

# Indian Opinion

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## EDITORIAL NOTICES.

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CORRESPONDENCE.—Letters and other communications should be written on one side of the paper only. When articles of "Correspondence" are signed with the writer's name or initials, or with a pseudonym, or are marked "Communicated," the Editor must not necessarily be held in agreement with the views therein expressed. In such instances, insertion only means that the matter or point of view is considered of sufficient interest and importance to warrant publication. Space being a consideration, correspondents are requested to be brief and to the point. Letters should be addressed—The Editor, "Indian Opinion," Phoenix, Natal.

## Indian Opinion

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH, 1908.

### India's Jubilee.

THIS month marks the Jubilee of the Proclamation issued by the late Queen-Empress Victoria, on the occasion of the assumption of the government of the Territories of India by the Crown direct, instead of administering them through the East India Company. That Proclamation included the following obligation:—"We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of the whole Indian Territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. In their prosperity will be our strength; in their contentment our security; and in their gratitude, our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us and those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

It is fifty years ago since that Proclamation went forth. Fifty years have meant a great deal to British Indians. Fifty years have taught them that British officials set in authority over Indian subjects of the Crown can find it possible to urge that, when there is a conflict between the carrying out of the solemn promises contained in this Proclamation and the placing of hardships upon British Indians because an alleged expediency dictates

such a policy, the Imperial Government should assent to revocation of those promises. Fifty years have shown that British Indians, long resident in British Colonies, can be legislated against in defiance of Indian wishes and susceptibilities, because these Colonies are self-governing, whereas India is not. Fifty years have shown that Indian conscientious objectors in British Colonies, in this modern twentieth century, may be treated as and herded with common felons drawn from the most degraded depths of aboriginal society. Fifty years have shown that solemn promises notwithstanding, it is the colour of a man's skin that counts in the administration of the Empire; and not his ability, his degree of culture, his enlightenment. Fifty years have taught these and many other things to British Indians; and it is almost a mockery to issue a new Proclamation on this anniversary, when British Indians in the Transvaal, who are not criminals, who are moved only by the loftiest motives in their recent action, are languishing in gaol.

A jubilee is a time of rejoicing. Let the hundreds of Indians who have, in the last ten months, passed through the prison-gates of the Transvaal rejoice that the spirit which has animated the Imperial Government, whose bounden duty it was to translate into action the obligations contained in the late Queen-Empress's Proclamation, has permitted the passage through local Parliaments, and the administration through parochial statesmen, of legislation degrading to the humanity, and offensive to the religion of every self-respecting Indian! The real jubilee that is being celebrated in the Transvaal to-day amongst Indians is that they are emancipating themselves from the bonds of self, and they are achieving the liberty and freedom of men who have realised their manhood. No Imperial Proclamations can enhance or take away from that glorious fact. Whilst Indians in India may rejoice that they are being given some additional measure of popular representation, so that they may take a larger share in the government of the country, let them realise also that their brethren in the Transvaal and in other parts of South Africa are slowly being crushed out of existence by the remorseless and savage machinery of Governments subordinate and responsible to Imperial Ministers charged with the carrying out of Royal and Imperial behests. And let British Indians in South Africa realise that the truest form of popular representation is that whereby every man represents inwardly and outwardly that which is best in himself.

## The Situation To-day.

THE position of British Indians in the Transvaal to-day is somewhat paradoxical. By all the canons of common-sense, they should, by now, be at their wit's ends. Instead, their imagination seems to be even more than normally fertile in devising means of circumventing the Government's efforts to promote a policy of discouragement and pin-pricks. It almost seems as though every blow dealt at the community inured it to receive the more stoically the blows to come. We have utterly failed to observe any real weakness in the Indian forces in the Transvaal. Every day we got added proof of their increasing steadfastness and determination. They are setting an admirable example to their brethren, not only in South Africa, but throughout the whole of India, for they are offering a practicable demonstration of the remarkable efficacy of passive resistance when rightly regarded and nobly inspired. The struggle has evoked a patriotism, a self-sacrifice, a courage, and a consistency of purpose which could never have been expected even by the most devoted Indophile, and the spectacle of the Transvaal Indians fighting unitedly for over two years, is an object-lesson to India, and to the Empire as a whole.

