAN OPINION]

On Tuesday last, the 8th inst., before Mr. A. D. Villiers, A.R.M., at Volksrust, Messrs. Dawad Mahomed (President of the Natal Indian Congress), Parsee Rustomjee (Vice-President), M. C. Anglia (Joint Hon. Secretary), and S. J. Randeria were charged with contravening section 2 sub-section 4 of the Immigrants' Restriction Act, by re-entering the Transvaal on the 31st ulto., after having been deported from the Colony. Mr. Mentz prosecuted, and Mr. H. S. L. Polak defended. The accused pleaded "not guilty" to the charge.

For the Crown, Corporal Cameron, of the Transvaal Police, gave evidence as to arrest of the accused in his capacity as an immigration officer. He admitted that they had previously been allowed to enter the Colony, possessing various qualifications, under the provisions of the Immigration Act, and that they had been proceeded against only under the Registration Act.

The Clerk of the Court gave formal evidence as to the service of the order to leave the Colony made by the Court in the previous case.

Sergt. Brundrett, of the Transvaal Police, testified to having taken accused under a deportation warrant issued under the hand of the Colonial Secretary, by train from Pretoria, on the 28th ulto., and having released them as the train crossed the railway bridge marking the Transvaal-Natal border. His instructions were to take them in this way. The train was running at such a speed that it was a physical impossibility for them to have got down at the border and avoided being carried into the neighbouring Colony. He was aware that had he put the accused across the border, he would have committed an assault. He was not aware of a notice served on Supt. Betts ordering him to refrain from carrying out the Colonial Secretary's warrant until the accused had been placed in a position to ascertain their legal position. The accused were placed upon the train leaving Pretoria at 8.5. a.m. on the 28th ulto. He had no authority to permit the accused to descend from the train at Volksrust and walk to the border.

For the defence, Mahomed Cassim Anglia stated that he was one of the accused in this case. He had previously been before this Court on the 19th ulto., charged with contravening the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and had been ordered to leave the Colony within 7 days. He had then proceeded to Johannesburg and Pretoria, and had expected to be re-arrested under that Act, when, had

he so desired, he could have appealed. On the evening of the 27th ulto., he had been arrested and detained at Pretoria under a warrant of deportation. He had immediately instructed his attorney, Mr. Blake, to serve a notice on Supt. Betts, calling upon him to take no steps to deport until the witness had had an opportunity of ascertaining his legal status. This notice had been ignored, he had received no further opportunities of protest, but was placed on the train leaving for the Natal border early the following morning. He had arrived the same evening at Volksrust station, but was not allowed to get off the train there. He was quite prepared to walk as far as the border but had no desire to cross it. He was, however, detained on the train until it had crossed the Natal Transvaal border-bridge. He considered that he still had the right to be in the Transvaal and certainly did not consider himself to be a prohibited immigrant. He confirmed the evidence he had given on the last occasion he was before the Court. He had made no attempt to evade the penalties of the Law.

Mr. Polak intimated that as the other accused would give similar evidence, he would not call them, but closed his case.

Mr. Mentz urged that the accused were prohibited immigrants and had wantonly re-entered the Colony after deportation. He asked for the heaviest sentence the Court could impose as they were the leaders and had done nothing but defy the law.

Mr. Polak argued that his clients were not guilty of the charge laid against them. They had regarded as wrong the order made against them by the Court a fortnight before, but had precluded from appealing against it by reason of a Supreme Court judgment which decided that an order to leave the Colony was an administrative order and not a judicial decision, and that consequently it could not be appealed against. His clients had therefore to await arrest and sentence under the Asiatic Act for not obeying the Court's order, in which case they would be in a position to appeal if necessary. They, however, had been summarily deported, without the opportunities of protest to which they were entitled, and had been physically prevented from remaining at the border, which they had no desire to cross and to re-cross. That position was forced upon them. They had re-entered to assert their rights. He, however, as the Court was obviously against him, would thank the Prosecutor for his suggestion that the heaviest penalty should be inflicted. He himself had been instructed to that very effect by his clients, three of whom, acknowledged leaders of the community, experienced men, had done what they had done with their eyes open and were prepared to accept the fullest responsibility for their actions.

In delivering judgment, the Magistrate considered that the accused had had ample opportunity to assert their rights if they had wished to, but they had failed to do so, and had acted in flagrant defiance of the law. He was not going to inflict the heaviest penalty, but taking all things into consideration he would sentence each accused to pay a fine of £50 or go to gaol for three months with hard labour.

The other eleven Indians who had also entered from Natal and deported were then similarly charged. Formal evidence on the same lines as in the last case was led. Mr. Polak who defended, intimated that he would lead no evidence, the accused pleaded not guilty, the circumstances resembling exactly those of the previous case. Addressing the Court, he demurred to the statement that the accused had ample opportunity to assert their rights. This could only have been done had the accused been arrested, charged and convicted under the Asiatic Act. The Magistrate, giving judgment, said he could make a distinction in favour of the accused, and would sentence them to pay a fine of £25 each or go to gaol with hard labour for six weeks.

All the accused cheerfully elected to go to gaol.

The same day, Valli Jooma and Gokaldas Govindji were also charged as prohibited immigrants. Both pleaded "not guilty." Mr. Polak defended.

Corporal Cameron, giving evidence for the Crown, said that Valli Jooma had stated that he had been in the Piet Retief district before the war, and from the accused's description, he had no doubt whatever but that he had actually lived in the district.

Valli Jooma, giving evidence, said that he had been in Piet Retief and Vryheid districts from 1896 to 1901, and had then gone to India. He had a Dutch registration certificate, which was with his brother. The Registrar of Asiatics had the number. He had twice applied for permission to enter and remain in the Colony but had been put off. He claimed the right to re-enter the Colony as a pre-war resident. He was not prepared to register under the Asiatic Act, but would do so voluntarily.

Gokaldas Govindji said he was a boy in Pretoria in his brother's store from 1896 to 1900, when he left the Colony. He had also been in Pietersburg. He described to the Court the old church in the Square at Pretoria. He had been refused permission to enter the Colony, though he had previously been granted a temporary permit. Mr. Gandhi was still pressing his claim. He also claimed the right of re-entry as a pre-war resident and said he would not register under the Asiatic Act but was prepared to register voluntarily.

Mr. Mentz urged that the accused had failed to prove their eligibility for registration under the Act and

must therefore be regarded as prohibited immigrants.

Mr. Polak claimed that the prosecution was altogether premature. His client under section 4 sub-section 2 of the Asiatic Act was entitled to apply for registration any time within 8 days of his entry into the Colony. It was for him to prove his eligibility before the Registrar, who, under the provisions of section 5 sub-section 1, could accept approved applications. Moreover, the accused's rights were specifically safeguarded under the new Act, and if the principles of that Act applied in two months' time when the Act was assented to, they applied equally to-day. His clients had demonstrated to the full their identity, and he asked for their discharge.

The Magistrate said he was quite satisfied that they were pre-war residents. He agreed that the charge was prematurely brought. The accused had eight days' grace under the Asiatic Act, and he would accordingly find them not guilty and discharged them.

Essopji Mahomed, a boy of 14 years, was similarly charged. He had entered the Colony alone, and Corporal Cameron said he had instructions not to let minor Asiatics proceed except they were accompanied by their parents or guardians who were lawful residents, or on instructions from the Registrar of Asiatics. The accused said his father had told him to come up to the Transvaal and he had done so, carrying with him an affidavit from his father. The father, Mahomed Essop, confirmed this statement. He had sent for his son because he wanted to safeguard his rights against his attaining his majority in two years' time. He himself was voluntarily registered and gave the registration certificate number. His son's name was on that certificate, which was burnt with others in Johannesburg. His permit was marked "re-registered in the Transvaal."

Mr. Polak pointed out the absurdity of bringing a charge like this where the police were satisfied as to the identity of the accused, and the Magistrate confirmed this view, discharging the boy, and asking whether some other procedure could not be adopted than detaining *bona fide* entrants.

The fifteen Natal men marched cheerfully to the gaol, and were accompanied by a number of prominent Volksrust Indians carrying black mourning flags. They were separately examined by the gaoler, and afterwards the Magistrate saw them and explained that so far as possible their religious susceptibilities would be regarded, and their diet varied as far as was possible within the prison regulations.

In the afternoon, a meeting of Volksrust Indians was held at Mr. Cajee's store, Mr. Cajee presiding. Messrs. Polak and N. A. Camia were

present, and addressed the meeting, the following resolution was unanimously carried, it being afterwards decided to send copies to the proper authorities.

"This meeting of British Indians resident in Volksrust hereby protests strongly against the harsh sentences to-day passed by a British Court of Justice upon some of the most respected leaders of the Indian community in South Africa and others equally courageous, who have been punished with hard labour for the political offence of seeking to secure their own rights and affirm those of their suffering Transvaal brethren; and urges the Transvaal and Imperial Governments to mete out substantial justice to Transvaal Indians and so end the terrible position existing to-day."

A cable of protest was afterwards sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee in London. A number of Charlestown Indians possessing Transvaal rights, were also present.

On Tuesday evening Mr. Sorabji Shapuji re-entered the Transvaal from Natal. He reported himself to the Police and was brought before the Magistrate on Wednesday, and remanded till Wednesday next, the 16th inst.

A telegram of sympathy was received from the Ladysmith Islamic Society.

Durban's Protest

A meeting of the Congress leaders and the Indian public was held on Tuesday evening in the Indian Auction Mart, Queen Street, on receipt of the news of the severe sentences passed upon the Durban leaders at Volksrust. Mr. Abdul Cadir presided and was supported by the leading men of the community in Natal.

