

# INDIAN OPINION

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## NOTES AND NEWS

### Housing Scheme For Durban Indians

**F**OLLOWING the approval by the City Council on February 8 of sub-economic housing schemes for Indians at Springfield and Cato Manor, six members of the Council have written to the acting Minister of Public Health, requesting him not to give his approval to the schemes for slum clearance at Riverside and Mayville. "May we, as responsible burgesses of Durban urge that, in our view, the requirements laid down in your department's letter of September 16, 1936, have in no way been met," they state. In the event of the Minister giving his approval to the schemes for slum clearance, the result undoubtedly will be to drive the lowly paid de-housed Indians from the areas at Mayville and Riverside farther afield to other localities. The Minister, in his letter to the Town Clerk on September 16, said he was not prepared to be a party to those people being turned adrift when there was no accommodation for them elsewhere. Referring to this, the six Durban councillors state that no attempt has, to their knowledge, been made by the City Council to provide housing accommodation for the Indians, if the Department of Public Health and the Central Housing Board agree, to leave their present dwellings. The Councillors who have signed the letter are: Messrs. P. Osborn, S. J. Smith, J. Fyfe, H. H. Kemp, H. G. Capell and S. M. Pettersen. The Corporation schemes provide for 50 houses each at Cato Manor and Springfield.

### Natal Disfavours Marriages Bill

Public opinion in Durban does not see the necessity of a Mixed Marriages Bill. Natal has the largest Indian population of the Union, but marriages between Indians and European women are rare. The Christian Churches and the Indian people do not approve of them. The Transvaal agitation against the employment of European girls by Asiatics which has been discussed in the House of Assembly, has had no repercussions in Natal. Inquiries failed to reveal any great cause for complaint in Durban stores. A certain Indian-owned establishment in West Street with a high-class clientele employs a number of European girls, who are

under a European manager. Other Indian stores do not engage European girls. The Transvaal objects to land being held by European women married to Indians. In Natal that point does not arise owing to the negligible number of mixed marriages.

### Transvaal Indians' Protest

Resolutions expressing strong protests against General Pienaar's and Mr. J. H. Grobler's Bills in the House of Assembly were passed at a meeting of nearly 1,000 people in the Patidar Hall, Newtown, Johannesburg, on Sunday night. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Transvaal Indian Congress and lasted four hours. Hundreds were unable to gain admission, as the hall was overcrowded. Mr. E. M. Aswat, vice-president of the Transvaal Indian Congress, presided, and among the speakers were Messrs. P. K. Desai, K. M. Jajbhay, A. A. Mirza, Z. N. Parek, B. K. Patel, W. Ernest and S. M. Desai. The following resolutions were passed: "This public meeting of Indians, assembled under the auspices of the Transvaal Indian Congress, lodges its strong protest against General Pienaar's Legislative Powers Extension Bill and Mr. J. H. Grobler's Transvaal Asiatic Land Bill, as uncalled-for and unnecessary and in conflict with the letter and spirit of the Capetown Agreement. This meeting deplures in strong terms the gratuitous insult offered by Mr. J. H. Grobler's Bill to the religious susceptibilities of Muslims, Hindus and Parsees."

### Indian Housing In Maritzburg

The recommendation of the Maritzburg Slums Committee that certain unalienated Town Lands between the Greytown Road and the Mountain Rise Cemetery be used as a site for the sub-economic housing of Indians, met with opposition at a meeting of the City Council on Tuesday, February 23, from Councillors S. C. Couzens and A. G. Lugsdin. Councillor Couzens said: "Here we have a Committee recommending that an Indian village be dumped at one of the main entrances to the town. This village will be a menace. Is it the intention of the Council that Mountain Rise should become an Indian suburb?" The Mayor

said that it would be very difficult to find another place for the scheme. Camps Drift was unsuitable. An Indian village could not be set up beside the Native village for obvious reasons. Councillor A. T. Allison supported Mr. Couzens. He suggested as alternatives the land belonging to the Grey's Hospital and used as a mule paddock by the Public Works Department, and the higher lands of the Camps Drift area which had been reserved for industrial sites, but where some Indians were already settled. In reply, Mrs. Shirley said that Camps Drift offered room for only 80 houses at the most. The proposal was approved by Council.

### Elections In India

The elections for the Legislative Assemblies under India's new Constitution, are now over in all Provinces, says a Reuter's message from Bombay. The final results have yet to be declared in the Central Provinces, Madras and Bombay, in all of which the Congress Party (which opposed the Constitution and aims at political independence from Britain) is expected to obtain majorities. The position of the Parties hitherto known is: United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa: Clear majorities for Congress; Bengal, Assam and North-West Frontier Province: Congress largest single Party, but not strong enough to form Congress Ministries, thus necessitating coalitions with other Parties; Punjab: The Unionist Party, which is pro Constitution, has a majority and its Leader, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, has been invited by the Governor to form a Ministry. In the Central Provinces of 55 results hitherto known the Congress Party has secured 37 seats out of a House of 121. The important question of whether Congressites will accept office will be considered at a meeting at Wardha on February 27. The matter largely hinges on Mahatma Gandhi's advice, but a decision will be taken by the All-India Congress Committee when the National Convention meets at Delhi late in March. At present the official policy of Congressites is to wreck the Constitution.

## Indian Opinion

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH, 1937

### The Governor-General And The Indian Community

**N**EVER in the history of the Indians in South Africa has there been a display of utter callousness by any organisation as has been displayed by the South African Indian Congress during the past week. In arranging a farewell in honour of His Excellency the Governor-General and the Countess of Clarendon, the Congress has deliberately flouted public opinion and made a distinct departure from past practices and procedure.

The Tea Party that was given at the City Hall on Thursday last presented a first class farce and brings once more to the fore the absolute necessity of calling a halt to those who act for the community without any mandate. And what about the Agent-General of the Government of India?

Let us review the events that had led to the arranging of the Tea Party at the City Hall. The facts disclose that methods have been resorted to, which, if permitted to pass without our strongest protest, would be the means of creating a second India in South Africa.

