

INDIAN OPINION

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NOTES AND NEWS

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas

On Anti-Asiatic Legislation

66 I CANNOT help feeling that the Anti-Asiatic legislation now being introduced in the South African Parliament will have a bad effect, on the little hope which has been raised by the Hofmeyr delegation," said Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, President of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, in an interview to the "Associated Press." Sir Purshotamdas added: "I cannot understand the mentality of the South African parliament which may lead to the passing of such a discriminatory legislation. If the Europeans cannot be employed by statute by the Indians in South Africa, is one to understand that the Europeans will refuse to serve under Indians anywhere else or is it merely in South Africa? They want to artificially maintain what they may regard as prestige and dignity of the Whites. One cannot sufficiently condemn the latter mentality if that be at the bottom of the contemplated legislation. Prohibition of mixed marriages between Indians and Europeans is again short-sighted and unnatural. Such mixed marriages are not prohibited by law in any other European country and it is difficult to understand why the whites of South Africa want to be more white than Whites of Europe." Sir Purshotamdas continuing said: "I feel that efforts at legislation like this and the sort of action which is threatened to be taken in Zanzibar, cannot possibly help the attachment of Indians to the British Empire as it exists to-day and every well-wisher of British connection must deplore them. Efforts at legislation of this sort smack a deliberate attempt of provoking the sense of humiliation amongst the Indians in South Africa and India cannot be blamed if Indians seek to exercise their power such as it may be to retaliate in such manner as they can. The whole thing to my mind reveals bankruptcy not only of statesmanship, but even of a sense of justice and ordinary humanity. It is to be hoped that Mr. Hofmeyr's bold stand against such legislation will still prevent such a tragedy."

Marketing Bill

The Marketing Bill which has passed through the House of Assembly is causing a great deal of perturbation among the Indian community. In reply to representations the Department of Agriculture has given the assurance that Indians have no cause for alarm under the Bill and that the Minister has indicated that the Bill does not contain any powers enabling regulatory boards to discriminate between producers. The Indian community is not satisfied with this statement and is seeking an assurance that the Bill will not be administered on racial lines, and that the interests of the Indian small farmer and middleman will not be prejudiced in any way. Failing this, the Tamil Benefit Society decided to seek the co-operation of all Indians in South Africa with a view to sending a representative deputation to India to place before the Indian Government and people the unprotected condition in which Indians in the Union will be placed under the Marketing Bill.

Acceptance Of Ministerial Office

The All-India Congress Committee has adopted the Working Committee's resolution in favour of the acceptance of Ministerial office in the newly elected Provincial legislatures as follows:—

"The All-India Congress Committee authorises and permits the acceptance of offices in the Provinces where the Congress commands a majority in the Legislature provided that the ministerships shall not be accepted unless the leader of the Congress Party in the Legislature is satisfied and able to state publicly that the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities."

Future Of India

In the course of a leading article on the All-India Congress Committee's decision to accept offices in the Legislature, the *Natal Advertiser* pays a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi by saying that his nationalism is unquestionable and goes on further to state:—

His (Mahatma Gandhi's) influence is visible in the decision to take

office. Acceptance may, of course, in some cases be merely a prelude to an attempt to destroy the constitution from within. Yet even at that risk it is better that a blank refusal. The Congress members will at least gain some experience of the responsibilities of office instead of remaining in the wilderness planning purely destructive or obstructive campaigns. If they remain long enough they may yet be brought to see that the problem of India's political future can best be solved along the lines of ordered and stable evolution rather than by persisting in an endeavour to grasp instant power. The British pledge stands. Upon the statesmanship of the Indian National Congress more than any other body depends the date when it can be carried out to the full.

We must confess we are not very happy over India's decision to accept offices in the Legislature. It is an experiment and we have our doubts about it not proving rather an expensive one to the country. This delay in fulfilling the British pledge is due to nothing else but Britain's anxiety to still continue to drain India as much as possible. The most important matters over which the people of India are concerned are the vast military and civil service expenditure and the heavy taxation on the agriculturists. It can hardly be expected that the present Government will give in on these matters and a crisis sooner or later is imminent. In the meantime God alone knows how much India will have been still further drained. Concentration on a boycott of all foreign goods appears to be the most effective weapon for the attainment of Swaraj. Patriotism and determination are the two qualities needful in every Indian in India to carry out this programme. Beyond that it asks for no sacrifice worth the name.

Adjourned 'Sine Die'

The Indian National Congress convention which met at Delhi was adjourned *sine die* on March 20 after passing a resolution calling on the British Government to withdraw the new Constitution and reminding all Congress members of Legislatures to "keep in constant touch with their constituents and masses."

Indian Opinion

FRIDAY, MARCH 26TH, 1937

Mahatma Gandhi's Parting Message

WE referred in our last week's issue to the question of unity and ventured to suggest that it was not impossible if only we worked in the same spirit as Mahatma Gandhi did in this country. It will not be out of place here to look back to the past with a view to seeking guidance in our present unfortunate position. There is no doubt that the Anti-Asiatics are alert and are pressing the hands of the Government to introduce racial legislation thus having the better of us whilst we are distracted. If we have to blame anyone for this state of affairs we have to blame ourselves more than anyone else. Mahatma Gandhi left these shores in July 1914 after a very bitter struggle in which Indians were put to untold hardships resulting in the famous 1914 settlement of the Indian question. The parting message given by Mahatma Gandhi to his countrymen in South Africa then is worth recalling. This is what he said: "There is a good and easy way for Indians to live peacefully in this country. They should forget religious distinctions such as Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Parsees. They should abolish Provincial distinctions such as Bangali, Madrasi, Gujarati, Panjabi etc. They should also abolish caste distinctions. The laws in this country apply to all Indians alike and they cannot fight them unless they stood united. Above all they must be truthful. In times of distress they must fight bravely. If Indians are entrapped in self interest and are weak to put up a fight they will be surrounded with difficulties.