The present phase of the struggle is remarkable for many things. Last January, the Government sought to martyrise Indians, and endeavoured to blackmail the community by imprisoning the leaders. To-day, leaders and followers alike are seeking martyrdom of their own accord. They are going cheerfully to gaol, almost as an army with banners waving. Rich and poor alike are courting the attentions of the police and the other arresting officials. They are braving all the hardships of prison life, even though half-starved and, in many instances, harshly treated. Though the Government seek to impose their will upon the passive resisters, by coercing even women and children, there is not the slightest sign of wavering. On the contrary, there is a bitter determination to fight on to the uttermost end, until every little scrap of the people's demands is granted.

There is no doubt too, but that this feeling of bitterness is rapidly being conveyed to the hearts of our brethren in India. Newspapers to hand by the last Indian mail contain columns upon columns of biting comment upon the alleged omnipotence of the self-governing Colonies and the abject impotence of the Imperial Government to secure redress for Indian subjects of the Crown resident therein.

It is beyond question that a sentiment of deep and growing hostility towards the Colonies is growing in ordinarily moderate circles in India, and this partially concealed conflict within the Empire bodes no good to its future.

Another prominent feature of the present phase is that quite a number of influential Europeans in the Transvaal have come forward, and offered practical sympathy to the struggling Indians. They have not hesitated to attract to themselves the blows aimed at their more helpless fellow-Colonists, in an effort to awaken the public conscience of the neighbouring Colony. All honour to them! They are possessed of the true spirit of patriotism, and it is upon the efforts of such men as these that the future greatness and unitedness of South Africa must depend, rather than upon the misguided energies of some of those attending the Durban Convention, whose unhappy race-prejudice bids fair to wreck the Empire, and launch the sub-continent upon a sea of troubles such as their tortuous statesmanship can never hope to smoothe.

IMAM ABDUL CADIR BAWAZEER

**A Heroic Chairman.** deserves well of the community. He is Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society of Johannesburg,

and largely through his efforts and those of his Society, the passive resistance struggle in the Transvaal has proved so successful. His political insight, his religious fervour, his personal modesty, have brought him most prominently before, and have endeared him to, the Indian public for a long time past. Having already suffered a brief term of imprisonment with hard labour for hawking without a licence—he had temporarily adopted that avocation in order to assist and encourage his less prominent brethren—he has now once again sought martyrdom. Together with Messrs. Moosa Essackji, Govindarajaloo and S. P. Padiachy, he travelled down to Charlestown last week and returned to the Transvaal by the next train. He and his companions refused to avail themselves of their voluntary registration certificates, declined further to identify themselves, were arrested, brought before the Court, and convicted as prohibited immigrants, for failing to apply for registration under the new Act from some place in South Africa outside the Transvaal. They were all sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment with hard labour, with a subsequent order of deportation! So Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer has achieved his great ambition to share imprisonment with other members of the community, and has forced the Government into the false position of treating as prohibited immigrants those who have registration certificates recognised under the new Act! It is an amazing absurdity, but one whose repetition is assured, so long as the present stupidity, which is miscalled

administration, is allowed to continue. Meanwhile, Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer has left his wife and family totally unprovided for, and dependent upon the honourable spirit that, he has assumed, animates the community. It is for the community to demonstrate unmistakably that his simple trust is not misplaced.

LAST WEDNESDAY'S MASS MEETING

in Johannesburg was a memorable incident in the history of the passive resistance movement in the Transvaal, not so much because of the enormous gathering on that occasion, nor even on account of the tenour of the resolutions that were carried with acclamation. It will impress itself upon the memory and imagination of British Indians throughout South Africa chiefly because of the presence of a large number of European friends and sympathisers. The names of Messrs. Hosken, Cartwright, Doke, Phillips, Kallenbach, Howard, Pollock, and Dallow will remain engraved on the minds of British Indians throughout the Empire, so long as Indian history will be written. We thank them and the many silent European sympathisers on behalf of the whole Indian community of South Africa.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT

have announced their decision to withdraw the restriction placed on pupils attending the Higher-Grade Indian Schools of the Colony, and so Indian students over the age of fourteen years are at present safe. It is most unfortunate that the community were compelled to apply for an order from the Supreme Court to restrain the Government from dismissing these pupils as threatened. The Government's belated declaration of intention is welcome, but we would remind members of the community that, in all probability, they are enjoying a respite only. The ignoring by the Government of the claims of Indians in matters educational has been notorious for a long time past. Had the Government not withdrawn from an untenable position to-day, had the Government not stopped just short of committing an inexcusable breach of faith towards the Indians of this Colony, we should have unhesitatingly advised and urged the community to boycott the Government schools and to inaugurate schools of their own and under their own control. We are not at all sure that, even now, it would not be possible for the Congress and the Patriotic Union to seriously consider the desirability of rendering the community quite independent of future Government action in this respect, by founding Indian schools, where they may be found necessary, to be conducted along lines suited to the growth and

needs of the coming generation of Natal Indians. If the Government is not alive to its duties in regard to British Indians, at least those Indians themselves should be alive to their duty to themselves and to the importance of their own interests. We trust that such a scene as was enacted last week in the Supreme Court will not be re-enacted for many a long day, and that it will serve as a warning to the community for its future guidance.

### Canon Berry on the Crisis

Replying to a letter in the *Transvaal Leader* by Mr. J. S. Preddy, of Germiston, Canon Digby M. Berry says:—

The letter of your correspondent, Mr. J. S. Preddy, does not touch the question whether the policy of the Government toward British Indians residing in the Transvaal is just or wise. He is only solicitous, apparently, that this policy should not be "reversed or relaxed," for fear of the effect upon the native population. This way of looking at the subject is as old as Pharaoh and the Israelites, and its result then was the ten plagues. But what I cannot get over is the suspicion, almost amounting to conviction, that we are treating with injustice and tyranny some six or seven thousand people, whose legal right to live here is as unquestionable as our own. It would be a real relief to me to be shown that my suspicions are groundless, because, as a citizen of a democratic State, I cannot avoid some measure of responsibility for what the State does. But this is my present view of the case: That we have induced these British Indians to obey a law which they detest by leading them to believe we were going to repeal it, and, having gained our point, we are refusing to repeal it. Furthermore, that we are refusing to allow them to import half-a-dozen educated countrymen of their own, and so practically excluding most of their children from the benefits of education, because most of them have the same objection that we should have to sending their children to African schools. The only way to govern thousands of people who have no vote is to consult with their acknowledged and respected leaders, and instead of doing this we are sending their acknowledged and respected leaders to work on the public roads in the garb of felons. If these are not the facts, I should be thankful to learn what the facts are. Provided we do justly, we can trust in Providence; but if we defy justice we shall bring retribution upon ourselves.

WIPING OUT THE PRISON TAINT. The greatest good the Suffragettes are doing in their prison visitations is that they are destroying the blight of irrevocable dishonour attached to the fact of having been in prison.—*Queen*

## At the Heart of the Empire

### A Monthly Survey

London, Oct. 1, 1908.

Even to-day the usual heading to this Letter hardly fits the case, for although I find myself back in London once more with the familiar grooves of work stretching out before me, it is only a week ago that I was being buffeted on the North Sea on my way home from Scandinavia, and therefore I cannot pretend to give readers of *INDIAN OPINION* a survey of what has been happening at the Heart of the Empire during the past month. Still, during the few days in which I have been picking up the ordinary threads of daily life, much has happened that may be of interest, and so, with my mind relieved by this concession, I will try to bring you into touch with what is going on here.

Suffer one more interlude, I pray. Imagine me in the beautiful city of Stockholm; I had been enjoying an afternoon in that wonderful and unique open-air museum, known as Skansen—a museum which interests without tiring, and about which I may perhaps write to *INDIAN OPINION* one day. Dark clouds gathered towards evening, blotting out the brilliant sun which had driven me to the shady part of the park during the afternoon, and as I was being hurried across the intervening stretch of water between Skansen and the city in one of those busy little ferries which render such good service in Stockholm, the big drops of a thunder storm began to fall. Fortunately I reached my hotel without serious harm, and entering the Reading Room, lighted upon a belated copy of the *Daily Mail*. I turned over its pages with only the "holiday" interest of one who for weeks had been cut off from English—or even foreign—newspapers. Somehow, after the first few days of such a holiday as I have been enjoying, one finds the new daily interests so absorbing that the mental focus changes, and the events of the great world beyond grow distant and dim. However, my languid interest was suddenly stirred into something more vigorous when I caught sight of an article, headed, "A Bonfire." It was that article which revealed to me the condition of affairs with regard to His Majesty's British Indian subjects in the Transvaal, and, in fact, in South Africa. Since that day when the storm drove me indoors at Stockholm I have been gradually coming into touch with press articles and letters on the subject, until to-day's news completes the sad story by telling us, on Mr. Gandhi's authority, that despite their sufferings and losses, British Indians are determined to continue the struggle against colour prejudice for conscience' sake. That events have come to the present pass is serious and deplorable, and the