In the course of his speech, the Chairman said the sentence was a most severe one, and to gentlemen who were unaccustomed to hardship, it was a cruel punishment. Their example was worthy of imitation by young men. To think of men such as these in prison made one think that the Transvaal Government could not be acting with reason; but, might was right, and the Transvaal Government was now putting its strength against loyal British Indians. It now remained for them to show their respect and sympathy for their leaders, and admire their courage for undertaking so much suffering for the cause of the community at their time of life.

The following resolution was proposed by Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam, seconded by Mr. Moulvi Fateh Mahomed, and supported by Mr. P. S. Aiyar:—

"That this mass meeting of British Indians emphatically protests against the most harassing and un-British action of the Transvaal Government in having imprisoned our President, Vice-President and Secretary and other educated Indians in violation

of the Transvaal Government's solemn pledges of the compromise, and also declares that the time has arrived for the immediate intervention of the Imperial Government to end this intolerable situation and to clearly define the status and position of Indians in the Transvaal."

The second resolution, which was proposed by Mr. Rooknoodeen, seconded by Mr. Ismail Gora, and supported by Mr. Bernard Gabriel, is as follows:—

"That this mass meeting of British Indians requests the leaders in India to call public meetings all over the Country to protest against the imprisonment of our President (Dawad Mahomed), Vice-President (Parsee Rustomjee), Secretary (Mahomed Cassim Anglia), and others, by the Transvaal Government, in violation of their solemn pledges to repeal the Asiatic Act, and now debarring entry of even highly-educated Indians into the Transvaal."

Mr. Hassim Jooma proposed:—

"That this mass meeting of Natal British Indians hereby authorises the Chairman to forward copies of the above resolutions to H.E. the High Commissioner, Transvaal, and also for transmission to the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India."

Mr. G. H. Miankhan seconded and Mr. R. C. Naidoo supported.

The fourth resolution is as under:—

"This meeting authorises the Chairman to convey the sympathy of the Natal Indians to the families of Messrs. Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Rustomjee, Mahomed C. Anglia, Ebrahim Osman and others for suffering imprisonment and for submitting themselves to the un-British action of the Transvaal Government."

Proposed by Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim, seconded by Mr. Suliman Mayet, and supported by Mr. P. V. Sanghavelle.

The resolution were put to the meeting and unanimously carried.

The first resolution was cabled to London, and the second to His Highness the Aga Khan, Bombay, and 18 other prominent leaders in India.

On Wednesday the Indian stores were closed in sympathy.

Cape Asiatic Grievances

Capetown, Sept. 5. The report of the Select Committee on Asiatic Grievances is published. Generally speaking, the report commends the more stringent application of the General Dealers Act. It also recommends that hawkers of standing in the rural areas, who were in business before 1906, should be placed on the same footing as general dealers under the Act. A minority report, however, dissents from this recommendation. The majority report also suggests that it would tend to prevent some of the abuses of Indian trading if all traders were compelled to keep books in some European language.—Reuter.

At the Heart of the Empire

A Monthly Survey

London, August 1, 1908.

A New Dignity for Lord Morley

The modern University of Manchester has installed Lord Morley as its Chancellor amid great rejoicing. There are many who think that the ennobled Democrat is in his true place at his library desk and not on the Government Benches of either House at Westminster. Still, Lord Morley has joined the ranks of statesmen, and the future will know how to appraise aright his statesmanship. In the world of letters he is an acknowledged master; the present has already pronounced its verdict. So he is in his right place in the Chancellor's chair of a University, and his speech at Manchester showed that he was able to take a fair and generous view of the claims both of technical and classical education. Among the recipients of honorary degrees on the occasion were Lord Curzon and Mr. Balfour, and the latter, in a brief speech at the public luncheon, told his hearers that it was an Indian question which led him into the world of letters and Mr. Morley, as Editor of the *Fortnightly* was the man who was responsible!

Tolstoy's Appeal

One of the most striking appeals ever made was that penned by Count Tolstoy two or three weeks ago and circulated widely in and beyond Russia. The vigorous old man calls upon the rulers of his country from the Tsar downwards to desist from government by murder, by deeds of violence and repression, and so save Russia from ruin. With all the realistic power of which his pen is capable and moved by an almost breaking heart, he describes the horrors of the wholesale executions now permitted in the country, and declares that he would rather perish in the same way—"they may push me off a bench so that by my own weight I may tighten the well-soaped noose round my own throat"—than live under such conditions of humiliation and wrong. "Yes, consider it, all of you from the highest to the lowest accomplices in murder; consider who you are; cease to do what you are doing. Cease, not for your own sakes, not for the sake of your own personality, not for the sake of men, not that you may cease to be blamed, but for your soul's sake, and for the God who lives within you." Though certain Editors have been punished for printing this appeal, no well-soaped noose has been placed round the old throat of the vigorous patriot who penned it.

Turkey's New Hope

Ten days ago things were going on in the usual way in Turkey, security of person and property being unknown; to-day everyone, except the corrupt Ministers of the Sultan, is rejoicing over a new era, made possible by the

significant words that appeared in an inconspicuous place in the daily press, to the effect that the Sultan had issued an *Irade* for the convocation of Parliament in accordance with the Constitution of 1876. The transformation has been complete, swift, bloodless; the Imperial ruler has bowed to the inevitable; Young Turkey, enthusiastic for right, for justice, for progress, hold the reins. The next few months will be extremely critical, but the general opinion is that the Sultan is in earnest, as much so as the reformers, and that a return to old ways is impossible. Turkey as a constitutional Power is as great and significant an event in the world's history as the victory of Japan over Russia, and its influence among the followers of Islam everywhere will be enormous. The remarkable fact is that the guiding spirit of this peaceful revolution is as yet unknown to the outside world, but his influence is everywhere for good.

Repression and Reforms in India

The Indian Budget Debate in the House of Commons must not be passed over without a word. Mr. Buchanan's appearance for the first time as spokesman for India showed him to be not only an adept at figures but possessed of generous sympathy and filled with hope. His manner, even more than the matter of his speech, emphasised these facts, and despite bombs, he holds out hope for substantial progress in associating Indians with the management of their own affairs. Lord Morley watched the debate from the seat over the clock in the Peers' Gallery framed, as it were by rows and rows of Indian listeners, and flanked by Lords Amphill, Lamington, Courtney, and Wolverhampton, not to mention Members of the French Chamber of Deputies on a visit to London. Since that day Mr. Buchanan has had to defend the heavy sentence on Mr. Tilak as necessary in suppressing sedition but he has not convinced everyone that this is the best way of meeting the case. The long-promised reforms are to be expected in the autumn; it is to be hoped that patience will be rewarded.

An Entente Pageant

The celebrations at Quebec have been *Entente Cordiale* in the truest sense of the term, for French and British have not only made friends but have become fellow-subjects of the same monarch, so much so that they could reproduce with enthusiasm the events of the past when they were enemies to the death. But we have also had a Pageant in England which has brought French and English together as players in the great scenes of Dover's history, in many of which the interests of the two nations met, even clashed. But so well was everything carried out by the two thousand performers under the direction of the Pageant Master, Mr. Louis Parker, that whether it was Henry V. preparing for war with France, or ending the war by bringing

home a French bride, or Henry VIII setting out for the Field of the Cloth of Gold, or Charles I. awaiting and welcoming at Dover his bride, or even the procession of French princesses who had worn the British Crown as consorts of British Kings, the spirit of the whole was finely expressed by the chorus in these words:

We have conquered each other enough
to prove.
That which must conquer at last is love;
For a loveless man is a lifeless clod,
And the spirit of love is a spark from
God.

Some New Books Concerning India

"History of Indian and Eastern Architecture," (Fergusson) new edition; John Murray; "Buddhism" (the Bishop of Calcutta) new edition; Longmans; "India Through the Ages," (Mrs. F. A. Steel); Routledge. "The Indian Countryside," (Scot. O'Conner); Brown, Langham, 6s. net; "Between the Twilights" (Cornelia Sorabji); Harpers, 5s. net., "The Story of My Deportation" (Lala Lajpat Rai) Panjabee Press, Lahore.

OBSERVER.

The Sultan's Accession Anniversary

The Opening of the Hijaj Railway

Hamidia Islamic Society's Meeting

A meeting of all Mahomedans in the Transvaal was held on the 11th instant, under the ægis of the Hamidia Islamic Society, to celebrate the 33rd anniversary of the accession to the Turkish Throne of His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan, Commander of the Faithful, and the Opening of the Hamidia Hijaj Railway. The Society's Hall was crowded, the attendance being very large. The Hall was profusely decorated with flags and bunting. A likeness of the Sultan and the Ameer of Afghanistan were prominently placed in the Hall. Suitable mottoes such as "Long Live the Sultan" in golden letters were to be seen on the walls. Mr. Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer occupied the Chair. To his right was Mr. Osman Ahmed Effendi, the proprietor of *Al Islam*. Among the guests invited and present were Mr. Wolfgang Frank, Imperial German Consul and Interim Consul of the Ottoman Empire, Mr. P. R. Krause, Anc. Councillor in the Imperial Ottoman Ministry for Monies and Public Works, Bearer of the 2nd class of His Majesty's Order of the Medjidich, and Messrs. Kallenbach, Isaac, George Godfrey, Vyas, Naidoo, Cama, and Gandhi. In reply to the enthusiastic welcome given to the Turkish Consul, Mr. Frank said that he hoped that the subjects of the Turkish Empire and of the German Empire would work hand in hand and that the forces of both the Empires also might work together for the good of the world at large. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society rejoices exceedingly in the fact that it has pleased the Almighty to spare His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan of Turkey, Commander of the Faithful, who now enters upon the thirty-third year of his glorious reign; and prays that God Almighty may spare His Imperial Majesty for many a long year to rule over the Moslem world as its spiritual head."