The Durban Indian Hospital Advisory Committee was a body that was created to build a Clearing Station and Dispensary out of the moneys that were magnanimously donated by the Indian African Line. The building having been completed, the Committee wrote to His Excellency the Governor-General to perform the opening ceremony. There was some delay in replying. The Committee wired with a request for a reply. The Secretary to the Governor-General replied that His Excellency would perform the opening ceremony and incidently pointed out that the delay was due to the fact that *arrangements had to be*

*made by the Agent-General for India.* In the meantime Mr. A. I. Kajee, the Hon. General Secretary of the South African Indian Congress, attends a meeting of the Committee and secures an unopposed resolution from the chair enabling the Congress to present an address to His Excellency on behalf of the S. A. I. C. at the opening ceremony. At a subsequent meeting of the Committee this resolution is rescinded. Following the rescision of the resolution, the Committee wired to the Governor-General advising him that the function was to be restricted solely to the opening ceremony and that if rival political bodies like the Congress and the Colonial-Born and Settlers' Indian Association were desirous of presenting addresses they should seek other occasions. To this the Secretary to His Excellency replied that *in the circumstances* the Governor-General would be unable to open the Clearing Station. Then followed the arrangement of a Tea Party at the City Hall by the Congress.

These, then, are the facts.

We are conscious of the extremely delicate nature of the subject we have chosen in view of the association of His Excellency with the function. But that does not deter us from exposing the methods that were adopted to gain one's ends. One thing, above all others, emerges from the events of the past week, and that is that the Agent-General has had to make all arrangements. This strengthens the case put forward by Mr. P. R. Pather who, at the meeting of the Colonial-Born and Settlers' Indian Association held at Maritzburg recently, stated that the Agency had reduced the Indian community to the status

of the Natives. The Governor-General, before accepting the invitation of the Indian Hospital Advisory Committee, sought the advice of the Agent-General. And it is perfectly safe to assume that in cancelling the engagement subsequently the Governor-General has had the advice of the same *potentate*.

Their Excellencies, during their term of office in this country, have shown a great interest in the welfare of our community. And it is but fitting that on the eve of their departure some tangible form of appreciation should be shown to them by the Indian community. If the Agent-General had not taken a hand in arranging the function, we feel sure that the Secretary to the Governor-General would have agreed to an all-party meeting at which all shades of opinion would have been represented. We learn that when the Colonial-Born and Settlers' Indian Association approached the Governor-General for an opportunity to bid farewell, the Secretary to His Excellency replied that the Secretary to the Agent-General had assured him that every section of the community would be present at the function that the latter was arranging. With what authority he gave that assurance we do not know.

The Agency knows perfectly well that the South African Indian Congress does not represent the Indian community. Since the formation of the Colonial-Born and Settlers' Indian Association, no public meetings have been called at Durban. Whatever remained of the Congress was further rift asunder by the resignation of its officials early last year following upon the marriage of Syed Sir Raza Ali. And yet the Agent-General has been a party to the Governor-General accepting an address from the South African Indian Congress on behalf of the Indian community. We cannot conceive of a more deliberate

attempt to flout public opinion and to gag the community.

It is extremely regrettable that the Congress, assisted by the Agent-General, had selected a farewell to the parting Governor-General, to force its *authority* on the Indian community. For, the occasion would have been most opportune to show to the Congress and the Agent-General that the South African Indian community was not going to stand any nonsense. We desire to make it clear that the Agency of the Government of India was established to work the Capetown Agreement. And, to use Mr. Sastri's words, the duties of the Agent-General were to be confined within the four corners of the Agreement. From the very high standard set by Mr. Sastri, the office of the Agency has been reduced to the point of assisting one party against another

and to the assumption of commissionership for the Indian community. The Indian community is seriously divided. We lay the blame at the door of the Agency. If the Agent-General acted impartially in all matters without serving any particular party, and refused to interest himself in any matters that savoured of the personal element, we feel sure the division in the community would have been healed long ago.

We want to utter a word of warning to the community. Agents-General have come and Agents-General have gone but we will remain here for good or for worse. It is extremely dangerous to use the office of the Agent-General to advance one's interests. Let there be no mistake about it. When the time arrives for battle, it would not be the Agent-General who

would lead us to battle, but it would be one amongst us.

Let us repeat that we do not desire a second India created in South Africa. The tactics that have been resorted to in arranging the Governor-General's farewell may have contributed to a victory for one party against another. But we dread to think what the reactions would be. They are bound to recoil on the aggressor's head as sure as the sun rises from the East.

The Agency of the Government of India must realise, if it has not already realised, that its office is here at the pleasure of the Indian community. It is here to support the community and not to supersede it. Our position, with all the laws against us is already difficult, and let not the Agency by its actions, make the position much more difficult!

## INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

### AGENT-GENERAL'S REPORT

**A**N account of the problems which the Indian settlers in South Africa had to face and the assistance given them by the Agent to the Government of India, re-named during the year Agent-General for India, is now available in the latter's report for 1935, which has been published in India.

#### Transvaal Land Tenure Act

The Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission reported during the year. The Commission was appointed to enquire into the effects of "coloured occupation" in the Johannesburg Gold Mine area and to advise as to how the power conferred upon the Minister of the Interior to withdraw land from the operation of the Gold Law prohibitions against coloured occupation should be exercised. In their recommendations the Commission endeavoured to strike a balance between the demands of the Indian community and the proposals of the Johannesburg City Council. As regards the individuals located outside the areas recommended for exemption, the Commission proposed, generally speaking, that the sites now occupied should be exempted, if occupation began from May 1930, and that if occupation began between May 1930, and June 1932, it should be allowed to continue for life or for a fixed period. Certain other legislative proposals designed to implement the recommendations were also made. These proposals

are substantially embodied in a draft Bill published by the India Government on the 1st November, 1935.