direction in which they are tending is dangerous enough, in all conscience, for a halt to be called. This would be the only brave and generous and righteous way of acting, in order that facts may be faced fairly and a just *modus operandi* take the place of prejudice. Although my duty towards *INDIAN OPINION* does not set political discussion in the forefront of this communication, I cannot refrain from expressing sympathy with those who are engaged in this struggle fraught with vital consequence to them, and I would send a message of hope that their strength may not fail in the evil day. Thousands are watching the course of this struggle and not one, whatever be his personal opinions, can deny that India's sons are showing courage and grit.

### Concerning Congresses

Congresses are certainly the order of the day; no matter what the subject of interest, people are found who are willing to come from all parts of the world to take counsel together on the matter. One substantial good must result; whatever differences of opinion may be expressed and discussed, men of different nations come to know and understand each other better, and even if they agree to differ they are more likely to respect the convictions of a man they have seen and heard than "to write him down an ass," as might very well be the case if he were a complete stranger.

Within the last fortnight two Congresses of great importance have taken place in England; at Oxford the History of Religions was discussed, and in London we have had a notable international gathering which has been occupied with considering the best and most practical means for inculcating Moral Education. The Moral Education Congress is the first of its kind; England and London may feel proud that it has taken place here, and it is probable that other nations will follow England's lead. I must give one or two facts about each of these gatherings.

The science of religion has been called the youngest of sciences, and it is a mark of the progress in liberal thought that a Congress such as that which brought together at Oxford hundreds of delegates, professing widely different creeds, for the purpose of discussing scientifically the forms and development of religions, could be held and that in spite of divergence of opinion everyone was desirous to hear the facts of the beliefs of others. The outstanding feature of the Congress is the demonstration of the inter-relation between religion and every aspect of life. Sir Alfred Lyall, who was President of the Congress, emphasised in his presidential address, the connection between religion and politics, especially in the West; Count Goblet d'Alviella, of Brussels, said that comparative

religion could not be separated from such subjects as psychology and sociology, and, according to Dr. Tylor animism is now to be regarded as a kind of primitive philosophy. Professor Gardiner, Principal of Brasenose College, and chairman of the local Committee, remarked in his address of welcome that because there was in all religions a great historic element, the study of the history of religion outweighed in interest all other branches of history. And he went on to observe: "All religions, however they may differ in value, have certain features in common, and owe their power over mankind to the relations which they bear to some sides and faculties of the human spirit. Most of us have a religion which we treasure, but we cannot fully understand it unless we investigate other religions which on one point or another bear analogies to it."

This was the key-note of the Congress, and so it is a matter of no surprise that the unanimous pronouncement of those who took part should be that its success has been most marked, whether from the point of view of the character of the papers read or from the point of view of Oxford's hospitality and sociability. The Religions of India and of Iran formed one section of the Congress; Buddhism and Islam also found able exponents. Mrs. Rhys David's contribution to the Oxford Congress was one of her characteristically thoughtful and able papers, with the title of "Knowledge and Intuition in Buddhism." By the way, the Buddhist monk, once known as a Scotsman of the name of Macgregor, and who has this summer been promulgating Buddhist teaching in England, was present at the Oxford Congress. Sir Alfred Lyall's Presidential address was largely concerned with religion in India; he devoted some considerable space to the complete neutrality of the British Government in India on religious questions.

The Committee of the Oxford Congress promises a full report of all the papers delivered—about one hundred and forty, I believe—and I think some of the discussions will be included. The Committee of the Moral Education Congress went to work in a different way and published beforehand a volume containing the papers to be read at the cost of five shillings. In many respects it was a wise foresight, as also the summary of the printed papers which enabled a visitor, or a delegate, to choose what was specially interesting to him or to her. Professor M. E. Sadler was a most sympathetic and informing President and the Congress drew its members from all parts of the world, east and west. Among the questions which came before the Congress was that of dual education, that is, of training girls and boys together. I found recently in Finland that the system has been adopted all over the country and is working with

marked success. But conditions in a sparsely inhabited country—only three millions in all—can hardly be compared to those of densely crowded areas, and although dual education has much to recommend it—America, by the way, goes in for it hot and strong—one must not be blind to the fact that it has the defects of its qualities. There can be no doubt, I think, that the association of girls and boys from the lowest forms up to and through the University course, as is the case in Finland, tends to produce a comradeship which is excellent, and acts as a stimulus in many ways.