If the leaders are self-interested, lazy, untruthful and not sound in character the masses will never

rise. If, therefore, the community remains backward the fault will lie with the leaders and the sin will be over their heads. Indians who have come from Bombay are very often careless towards those that have come from Madras and Calcutta. The latter are despised by the former. This is a dangerous attitude and the community will suffer if it prevails. Even the better Indians despise the Colonial born Indian. I consider this a wrong on their part. Colonial born Indians have their shortcomings, but who is faultless? They have many virtues too. It should be remembered that the success of the Passive Resistance struggle was due largely to the sacrifices of the Colonial born Indians." In conclusion Mahatma Gandhi stated that the salvation of Indians lay in their own hands and their last resort was Passive Resistance which was an unconquerable weapon.

The position of Indians has never been as grave as it is to-day and the leaders of the community must take things more seriously. It is for their guidance that we have recalled here the parting words of Mahatma Gandhi. If we abide by them we shall never go wrong. The time has now arrived when we should, without the least delay, move to sink all petty differences in our own ranks in order to be able to show a united front to our enemies. For this we must shake off all false pride and make room for a real sense of self-respect and honour. We have already suggested, and we do not mind doing so again, that an emergency conference of the leaders of the Indian community representing all the three Provinces and comprising all

shades of opinion should forthwith be called wherever convenient to seriously deliberate over the present position and to decide on a proper line of action. To rely on the Agent-General or the Government of India doing anything for us is hopeless. If we examine our past records we would find that we were able, at least to some extent, to maintain our position in South Africa before the Agency was established but since the advent of the Agency we have been continuously losing ground. And we do not blame the Agency for that. We blame our leaders who did not look to the interests of the community as a whole but were concerned only about the material interests of a few and in their anxiety to safeguard those allowed the question of principle to go by the board. If we consider any legislation to be wounding our sense of self-respect and if we hold our self-respect to be above everything else we must be prepared to suffer for it. The time has now arrived to show not by words but by deeds that we are a self-respecting community. May Heaven's light be our guide.

—:O:—

Fountain of Wisdom

Misrule on the part of the British Government which is upheld by the British Power is misrule, in the responsibility for which the British Government becomes in a measure involved. It becomes therefore not only the right but the positive duty of the British Government to see that the administration of a state in such a condition is reformed and gross abuses are removed.

—LORD NORTHBROOK.

—O—

You cannot get an organized society and justice unless you make force and power not the instruments of the rival parties to a dispute but the instruments of the law, and the first law must be that nobody shall go to war.—SIR NORMAN ANGELL.

—O—

Men with strong religious and revolutionary faith, men with well-thought out plans for improving the world, have been more systematically and cold-bloodedly cruel than any others.—ALDOUS HUXLEY.

DR. MALAN ON UNION'S DESTINY

SPEAKING at a picnic organised by the Paarl Training College branch of the Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond on Paarl Mountain on Saturday last, Dr. D. F. Malan said that the A.N.S., which had recently been established, was a protest against the existing students' organisation (the N.U.S.A.S.), which had shown a lack of will-power and character.

A.N.S. was an attempt to bring back to the people an appreciation of the spiritual values which had been completely lost in the world in consequence of the Great War.

Dr. Malan scouted the dictum that there was nothing more for Afrikanerdom to achieve. The Afrikaner youth of to-day, he said, was living in a very important period in the history of South Africa. Past and future generations might envy them that privilege. The past history of South Africa had been a period of pioneering, and now that structure had been erected it was for the coming generation to say what would be made of that and what spirit would prevail. Now that South Africa had reached its majority their work was not finished but had only just begun.

Dealing with the colour question Dr. Malan said that they must follow the example of their ancestors in their outlook on this problem.

Voortrekkers had not viewed non-Europeans in a hostile or repressive spirit. They had, however, felt that God had created the human world, as He had created the world of nature, with a set purpose and He was not a God of uniformity. He had created diverse races.

Had He done so in order that they might be put into the same pot, or to give them national pride in order to retain their racial identity?

In South Africa they could not embrace the liberal idea which would allow a mixture of races regardless of the consequences. God's creation was behind their ideal of a White race.

"What is our future as a nation? How shall we stand among the nations of the world?" asked Dr. Malan. "I think in the heart of young South Africa there is only one idea alive. We must be no less free in theory and in practice than any other nation in the world. If we are satisfied with anything less than that we have not yet reached the full

measure of nationhood. We must never be satisfied with a form of government which does not fit in with our national traditions and ideals."

Continuing, Dr. Malan spoke in appreciation of the efforts of the Afrikaner people to create separate scholastic, culture, youth and philanthropic organisations, despite the reproach that these separate movements were evidence of race hatred. They would, on the contrary, result in greater unity and better understanding than had ever been the case before.

Afrikaans-speaking people would only be able to give up striving for their own organisation and work for a united people when English-speaking people would come to regard South Africa as their only fatherland.

"If that day comes the Afrikaner will not find it necessary to strive only for himself but for South Africa. That will only happen if we sever the British connection and South Africa becomes a free and independent republic," declared Dr. Malan.

GEN. SMUTS ON POSITION OF EUROPE

ADDRESSING the opening meeting of the Stellenbosch University branch of the Afrikaner Nasionale Studentebond on Saturday night, General Smuts took as his subject: "Whither Europe?"

"This," he said, "is the most important question which could be asked in the world to-day? Europe is the field upon which our future will be fought out."

He said he had recently received a letter from a well-informed friend in Europe who told him that there existed a dangerous spirit among certain groups of youths in Europe. "I have no fixed opinions and you may interpret me as you wish in this address," said General Smuts.

Tracing history General Smuts said that the Nineteenth Century could be written down as an epoch. There was the phenomenon of America, a nation of 120,000,000 which had developed in the shortest period known to history. There had also been the development of science and scientific technique, one of the greatest human achievements.

The Nineteenth Century had also marked the development of the principle of nationality. Germany, up to the middle of the Nineteenth Century had consisted of a whole number of principles.

At the start of the Twentieth Century Europe had been built up of a number of sovereign independent States with no bond between them, and it was this

lack of bond which was to a great extent the cause of the Great War. The Great War did not solve many problems—the condition of the world to-day, so far as the European nations are concerned, was the same as before. It was a case of victor and vanquished, which gave rise to States which could be described as haves and have-nots.

New systems of Government were introduced, such as Communism and Fascism. Those ideological systems had contributed still further to make the problem almost insoluble.

"What is the solution?" asked General Smuts. To go back to the old pre-War system of alliances is the tendency now developing. The outlook is very dark.