Proposed by Moulvi Haji Ahmed Mukhtar, seconded by Mr. Iman Haji Kamalodein, and supported by Mr. Shaboodein Hoosen.

"This Meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society tenders its humble and respectful congratulations to His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan of Turkey, Commander of the Faithful, on the opening of the Hamidia Hijaj Railway as far as Al Medina; and congratulates the Moslem world on the completion of the above most difficult line, which is calculated to promote unity among the followers of Islam and which will materially strengthen the faith; and offers thanks to the Almighty that the undertaking has been so successful."

Proposed by Mr. Osman Ahmed Effendi, seconded by Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim Kunke, and supported by Mr. Razak Noorbhai.

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society offers its congratulations to those brave and good men who were connected with the initiation and completion of the Hamidia Hijaj Railway, and prays to God Almighty for His blessings upon them."

Proposed by Mr. I. B. Momaniat, seconded by Mr. Hoosen Mall, and supported by Mr. Mahomed Salloojee.

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society confirms and approves of the action of the Committee of the Society in having sent cablegrams of felicitation to Constantinople and Al Medina."

Proposed by Mr. M. P. Fancy, seconded by Mr. Ahmed Hallim, and supported by Mr. Omarjee Sale.

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society advises the Hamidia Islamic Society to form a Committee for collecting funds from Mahomedans all over the Transvaal in aid of the Hamidia Hijaj Railway, and to forward the same to the proper quarters."

Proposed by Mr. Hajee Habib, seconded by Mr. E. M. Cachalia, and supported by Moulvi Haji Ahmed Mukhtar.

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society authorises the Chairman and Secretary of the Society to forward copies of the foregoing Resolutions to the proper quarters."

Proposed by Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia, and seconded by Mr. Dildar Khan.

Celebration at the Cape

The first of September was a "red-letter day" with the Moslem community of Cape Town. Interesting

ceremonies connected with the celebration of the anniversary of the accession of His Majesty Abdul Hamid Khan to the Sultanate of Turkey were carried out.

A preliminary meeting of Anjuman Islam was held on Sunday in the hall of the British Indian League in Loop-Street, when arrangements were made and a programme drawn up for the celebration. The meeting was attended by many prominent members of the Moslem community and was presided over by Mr. Adam H. G. Mahomed, chairman of the Anjuman Islam. There were also present: Messrs. Ismail Gabroo (chairman of Habibia Society), A. Cader, Molve Badirzuman, Syed Mustafa Edroos, T. Booly, M. Arif, Mohammed Bux, Fakir Ismail, Ismail Sydiek, and several others.

On Tuesday at one o'clock the followers of the Faithful closed their shops and observed the day as a solemn and religious holiday. But the most interesting feature of the ceremonies was the procession of the scholars of the Mahomedan schools of the city. They assembled to the number of over 400 at the Indian Mosque in Loop-street, where prayers were said by the chief priest, Imaum Mahomed Talbrodien, for His Majesty the Sultan.

The children were afterwards assembled outside the mosque, when a photograph was taken of the whole group. They then began their procession through the chief streets of the city. In the van of the procession some of the bigger boys marched, bearing bannerets symbolic of Moslem tenets, while others were beating timbrels. The march was both novel and instructive. What pleased the young people most, however, was the distribution of the good things that had been kindly provided as refreshment for them after their march through the city.

In the evening prayers were again said in the mosque, which was prettily illuminated with fairy lamps, and the proceedings of a most interesting day were brought to a conclusion by the serving of refreshments, which were partaken of by all the prominent members of the Mahomedan community.

The following is the text of the cable despatched by the chairman of Anjuman Islam to the Sultan:

To Private Secretary, His Majesty Sultan, Constantinople.—"Hijaj Railway gloriously commemorates Your Majesty's reign. Indian Anjuman Islam rejoices and earnestly implore Providence to continue your rule and bless your people. All yours here observe solemn holiday."

The South African Indian Association had a large gathering at the rooms of the Association, Hanover-street. Prior to the meeting a service had been held in the Mosque, Aspeling-street, at which Imaum Abdur Rahman K. Gamildien offered up a prayer for the long reign and happi-

ness of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and of thanksgiving for the establishment of the Hijaj Railway.

Throughout the day the exterior of the buildings in which the rooms of the association are situated was gay with bunting and decorations in greenery, and inscriptions bearing upon the events commemorated that day. In the evening incandescent lights lent animation to the scene. There was a goodly display of flags, while tea and more substantial refreshments were handed round. Mr. Casim Ali, Secretary of the Association, assisted by an energetic band of workers, had made all arrangements, so that everything passed off without a hitch.

Mr. Ebrahim Norodien, President of the Association, took the chair, and those present included: Messrs. J. M. H. Gool, Hadje Sulieman Shah Mohammed, Hoosen Ahmed, Emaum Mohammed, M. I. Dala, Amanet Ali, Hadje Ebrahim, R. Nowrosjee, Adam Abdullah, Hadje Mohammed Khan, Ebrahim Ismail, Hafiz Abraham, A. Magiet, Feefoz Khan, B. Desai, A. G. Chogley, Alimia, M. Shabodien, etc.

The Secretary, Mr. S. Cassim Ali, read a letter from Mr. L. Arthur Myburgh, Consul-General for Turkey, regretting that unforeseen circumstances prevented his being with them that evening.

Mr. J. M. H. Gool, moved that a congratulatory address be forwarded by cable to His Majesty the Sultan of Turkey on the occasion of the anniversary of his accession to the throne, and expressing satisfaction at the opening of the Hijaj Medina Railway.

Mr. Haji Sulieman Shah Mahomed seconded the motion, and Messrs. M. I. Dala, S. Cassim Ali, Emaum Mohammed, Haji Ebrahim and others also addressed the meeting.

The chairman suggested that as a further means of marking the auspicious occasion, a society for the propagation and study of the tenets of Islam be founded in Cape Town. The principle was unanimously accepted, and it was decided that it should be named The Hamidia Islamic Society of Cape Town. The election of office-bearers was at once proceeded with and resulted as follows: President, Haje Sulieman Shah Mahomed; Vice-president, Mr. J. M. H. Gool; Joint Treasurers, Mr. Haje Mohammed Khan and Mr. M. I. Dala; Joint Secretaries, Mr. Hossen Mohammed and Mr. Haje Ebrahim; Committee, Messrs. R. Nowrosjee, E. Ismail, Hajiz Abraham, A. Magiet, Emaum Abdur Rahman, Feeroz Khan, B. Desai, A. G. Chogley, Alimia, and M. Shabodien, with power to add to their number.

The Stellenbosch Mahomedans closed their stores in honour of the Sultan's accession and the opening of the Damascus-Medina railway. At eight o'clock an illuminated service was held at the mosque and attended by large numbers, at the close of

which the congregation adjourned to the spacious store of their local chairmen. Mr. Moosa Noor Mahomed, when further prayers were offered and a great Moaled and feasting took place.

What Indians have done for the Empire

Mr. Robert Sutherland writes as under to the *Transvaal Leader* of the 3rd instant:—

Sir,—The other day the Sheriff—or what is known in this country as the Mayor—of Bombay convened a meeting to protest against the treatment of the British Indians in the Transvaal, and the people, native and European, responded in such numbers that the Town Hall, capable of containing upwards of 3,000 was packed, there being hundreds outside who could not find room. The chair was occupied by His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, a cultured native gentleman, the chief of the Mussulman community in India. There were 15 other native gentlemen, nine of whom were baronets or knights of the Empire, and six bore other honours. The meeting was a most enthusiastic one, and an Englishman, the Hon. Mr. Armstrong, president of the Chamber of Commerce, proposed the first resolution, and copies of the resolution were sent to His Majesty the King and the Colonial Secretary. When this country is criticised by the people oversea, the criticism is generally met by the retort that outsiders should mind their own business, and not interfere in the affairs of this country of self-government, and this will probably be the answer to the Bombay meeting.

But when we remember that this country was added to the Empire not only by those formerly uitlanders in the Transvaal and who are now citizens, but largely at the cost of England and India, is the attitude not unreasonable? One of the arguments brought forward by the anti-Asiatics is that Asiatics are residents of this country without having contributed anything to its acquirement, and even a statesman like Sir Percy Fitzpatrick and that vigilant politician, Mr. Freddy, appear to be of this opinion. The former, in his speech on the Validating Bill, not only told us this, but predicted that if there was any trouble in future it would fall to the burden of the white man. In my opinion this prophecy is not based on history. We know that there has been trouble in Africa four or five times during our own time, which was met, not by the white man only, but by coloured troops furnished by India, and if there were a serious rising amongst the native tribes this country would be unable to cope with it. Those of us who were in India when war in this country broke out know the timely and valuable service which India and In-

dian soldiers rendered to this country and the Empire. Immediately the troops of the late Republic entered Natal, the Viceroy in Council telegraphed to England the offer to mobilise, equip, and despatch two regiments of Sikhs and Gurkhas, the flower of the Indian Army. The offer was not accepted, as it was thought that there would be a prejudice against sending coloured troops against white. But the reply stated that trouble was brewing in East Africa and China, and that the Asiatics should be held in readiness for this, but that India should send as many white troops as could be spared; and these were sent, at the cost of India, and were the first to arrive to the rescue of the British of the Transvaal. Besides eight contingents of mounted Volunteers, including Colonel Driscoll, followed, and when the disaster to the Highlanders happened at Modder River the Indian Government requisitioned and sent the Lusitania of the Indian seas with Sir Hector Macdonald, and all at the expense of the taxpayers of India, the kinsmen of the Asiatics of this country. Part of the Asiatic troops were sent to operate in Somalia, and part to the relief of the Legations in Peking, where they arrived in the nick of time, and saved the people who were beleaguered there. In 1863, when King Tneobald of Abyssinia seized Consul Cameron, our agent at Magdala, and clapped him and the British residents in gaol, India and her Asiatic troops came to the rescue. She sent 12,000 men under Sir Charles Napier, afterwards Lord Napier, and they finished that campaign with conspicuous success. This expedition was undertaken at the cost of India, although her own interests were in no way involved. The Asiatic question now, so far as I can understand it, has narrowed down to this: The Asiatics say, "Bar and bolt the entrance to this country against the hawkers, traders, and merchants, but we will not willingly consent to the slight which the Validating Act puts on Indian gentry such as the millionaires and philanthropists, the Peabodies, and Montifores of India, who attended the Bombay meeting."