It is impossible to cover the wide ground of the Moral Education Congress in a brief paragraph, but two broad principles may be noted. There seemed to be a general desire on the part of all the educationists assembled to inculcate the idea in the minds of the youngest children of social duty and subordination of individual benefit to the good of the community. One of the lady speakers insisted that children should be made to feel that the order and progress of the school depended upon them as much as upon the teachers, and she considered, too, that they should have the opportunity of exercising free will, whether for good or ill, in school life. Then, too, there was no disputing the fact that the child must be regarded as a soul, not merely a brain; that it is not enough to cram him full of facts, but every ennobling instinct and emotion must be developed. It was also insisted that in teachers personal character and capability and tact were as important as a brilliant degree. Of course the actual imparting of religious instruction was a subject which called forth the most diverse opinions, gathered from both theory and practice. Many held that children required the teaching of a personal God as the incentive to goodness; others considered that moral instruction should be directed simply towards making a child realise his duty towards family, country, and humanity. Whatever the individual opinion, everyone must recognise that the emotions play as important a part in life as the intellect, and at the foundation of all human beings there is the vague upward aspiration and longing which finds its best expression in worship.

#### New Books

Among recent publications of books of Indian interest, mention must be made of the following: "Oriental Crime," by H. L. Adam (T. Wernat Laurie, London, 7s. 6d.) in which India's system of dealing with malefactors is treated; "The Creed of Buddha," by the author of "The Creed of Christ," (John Lane, London, 5s. net.) "Wheat among the Tares," Studies of Buddhism in Japan, by the

Rev. Arthur Lloyd, M.A., Lecturer in the Imperial University, Tokio. (Macmillan 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Heart of India," by Dr. L. D. Barnett, Professor of Sanskrit, University College, London, (John Murray, "Wisdom of the East Series, 2s. net.)

"Selections from the Travels and Journals preserved in the Bombay Secretariat," by G. W. Forrest. (Bombay, Government Central Press)

"The Philosophers and the French Revolution" by P. A. Wadia, Second Edition. (Times of India Office, Bombay, 4s. 10d. post free from London.)

"The New Spirit in India," by Henry W. Nevinson. (Harper Bros. 10s. 6d. net.)

"The Hindu at Home," by the Rev. J. E. Padfield. Second Edition. (Simpkin, Marshall, 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Mikirs:" From Papers of the late Edward Stack, I.C.S., edited, arranged, and supplemented by Sir Charles Lyall. (David Nutt, 7s. 6d. net.)

"The Meithis," by T. C. Hodson. (David Nutt, 7s. 6d. net.)

The October number of the *Bankers' Magazine* contains an article on "The Recent Indian Currency Crisis," by Mr. W. H. Hackett.

To-day an announcement is made that Mr. John Murray, in conjunction with the *Times* will publish by command of the King a new and popular edition of the "Letters of Queen Victoria." The book will be a marvel of cheap production—three volumes, with sixteen illustrations, and complete text—net price six shillings!

OBSERVER.

## The Colour-Fallacy.

### Mrs. Annie Besant's Views.

Writing in the *Theosophist* on her recent tour in Australia, Mrs. Annie Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society, says:—

One sees here the result of the power passing into the hands of the ignorant—the hasty snatching at a momentary advantage without thought of the remoter consequences; the thinking only of Australia and not of the Empire, the hatred of coloured races. One looks forward and sees the Australians themselves becoming yellow under the play of climatic influences, and wonders how they will then keep a "white Australia"; many of them are already much yellower than the northern Indians whom they exclude. And one thinks, amusedly, that if Jesus Christ should come this way He would be prevented from landing by the Australian law. One doubts if a white Australian should consistently worship a coloured Saviour.