"Another solution suggested is the formation of a super-State, the idea being that Europe is in reality a family where there ought to be real authority.

"But what human possibility is there of such an occurrence? There is no chance in our lifetime. I do not see Russia, Germany or Great Britain submitting to a super-State.

"Another solution, the League of Nations, was the outcome of the Peace Conference, but at present there is a movement to revise the constitution of the League, especially the article referring to sanctions, which appears to be an unworkable measure as a result of its failure in the Italo-Abyssinian war.

General Smuts said that it seemed that Germany's demand for the restoration of her colonies and other matters now arising was beyond the powers of the League to deal with without causing war, and many people thought that Europe was heading for war which would cause the end of Western civilisation.

General Smuts said that he did not submit to that view, and while he thought that the position was serious he did not think war would occur on account of the rearmament which was taking place. His interpretation of the position was not a heading towards war, but to a state of armed peace, which would not be without precedent. Armament was a procedure which sapped the resources of nations by causing excessive taxation, and that in its turn prevented the national desire which existed on the part of the people to better their own position. It would be the people who would eventually rise against extensive rearmament.

General Smuts considered that scientific developments to make war as drastic as possible should be allowed to go on, when absolute horror would act as a brake to any nation heading for war.

"I believe in the future," he concluded. "It is to me unthinkable that all the progress made up this moment by the European nations should suddenly fall away."

MR. M. N. ROY ON "INDIAN RENAISSANCE"

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The following is the conclusion of the lecture on "Indian Renaissance" delivered by Mr. M. N. Roy at Poona, a portion of which appeared in our last week's issue:—

“MAHATMA GANDHI, despite his pet theories, has been able to sow the seeds of a revolution. I am not interested in the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, but I tell you this, that it has moved the masses and has developed the spirit of resistance. It has ended the spirit of complacency. It has disturbed the spirit of stagnancy. It has disturbed the spirit of fatalism. And it has encouraged, though in a small way, the spirit of revolt; it has advanced the movement of freedom of the Indian people. These are the conditions which will give the impetus to an intellectual movement. The very interesting feature of our struggle for freedom is that in this movement we have an objectively revolutionary striving associated with an ideology which obstructs its successful development and its thriving. And as long as we have a motor-car set on the reverse gear, we cannot expect to go forward. We must change from the reverse gear to some other gear and thus we will be able to go forward. And as long as we in India are conscious of the fact that we have the tendency to slip back to the reverse gear, there will be no salvation. We will be able to realise this when we understand that the future can only be built on the ruins of the past. We cannot seek inspiration for our advancement ahead from the past.

“There have been instances in the history of humanity, even in the European renaissance movement, where people have appeared to find inspiration in the past for their advancement to their future. But that was only a self-deception. The very idea that we must find inspiration in the past so that we can disturb and dislocate and destroy the present is represented as the spirit of revolution against the present. We can only build the future through the destruction of the present and the past.

Intellectual Revolution

“Social revolution does not move in a cycle. It moves further and further and once we disturb our present mode of thought and the present mode of belief, we determine the way towards the future. Therefore we will have to go further and further as we proceed towards the future. Therefore, even if subscribing to old inspirations and old ideas helps us to develop the spirit of revolution against the present, that is not revivalism but only a hidden form of renaissance. Our orthodox

nationalist ideology to some extent falls within that renaissance movement although in the form of revivalism. We must once for all realise that however great might have been the past, however happy the people of India might have been in the past, we cannot go back. We cannot get the past to live again. If that is the case, then we stand with our face turned towards the future and if we find through historical experience such elements of thought that will help us, let us utilise them to go further ahead. But already we have learnt from the past that we must make a critical examination of our past history so as to appreciate future possibilities. To-day those people who are involved actively in the political movement of the country cannot be expected to contribute very much to this aspect of our national struggle of thought revolution except to translate the ideas into action. But there are the intellectual student communities who are not actively participating in the political movement. It is for them to perform this task of revolution of ideas, as a task that has got to be performed if our political movement is to succeed. It is generally known that there are intellectuals who keenly feel the humiliation of our present political subjection and who are very much perturbed by the economic backwardness of the country, who regret the intellectual backwardness of the masses of the Indian people, in short, who are as sincerely and as earnestly patriotic as ourselves, who are actively engaged in the political movement. But they have a difficulty in joining the active political movement. They do not approve of certain reactionary characters in the ideology of our national movement. As intellectually progressive persons they find something repulsive, something objectionable to this ideology which will take us back to the old primitive or medieval condition. Now these gentlemen will be making a mistake if they remain in this attitude, if they say that because of certain defects they are standing aloof; it is for them to come forward and point out those defects. It is for them to come forward and help the national movement and develop the progress of the revolutionary movement because they are not pre-occupied with political activity.

Power To Govern Country

“But now we may ask the question why is it that it is at all necessary to go into all these questions which appear to be so remote from our immediate problem. We may say ‘let us carry on our political task and once we have

solved this problem, once we have established freedom in our country, we may turn to other problems.’ It is perfectly true that the reconstruction of Indian society and with it the free intellectual development of the Indian masses, is not possible before certain material conditions and certain economic developments have taken place and these are not possible before we have the power to govern our country and re-organise our country in a way we think most suitable for our purpose.

“But there is the other side of the question. That so long as we remain wedded to a mode of reactionary thought which restricts our will to action, we will not be capable of solving the immediate problem of political independence. In other words, political revolution cannot take place unless there is a philosophical revolution. Everywhere in the world political revolution and social upheaval have been preceded by revolution in thought and that should take place in India too. We must have ideals before us. But before we can set to work out those ideals, we must have ideas. What is the fundamental feature of the so-called typical Indian temperament. We have been taught, and we generally believe, that the Indian temperament by nature is given to the spiritualistic way of looking at things, whereas Europeans in the materialistic way.