While the Commission's report, the Agent-General observes, was a sympathetic, impartial and broadminded document, and the recommendations were, within the Commission's terms of reference, fair and just; the position as left by the Report was by no means a guarantee against hardship in the future. Unless, for example, Indians confined to exempted areas were given the right to own property, they would have no remedy against exploitation in the form of rack-renting. As regards exempted areas, it was extremely doubtful whether in view of the inevitable growth of population and the increasing industrialization of some of the areas, they made an adequate provision for the future. Again the position of individuals outside the exempted areas, whose occupation of particular sites was either intended to be protected by the law or was recommended for exemption, was far from secure, for they might not be able to maintain themselves against the exactions of landlords or, in the case of traders, against difficulties in obtaining trading licences. Finally, the position of Asiatic Companies which acquired immovable property before the passing of the Act of 1930, was far from satisfactory, although this again was a matter not

within the Commission's terms of reference.

The position arising out of the report was considered at a meeting of the City Council of Johannesburg. The Council resolved to adhere to its original proposals for the exemption of areas, although in some cases the Commission's recommendations exceeded the Council's proposals. Secondly the Council resolved that new townships should be established with the right to own property in them reserved exclusively for Indians—but the Agent-General strongly urged that the Indian community and the Government of India were uncompromisingly opposed to any measure of segregation.

An important Ordinance containing possibilities of application against the Indian trader was passed by the Natal Provincial Council in May, 1935. This is the Rural Dealers' Licensing Law Amendment Ordinance which, among other things, empowers rural local authorities to oppose the grant of a licence "on the ground that the business which it is proposed to carry on is calculated to depreciate the value of the property in the vicinity" or "to interfere with the health or comfort of occupiers of property in a locality which is wholly or in greater part confined to residential occupation". It authorises also the imposition of restrictions defining and limiting the nature of the business for which a licence is sought.

The Ordinance does not specially mention Indians, but the Natal Indian Congress in the light of past experience, apprehend that it might be used in a spirit of racial discrimination. Representations were accordingly made and deputations led, and as a result an assurance has been obtained that the Ordinance will not be used as a racial weapon.

### Slums Act In Durban.

Another matter of great concern to Indians was the administration of the Slums Act in Durban. The Durban City Council proposed to take action under the Slums Act against a suburb called Mayville, which is mainly occupied by Indians. It is true that Mayville is generally regarded as a slum but the local Indian Congress complained that the Council were actuated by racial considerations. In support of this accusation there was certain evidence which suggested that the Council intended to allot the area for European occupation after the existing buildings had been demolished and the area laid out afresh, although such an intention had not been officially expressed. In reply to representations made, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Hofmeyr, explained that he stood by the assurance he gave when the Slums Bill was before Parliament in 1934, that he would not allow the Act to be administered in a racial spirit. The matter is in abeyance for the present.

### Natal Sugar Industry

There was a crisis in the Asiatic industry necessitating the restriction of output, and the Indian planters apprehended that this might bring about their extinction. Of about 1,400 non-European planters, more than 700 were Indian planters, most of them small men, with only a few acres under cane. Discussions were initiated and ultimately an assurance was conveyed by Government that the interests of Indian planters would receive full consideration.

### Asiatic Bazaar Regulations

Some of the provisions in the Draft Regulations for the Pretoria Asiatic Bazaar which have been under consideration for three or four years are particularly stringent and are bitterly resented by Pretoria Indians. The matter was discussed in conference and some important concessions secured. But on these points to which Pretoria Indians attached particular importance, no agreement could be reached and the matter still remained under negotiations at the end of the year.

### Durban Building Bye-laws

A resolution was adopted by the Works Committee of the Durban City Council suggesting that plans for building or for alterations and additions greater in value than £300 should be prepared by a qualified architect. The

Indian community were affected in two ways. Firstly, as there are a number of Indian draughtsmen who are not qualified architects, but are engaged particularly by Indians to prepare plans for buildings of small value, the resolution endangered the livelihood of these Indian draughtsmen. Secondly Indians who in future wished to build a house worth more than £300, would have to employ a qualified architect whose fees would naturally be higher than those of an Indian draughtsman. The representations made in this case met with success, the Executive Committee declining to agree to the byelaw.

### Old Age Pensions For Indians

Under the existing law, provision for old age pensions is made only for white and coloured persons. In March 1935, a Congress deputation, led by the Agent General, waited on the Minister of Finance and urged that provision should be made for Indians also. Towards the end of the year, it was announced that a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,000 per annum would be provided for this purpose in future.

### Vocational Education

There was agitation for provision of agricultural and technical education of Indians, and it was urged that a beginning should be made by the establishment of a Government Agricultural Farm in the coast land of Natal to which Indian students may go. The Minister of Agriculture who was approached saw difficulties in the way of establishing an agricultural school, but promised to consider what practical assistance he could give through the medium of the Agricultural staff under his control. In the matter of technical education, as a result of representations made, the Union Government announced in November, that a sum of £250 would be provided for the purpose of starting continuation classes for Indians in Pietermaritzburg. This is, at any rate, a beginning, says the Agent-General.

### Admission Of Families Of Condonees

Another matter of considerable importance to Indians in which the Agent-General personally interested himself, was the entry into the Union of the wives and children of Indians whose illegal entry was condoned in 1928. Unfortunately, however, the efforts made did not meet with success. The Minister of the Interior expressed his inability to countenance the entry into the Union of what must amount to a considerable number of additional Indians. The connected question of the deportation of Indians found to be illegally present in the Union, because they had failed to apply for condonation in 1928, was raised at the same time. The Minister said that he could not reconsider cases already decided, but promised that he

would personally consider all future cases most sympathetically.

### Civilised Labour Policy

A policy known as the Civilised Labour policy was laid down in 1934. This policy has, of course, been used as a method of finding employment for the "poor Whites." An assurance was, however, conveyed to the Agent-General that Indians were not excluded from the purview of the term "civilised labour." The Congress urged that as the adoption of the policy had already had an adverse effect on Indian employment before this assurance was given, it should be fortified by making available to Indians the facilities provided by Labour Bureaus, and secondly, by providing technical training for apprentices.