Sir P. Fitzpatrick says that the Validating Act provides for this, and the provision amounts to this, that should these men wish to come for a month to enjoy the fine climate of this country, they would be stopped at the frontier, and have to stay till they got a pass, a matter of days, if they arrived on a Saturday, and this pass they would have to carry always on them, like a convict at large on ticket-of-leave. Supposing Sir P. Fitzpatrick, when he went to England, and arrived at Dover or Southampton, were not allowed to land till he got a permit from London, and I, a nobody, because my skin was slightly whiter, was allowed to land, and were not asked for one, would he consider that insulting and unnecessary?

Asiatics in Mauritius

Sir Charles Bruce's Letter

The following is the text of the letter addressed by Sir Charles Bruce, late Governor of Mauritius, to *The Times*:—

According to a telegram from Pietermaritzburg of July 15, the Colonial Secretary of Natal, in defending anti-Asiatic legislation, is reported to have quoted, "as an example of the effects of the admission of Asiatics to a country, the case of Mauritius, where whites have been superseded, and Asiatic trading had become a curse." I have no desire to express an opinion on the proposed legislation in so far as Natal is concerned, but as regards the example of Mauritius I should be glad if you will allow me to make two observations. The introduction of Asiatics into Mauritius has been from the first, and is still, promoted by the European community as essential to the economic salvation of the colony. And, secondly, there can be little doubt that, but for Asiatic immigration, the island, destitute of the means of providing a revenue adequate to the support of a civilized Government, would have been abandoned and would have reverted to France. As it is, Asiatic immigration, under scientific European supervision and management, has enabled the Colony to develop its natural resources, to provide a revenue adequate to the requirements of a highly civilised Government, and to contribute generously to the defence of an important base of naval and military operations.

A Disgrace to Durban

Yesterday morning (writes a correspondent to the *Natal Advertiser*), whilst some Indians were experiencing difficulty in landing an unusually large catch of fish on the Beach, some scores of, to all outward appearance, respectable people, forming part of the crowd watching the operations, grabbed at the fish as they were thrown up on the sand, and carried them off. In some instances, several were taken by one individual. Men and boys were not the only offenders, a respectably dressed woman was also seen and heard urging a coolie waiter boy to "get her one."

Mention is also due of the hooliganism displayed by a number of men in bathing costumes from the enclosure, who amused themselves and a goodly number of the watchers by flinging the fish at the Indians, who were busily engaged lightening the overstrained net of its load. They and the pilferers may have considered that the colour of their skin entitled them to rob and obstruct the Indians, but it was a most disgraceful and contemptible exhibition, and it is to be hoped, for the sake of the good name of the town, that the authorities will take steps to prevent a recurrence.

Philosophy in Quatrains

A Review *

"All things pass away" Thus, in Arabic, the text that adorns the cover of Mr. Baerlein's little volume, beneath an allegorical representation of the Wind blowing upon thistle-down. The refrain recurs again and again throughout Eastern Philosophy, and especially with the Semitic poet-philosopher. We recall it in the Book of Job and the Song of Solomon, and it haunts us in the quatrains of Omar Khayyám and Abu'l-Ala. Indeed, there is much that links these last two together in our memory. Abu'l-Ala, the Syrian, was born some forty-four years before his Persian co-religionist. They both, in their English garb, sing their spirit forth in quatrains. Their theme is generally the same—the mutability of things temporal, and their conclusions do not differ greatly. It is a high tribute to Fitzgerald's work that Mr. Baerlein should, in transmuting his poet into English verse, have reminded us of old Omar's best thought, and an even greater to Mr. Baerlein himself that, though his rendering of Abu'l-Ala's philosophy into English quatrains must inevitably evoke comparison with the translator's better-known predecessor, he does not shine by reflected glory alone, he is no mere copyist. Indeed, Mr. Baerlein offers us a singularly beautiful string of pearls, and as he tenders his offering, he gives unmistakable evidence of deep and wide scholarship and culture. We confess that we have carried his little volume about with us (accompanied by the inevitable Omar) with undiluted pleasure, and we have joyously hugged to ourselves the beauties of expression wherein Fitzgerald himself has not excelled.

Abu'l-Ala and Omar Khayyám have much in common, it is true, but their temperaments are not akin. The first seems often oppressed with the sad seriousness of things, and even when he gibes, it is not without a proper solemnity. Perhaps it is a matter of training and worldly experience. His range of action was not so wide as that of his better-known brother-poet. The old Tent-Maker was a courtier, and had learnt the courtier's arts, and not least of these, the courtier's cynicism. And here is the main difference between the manner of the two men, though their matter be the same. The one laughs seriously; the other is most serious when he mocks the most. In Abu'l-Ala there is no mention of the wine of oblivion. For him there are the stars and the silence. But both dreamers are lulled to rest by the music of the spheres and the perfume of the rose, and in this respect, Abu'l-Ala is a true Siffi.

* "The Divan of Abu'l-Ala" by Henry Baerlein.—"Wisdom of the East" Series, John Murray, London.—Price 1s. net.

But listen how differently they tell the same tale. Says Abu'l-Ala:

The scarlet eyes of Morning are pursued
By Night, who grows along the narrow lane.

Whilst Omar Khayyám openly rejoices, because

Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to flight.

Abu'l-Ala makes Morning apparently flee from the all devouring Night. Omar, on the contrary, delights in the thought of Morning chasing Night away. And who is there will not joy with him!

And again, contrast the grim solemnity of the Syrian with the cynical contempt of the Persian. Says Abu'l-Ala:

Aye, when the torch is low and we prepare
Beyond the notes of revelry to pass—
Old Silence will keep watch upon the grass,
The solemn shadows will assemble there.

But Omar:

And then Thyself with shining Foot shalt pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the grass,
And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—turn down an empty Glass;

But all along the thought is similar.

The Syrian says:

And all the marvels that our eyes behold
Are pictures.

And the Persian echoes him thus:
For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show.

And again, Abu'l-Ala sings:

There is a palace, and the ruined wall
Divides the sand, a very home of tears,
And where love whispered of a thousand years

The silken-footed caterpillars crawl,
And where the Prince commanded, now
The shriek

Of wind is flying through the court of state.

Omar puts it thus:

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jumshyd gloried and
drank deep:

And Bahram, that great Hunter—the
Wild Ass

Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast
asleep.

One last comparison, Abu'l-Ala warns us:

For destiny will bring the bowl of sleep
Or bowl of tribulation—you shall drink.

Omar Khayyám puts the thought perhaps more dramatically:

And when the Angel with his darker
Draught

Draws up to Thee—take that, and do
not shrink.

Throughout, however, we hear the same music, the same concords, the same harmonies. If the Syrian and the Persian thought alike, the similarity of sound has been well rendered by their translators.

Some verses we remember of particular beauty in Mr. Baerlein's translation. They will doubtless be enshrined in many a Western heart. As, for instance, this:

Yet if all things that vanish in their
noon

Are but the part of some eternal
scheme,

Of what the nightingale may chance to
dream

Or what the lotus murmurs to the moon!

Or this:

Dark leans to dark! the passions of a
man

Are twined about all transitory things,
For verily the child of wisdom clings
More unto dreamland than Arabistan.

Or this:

Send into banishment whatever grows
Upon the waves of your tempestuous
heart;

Let every wish save Allah's wish depart,
And you will have ineffable repose.

No apter thought for Asiatic passive
resisters could be found than the following. Its music is haunting:

Ah! Never may we hope to win release
Before we that unripeness overthrow,—
So must the corn in agitation grow
Before the sickle sings the songs of
peace.

And, for their special delectation
and encouragement let us end as we
began:

All things pass away!

A. CHESEL PIQUET.

Indian Patriotic Union

Durban Mass Meeting

Passive Resistance for Natal.

Protest against the £3 Tax

A mass meeting of Indians, under the auspices of the Natal Indian Patriotic Union, was held on Saturday afternoon last, in the Indian Auction Mart, Queen Street, Durban, in order to take steps to present a petition to the Throne in reference to the grievances of Natal Indians. About 500 were present, Mr. P. S. Aiyar, the president of the Union, occupied the chair, and was supported by delegates from various centres.