No Divine Dispensation

“All this is very high sounding. Our mode of thinking is, to a certain extent, I admit, religious. But that is because our thoughts for centuries were religious and metaphysical. And what is the essence of this religious temperament of thought? It is to believe in some supernatural force which dictates and dominates and determines all earthly events. The temperament of the Indian people can be defined in one single word in so far as great masses of people are concerned, i.e. fatalistic. They think and believe that everything in the world is pre-destined and pre-ordained by a supernatural force called “God,” and they believe that this almighty force governs this pre-ordained world; they think that they will be revolting against God's laws and natural destiny if they conceived an idea of changing things from the state in which they are found. Therefore, the religious temperament in this sense is a decisive obstacle to the revolutionary spirit. Before we can set before us the ideal of changing the political outlook of our country we must get rid of the idea that everything in this world is pre-ordained by a complacent providence. And so even the British Government in

India, they think, is pre-ordained and, therefore, to revolt against that Government is to interfere with the pre-ordination of Almighty providence. Therefore, when we set before ourselves the idea of political freedom from British imperialism, we are revolting not against British imperialism but against the heavenly imperialism of God. And that is why I say that you must do away with this idea of a divine pre-ordination and the belief in a divine dispensation.

"Angels In Revolt"

"Our patriotism is intensely religious and so is our ideology. But the essence of our movement is to be revolutionary and to free the country from the acknowledged political domination of a foreign power. Therefore, it means a revolution against the spirit of what we have been taught to believe, a revolution against those things to which we have been accustomed so far, a revolution against all so far accepted notions of life and living, i.e., a revolution against the spiritual genius of India. Whether we are to submit ourselves weakly to this spiritual force or whether we are to be the makers and masters of our own destiny and stand as freemen, we have to decide. We do not recognise the right of British Government to rule and dictate to us and dominate our life and so we cannot recognise the right of God to settle our destiny for us and it will be perhaps a shocking revolt to some of you that we should revolt thus. But these things of revolt and rebellion are inherent in our movement. I will say "we are angels in revolt."

Significance Of Our Movement

"The Indian Nationalists are struggling for freedom, for political independence because they want to proceed towards the goal of political freedom. That profound revolutionary significance of our movement—to proceed quickly and rapidly to the achievement of political freedom should not be forgotten. Therefore, for the success of our political struggle, for the attainment of our immediate national goal of political independence, the renaissance movement, i.e. the intellectual movement of a critical attitude towards all our past and accepted traditions, is imperative. To educate us out of the crippled form of outlook on everything in life and subject everything to a critical way of analysis is an essential necessity. When somebody comes and tells us that we have to join the political movement, we have to fight for freedom, and we have to change the order of things in life, it is only natural that we should ask, 'why it is that we have to fight for our freedom, why it is that we should join the freedom movement and why at all we should fight for the country. I ask what do I care for the country. Why should I

join with others? You will be able to persuade me if you can show that it is for my benefit and for my happiness. If you can show that the striving in me for an intellectual development, the striving in me to attain to the heights of human progress has been obstructed, and joining the movement will remove the obstacles that stand before me, that stand in the way of my progress, then alone will I be compelled to join the national struggle."

"We have to remove these obstacles because only then we will be able to reconstruct our society. And such a reconstruction is conducive to the intellectual and material development of India. In the past we attained a very high level of spiritual development and then we entered in the medieval period of darkness which in Europe lasted for a few centuries and which in India has lasted for over two thousand years. It has been long enough, this twilight of medievalism and these centuries of inaction. It is time for us to wake up from the stupor of centuries, it is time for us to march out of this medievalism and turn our faces towards the dawn of re-birth. And when we have this perspective before us we are not striking a new path, it is in no way a new direction from the road of political freedom on which large masses of Indian people are travelling to-day. It is only a supplementary form of activity and a very necessary and good form of activity. The clarification of ideas is a necessity for determination in action, for the success of the freedom movement. Ideals are very noble but ideas are greater. We have ideals before us but we have no ideas as to how to realise those ideals. Therefore, let us not be intoxicated with mere idealism, let us learn to think and think critically. Let us have clear ideas and then only we will be able to clearly visualise a road to our ideals. This we will be able to do in two ways. On the one hand, we should learn from those people that have gone ahead of us. If the European nations stand to-day at the vanguard of human progress, that is because there was a time when they had the courage and the intellectual equipment to break away from the bondage of traditions and strike the way for a new line of development. If we have been living in political subjection for the last two hundred years that is because we have not been able to fall in line with those progressive European nations. It is undoubtedly the most important and relevant pre-requisite to organise ourselves. We did not choose to do that before and we are compelled to do that now if we are to develop our movement for independence. If we do not do so we will be compelled to live in bondage for the rest of our life. Let us then begin doing something by utilising for our benefit the new forces in the

world at least two hundred or three hundred years later rather than not doing it at all.

"On the other hand, we have to free ourselves from the thousands of years of old dogmas. You must throw a lot of criticism on our history, on our social traditions, on our ancient mode of thought, on our philosophy and religious dogmas and our present way of outlook on life. Because in the light of criticism, these thousands of years of superstition and ignorance will disappear and we will see the new light of liberty and this new knowledge will show us that our old traditions do not serve our purpose to-day. They will not be useful to us, they will not inspire us with the will to act. But in order to throw light of criticism on our past, it will be necessary for us to draw inspiration from the movement of the renaissance of the west. The renaissance movement in India going on to-day is taking place three hundred or four hundred years later. It will help us to draw our inspiration from those forms of civilisation which were born at the time of the renaissance movement in Europe. Gradually we are getting over those influences, of feudal traditions and local patriotism. To-day socialistic ideas are gaining favour with larger and larger sections of Indian intellectuals. This means that there are elements among educated Indians who have realised the necessity of learning from those who have gone ahead of us.

".....But the most important thing is that there is the spirit of revolution among the masses of the people. When the general masses of the people take it into their head that they are not satisfied with the established conditions of society, not satisfied with the way of the Government, surely there will be a change in the present conditions. The religious temperament is gone, our spiritualism has ended and now has begun the revolution of the angels. We are angels in the field of revolution. Our ideal was metaphysical, our attitude was supernaturalism and now not only the intellectuals but also the backward masses of India, who had remained in dark ignorance for centuries, have begun to think, have begun to will to change the condition of our life. At last the revolution has started. The renaissance movement has begun. Let us do it systematically. Let the intellectuals who are not participating in the political movement choose that as a field of activity for an intellectual revolution. To-day the renaissance movement is a mass movement in the country and therefore it is bound to succeed,

TRIBUTE TO LATE MR. M. B. MAHARAJ

THE death of Mr. M. Beethasee Maharaj in Durban early in February removed a well-known Indian public man. Mr. Maharaj was born in Durban and never left the shores of South Africa. In his younger days he did not have the opportunity of good education but, in spite of this handicap, he demonstrated that obstacles are placed to be overcome.