A scheme introduced in the Transvaal provided for the supply of half a pound of milk to the European children in primary schools. As a result of representations made, Indian children were also brought under the scheme. A distinction was also made in the Red Cross Uniform for Indian women. The matter was brought to the notice of the Chief Commandant, who after some discussion agreed to recommend to her Committee that the Indian women should also be allowed to wear the European headdress.

### Work For Mohammedans

A sum of £1,200 was sanctioned by the Union Parliament during the year for the establishment of an office in Mecca, the object of which is to assist the numerous Mohammedans who make pilgrimage from South Africa to that Holy City.

In the enforcement of the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1934, on representations a concession was made to the Mohammedan butchers that the animal to be slaughtered by them should first be stunned and then killed according to ritual.

The total number of Indian emigrants who availed themselves of the scheme of assisted emigration to India was 592, (including 327 adult males) against 880 in 1934. It was also understood that in 1936, a census would be taken of Indians in South Africa. This would, to a large extent, solve the great difficulty experienced by the local Indians in obtaining useful information about the members of the community resident in the land.

The Agent-General, during the year, tried his best to compose the differences between the Indian Congress and the local Colonial Born and Settlers' Indian Association. Unfortunately, however, the efforts did not meet with any very great success. A hopeful sign, however, is that most of both the parties realize that internal dissensions are the greatest source of weakness to the Indian community abroad.

# POSITION OF INDIANS IN EAST AFRICA

## A VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS

“AS I was never tired of emphasising to prominent organs of public opinion in East and South Africa, such as the *East African Standard*, the *Colonial Times*, *Tanganyika Opinion* and the *Zanzibar Voice*, varring a few which have kept in constant touch with, and take particular interest in African affairs, the general public in India considered Africa literally as a ‘Dark Continent’”, declared Mr. Manohardas Kauromal, a prominent zamindar and public worker of Sind, who has returned to Karachi from an extensive tour of East Africa.

In the course of travels which occupied him four months, Mr. Manohardas covered 14,647 miles making lightning dashes from one place to another and visiting Seychenelles Islands, Kenya Colony, Uganda Protectorate, Tanganyika—formerly German East Africa—Zanzibar, Portuguese East Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Transvaal. The people of India have he said, a very vague notion of Africa and the conditions, social and political, obtaining there, particularly as affecting the Indians settled there.

Mr. Manohardas was of the view that here, as everywhere, there were two sides to the shield—one a depressing one of racial discrimination, colour prejudice and undue restrictions and limitations placed on Indian settlers; and another, of absence of meaningless routine in administrative affairs and the remarkable spirit of self-reliance displayed by Indian settlers and their fervent patriotism.

### Numerous Disabilities Of Indians

Dealing first with the numerous disabilities under which Indians are labouring in East Africa, Mr. Manohardas said that no Asiatics were admitted in East African hotels. Indian residential localities were situated away from European quarters. Even cinema halls were partitioned to segregate Europeans and Indians. The highlands were reserved for Europeans growing maize and wheat on the mixed farming system. The country had, along with others, been hit by economic depression and several farms were for sale, but the present owners would much rather sell them to their own nationals for ridiculously low prices, than sell them to Asiatics, because they were mortally afraid of the latter's low standard of life.

Under the Maize Marketing Act, the natives could not dispose of their produce of maize in the open market to Indians. The produce was graded and the price fixed by Agricultural officers. The natives could not sell their produce at lesser prices than those fixed for them

whereas the Europeans were not affected by this Act.

A similar Bill known as the Dairy Products Marketing Bill was sought to be introduced, but thanks to the persistent opposition of Indians, the measure was thrown out.

The Indian traders had to obtain a licence from the Government to buy maize in mofussil Government-controlled markets. This acted as a great handicap to Indian produce trading interests. Added to this was the Shopping Hours Act which was applied to all places in East Africa.

### Discriminatory Legislation In Rhodesia

In Rhodesia even to-day there were some pieces of discriminatory legislation on the statute book. For instance, all coloured immigrants, however highly educated, had to give thumb-impressions on three sheets of paper to the authorities and pay one sterling. These laws were gradually being relaxed but the legislation was still there on the statute book.

As regards the services, hitherto Indians in the lower ranks were accorded the usual privileges but these were now being gradually withdrawn. For instance, they do not now get the benefit of pensions, provident fund, leave and passage home. Compared to farming interests, however, the mercantile bodies were more conciliatory in their attitude towards Indians. Another interesting feature is that, in common with other Western countries, the Agricultural Department in East Africa was devoting considerable attention not merely to the promotion of agriculture but in affording marketing facilities for the produce of the land.

The question of income-tax was agitating Indian public mind in Kenya. Every Indian paid poll tax and education tax, while the European was exempted from the former. Indians, representing 3 per cent. of the population, demanded the introduction of income-tax while the Europeans totaling 97 per cent. were opposed to it. The Colonial administration was happily free from cobwebs of routine, and needless paraphernalia. The officials were easily accessible. All public and official correspondence were couched in courteous and respectful terms.

### In Portuguese East Africa

Mr. Manohardas was told in Portuguese East Africa that the Portuguese section of the population at the outset lacked patriotic fervour, but thanks to Mahatma Gandhi's movement, they had since imbibed a deep and enduring affection for their country and insisted that they should buy articles of their own country's manufacture, failing

which they buy products of other countries such as Japan, Germany or England, whichever is cheaper.

There were art schools in every important town in the Portuguese territory. As an instance of how patriotic instincts were nurtured among the rising generation, Mr. Manohardas cited the fact that the Mayor of Nairobi set essay competition open to students of municipal schools on topics like “How do you like Nairobi.” and “How can you render Nairobi more attractive.”

That the physical side was not neglected in South African territories was clear from the fact that at the Witwaters-Rand University of Johannesburg, College students received instruction in physical culture under the direction of special instructors.