The Chairman, in the course of his address, said that they required the support of the Indians if tangible results were to be achieved. There was not one who had not a growing feeling of discontent as the result of the hardships inflicted upon them. Poverty pervaded all sections of their community, and it would be folly if they did not take some action to check its progress. Half a century ago, when the country was undeveloped and practically bankrupt, the Colonists approached the Indian Government for labour, and the Indian Government encouraged this emigration to find an outlet for the surplus of the Indian population. At first the Indians were given land at the conclusion of their indentures, and were promised free education for their descendants. Soon after the grant of Responsible Government, the order changed, and the first thing the Legislature did was to disfranchise the Indians, because it was alleged they would swamp the whites, although there were 9,359 Europeans on the roll, compared with 251 Indians. Without a show of reason that law was passed, and since there had been gradual attempts to eliminate Indians from Natal. He then referred to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Act, and said it was provided by the

Viceroy that Indians should not be imprisoned for neglect to pay the £3 tax, but the same result was achieved by civil process. So long as the economic and social condition of the country remained what it was, competition was bound to remain. The Indian trader had a specific place as well as the Indian labourer, for he traded with his own countrymen who had a legitimate claim on him, for the articles they consumed. (Applause.) They received but small wages, and could but pay a moderate price for their requirements. Under the Licensing Law, continued injustice was perpetrated, and it was not true that Indian traders were on the increase. In 1895 there were 4,000 such; now there were but 1,040. He pointed out that if the proposed Bills became law, there would be no openings for educated Indians. They were debarred the Civil Service, and from time to time their educational facilities were curtailed. It was owing to confidence in British justice that they settled in Natal, where they had now built up their homes, and a large majority of them regarded it as their mother country. They calculated that as British citizens, who had assisted in the development of the Colony, they had a place in the Colony, and every Britisher, in common fairness should give them a hearing. The Government of Natal enforced severely enough the claims of the State upon the subject, but did not consider the claims of the subject on the State. As they had failed in constant requests for redress, they had to approach the Sovereign to ask for protection of their rights. (Applause.)

Mr. R. Dehaloo (Isipingo) proposed the first resolution as follows:—

"That this mass meeting of the British Indian Subjects hereby confirm the action taken by the Natal Indian Patriotic Union with reference to submitting a humble petition to the Throne, beseeching His Most Gracious Majesty, our beloved Sovereign, for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into our grievances."

Mr. C. Nulliah (Maritzburg) seconded and it was carried unanimously.

The second resolution was proposed by Mr. A. D. Pillay, and seconded by Mr. Roopnarayasing, and was also carried with enthusiasm:—

"That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to his Excellency the Governor and the Natal Government for their information."

Mr. L. Gabriel said that the inhuman treatment meted out to them filled them all with discontent. They had made the Colony their home: the majority of them were born in Natal, and they claim their rights and privileges in a British Colony. To many, India was only a geographical expression, and they meant to remain in Natal, and work out their salvation. He referred to Indian education, and

said that a boy could not remain at school after 17. Recently, four Colonial-bred Indians passed the Civil Service examination, but rules were passed to prevent their entrance into the Service. He pointed out that Indians had always assisted the Colony, as far back as the Zulu War when a Sepoy Corps was formed. They could put their troubles at the foot of the Throne, and wait for redress.

More Passive Resistance

Mr. H. S. L. Polak (Editor of INDIAN OPINION) said that, while petitions were useful, they must be followed by action. He urged them to follow the example of their Transvaal brethren. They did not sit down under their troubles, but followed their petitions by actions. (A voice: "We mean business.") During the past two years they had suffered severely for their rights. Were they willing to follow them, and adopt passive resistance? (Applause.) They would cause hardship to no one save themselves. If their demand was wrong they would fail: but if right they would gain the respect of the European Colonists. With regard to the £3 tax, they should collect information as to the cases in which severe hardship was inflicted, and present it to Parliament, and he asked them to go further—to refuse to pay—(applause)—and suffer the necessary consequences of imprisonment. The same thing should be done with regard to licences. If they were arbitrarily refused, let them carry on business and take the consequences. He said the European feeling towards Indians in the Transvaal had much changed during the past two years, and people admired them, because they stuck to their principles. If they suffered for them they would gain the respect, and afterwards the sympathy, of the Europeans. If they were prepared to suffer for their principles, their wrongs would be righted, as surely as day followed night. (A Voice: "We are willing to go to goal for them.")

Speeches in Tamil and Hindustani were also delivered by Messrs. C. N. Naidoo, Babu Talwantsing, and R. Moodaly.

"A CURIOUS STATUTE." The *Natal Mercury*, writing upon the Prohibition of Licences Bill, says: We have recently had sufficient causes of friction between the Imperial authorities and Natal, without deliberately inviting fresh unpleasantness of the same nature. To enact an absolute exclusion of all natives of Asia and their descendants from the right to earn a livelihood by trading, is to institute race legislation of the crudest conceivable character.

The Bill is drawn upon such sweeping lines that it might be interpreted to apply to our Jewish fellow-Colonists, as the descendants of natives of Asia—which is certainly a curious Statute to enact under the *regime* of our present distinguished Governor.

Problems of Empire

Coloured Immigration into South Africa

By the Hon. George Maydon, J.P.
(EX-COLONIAL SECRETARY, NATAL.)

(Concluded)

It is the fashion to-day to say that the Indian is crowding out the European, but even to-day, though the prevailing depression has reduced hundreds of Europeans to poverty, none can be found who will stoop to the hard work and menial occupation (for so it is here regarded) of hawking fruit and vegetables from door to door. Nor though the outcry about the wickedness of trading with Asiatics while white people are starving is incessant, does any class of the community, rich or poor, dream of abstention from this form of Indian trade in order to buy fruit and vegetables at the municipal market houses, run by Europeans, as to do so would be at the cost of much trouble and inconvenience. So the Indian labourer (the coolie) has thriven, partly from his own virtues and partly by the connivance of our vices of laziness and indifference.

But on the opportunity which his prosperity has created there has arisen another class which has occasioned a growing jealousy and embarrassment.

This is the trading Indian, known colloquially as the Arab.

To-day, probably, there is a large majority of Natalians who look upon the indentured, or labouring Indian, and with justice, as most advantageous to Natal. There are few who take any such view of the trader, and the plain truth is that the former adds to our opportunity of gaining prosperity, and the latter diminishes it. There seems to me nothing shameful in baldly stating the fact, nothing unjustifiable in frankly acting up to the principle. Both fact and principle are the guiding motives in the life of the most civilised peoples, whether individually or nationally, only they are but rarely frankly avowed.

But there are reasons beyond this which justify much of the antipathy to the Arab trader. First, his methods are by no means admirable. Too often he is merely a "fence," and by his means the proceeds of many small thefts are safely passed away.

Next he is a frequent bankrupt, bankruptcy being in the hands of the unscrupulous a very profitable transaction, it is said. That the evil is a real one may be judged from the fact that legislation has been enacted to enforce the keeping of books, in English. This barricade against rascality is a poor one. Then, lastly, the Arab has crowded out a large number of European traders, who previously lived, if they did not flourish, in every village where now the Arab alone is to be found. Even though the methods of these Arabs were entirely honest—and in some cases, no doubt, that is the case—nevertheless, the preference to

the European in place of him is entirely justifiable both on the ground that there are so many of our own race who find a difficulty in gaining a livelihood and because the value to the State of every European is positive and real, while that of the Asiatic may often be represented by the minus sign.

There is still another phase of the Asiatic labour question which cannot be overlooked, in Natal at least. This Colony has recently made such marked progress in several small lines of manufacture as to occasion official notice from her neighbours.

The Transvaal Prime Minister has more than once publicly referred to "Natal's bastard industries," maintained by cheap Asiatic labour, and recently the Collector of Customs of the Cape Colony has minuted a reference to the establishment in Natal of soap and match factories by the aid of Asiatic labour, to the detriment of similar industries in the Cape Colony.

It seems somewhat inconsistent for the Transvaal, dependent upon cheap foreign labour, whether Chinese or Mozambique natives matters not, and the Cape equally upon Malay or bastard Hottentot, to reproach Natal with cheap alien labour, but it is nevertheless evidence of how the Indian has established his industrial value for enterprises outside his own special realm of agriculture, and his capacity for successful rivalry with the European labourer or mechanic in every form of industry cannot be denied.

And though in the particular instances cited success has been due to various other causes, and not to the employment of Indian labour, it is nevertheless true that that labour is both cheap and effective.

What, then, it will be asked, is the real reason that Natal asks that the flow of this advantageous labour should be stopped? The answer is simply that all children of Asiatics so imported born in Natal are able to claim citizenship, and in the course of no great while will become an embarrassment, even if they have not already done so.

So with this class, as with the trading class, it is desired that a limit should be fixed.

But there now arises in regard to this question a consideration of which much is heard in England just now. It is an argument which has done service, or, rather, disservice, in the past, for it was made into one of the chief grievances against the Kruger régime in the Transvaal, and has been a source of exceeding trouble to the administrations responsible in that country since Mr. Kruger's time.

I must always maintain that the English people, in making no distinction between English subjects and races subject to England, are making a radical and costly blunder. That the blunder is an old one, and the payment for it has been long delayed, is nothing to the point. We are beginning to pay now in troubles arising in this country, still more in the fer-

ment which is growing in India. But at present we have only begun to pay.

There are serious politicians, men, indeed, whose opinions command attention, who speak of the debt which England owes to India.

'Tis a curious inversion.

Every student surely knows that the facts are all the other way.

Another generation, I suppose, will be describing the debt that England owes to Egypt—this one would hold such an assertion in derision.

Let us recognise that the loyalty of many Native princes to the British Raj, splendid and admirable as it is, is inspired also by a perception of the immeasurable benefits that the Raj has conferred on India.

To the ordinary Englishman, too, every individual belonging to this family of mankind must be an Indian, and must therefore be entitled to whatever privileges his conception of the relationship between England and India bestows. The same is true indeed of our courts of law and public institutions of all kinds. Except as regards immigration restriction (an enactment of recent date), I have never heard a challenge of the place of origin.