In the early days of Indian education, very few were qualified as teachers and Mr. Beethasee was appointed as Principal of the Isipingo Indian School temporarily and that appointment was the making of the man, for he took private studies and eventually qualified as a teacher under the Natal Education Department. He was a man full of ambition, perseverance and zeal for any cause he took up.

He was subsequently appointed as Headmaster of the primary department

By

Rev. Bernard L. E. Sigamoney

of St. Aidan's Provincial Training College. Among the teachers he wielded his influence in the literary direction, and inspired them to take a deep and an abiding interest in national literature, with the result that a wave of nationalist feeling spread among a certain type of teachers. The St. Aidan's Literary and Debating Society was formed and one of the Patrons was Dr. O. T. Loram who took a personal interest. The late Mr. Maharaj took a very active interest in the public life of the Indian community in South Africa, and his name will be remembered by those who knew of the early struggles in South Africa. Under the pen-name of "Bhussmasoor" he was

a regular weekly correspondent to the *Natal Witness* on Indian topics. Later on, under the same pen-name he was a correspondent to the *Natal Mercury*. In 1917-1918 he was connected with a Hindi newspaper *Dharma Vir*, a journal which stood for orthodox Hinduism. His love for India was very great, and owing to his enthusiasm a paper called *The Swaraj* was started in English which was the channel by which Indians in South Africa were given an opportunity to glean Indian views. He was the Editor of the paper. He was also one of the founders of the S. A. Indian Congress. Mr. A. Ismail, who convened the first South African Indian Congress at the Cape, had in Mr. M. B. Maharaj a worthy lieutenant. Retiring from teaching Mr. Maharaj became a merchant. During the depression he suffered great loss, and died a poor man.

South African News In Brief

Sir Patrick Duncan Sails

For South Africa

SIR PATRICK DUNCAN and his family sailed from London aboard the *Warwick Castle* for South Africa on Friday last. Sir Patrick and Lady Duncan were seen off at Southampton by a number of personal friends, including Mr. Robertson Gibb and Sir Campbell Stuart, on behalf of the Union Castle Company. Interviewed by Reuter, Sir Patrick said he looked forward to his new work for South Africa, where, as a rule, the Governor-General and his staff were strangers to the country. "Being a South African and so long in public life, I may be able, without going beyond the strict limit of my position, to be of use in the Government of the country. I have no intention of interfering with those responsible to the people. I go out as a South African, and the fact that the King has conferred a distinction on me in the form of a title does not make any difference so far as I am concerned."

Indian Store Burned Down

At Stanger

Fire completely burned down an Indian general dealer's store belonging to Mr. B. Veerasamy at Stanger on Tuesday night. The building was of wood and iron and situated at 16 Couper Street, in the Indian portion of the town. The fire is believed to have started near the kitchen shortly after the evening meal and was out by 9 p.m. It is understood that stock valued at £1,500 was destroyed. The building belongs to Indians. An adjoining building, occupied by Messrs. M. M. Tayob & Co., Indian general dealers, also caught fire and the ceiling was badly damaged. The blaze was, however, put

out by the use of buckets of water and garden hose. There is no fire brigade in Stanger and the police and some of the younger Indians did yeoman work with bucket squads and an ordinary hose in fighting the second blaze. Nothing could be done to save the premises belonging to Mr. Veerasamy, as the building was well alight when the police arrived on the scene. Attempts were made to save the stock. Extraordinary sights were witnessed during the fire, when the neighbouring storekeepers moved their goods from the threatened buildings in the locality into the street, which resembled a jumble sale. It is alleged that a quantity of smaller goods was stolen during these rescue operations by the huge crowd of bystanders. Fortunately there was little wind. Had there been a strong wind it is feared that a number of the stores nearby would have been burned down. A storm threatened during the blaze, but the rain began to fall only when the fire had been put out.

Indian Housing Scheme

The Maritzburg City Council on Monday last rescinded its previous motion approving of a site on the Greytown Road for a sub-economic housing scheme for Indians, and requested the Slums Committee of the Council to submit alternate sites for the proposed scheme with an estimate of the probable cost of the essential public works necessary. Councillor A. G. Lugsdin moved the resolution, and as the matter had been fully debated at the last meeting of the Council it was not debated at any length. Several protest meetings of Europeans and Indians have already been held against the selection of the Greytown Road site.

M. E. Lakhi Ward Equipment Fund

The Organising Committee of the M. E. Lakhi Ward Equipment Fund has received the following letter from the Provincial Administration in connection with a contribution of £129 12s. 2d. for equipping the Lakhi Ward:—

"I am desired by the Provincial Executive Committee to express its thanks for, and very high appreciation of, the splendid contribution made by the above fund for the purpose of the supply of essential hospital requirements for the M. E. Lakhi Ward. The desire of the Organising Committee, as expressed to me, will be communicated to the Medical Superintendent, Grey's Hospital, and to the Hospital Board. I enclose formal receipt for the cheque which accompanied your letter. The Executive Committee congratulates your Committee and the City Indian Musical Club on their enterprise, generosity, and fine public spirit."

Road Safety In Union

The Automobile Association of South Africa has written to the Minister of the Interior urging the Government to appoint a commission to inquire into road safety generally and into road accidents, their cause and suggested remedies particularly. The letter urges that the commission should report on the necessary statistical data which should be compiled and maintained by the Government in connection with road safety. "The association," the letter adds, "is of opinion that the whole question of road safety is one which calls for the most painstaking investigation. In view of the extremely rapid increase in the number of vehicles on Union roads, and in view

of the large number of accidents which occur each year, resulting in a considerable loss of life, injury and damage to property, the association feels that the appointment of a commission to inquire into road safety is extremely urgent and should not in any circumstances be delayed.