Mr. Manohardas concluded with an appeal to Indians to take greater interest in East Africa and their brethren settled there.

## In The Magistrate's Court For The District Of Impendhle Held At Impendhle

Case No. 1/1937.

Between HERALAND No. 126129/126130 also known as HERALAL BENNIE, Free Indian of Deepdale Rail, Male,—Plaintiff, and MUNGA, Free Indian Female No. 62241/114325 formerly of Deepdale Rail, but whose present whereabouts are unknown,—Defendant.

To the above mentioned Defendant.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the above Honourable Court to be held at Impendhle on the 8th day of March, 1937 at 10 a.m. in the forenoon to answer the Plaintiff's Summons, wherein he claims a dissolution of his marriage with you under and by virtue of the Indian Immigration Law No. 25 of 1891, on the ground of your continuous desertion extending over one year.

And further take notice that in default of your doing so the Plaintiff may proceed therein and provisional judgment may be given against you in your absence, but that at any time within three calendar months from the date of any order or judgment pronounced against you you may appeal to the Supreme Court of South Africa, Natal Provincial Division, against the said Order or Judgment.

Dated at Impendhle this 15th day of February 1937.

By order of the Court.

(Sgd.) A. S. V. D. HEEVER,  
Clerk of the Court.

ANDREW FOX,  
Plaintiff's Attorney,  
225 Longmarket Street,  
Pietermaritzburg.

# MAHATMA GANDHI AT TRIVANDRUM

## ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION

A MAGNIFICENT reception was accorded to Mahatma Gandhi and party on arrival at Trivandrum recently to participate in the Temple Entry celebration. En route from Madras to Trivandrum, large numbers of people gathered at all stations to pay respect to the great leader and to have his darsan. In some stations the crowd was so great that the train conveying Mahatma Gandhi started a few minutes late. Flower and khaddar garlands were showered and rich and poor gave donations to him.

The enthusiasm of the people was unbounded and in their eagerness to see Mahatma Gandhi people, especially at Virudhunagar, got on the top of the carriages. When the train entered Travancore territory one could notice every important station beflagged and decorated. Rockets were fired and pipers played music even at stations where the train did not stop. Large numbers of Harijans cheered Mahatma Gandhi as the train rushed past them.

Shouts of "Gandhi-ki-jai" rent the air when the train steamed into Trivandrum station. After Mahatma Gandhi had got down from the train, a civic reception was accorded to him in a specially decorated pandal opposite to the station.

### Civic Address Presented

At the Tampanoor maidan opposite the station a mammoth gathering had assembled several hours before the arrival of the Express to have a glimpse of Mahatma Gandhi. Leading officials and non-officials had assembled in the pandal whereto Mahatma Gandhi was taken and garlanded.

Mr. Nataraja Pillay, Municipal Councillor, read the address on behalf of the Municipality. Loud speakers had been installed to enable the vast concourse of people assembled to hear Mahatma Gandhi. The address stated:

"Revered Mahatmaji,—On behalf of the citizens of Trivandrum, we offer you once again a most hearty welcome. Deep and abiding interest in the conditions of life of the man in the street forms a common bond between you and this Corporation working in a remote corner of South India.

"Few have made such sacrifices for the land of their birth; fewer still have dedicated their lives to the cause of the poor and down-trodden. The poor are always with us; but your dynamic personality and your heart, abounding with sympathy, have enabled us to visualise a continent where villages will function as economic entities and social disabilities will cease to mar essential human values. There has been

no greater unifying influence in this country than the enthusiasm you have evoked in the heart of every Indian to work actively to remove social and economic evils.

"Our joy in welcoming you on this occasion is enhanced by the fact that your present visit is to guide the celebrations organised to express the genuine and universal satisfaction of the epoch-making Temple-Entry Proclamation of His Gracious Highness the Maharaja. We now rejoice in a boon as liberal as the generous heart of a youthful and humane Hindu ruler can conceive and as noble and purposeful as the cultured vision of a great sovereign and statesman can envisage.

"In offering you our homage of reverence, we pray that you may be spared long in health and happiness to serve the cause of humanity and rejoice in the prosperity of your countrymen."

### Mahatma Gandhi's Reply

Mahatma Gandhi, after acknowledging the cheers that greeted him from all sides, said that as rightly pointed out in the address this was not his first visit to Travancore or its capital, Trivandrum. Every time he had come to Travancore, he had done so as a crusader to Savarna Hindus to remove from their fold untouchability. He had on several occasions talks with Savarna Hindus, untouchables and depressed classes, so mis-called, on this subject. He had now come as a humble pilgrim to offer congratulations to the Maharaja, his mother and their adviser, the Dewan. With the co-operation of this trinity, if he might call these three distinguished persons, a great act had been achieved. The Temple Entry Proclamation was a fact and had been working with success for some time now in Travancore. Proceeding, he said that these temples had been sealed to him so far, perhaps voluntarily. He did not know whether he would have been thrown out of them if he had tried to enter them. He could not avail himself of the opportunity of entering them, having made common cause with the Harijans. If it was open to Harijans now, it was open to him also. This was the opportunity for him to see their beautiful temples. He took the address as a token of their goodwill.

He would have many occasions, Mahatma Gandhi stated, to speak about the great act of the Maharaja. This act involved a great responsibility. Rajas might make common cause with their people. It depended upon the people to give proper effect to the Proclamation. If Savarnas went to temples with mental reservations that temples would

be polluted if Avarnas entered them the Proclamation was not being given proper effect. If Harijans went to temples as curiosity-mongers, then also the real purpose was not achieved. Mahatma Gandhi concluded with the hope that there would be no distinction in Travancore between Savarnas and Avarnas. He thanked the organisers for their address.—*The Hindu*.