In South Africa, therefore, everybody with the distinguishing characteristics of the Hindoo, and wearing the Asiatic garb, has been accepted without question as a subject of the Crown, and allowed to claim any privileges pertaining to the status. As a matter of fact, there are thousands of Indians here who claim the full rights of British subjects who have no shadow of foundation for such a claim. A very great many, particularly in the early days of the influx into Natal, came from Zanzibar, and were subjects of that Sultan, many others, of the Imann of Muscat, and quite a large proportion who were Goanese, and therefore subjects of Portugal, all migrating here from the Portuguese possessions in East Africa, but all parading under the Union Jack, the flag that has shadowed so many a sham.

What, then, is the outcome?

That the settlement of these people is productive alike of good or evil.

That the good results are more early resultant and more tangible.

That the evil, though longer delayed, may be much more disastrous.

That a free people have every right to determine who shall and who shall not be admitted to citizenship.

That in the last issue the question must be decided by power and not by sentiment, even where that sentiment is founded in truth.

That the policy of Asiatic exclusion carries with it the necessity to be prepared to enforce it by might, and to maintain the dominion over a large portion of the continent of Asia by might, founded as such dominion is on beneficence to the Indian.

But let us also mark how frequently the devices of man set in motion to achieve one object accomplish something quite contrary, and bring ill consequences in their train, while

wholly failing of the desired end, and in dealing with this subject let us try to avoid such a fate for our measures.

Nobody's Child

A Pitiable Case

Official Red-tape

A most pitiful affair was brought to the notice of Mr. Hime at the City Court, says the *Times of Natal*. A little Indian girl of about fifteen years of age, whose parents are dead, made her way up from Durban on Saturday and was found at the railway station by Miss Payne Smith. It was found out that she had no one to protect her, and she was suffering from a disease of the eyes and itch. She was taken to the Indian Hospital, but the attendant would not admit her without an order from the Magistrate or District Surgeon. The child was eventually taken to the Police Station, where she was kept until this morning, when she was taken before the Magistrate by the Chief Constable to receive his Worship's directions. The unfortunate child was put into a cell and made as comfortable as possible by the police all day on Sunday. The Chief Constable did his best to have her taken to some hospital. He made applications to Gray's Hospital, the old Indian Hospital, the new Indian Hospital, the Epidemic Hospital, the District Surgeon, Dr. Ward, the Corporation Medical Officer, Dr. Buntine, and the Chief Clerk of the City Court, Mr. Von Gerard, but without success.

The Chief Constable informed the Magistrate that some considerable time ago he advised the Council that there was no place to keep such destitute people as this little child, and he asked them to come to some arrangement with the Government about the matter. This was done, and the Government replied that they would have a special ward erected at Gray's Hospital for that purpose, but it was never done. He wished to have his Worship's direction on the matter.

The Magistrate ordered that she be sent to the Indian Immigration Trust Board's Hospital for examination and treatment.

AN AWKWARD QUESTION. A correspondent writes: I beg to draw the public's attention, and to ask what the Government thinks about our Mosques and other religious places, when they intend to pay us compensation? Will they compel us to take compensation or to carry away the holy places? Or will we take compensation for our trade and put the holy places in desolation? We shall resort to passive resistance after the Bills receive the Royal assent.

Mr. Gandhi's Speech

The following speech by Mr. Gandhi was unavoidably omitted from the report of the mass meeting, held at Johannesburg on the 23rd ulto.:-

I think that it is necessary for me to make a few remarks in connection with what has happened during the last few days in connection with the Asiatic community resident in the Transvaal. I have had to take the responsibility again, in spite of the Validation Bill having gone through both Houses practically unanimously, of advising my countrymen still to continue to burn their registration certificates, and to show to the Government that they are as determined as ever to suffer until full redress is given with reference to the demands made by the British Indian community. Mr. Chairman has explained to you that we have made no new demand. We have never shifted the ground, but we have been compelled, inch by inch, to re-gain the whole of the lost ground by undergoing sufferings heaped one upon another. It required the incarceration of over 200 Indians before we could gain the admission from General Smuts that his law was bad, that it was unworkable, and that it would be removed from the Statute Book. It again required the incarceration of nearly 100 Indians before we could gain what we have through the Validation Bill, and I have no hesitation in making this admission, that the Validation Bill, is a vast improvement on the old Asiatic Act, much of the irritating clauses have been removed, the great religious objection has been removed, our oath has been preserved, and, for this, all honour to the Government, all honour to the Progressive Party, and I am now in a position to tell my countrymen, that if they do not choose to fight for a principle but if they have wished to demonstrate to the world that they were fighting only that they might be able to keep their solemn obligation but not that they might be able to keep their own status in the country, I can freely advise them to accept the Validation Act, but if it is their desire, as I hope it ever was their desire, that we have undertaken this battle not merely for our personal benefits, but in order to fight for a principle or a bundle of principles, then I have no hesitation in asking my countrymen to undergo further suffering; but, whether they do so or not in a body, whether the majority of the Asiatics choose to accept the benefits that the Government have so liberally given, as they put it, it is open to them to do so; but so long as I remain in this country, it is my desire to oppose the measures of the Government until we get the redress to which we are entitled, until the promise that I still declare General Smuts made in connection with the repeal of the Act is fulfilled, and until the status of highly educated

Asiatics is placed on a firm footing. These are no new demands. The Colonists or the Government, by giving us a little, inch by inch, make the Colonists believe that they are conceding what they need not have conceded, but I deny that position absolutely. I take the position that the Chairman has taken, and it is only when these two things have been fulfilled that we shall have got what was our own or what should have been our own. I draw your attention to this fact, that General Smuts himself has told us now and told the world that the Natives of South Africa, the Zulus and the Bantus, get treated the same as the Europeans, if they possess the same educational qualifications as the European, but the poor Indian and the poor Chinaman cannot do that. If the Native of South Africa may not have the colour-bar, why should the British Indian, why should the Chinaman, have the colour-bar? Why should the Indian and Chinaman be subjected to the colour-bar, have to labour under this colour disability? It is quite enough that we consent to the influx from British India being stopped entirely; but the stopping of that influx does not mean, it never meant, that educated Indians were to be shut out of this country or that they could enter it only on a permit granted by the Governor in Council and which might be revoked at pleasure. That is not the position for which we have been fighting so long, and that is not a position which can ever be accepted by us if we wish to be called men. When we take up this position, it is not a position of defiance; and I am very sorry indeed that Sir Percy has thought it desirable to hint, although very distantly, that there might be in this Colony a racial conflict: A racial conflict is now going on. I do not know what the meaning of any further racial conflict may be, but I do know this, that if it covers any threat of physical violence, I standing here before this multitude of my countrymen shall ask you to suffer even that physical injury. I see before me to-day my fellow-countrymen, the Tamil gentlemen. Their sore backs I have seen. They have never been used to carry sandbags, but they were called upon to carry sandbags in the gaol—these were the Gaol Regulations, but they have suffered, all the same, physical injury under the Gaol Regulations. It has not pleased General Smuts in fighting this battle with a weak people, with a people who have no voice, it has not pleased General Smuts to order the Gaol Authorities to give no hard labour to these prisoners or to give them hard labour which they could bear; but, no, we have to drink the cup of difficulty up to the brim, and I ask my countrymen to drink that cup if they wish to fight for a principle. I do declare that our fight, my fight has always been for a principle, and it shall be for a principle. General

Smuts has been saying that we claim partnership. We do claim partnership. I claim it now, but I claim it as a younger brother. Their Christianity teaches them that every human being is a brother. The British Constitution teaches us, it taught me when yet a child, that every British subject was to be treated on a footing of equality in the eye of the law, and I do demand that equality in the eye of the law in the Transvaal also. So long as the Transvaal remains under the British flag, and so long as I may be allowed to remain in this Colony, so long must I continue that agitation until British Indians have equality in the eye of the law; it is purely and simply a question of time, but that equality must be given. It may not be given, then we may be driven out of the country and I should be quite content. If that is the position that the British Government have taken up, if that is the position that the Transvaal Government also have taken up, I am quite willing to take up the position that Parliament has taken up, namely, that the white Colonists, that Parliament, should occupy the fiduciary position, because we are vassals, because we have no representation in Parliament. I accept that position. What is the duty of a trustee, if not to make his ward fit for everything that the trustee has been doing for the ward? Are the Government fitting us, their wards, for full citizenship? Do they hold out any such hope at all? And if they do why is there so much resentment, why should there be sustained cheering in the House of Parliament when General Smuts derides the idea of partnership? Yes, partnership undoubtedly. British Indians will not remain in this country or in any country under the British flag as slaves. They will demand to remain in this country, as also in any part of the British Dominions, as men, and so long as we do not claim this, I think that we do not deserve British citizenship, and, seeing that it is my intense prayer to the Almighty that my countrymen live as full British citizens, so long must we continue to work that we may have given to us these rights. (Applause).

Durban Higher Grade Old Boys' Association

The following are the officers of the above Association elected for the ensuing year:-

- President*: F. B. E. Conolly, Esq.;
- Vice-Presidents*: Messrs. R. C. Naidoo, A. Christopher, X. David, B. Telloo and V. Joseph;
- Secretary*: Mr. T. M. Naicker;
- Treasurer*: Mr. R. E. Moodaly;
- Auditor*: Mr. M. B. Lazarus;
- Committee*: Messrs. M. B. Iyalloo, B. L. E. Sigamoney, M. E. Sigamoney, M. B. Lazarus, V. N. Thumbadoo, J. Jeevananthum, Michael Lazarus, Sol. D. Royappen and V. S. C. Pather.

Notes on the Transvaal Stuggle

[BY OUR TRANSVAAL REPRESENTATIVE]

The Tamil Sacrifice

The *Transvaal Leader* publishes the statement that fully 25 per cent. of the Tamils have suffered incarceration for conscience' sake. Through an oversight in sending occasional notes, I omitted to send a list of Tamils who went to gaol on the 14th ulto. I now give the list of these heroes, some of whom were in possession of licences, but they declined to use those licences.