Commended For Heroism

Inspector R. A. Meston, of Pietersburg, and two Native constables, Frans Gobedi and Joseph Mandala, also of Pietersburg, have been commended for gallant conduct in Police Force Orders dated March 22. Inspector Meston, it is said, at imminent peril of his own life, rescued two Native children from drowning in the Zand River near Pietersburg. Constables Frans Gobedi and Joseph Mandala are commended for rendering assistance to their officer at great personal risk. Gobedi was the constable who first entered the river and Mandala crossed the river to the island opposite the one which the children were marooned.

S. A. Defence Attitude Condemned

South Africa's reluctance to enter any common Empire defence scheme can only be described as suicidal, Col. C. F. Stallard, leader of the Dominion Party, told Africopa in an interview. "In the present position of the world we are more liable now than ever before to attack. Our refusal to enter into a defence scheme thus amounts to little else than an invitation to attack," he said.

Shopkeepers Oppose Early Closing Plea

Retail tradesmen in Durban are opposed to a movement set on foot by shop assistants to have shops closed on Friday nights. A resolution passed at a meeting of the Durban Retail Traders' Association instructed the executive to oppose the alteration of the Shop Hours Ordinance sought by shop assistants, and to cooperate with other opposing associations. The chairman, Mr. P. S. McNamee, said that the vigorous campaign of the shop assistants' organisation could be attributed to their wanting to do something sensational to gain increased membership.

Public Holiday On Coronation Day

The Union Government will proclaim May 12 as a public holiday. Further steps contemplated regarding the coronation are the decoration of Government Buildings, a salute of 21 guns in each of the four provinces, military reviews and the issuing of commemorative medals and stamps says a message from Capetown.

Dr. Brookes' Senatorship Supported At Vryheid

Dr. Edgar H. Brookes, Principal, Adams College, received the nomination of the Vryheid Urban Area Native Advisory Board at a meeting held in the Vryheid Location on Tuesday, March 22.

Provision For Native Employees

Approval of the recommendation of the Select Committee on the Native Laws Amendment Bill that a local authority be given the right to call upon any employer of Native labour to make provision for his Native employees, even if he only employs one Native, was expressed by the President of Durban Chamber of Commerce, Mr. A. N. Neilson, in an interview with the *Natal Mercury*. "I can see no difference in principle between the application of the proposal in the case of only one Native, or in the case of 25 as laid down by the existing law," said Mr. Neilson. "This proposal does not mean that the employer of a Native must himself provide an establishment for that Native, for in many cases it would not be practicable. It means that he can be held responsible by the Corporation for seeing that the Native employee is suitably housed. "The Corporation could not make useful use of the power until it is in a position itself to provide adequate accommodation for all Natives, which will not be possible for some considerable time."

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Coronation Celebrations Committee (Maritzburg)

At the request of the Mayor of Maritzburg, Mr. F. J. Lewis, representatives of the Colonial Born and Settlers' Indian Association, the Natal Indian Teachers' Society and the Natal Indian Congress, attended a meeting last week at the Supper Room. After some discussion the following gentlemen were appointed to constitute the Coronation Celebrations Committee: Mr. F. J. Lewis (Mayor); chairman; Dr. M. R. Peters, (vice-chairman); Mr. I. Anthony (secretary); Committee: Messrs. V. K. Pillay, K. Sobramoney, B. R. Naidoo, S. David, R. Dookran, P. M. Seethal, S. Rathanam, E. G. David, R. A. Moodley, and I. A. Hafjee.

Shree Rama's Birthday Celebration At Tongaat

The celebration of Shree Ramnavmi, in honour of Shree Rama's birthday, will be held at the Shree Vishwaroop Temple, Tongaat, on Monday, April 19. All Hindu devotees are requested to attend the ceremonial performances.

New Body Formed At Sophiatown

A meeting was held at Sophiatown, (Johannesburg) on Sunday, March 14, for the purpose of forming a Sabha. There was a good attendance from Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare and Ventersdorp. The newly-formed body was named "The Sanathan Ved Dharam Sabha," and the election of officials was as follows:— President: Mr. Bhagwatee Singh; Vice-President: Mr. Surjoo Nankooram; Life Presidents: Messrs. Ramlal Singh, Koongbeharry, Ramlal Singh, Seubajan Ajodha, Ramdial Singh and Rugber Bania; secretary: Mr. D. Singh; assistant secretary: Mr. Roopnarain; treasurer: Mr. Lalbeharry; assistant treasurer: Mr. D. Kalichuran; committee members: Messrs. Ramclon Bhayroo, Bhadur Singh, Saha-duv Singh, C. Bhan, Seepaye Neerpath, I, Dookia, Debi Dayal, S. Junkun, Rampersad Ajodha, Lutohman, Luokan Ram, D. Rsjoo and M. Ranchod.

Nizamia Muslim Society

The first annual general meeting of the above society was held in Maritzburg on Sunday last, Mr. Shaik Madar presiding. A large number of officials and members were present and the secretarial report was read and adopted. The society had made very good progress and 230 members were registered during the year. The initial move of the society was to build a Visitors' Home, Hall, Library and Home for the indigent Muslims. Nine committee meetings were held and all resolutions were successfully carried out. Over eight thousand copies of the Monthly Bulletin known as the "Nizamia" were issued gratis to Muslims and others in all parts of the Union and Overseas. After the treasurer's report had been adopted, the following officials were elected for the ensuing year:—Patrons: His Exalted Highness The Nizam of Hyderabad, Sir Syed Raza Ali, Maulana A. R. Ansari, Mr. A. I. Kajee (Durban); President: Mr. Shaik Madar; Vice Presidents: Messrs. Sayed Ashaik Ali, A. A. Sharief, S. Ya-coob, Jamalooddeen Ahmed, Sayed Amod and Mahomed Ali; secretaries and treasurers: Messrs. S. E. Kader and S. M. Badroodeen; committee: Messrs. Amod Shah, Shaik Ali, Shaik Yusuf, Shaik Amod, A. Aziz Abdul Kadir, A. Kadir, Sayed Sharief, A. K. Jamalooddeen, A. R. Deen Ali, S. M. Kader, M. O. Offendi, Hajee D. Peerbear, D. E. Bhayat, and Adam Habib; executive committee: Messrs. A. B. Sharief, Shaik Yusuf and Shaik Madar; advisors to the society: Maulana M. I. Seepye, Hajee M. E. Lakhi and Hajee M. I. Kajee; Auditor: Mr. Shaik Madar.