## Parsi Association of Europe

The following report of a dinner recently held by the Parsi Association of Europe appears in *The Times* of the 16th Sept:—

The Parsi Association of Europe held a banquet in celebration of the New Year on Sunday last at the Criterion Restaurant, which was attended by all the prominent members of the Parsi community, resident or on a visit here, and a number of English, Hindu, and Mahomedan guests. Sir M. M. Bhownagree, K.C.B., the chairman of the Association, who presided, in giving the toast of "The King, the Queen, and the Royal Family," said that their Majesties, as well as the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and other members of the Royal Family, had to the fullest extent maintained the noble precedent established by their late beloved Queen-Empress of manifesting a lively interest in the welfare of the people of the Indian Empire. The speaker had, during the past few weeks, heard from numerous loyal and responsible Indians the expression of a confident hope, based on the widely entertained appreciation of the keen interest thus evinced by the King-Emperor in his Indian dominions, that his Majesty would not be unwilling to respond to a direct appeal to solve the complex problem of the treatment of his Indian subjects in his South African Colonies. He had no hesitation in referring to this hope, for it showed how deep was the confidence of his Indian subjects in his Majesty's regard for their welfare. It proved that when the people of India felt that Parliament and statesmen had failed after years of endeavour to secure them redress against harsh and irritating treatment in a part of the Empire and the deprivation of those rights and privileges which had been assured to them by repeated pledges of the Crown, they yet entertained a firm faith in the commanding influence of their beloved Sovereign to obtain for them that elementary justice and fair treatment to which every British subject was entitled wherever the British flag flew. King Edward VII. had been deservedly acknowledged to have done more, perhaps, than any Sovereign of any country or any age to secure the blessings of peace throughout the world, and it was only natural that many millions of his docile and loyal subjects in India should now look to his Majesty to exert his personal influence to remove the indignities and hardships which were being inflicted upon them by another small section of his subjects, and so restore peace between the outlying portions of his dominions. It was on such firm faith that the devotion and loyalty of the people of India to their Sovereign's person and Throne were based; and He asked them to honour the toast with enthusiasm.

## "Indian Law-Breakers"

Under the above heading appears the following letter from Mr. Robert Sutherland in the *Rand Daily Mail*:

Although countries like Russia, Turkey or Venezuela might with propriety enact such Asiatic laws as have been lately passed, and are being at present administered, by the Transvaal, they would be unable to enforce them against British Indian subjects. It would raise such a storm of indignation and protest throughout England and India that they would be dropped, or there would be war.

If President Kruger sent Mr. Gandhi and other high-class educated British Indians in prison garb to break stones on the public roads of the late Republic for no better reason than they have been convicted; if he treated Indian women and children with the inhumanity which an eye witness states he saw done at one of our frontier towns, and forced Hindus and Mussulman political prisoners to eat fat or starve; if he put men born and bred on the plains of India in ice-cold water on a winter's morning in this, to them, rigorous climate, and made them go for a full hour in *puris naturatibus*, it would lead to an ultimatum from the British Government, which would put a stop to it in twenty-four hours. Yet this British Colony of eighteen months' old, which has scarcely shed its political swaddling clothes, does it with impunity. When information of this kind leaks out it is the custom to put up some interested petty official to deny it; but an independent doctor who examined the man has certified that he was suffering from pneumonia, which, I think, corroborates the statement. Canon Berry in a letter to the press has pointed out that for Indians to eat or touch fat was a mortal sin, and that it was treatment such as the prisoners met with that led to the Mutiny. It is even worse than that; for the soldiers who mutinied were not made to eat fat, but to bite off the end of a cartridge which was supposed to have been lubricated with oil.

A trader who applied for a traders' licence, and was refused because he would not give finger-prints was sent to prison for trading without one, and the work he was put to was to empty and clean the sanitary buckets of the other prisoners, or what is known in India as *mehter* work, and when he was leaving he was told, he says, that he was warned not to come back again or else he would die. We see batches of these Indians being sent to prison almost daily for the same reason, and in a short time the gaols of this country will be filled to overflowing, and there is not a real criminal amongst them. They are law-breakers, but let us examine what is the nature of the law. It is one compelling them to register by the giving of finger-prints, which is unnecessary, for they have registered twice already, and the giving of finger-

prints they regard as degrading and a practice applicable only to gaol-birds in this country, criminals in India, and murderers in China. The other objection is the disability and insult which the law offers to high-class Indians by their total exclusion, and I will give an illustration to show the reasonableness of the latter objection.