—oOo—

## Indian Culture

### Austrian World Traveller's Tribute

"I AM no Miss Mayo. India is unquestionably the best country we have traversed so far. Its oriental beauty and the hospitality and culture of its people stand out prominently," declared Mrs. Betty Starek, an Austrian world traveller who, with her husband, has now completed ten long years of travel in most of the Asiatic and European countries on horse-back and is now on her way back to Austria, which the couple expect to reach in 1940. Mr. and Mrs. Starek left their home in Austria in 1926 taking with them six horses, two for their mounts and four to carry their kit, which includes all camping equipments. They have now traversed over a score of countries, their path lying across Hungary, Serbia, Greece, Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, Central Asia and via Karakoram to Kashmir, North and South India, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, China, Manchukuo, Japan, Formosa and back via the Sathia Pass and through Tibet to Calcutta and Delhi. At Delhi they gave up the ponies and took instead two tongas, in which they propose to reach as far as Kabul, via Peshawar and the Khyber Pass. At Kabul they will again take to ponies proceeding thence to Africa and then home. Mrs. Starek, who speaks English with difficulty and has picked up a little Hindustani in India, was enthusiastic about her impressions of India, which she said explained her return visit to the country. The purpose of her tour was purely one of study of the conditions obtaining in different countries. She intended, with her husband, to write an account of her travels on the completion of her tour. She added: "I am no Miss Mayo. I will have nothing but good to say of India. It is a wonderful country."

# South African News In Brief

## Governor-General To Broadcast Farewell Message To Union

THE Governor-General and the Council of Clarendon will give a farewell broadcast from Government House, Capetown, at 8 p.m. on March 18. The broadcast will last 20 minutes and will be relayed from all stations.

## Guests Of Orient Club

Professor Edgar Brookes, who recently returned from India after representing South Africa at the Y.M.C.A. conference held at Mysore, and Mrs. Brookes were the guests of honour at the weekly luncheon at the Orient Club at Isipingo. They were presented with bouquets by Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim, who presided.

## Heroism Of World Tour Cyclists

The life of a Durban Indian was saved by two Indian world tour cyclists on the Durban Beach on Sunday morning. The Durban Indian, Nariman N. Adajania, was bathing and became caught in a channel and washed out to sea. No life-lines were immediately available, he told a representative of the *Natal Mercury*, but Rustom Ghandi and Rutton Shroff, two Parsees, who are at present in Durban on a world tour by bicycle, swam out into the open sea to the rescue. They reached the drowning man at considerable risk to their own lives, in the nick of time, and brought him to shore safely. "I feel it my bounden duty to express my deepest gratitude and I admire their pluck and courage," Adajania added.

## Professor Jabavu To Attend World Congress

A singular honour has been conferred on Professor Jabavu of Fort Hare, who has been invited to attend a world conference which takes place in Philadelphia in September. Professor D. D. T. Jabavu received an invitation from the Birmingham and London committees to attend the Friends World Conference as one of their delegates.

## Lord Baden-Powell's 80th Birthday

More than 15,000 scouts of all ranks in South Africa joined in sending Lord Baden-Powell, Chief Scout and founder of the movement, a cable of congratulation on his eightieth birthday on Monday last. The message, which was sent through the headquarters in Johannesburg, read as follows: "All ranks in South Africa wish you and Chief Guide very many happy returns, good scouting and good camping." Lord Baden-Powell is at present in India, where he has just attended an All-India Jamboree, which concluded at Delhi a few weeks ago. He will return to England soon, so as to be present at the World Jamboree which will be held in Holland during July and

August. It will be attended by a contingent of 75 scouts from the Union.

## New Status Of Indian Girl Guides

The Durban and District Indian branch of the Girl Guides is now an official unit of the South African Girl Guides Association. Permission to join the association was given by Mrs. H. S. North, Provincial Commissioner for Natal Girl Guides at a ceremony at Sastri College on Saturday afternoon, when it was decided to form a local association with the following executive committee: Mrs. R. A. Banks, Mr. G. H. Hindson, Miss Lawrence, Miss Slatter, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Thomas. Mrs. Banks was elected president, with Miss Choonoo, secretary, and Mr. Hindson, treasurer. Mrs. North presented Mrs. Banks with her sash of office, paying a tribute to her for the good work she had done in the past in the cause of guiding. The Mayoress, Mrs. Cyrns, also addressed the gathering. Mr. Dunn presented the guests with bouquets and 16 Guiders received their warrants. Mrs. Thomas is the Commissioner for the Durban and District Indian Girl Guides.

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## Nizamia Muslim Society

The following letter has been received by the Nizamia Muslim Society, Maritzburg, from His Highness the Aga Khan: "I have the honour to inform you that His Highness the Aga Khan thanks the members of the Nizamia Muslim Society for their letter of good wishes and welcome."

## H.Y..MA. (Maritzburg)

Mr. V. K. Pillay, chairman of the Hindu Young Men's Association, Maritzburg, wishes to correct a statement made by Mr. A. T. Moodley, retiring chairman of the Association, at a meeting held recently, that the association had a credit balance of £600. This, he says, is an obvious clerical error, as, according to the financial accounts and balance sheet submitted at the meeting, the surplus reflected an amount of £182-0-8, to be exact.

## Andhra Maha Sabha Of South Africa

Under the auspices of the Andhra Maha Sabha of South Africa and Clare Estate Shri Vishnu Young Men's Society, an Andhra Patasala was established at Clare Estate Shri Vishnu Temple Hall, New

Germany Road on Sunday, February 14, at 2 30 p.m. In the presence of a large gathering of men, women and children of the district Mr. V. M. Naidoo (President of the Andhra Maha Sabha of South Africa) who presided, emphasized the necessity of promoting vernacular education and its many advantages. Of the various speakers were Messrs. O. M. Chetty, president of Clare Estate Shri Vishnu Young Men's Society, D. V. Naidoo (joint hon. secretary), A. J. Naidoo (hon. treasurer), M. R. Naidoo and R. M. Chetty, committee members.