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India Letter

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

The Greatness Of Hinduism

MISS UMA DEVI, a Polish convert to Hinduism, addressed the members of the Madras Presidency College Sanskrit Association on "What has attracted me to Hinduism." Prof. P. P. S. Sastri presided. The speaker said that while she was a student she learnt that the rishis of India were the custodians of the Divine Wisdom. From that time onward she had great reverence for India. From the first, she was extremely dissatisfied with Christianity as practised by the people and taught by the church. She found that the so-called Christians acted in a way quite opposed to true Christian principles. She joined the Theosophical Society and from that time she came to know more about the Hindu religion and Hindu culture. She studied the Upanishads and the Gita and found in them everything that appealed to her heart and answers which could satisfy all her doubts. She found in the theory of reincarnation a satisfactory explanation for the inequalities found in the world. She was then impressed by the idea of the oneness of God and the oneness of Life propounded by the advaitic vedantin. The principle that divinity was present in the highest and the lowest being seemed to her to be the greatest truth which had ever been expressed. Proceeding, Miss Uma Devi said that she could say from her own inner experience that Hinduism satisfied all the spiritual needs of man. The teachings of the Gita were the most sublime she had ever come across. She found everywhere in the West hypocrisy, aggressive selfishness and utter materialism. When she came to India she found the true spirit of religion permeating the land. She found that Indian art and culture expressed the highest ideals. Miss Uma Devi said that she had met great scholars and leaders of thought and found that the country was pulsating with the true spirit of divinity. She had met a realised soul in Sri Ramana Rishi. Continuing, the speaker said that in her travels in India the one thing that struck her most was the utter lack of understanding among the people of the great truths of their own religion, especially among the youth of the country. She was told that the system of education imparted in the country was such that the youth were not at all taught their religion. It might be one of the reasons; but she would say that the spirit of tolerance which she found among the Hindus was a great source of weakness. Missionary work for the propagation of Hinduism was not being carried on. Indians, she found, were suffering from

an inferiority complex. But, she would say, from her own personal experience, that it was only India that could save the world. Indian youth had with them the means to bring peace to the world. Her greatest sons, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others were the world's saviours. But, to her great surprise, she found that the youth looked to the West and copied the superficialities and the foolish customs of the West. Miss Uma Devi, proceeding, said she had taken an active part in the fight for freedom, political, social and religious, in her native country, and she had rendered the utmost service to her country. But because she sincerely felt that the ills of the world could be cured only by Hinduism and the great truths enshrined in its teachings, she came out to India and identified herself with the religion. It would be her endeavour to understand India's culture and civilisation and do her humble bit to make Indian youth realise the greatness of his own religion. India had the greatest message to give to the West, and only in a spiritual revolution lay the salvation of the world. The atmosphere in Europe was full of hypocrisy, hatred and selfishness; and the nations were busy increasing their armaments. India alone could save the world from the catastrophe overhanging it, and she hoped Indians would soon bring lasting peace to the world.

India's Destiny

Dr. G. S. Arundale, President of the Theosophical Society, in closing the 6th International Theosophical Convention at Benares, said: "I most earnestly trust that the members of the Indian section will ever increasingly realise that it is they more than most others who can give a true lead to the Indian people, so that they may be bestowed upon the world, a nation rich in differences, but deeply understanding their harmonious resolution, and, therefore, a nation powerful to release, for urgent needs of the world, those forces which shall bring about, in due course, that great apotheosis of modern civilisation of which India is destined to be the heart."

Indians In Zanzibar

The clove industry is once again the subject of a strong representation to the Government of India by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, says the

Indian Review. The Association denounces the Binder report whose recommendation, it says, "are directed solely to developing the clove industry in Zanzibar with Indians eliminated from it." One wonders what possibly can be the interests of the country apart from the interests of the people constituting it? The clove industry in Zanzibar is practically the creation of Indians, and its interests are the interests of the Indians as well. "The Zanzibar policy is to try to save the industry at the expense of Indians. The trade has been taken out of their hands. The debts due to them are being withheld under the name of 'moratorium.' They are denied the rights to own land. Short of expulsion, everything has been done to make them quit the land in which they have lived and worked for centuries." In forwarding this memorandum, Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, chairman of the Association, has voiced public feeling in the country when he appealed to the Government to take "prompt and effective" measures to safeguard the interests of the Indian community in Zanzibar before His Majesty's Government pass final orders on the report.

British Educational Experts In India

Messrs. Abbot and Wood, British Educational experts, recently met the U. P. Secondary Education Re-organisation Committee at Allahabad. The points emphasised by them in the course of discussion were that teachers should aim at creating a proper attitude towards knowledge instead of cramming knowledge into the heads of pupils. They expressed the opinion that, in the early stages of classes too long courses were too difficult for growing children and that women should be increasingly used as teachers as they were better suited for this work. Their conception of education should receive a new orientation. It should be more educational than instructional. They suggested that India might try junior technological schools which had been so successful in Britain.

Harijan Fund

During his recent tour in Travancore Mahatma Gandhi collected a sum of Rs. 1,750 towards the Harijan Fund,

TRANSVAAL INDIAN TAMIL BENEFIT SOCIETY

PROTEST MEETING AGAINST MARKETING BILL

A MASS MEETING under the auspices of the Transvaal Indian Tamil Benefit Society was held at the Empire Bioscope Hall on March 10. Mr. N. S. Pillay presided and the following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

(1) In view of the fact that the Marketing Bill is fraught with danger for the economic existence of the Indian community in South Africa, this meeting hereby resolves to draw the attention of the Union Cabinet to the effect of the operation of this Bill in the event of it becoming law and to request the Union Government to introduce such amendments as to safeguard the rights and interests of the Indian Agriculturists and distributors in order to enable them to carry on their Agricultural pursuits uninterrupted and unhindered

(2) Having regard to the fact that the Marketing Bill is a class legislation intended to promote the economic interests of the European community and having in view that such legislation is calculated to place the economic interests of the Indian community at a disadvantage, this meeting hereby resolves to draw the attention of the Government of India to take into their consideration the desirability of safeguarding the rights of the domiciled Indian community in the Union in terms of the upliftment clause of the Cape Town Agreement.