Messrs. R. Kanagasabi Pillay, Savery Pillay, R. Packrey Moodaley, P. Rajoo Naidoo, Subrayaloo Naidoo, T. Pavaday Naidoo, Muthramoothoo Pather, M. Nadasan, Candasamy, Moonsamy Naidoo, V. Vurthen, S. Rangasamy Naidoo, Vengetasamy Appoodoo, Ranga Padayachey, V. S. Moodaley, R. Jameson, S. Vallo Padayachey, S. Murthramoothoo Pillay, V. Govindasamy Padayachey, C. Canda Moodaley, Nursoomullo, Ranga Padayachey, Nayana Naidoo, Rama, Nagappan Naidoo. On their discharge, they complained of ill-treatment at the hands of one of the warders. The following affidavit by one of them has been sent to the Governor for investigation. The facts speak for themselves.

I, Poonoosamy Naidoo do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that on the 14th instant I was sentenced with others of my countrymen to seven days' imprisonment with hard labour for hawking without a licence. On the 18th instant, I went out with a gang to work. I had about 8 or 9 shovels full of sand in a bag, when the Warder came up, struck me and abused me, and ordered me to go and get some more sand. I accordingly went back and filled the bag, which was far too heavy for me to carry; but I was forced to carry it. I informed the Warder that my shoulder was already swollen from carrying bags, but he took no notice. On the 19th inst., on returning from work at 4-30. I was standing, with the others, outside the prison-gate for inspection. The Warder in charge without the slightest provocation came up to me and struck me with a stick he had in his hand, saying there was plenty of room at the back, why did I come and stand in front. I did not reply, and moved further back. The Native Constable was constantly using abusive language towards me.

Declared at Johannesburg, this 21st August, 1908.

Before me,

(Sd.) J. C. STEGMANN,
Justice of the Peace.

Dr. Thwaites who examined them has issued the following certificate.

I have examined the three men, R. Poonoosamy Naidoo, A. Arumongum and S. Vallo as requested. They bear no external marks to prove in-

juries to their bodies. The muscles on the shoulders of the first named appear swollen and tender, a natural result of excessive use of parts unaccustomed to such work--such as carrying bags of sand.

Was it a Mistake?

The circumstance that the Natal leaders were arrested at a semi-religious place has not failed to attract the attention of some of the Transvaal publicists. The *Transvaal Leader* of the 28th ulto. has the following leaderette on the Maliba case, as also the arrests.

We feel confident that the Colonial Secretary, who has so much work to do, is not aware of certain features of the administration of the law affecting Asiatics. Whatever view any of us take in the controversy between the Government and the Asiatics, we suppose that most European Transvaalers are agreed that where Asiatics, especially those who have taken no prominent part in recent agitation and who are residents of long standing, are trying to meet the requirements of the Government, they should not be harried. On Wednesday an Asiatic was brought before a Magistrate in Johannesburg for breach of the law. He held a Peace Preservation certificate and a Milner registration certificate. He had failed to register voluntarily owing to absence in a remote district but offered no sort of opposition to the Government, and was as a political factor unknown. His was one of the very cases this year's Bill was intended to meet. Yet he was prosecuted under the old Act! Thus it appears not to be a dead letter at all, but a very lively one; and we can understand that action of this kind leads the mass of the Asiatics, illiterate people, to doubt everybody who tries to reassure them that the formal repeal of the Act is unnecessary. It is no doubt a pure blunder on somebody's part. Yesterday several influential Mahomedans were arrested—in a Mahomedan building, which partakes, we are informed, of the character of a religious meeting-place. There had not been the slightest indication of their intention to evade arrest. The greater part of the Mahomedan world is just now in a condition of ferment owing to the events in Turkey. Britain is the greatest Mahomedan Power. Incidents of this nature are used by the Tilaks and their kind in India to increase the difficulties of British administration there and bring Mahomedans and Hindus into one extreme party. We need say no more—at least, we hope not.

"Fortunately Arrested"

Under this heading, the *Star* gives a graphic report of the case against Mr. Randaree. I cannot improve upon it. I, therefore, give it as it is.

In B Court to-day, before Mr. H. H. Jordan, an Indian named Randaree was charged with remaining in the Colony after the expiry of his temporary permit to stay, and after being warned to leave by the authorities.

He pleaded not guilty, and was defended by Mr. Gandhi.

Supt. J. G. Vernon said that on August 15 he called upon the accused to produce his authority for remaining in the Transvaal after being warned by the Registrar of Asiatics to quit. He replied that he had no authority, but had made a further application to remain. On instructions, witness arrested accused.

James Cody, in the office of the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria, said a temporary permit to reside in the Transvaal was granted by the Registrar of Asiatics on the 10th March last for three months. Accused applied for an extension on the 9th of June, and this was refused on the 24th July by letter.

The Magistrate: You allowed him to stay until then?

Witness: He gave certain reasons for wishing to stay. We investigated these reasons, and decided that the permit should be refused.

Mr. Gandhi: Are you aware that the accused's father is in Johannesburg?

Witness: I cannot say for certain.

Randaree went into the box.

"I understand that you intended to leave after the expiry of your permit and re-enter the Transvaal under the Immigration Restriction Act?" said Mr. Gandhi.

"Yes," replied the accused, "but fortunately I happened to be arrested here."

The accused asked leave to make a short statement, but the Magistrate pointed out that he had a very able solicitor defending him.

"It does not matter," said Mr. Gandhi, and the accused went back to the prisoner's box.

The Prosecutor said the position with regard to the accused was as if the Court had ordered him to leave the Colony within seven days and he had refused to do so.

The Magistrate sentenced the accused to one month's hard labour.

The Food Question Again

The following letter has been addressed by the British Indian Association to the Director of Prisons, which clearly shows how the Government intend to circumvent British Indians:—

28th August, 1908.

The Director of Prisons, Pretoria.

Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant with reference to the diet scale laid down for British Indian prisoners in the Transvaal Gaols.

My Association begs to point out that a change in the diet scale has been asked for not because the food supplied is medically improper but because it is not suited to the habits of British Indian prisoners. My Association, therefore, ventures to submit that it is hardly a question for medical opinion, but it is one for investigating the habits of British Indians as to food.

My Association admits that mealie-meal forms part of the diet scale for Indian prisoners in the Natal Gaols, but my Association does not agree with the inference drawn therefrom that mealie-meal is suitable for Indian prisoners. Happily, throughout South Africa, very few Indians are incarcerated and, therefore, the question of the diet scale has not hitherto occupied the attention of Indian

public bodies, but now, in view of the unusual position that has been created in the Transvaal, the question has become one of very great importance, and, unless the authorities intend to disregard Indian habits and sentiments entirely, my Association submits that an investigation in the manner suggested by me is absolutely necessary.

I venture also to point out to you that you have omitted to mention that the Natal scale, whilst it retains mealie-meal as part of the diet for British Indians, it provides for bread also, thus enabling Indians at least to fall back upon four ounces of bread. I beg also to point out that, according to the Natal scale, for prisoners undergoing a sentence beyond 42 days, treacle is added to the ration of mealie meal, and that for others the scale is fairly liberal, much more so than the Transvaal scale. My Association, therefore, respectfully trusts that the matter will be reconsidered.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,
Chairman, British Indian Association.

Violence Also?

Johannesburg, 28th August, 1908.

The following communications show what price the Indians will have to pay for their principles:—

The Honourable,
the Attorney General,
Pretoria.

Sir,—My Association has been informed that, at the trial of an Indian named Gopal Chhiba, on the 25th instant, for trading without a licence, immediately after the sentence was pronounced against him, Constable No. 50 violently dragged him from the dock. My Association is informed that this was witnessed by several British Indians.

My Association will be obliged if you will kindly investigate this matter and take such steps as may be necessary in order to protect British Indian prisoners from molestation.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,
Chairman, British Indian Association.

The Secretary of the Law Department replied:

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 28th August addressed to the Attorney-General complaining of the action of Police Constable No. 50 at the trial of Gopal Chhiba and in reply to inform you that the matter is receiving attention.

Down on Indians and Pauper Aliens

The *Transvaal Leader* of the 28th ulto., publishes the following information.

The South African Party (White League) is arranging to hold public meetings in Fordsburg on September 4, and Johannesburg on Wednesday, September 9, to

place before the people the following resolution:—

“That this meeting emphatically protests against any further concessions being granted to Indians in the Transvaal, and urges that the Asiatic Registration Act be rigidly enforced, and that no privileges be given coloured people other than extended to the natives of South Africa.”

“That this meeting is unanimously agreed in urging the imperative necessity of enforcing the Shop Hours Regulation Act, and thereby relieve shop and store-keepers of the unfair competition that now prevails.”

“That this meeting also desires to bring to the notice of the Government, with a view to minimise illicit gold-buying and illicit liquor-dealing, the urgency of stopping all hawking of goods or produce, of whatever description, in the mining areas of the Transvaal, excepting local farmers who are selling the produce of their own or hired land.”

“That this meeting denounces the continued permitted influx into the Transvaal of pauper aliens, the serious injury caused thereby to tradespeople and mechanics, calls for immediate enquiry to ascertain the means by which so many undesirables enter the Transvaal, and to concert measures to prevent a continuation of the injustice alike to Boer and British-born residents.”