## Indian Church Enlarged

A correspondent from Maritzburg writes:—

The members of St. Anthony's Indian Mission, Maritzburg, had the happiness recently of seeing a long-cherished wish fulfilled, when the enlargements necessitated by the steady increase in the congregation were completed. The new tower, which is carried out in graceful Gothic lines, is very imposing. A baptistery occupies a place at the main entrance, the baptismal font being the gift of Dr. M. R. Peters in memory of his mother. With the erection of the new gallery ample accommodation is now secured for the choir. Three beautifully toned bells, recently imported from Europe, now occupy the belfry. The scheme which has now been brought to completion was a cherished dream of a former well-beloved pastor, Fr. F. Gourlay, O.M.I., but the privilege of seeing it materialise has been reserved for his worthy successor, Fr. Leo Gabriel, to whom the Indian community is sincerely attached. The co-operative spirit of the congregation needs no further illustration than the fact that the sum of £575 has been collected within the past year and a half, thus wiping out the entire debt on the church. His Lordship Bishop Delalle graciously consented to bless the new extension. After the customary ceremonies Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given. His Lordship then addressed the congregation, expressing his appreciation for the good work that was being done in the parish, and hoping that it would continue to prosper. Afterwards the members of the parish and visitors, including Frs. Quinquis, de Gersigney, Wolfe, Kelly, Conter and Le Bras, were entertained in the presbytery garden, refreshments being served by the ladies of the Sacred Heart Sodality. A special word of thanks is due to Mr. M. R. Naidoo, who acted as M.C. During this function Dr. M. R. Peters, on behalf of the Indian community, thanked his Lordship the Bishop for his presence and assured him of the loyalty of this portion of his flock. Dr. Peters also thanked Fr. Gabriel, the priest-in-charge, for all that he had done for the mission, whose flourishing condition was entirely due to his untiring zeal.

# AMERICAN EVENTS

(FROM OUR NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT)

## Uday Shan-Kar In The United States

**U**DAY SHAN-KAR has returned to the United States after an absence of three years. The news of his return prompted the publication of articles in professional and general publications throughout the country, discussing the Hindu dance and extolling the premier exponent of its art that America has seen—Uday Shan-Kar. The Majestic Theatre in New York was crowded, every seat filled, at each of the initial performances given by Mr. Shan-Kar after his arrival. The extraordinary success of his performances (extraordinary since the American public is not famed for a good memory), caused an extension of his New York engagement. He is, therefore, to give five additional performances beginning in a fortnight. Mr. Shan Kar's schedule is so full that it has been impossible, to date, for his friends to arrange the customary public reception that featured his visit here three years ago. Mrs. Kamala Mukerjee and Mrs. Sen, the wife of the local representative of the Indian State Railways, were, however, able to arrange a private gathering for their distinguished compatriot.

## Taraknath Das To Lecture At N. Y. College

Dr. Das, the distinguished writer and lecturer on international relations, is to give two courses at the College of the City of New York commencing in February. The topics of Dr. Das's courses will be "Modern India" (a survey of ancient and modern India, its government, politics, etc.) and "The Near East in World Politics."

Edwin C. Hill, writing in a syndicated news-column (Hearst papers) that reaches eight million people..., hailed Dr. Das' "penetrating and prophetic insight into the bewildering snarl of current international relationships," declaring that "the selection of the East Indian savant...is in line with Dr. Robinson's drive for a broad, informed and liberal educational outlook in world's affairs. Dr. Robinson is the president of the College of the City of New York.

## News In Brief

The Hindustani community of New York arranged a farewell dinner for Mr. N. R. Checker, a local businessman, prior to his departure for a visit to his family in India.

Mr. Himendra Rakhit, former head of the Hindustan Association of America, was welcomed back at a dinner in his honour, tendered him by the Association. Mr. Rakhit discussed his experiences

while in India. Among those present were Mr. and Mrs. Sen, Dr Taraknath Das, Dr. Sarat and Mrs. Kamala Mukerjee.

Mr. S. Ansari, of the Jamia Islamia, Delhi, was elected President of the Hindustan Association at their elections on January 3.

L. Glick (Selim), of San Diego, California, has commenced issuing a publication called "The Mirror of Islam." The first issue contains articles criticising the British policy towards their Moslem subjects.

Mr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, noted publicist and Nationalist, has recently returned from a lecture tour in the Middle West and New England. Dr. Muzumdar, who gave as many as six lectures within a few days in some towns, commented on the renewed interest of the American public in India and her problems.

*Unity Magazine*, of Chicago, is serializing a translation by Basanta Koomar Roy of Rabindranath Tagore's "Russian Impressions."

Mrs Leith Hamachandra, (whose husband is a Ceylonese) was responsible for a widely publicised Armistice Day celebration in a Junior High School in the city. All events in the programme were acted, sung, and directed by the children themselves.

## President Roosevelt's Re-organization Plans

The afternoon papers on January 12 carried headlines like the following: "President asks drastic shake-up of 100 Agencies, bigger Cabinet." The Anti-Administration New York *Herald Tribune* the next morning, said "Roosevelt asks Congress for 2 new Cabinet posts in Re-organization Plan"; Senate democrats are critical of President's Revision Scheme; Roosevelt proposal may pass the Docile House but Bryd strikes out as foe in Upper Body."

The evening paper quoted above is pro-Roosevelt. The *Tribune*—controlled by women, incidentally—is Republican. Senator Byrd, mentioned above, is one of those Democrats who became "Independent Democrats" at the time of the elections. We likewise had "Independent Republicans" who supported Roosevelt, for that matter.....

President Roosevelt's proposals have been hailed with approval on the part of the majority of the Democratic members of Congress while the Republicans, and those Democrats who have not profited by the New Deal, attack the recommendations as unconstitutional, foreshadowing dictatorship, etc.

Representative Snell, Republican, declared, "the first thing for Congress to

decide, in dealing with the President's message, is whether we are going to follow the framers of the Constitution or change the whole original conception of the nation." Senator Borah contented himself with the observation, "I see no savings in sight," with Senator Nye, of munitions investigation fame, hailing the President's proposal as "a tremendous undertaking."