(3) This meeting resolves to seek the co-operation of the Indians in South Africa in the event of failing to obtain justice at the hands of the Union Parliament, with a view to send a representative deputation to India in order to place

before the Indian Government and people the tragic condition in which Indians in the Union will be placed under the Marketing Bill.

(4) This meeting resolves to forward the aforesaid resolutions to the Government of India, Indian National Congress, the Agent General for the Government of India in the Union, the Union Government and the Press.

(5) This meeting, while thanking Mr. P. S. Aiyar for his instructive address on the Marketing Bill, places on record their appreciation of the services rendered by the Natal Indian Farmers' Union in connection with the Marketing Bill, and as the Bill contains principles of a far reaching nature, this meeting ventures to hope that the Indian Farmers in Natal will sustain their struggle until economical freedom is placed on unchallengeable grounds.

The Sporting World

Witwatersrand Indian Football Association

THE annual general meeting of the above association was held at the Indian Assurance Office (Joh'burg) recently. Delegates from the following Clubs were present:—Vredons, Moonlighters, Moonlighters A, Standards, Crimson League, Stella, Rangers and Dravadiana. Mr. S. D. Royeppen presided supported by the following officials: Hon. Life Vice-Presidents: Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney and Mr. K. Naransamy; Vice-Presidents: Messrs. B. D. Pavadai and V. Dorasamy; hon. secretary Mr. Andrew Anthony and the treasurer; Mr. G. D. James. The Chairman in welcoming the delegates, said that he was delighted to see such a gathering of Indian Footballers, and the attendance was very welcome in view of the fact that this year there will be the tournament for the Sam China Cup. He said that the Wits. had played a prominent part in Transvaal and will continue to do so in the years to come. He was not standing for office, but he wished to thank all members and delegates for their co-operation in making his task easy, and said the association was fortunate in having men like Rev. Sigamoney, Messrs. K. Naransamy, B. D. Pavadai, A. Anthony V. Dorasamy and K. Thumbby to carry on with the work. The election of officials resulted as follows:—Patron: Dr. Wm. Godfrey; Hon. President: Mr. B. D. Pavadai; Hon. Life Presidents: Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney, and Mr. K. Naransamy Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. Anthony, J.

By "Rambler"

R. Naidoo, J. F. Marrian, K. Thumbby, Bob Singh, and S. D. Royeppen; hon. secretary: Mr. L. F. Williams; treasurer: Mr. K. G. Moodley; record clerk: Mr. M. P. Pillay.

Higher Grade Schools' Football Club

The 26th. annual general meeting of the Higher Grade Schools' Football Club was held on Sunday last, at the residence of Mr. V. Arumugam, at 16 Ginman Street, Maritzburg, in the presence of a big gathering of members. Mr. R. Moothall the President, presided. The Chairman referred to the recent death of Mr. D. Jugdoe, who was a Patron and vice-president, and had rendered useful service to the club. The meeting, as a mark of respect, stood and observed two minutes' silence. After which, election of officials for the ensuing year took place.

Indian Cricket Tour

A strong side representing the Northern Natal Indian Cricket Union will be touring Johannesburg during Easter Holidays where they will be engaged in a series of cricket matches. The team will be the guests of the Witwatersrand Indian Cricket Union. Two matches will be played on the Indian Sports Ground one on Easter Sunday and the other on Easter Monday. It is the first

side to visit Johannesburg representing a Cricket Union from Natal. In the past a team from P. M. Burg and the Natal Indian Teachers paid visits.

Pretoria Indian C.C.

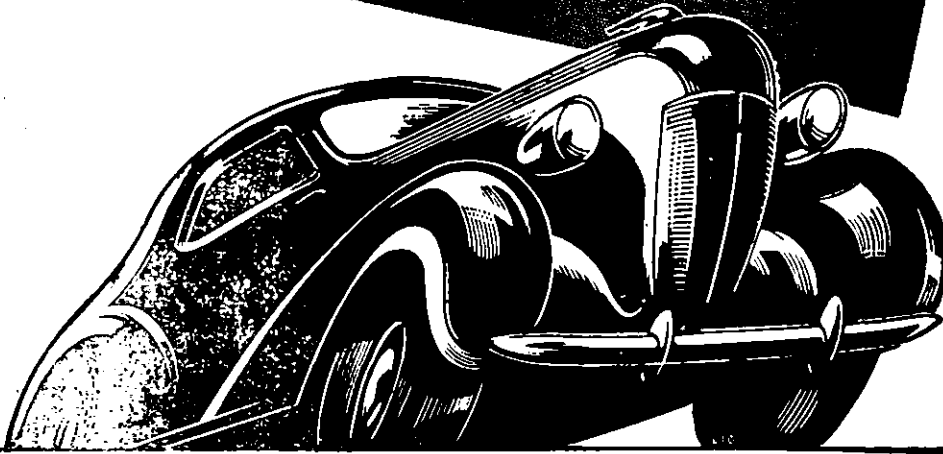
A bioscope entertainment which was given by the Pretoria Indian Cricket Club on March 18 at the Royal Kinema, Grand St, Pretoria, for funds was well supported. The Club wishes to thank both Indians and Europeans for the generous support to enable to bring the Club to a financial footing and the same time to a success. Thanking once again.

Verulam Temple C.C.

The Verulam Temple C.C. met Sastri College C.C. at Verulam on Sunday last. The home team won the toss and elected to bat. The scores were as follows:—Verulam Temple C.C. (1st innings 67) G. H. Bux 14, Borat 6 for 24. Sastri College (1st innings 76) Amra 16, G. H. Bux 5 for 16. Verulam Temple C.C. (2nd innings 51, S. J. Morris 16, Borat 8 for 28. The Collegians were thus left behind to make 43 runs for an outright victory, but collapsed through the deadly bowling of Mr. S. J. Morris and were all out for a mere 32 runs. Thus the Verulam Temple C.C. won a most interesting match by 10 runs.

On Sunday March 28 the Verulam Temple C.C. will meet Sparks C.C. of Sydenham at Curries Fountain commencing at 10 a.m. And on Easter Monday March 29 the Temples will meet Khalifat C.C. (Muslims) of Durban at Verulam commencing at 10 a.m.

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