Mr. Chaplin on the New Bill

Mr. Chaplin, M.L.A., speaking at Goldenhuis on the 27th ulto., remarked as follows on the new Bill:—

As to the Asiatics, he had seen that the papers were saying that the Government had climbed down before the Asiatics. It was not his business to defend the Government, but it was fair to look upon the position as it was. The Asiatics took up what most of them thought was an unreasonable attitude, but they put forward some claims which were not unreasonable. They said that some people were not present at the time of the voluntary registration agreement, who, if they had been here, would have been allowed to get the benefit of the compromise without any question whatever. They said further that if such people could now prove that they had been here they would have been accepted. As his hearers knew, the Opposition joined with the Government in settling the matter. It would have been easy for the Progressive Party to assume the opposite attitude, which would have been intelligible from the party point of view, but that attitude did not commend itself to them. They thought the question was outside party politics, and that it was better for both parties to agree and to show the Asiatics that they had both sides against them. The Bill which had been brought in was fair. It affirmed the principle already laid down that no more Asiatics were to be allowed into the Colony except people who could prove that they would have been allowed here before. The whole country was at one in its determination to stop Asiatic immigration, and the Asiatics would find that this was so. All sections of the House were in favour of the Bill, and the Asiatics must accept the inevitable; they must recognise that they would get no support in the way of party politics at all. (Loud applause.)—*Rand Daily Mail* 28th August.

British Indian Petition

The British Indian Association has sent to Lord Selborne a Petition to be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in connection with the Asiatics Registration Act recently gazetted.

The Natal Leaders

Messrs. Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Kustomjee, and M. C. Anglia are now

servicing three months with hard labour for the sake of the country that gave them birth, and they have well earned it. The seven days' adjournment that was taken by the Public Prosecutor was passed by them in galvanising Indians in the Transvaal into life. The sinews of war being fairly exhausted, they undertook the task of making collections. They commenced at Johannesburg, and most of the principal merchants willingly and handsomely subscribed, although they have borne the brunt for the last two years in every way, and although some of them could ill afford to pay as they have done. In two days, they collected over £200. On Friday, after the prayers at the Friday Mosque, they, accompanied by Mr. A. M. Cachalia and Mr. Nadeshir Cama, in whom the Post Office has stupidly lost a zealous servant and the community has gained an equally zealous worker, went to Krugersdorp. The people of Krugersdorp gave them a warm welcome, and within three hours, most of the Indians had paid up, bringing the total subscriptions in Krugersdorp up to over £59. They returned to Johannesburg the same evening, by the last train, and next, that is, Saturday, morning, they entrained, accompanied by Mr. Cachalia, the Chairman designate of the British Indian Association, to Heidelberg. In Heidelberg, the stout-hearted Mr. Bhayat, who has been spending money like water on behalf of the cause, gave £16. The result was that, within a few hours, and from very few Indians, £45 was collected. They, then, took the night train to Standerton. The leaders of Indian society in Standerton met them at 2 o'clock in the morning. Here, again, the response was equally liberal, over £53 being collected. Mr. Cama had here rejoined the party. The leaders then decided to go to Pretoria, from where they had been deposed, and do some work there. They, accordingly, went there by the Sunday train, summoned Mr. Gandhi, who joined them by the first train available, and those Indians who have submitted to the Asiatic Act could not withstand the entreaties of the leaders, and Mr. Hajee Cassim commenced the subscription list by putting down £5. Messrs. Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed, Ayub Hajee Beg Mahomed, and others followed, the subscription list reaching £26 in a few hours. A meeting was then held hurriedly in the Location, and promises of further subscriptions were made. They then, after having been entertained with refreshments by Messrs. A. M. Suliman, entrained for their destination, where they were to be invited to become King Edward's guests for three months. At Germiston, they were met by Messrs. Imam Abdul Cader Bawazeer, M. P. Fancy, E. S. Coovadia, Omerji Sale, G. P. Vyas, Jivanjee and others. They were entertained to a tea-party at a local hotel. The most pathetic part of the entertainment was that, although it

was given by those gentlemen who went to see them off, the leaders would not hear of the bill being paid by them, Mr. Anglia insisted on the Natal leaders themselves paying it. Amid the hurrahs of these friends, at half past eight, they left for Volksrust. Messrs. Bhayat, of Heidelberg, and Abdul Rahman, of Potchefstroom, besides Mr. Cachalia, were with the Natal leaders. This energy and the record collection remind one of the zeal and the success of the veteran General of the Salvation Army.

The B.I.A. Committee

This Committee met on the 7th instant, Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia being in the Chair in the absence of Mr. Essop Mia. The Committee, voted £100 for the South Africa British India Committee and collectors were appointed for collecting subscriptions. On receipt of the news of these barbarous sentences imposed on the Natal leaders and others, a committee meeting was held on the 8th instant. The meeting decided to hold a Mass Meeting on Thursday and to advise all in the Transvaal that Indian stores should be closed and all business suspended on Thursday, the 10th instant, out of regard for the leaders, and the Secretary was authorised to send cablegrams regarding the incarceration of the Natal leaders to London, all parts of India, Zanzibar, Aden, and other places. The cable to London states that since the renewal of the struggle 175 patriots have been imprisoned.

"If True, Disgraceful!"

Rev. Joseph Doke writes as under, to the *Transvaal Leader* of the 29th ulto:—

Sir,—In your sub-leader of the 10th inst., under the heading, "If True, Disgraceful," you referred to the treatment of the Asiatics in the gaol. Your words are well worth repeating. Directing attention to Mr. Gandhi's complaint that the men were being half-starved, you ended, "These men are political prisoners; it is unjust if they are put to hard labour or made to wear prison clothing; it is infamously unjust if they are treated dietetically as Mr. Gandhi says they are. We thought that countries professing themselves civilised had abolished torture. We seem to be an exception."

Will you allow me to point out that, according to the statement in this morning's paper, the Director of Prisons has replied, "that no change will be made in the present diet for British Indians, except on medical advice." That is, the British Indians are not only to be "made to wear prison clothing," and be "put to hard labour;" they are also to be still "half starved," a punishment which is not embodied in the sentence. When you said 16 days ago that "if Mr. Gandhi's accusation be well-founded, we are acting in a way which would disgrace a Turkish province," you did not speak too strongly.

I have proof that this shameful and inhuman treatment is causing acute suffering. I am told that one Indian boy, unable to eat the repulsive mealie pap, and too weak to continue the hard labour, was brutally kicked by one of the native guards. Others complain bitterly of the dietetic torture to which they are subjected. They think this is part of the effort to reduce them to compliance with the desire of the Government. I refuse to believe this is so. But, at any rate, for the credit of the Transvaal, it must be stopped.

Mr. Rustomjee's Challenge

Messrs. Camroodeen's Denial

Mr. Adul Caadir writes a lengthy letter to the *Natal Mercury* in regard to the challenge given to Mr. Dan Taylor, M.L.A., by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee. The following are the main facts:—

The firm of M. C. Camroodeen & Company was opened by me in Maritzburg, in the year 1882, and in Durban in the year 1887. I have from the inception of the firm been in control of it, and am still the senior partner. My firm deals mainly in soft goods, its dealings in rice, dholl, &c., being at all times on a very small scale. When my firm opened in Durban, Mr. Arbuckle had practically ceased to carry on business, and shortly afterwards closed down. At the time my firm opened business in Durban, Mr. Camroodeen was in India, and had been there for some considerable time, and has never returned to this Colony. Mr. Camroodeen's wife and children have never been in this colony, and no other member of my firm had his wife or family in this Colony until the year 1895, which was many years after Mr. Arbuckle had ceased to carry on business. My firm has never been interested in any contract for the supply of sugar estates or the Natal Government Railways with rations for Indians, and has never supplied any sugar estate on the Natal Government Railways with rations for Indians, and I shall therefore be glad to know from Mr. Taylor in what respect my firm could have been in competition with Mr. Arbuckle in connection with such supplies. In further proof of the absolute lack of foundation for Mr. Taylor's statement, and the meaning which he evidently intended should be attached to it, I may say that the average expenses of my firm and the individual partners thereof for the past 15 years exceeds £400 a month.

THE GREATEST SERVICE. No greater service can be rendered the youth of a country than to train good teachers and professors for its benefit—*L'Étoile, Belge* Brussels.

Late News

[SPECIAL TELEGRAMS]

Johannesburg, Friday.

A mass meeting was held here yesterday. The feeling was most intense. A resolution was passed deploring the heavy sentences upon the Natal leaders and resolving to continue to suffer until the redress to which they are entitled was granted. The second resolution implores the Imperial Government's intervention. The third resolution places on record the deep sense of the valuable services rendered by Mr. Essop Mia, chairman of the British Indian Association, who is going on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Mr. A. M. Cachalia is now appointed President of the Association. Telegrams of sympathy and support were received from every town and district in the Transvaal, also from Dundee, Ladysmith, Bulwer, Durban, Cape Town, and Kimberley. All shops were closed yesterday out of respect for the Natal leaders.

A message from Volksrust states that all Indian prisoners are at work breaking stones on the main street of the town. They complain of the diet.

Yesterday a hawker was sentenced at Boksburg for trading without a licence and was sentenced to six weeks hard labour.

Mulji Patel, whose release is expected to-day, will probably be deported to-night or to-morrow.

The *Star* last night urges drastic measures, suggesting the imprisonment of the Transvaal leaders. To-day's *Leader* suggests that the Government should give way on the education question, and protests against the present application of the Asiatic Act. It also calls attention to the unsuitable prison diet and hard labour for political prisoners. The article concludes: If we were alone in the Colony, we should contend that it is unworthy of a civilised people to do these things to men representing a great civilisation older than our own, to say nothing of their membership of the Empire. We decline to believe that the majority of English-speaking or Dutch-speaking Transvaalers realise what is being done or that they approve of it.

OUR SUPPLEMENT. We give this week a photographic group of the Standerton Indian merchants who lately suffered imprisonment for 14 days with hard labour, for Conscience's Sake.