In the words of the President himself, the proposal "rests solidly upon the American way of doing things. There is nothing in it which is revolutionary, as every element is drawn from our own experience either in government or large-scale business.

"It will be necessary to provide for the establishment of two new departments, a department of social welfare and a department of public works, for the assignment by the President of all the miscellaneous activities to the twelve major departments thus created, for reorganization of the civil service system, for modernizing and strengthening the managerial agencies of the Executive, and for making the Executive more strictly accountable to the Congress. By the creation of two new departments nearly one hundred agencies now not under regular departments can be consolidated as to their administrative functions under a total of twelve regular departments of the government."

"In placing this programme before you I realise that it will be said that I am recommending the increase of the powers of the Presidency. This is not true. The Presidency as established in the Constitution of the United States has all the powers that are required. In spite of timid souls in 1787 who feared effective government, the Presidency was established as a single strong chief executive office in which was vested the entire executive power of the national government, even as the legislative power was placed in the Congress and the judicial in the Supreme Court.

"What I am placing before you is not the request for more power, but for the tools of management and the authority to distribute the work so that the President can effectively discharge those powers which the Constitution now places upon him. Unless we are prepared to abandon this important part of the Constitution, we must equip the President with authority commensurate with his responsibilities under the Constitution. And, in so doing, we shall know that we are going back to the Constitution, and giving to the Executive branch modern tools of management and an up-to-date organization which will enable the Government to go forward efficiently. We can prove to the world that American Government is both democratic and effective!"



# BINDER INQUIRY REPORT

## DENOUNCED BY MR. C. F. ANDREWS

**I**NTERVIEWED in Bombay regarding the Binder Inquiry Report, Mr. C. F. Andrews said that the report published had distressed him very much. It seemed at first sight from the general summary that the Indian community had lost heavily. Surely it was nothing less than a scandal that the moratorium which involved huge sums of Indian money was now to be renewed for the third time, making in all more than two years during which period the Indian merchants had received no payment.

"The second thing which struck me," said Mr. Andrews, "is that the Clove Growers' Association is to continue to dominate the situation with added powers in some important directions. The way that the Clove Growers' Association has been boosted up by the Government in the past gave no hope that it would be any less antagonistic to Indian interests in the future. This Clove Growers' Association which proved so hostile to the Indian interests is still

to control the whole situation. When I was in Zanzibar I was openly told by responsible people that the association was determined to get the clove market out of Indian hands. While it is difficult to ascertain from this meagre report exactly how far they will still continue to act against, the Indian interests, it seems clear to me on reading between the lines that the only position which the Indian merchants will be able to occupy will be that of subordinate agents of the Clove Growers' Association and strictly under their control."

In regard to the Land Alienation Act, Mr. C. F. Andrews said: "It is true that some method will be employed to avoid direct racial discrimination against the Indians, but here again I am afraid in the actual practice the result will be the same.

"There has been nothing to show that the Indian have occupied the land and turned out the Arabs. They have only mortgage over land in order to recover

payment of their debts. I am afraid the Arabs who are not really agriculturists at all in the true sense of the word will be defined as agriculturists, while the Indian who stand on the same footing as the Arabs with regard to land will be defined as non-agriculturists. Of course real agriculturist is the African as far as hand labour is concerned."

In conclusion Mr Andrews said that after two and a half years' incessant struggle, agitation and enquiry in the course of which the rights of the Indian case were proved again even by the Zanzibar Government's own officers through their own mission of enquiry, the end of everything was this miserable letting down of the Indian position in favour of the small anti-Indian party with commercial interests in Zanzibar. The Government of India ought not to take the report lying down. There would be intense indignation in Zanzibar among all the Indians whose patience must nearly be exhausted.

## AN EXPLANATION WANTED

To The Editor "INDIAN OPINION"

**S**IR,—Much undue publicity has recently been given to a renowned Indian Journalist—a misnomer and travesty on the English language—now touring South Africa. May I be permitted to ask a few questions. We learned from the *Natal Mercury* that the gentleman possesses an Oxford degree. At what college in Oxford did he pursue his "western education" and when was this distinction conferred on him? We learn further, that he has been appointed to the chair of English at the Atlanta University, Georgia U.S.A. Is this not a flight of imagination? In the light of what follows the whole thing sounds preposterous and not a little "phoney". My curiosity about this world tourist has been roused by the publication in Durban of a booklet entitled "The Indian National Tourist," which assays to inform the illiterate Indian community of Natal, of something of the wonders across the seven seas and of his experience in Africa.

Worse English idiom and more defective English Grammar it would be difficult to find in any Primary Indian school in this country. This, from one who has been holding forth very priggishly, on the superior brand of English

spoken and written by the average Indian schoolboy in India, is an insult to the average South African Indian's intelligence. How could a Professor-of-English-to-be, of the Atlanta University be guilty of such inane vaporisings as deface the pages of this book? How come so renowned sic a journalist to be exalted to such a high and responsible office? Who has been responsible for this charlatan's entry into this country, and why all this garlanding and worshipping of this pukka Bengalee Baboo, educated South African Indians cannot for the life of them see. I understand that the famous sic journalist recently essayed some "bunk shooting" on Comparative Religion and other such jingoisms. Truly, Sir, the proverbial fool has been allowed to tread and run amuk where men, genuine Oxonians, of much greater calibre have hesitated. The learned gentleman must think us a pack of fools ready to imbibe any and every brand of quackery his whim can dispose. Being such an ardent patriot and nationalist, why, I wonder, did he ever go to the west for his education? Were not the Bengalee Universities good enough or did he prefer the foreign

rouged and powdered "sweethearts" to the veiled, demure, virtuous, butter-wouldn't-melt-in-your-mouth Bengalee variety? (These foreign sweethearts are mentioned in his book).

Sir, you will be doing a service to educated South African Indians if you would endeavour to find the answer to my queries. I feel very strongly that this type of quackery which hails from the motherland, brought to us by such famous? journalists, can do nothing but lower the South African's as well as India's prestige in men's eyes. I would like to give honour where honour is due.

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