### An Honoured Guest

This summer amongst a number of other high class Indians who visited England was the Prime Minister of Nepal. When he arrived at Dover he was met by Lord Charles Beresford, representing the British people, to welcome him to England. After a short rest Lord Charles escorted him in his launch round the Channel Fleet which was lying off Dover. He was afterwards the honoured guest of the King, Prince of Wales, Prime Minister and the highest in English society during his stay in England. Supposing he had come to the Transvaal, he would have been met at the Dover of this country not by General Smuts, but by a policeman. He would be told that by the laws of this country he was a prohibited immigrant, and that he could not enter. If he explained that he was only a visitor, he would be told that he could not enter till he got a permit, and if it was granted him he would have to carry it always on him, and be liable to be asked for it by any policeman he met, like a convict at large on ticket-of-leave. Is such a law as this necessary? It is not only unnecessary, but fatuous, contrary to this country's best interests, and insulting to Indians of all classes, and also to Anglo-Indians who have associated with them and who have received India's hospitality. The well-to-do people of India who live on the plains migrate periodically during the summer heat to the hills, or go to England and the Continent and spend money there. Some of them have costly establishments which they keep up to the benefit of the country and the institutions in the neighbourhood. The climate of England, or even that of the Riviera, could not offer them sunshine and a climate so suitable as that of South Africa, and by coming here they would avoid the disagreeable voyages up and down the Red Sea in summer. If the people of this country did not act as if they were a race of secluded, sacred white Lamas, they would welcome them instead of slighting and insulting them, as the present laws of this country do. Mr. Gandhi's crime which he is expiating by breaking stones on the streets of Volksrust in a dress ornamented with broad arrows is practically a protest against these odious laws. There are in India gentlemen who rank much higher than the Prime Minister of Nepal, who has lately been the honoured guest of England, and there are several who take precedence at the Court of St. James, of any in this country, yet to the highest the Transvaal laws offer the same insult.

### The Son of a Prime Minister

Mr. Gandhi, the convict of this country's laws, comes of the same class as the Prime Minister of Nepal, and his father when he died held the same rank, being Prime Minister of one of the States of Western India. Mr. Gandhi himself is a man of high educational attainments, a barrister of the Inns of Court and a man of high moral character and exemplary life. He was born a Hindoo, but he has taken for his guidance what is best in all religions, including Christianity, the essence of which he has practised more strictly than the majority of nominal Christians.

The Magistrate, when passing sentence, we are told, remarked that he was sorry to see a man who was an advocate of the Courts of this country in such a position, and had he been in his private house instead of on the bench he might, with equal appositeness, have added that he was ashamed of administering a law which compelled a high-minded patriot to immolate himself in the interest and honour of his country and countrymen.

### Indentured Labour

Describing his impressions of a visit to the Kearsney Estate, a *Transvaal Leader* representative says:—

There are 120,000 Asiatics in Natal, but only 26,000 of these are indentured, and only 8,000 of these latter employed on the tea and sugar estates. The rest are employed on the railways, in the Public Works, and by up-country farmers. Apparently the last-named withhold redistribution, fearing the Asiatic policy will be reversed. The leaders of the tea and sugar interests seem, like the leaders of the mining industry on the Rand, willing to trust their industry to the Central Parliament, confident that labour and other matters will receive justice; but they are unwilling that the Central Parliament should deal with purely local matters.

The heat in most of the processes of tea and sugar preparation is terrific, and the climate thereabouts is moist and steamy. It seems doubtful whether Europeans would be able to perform the work, while certainly the product would have to receive a huge bounty to enable competition with the Asiatic-grown tea and sugar from elsewhere.

The Asiatic men and women seem wretched enough, but the children regard many of the processes as a sort of pastime, and I observed no sign of fear of overseers among them.

The Asiatics work resignedly at 110 in the shade. The planters insist that the labouring Asiatics are totally different from and never merge into the trading Asiatics.

Except at Paarl I have seen nowhere in South Africa such close cultivation as on these estates.

## A Striking Letter

To the Transvaal Press

Mr. H. S. L. Polak, on the 2nd inst., addressed the following letter to the Transvaal Press:—

At the end of last week, Mr. Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, the respected Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, representing the Indian Mussulmans of Johannesburg, was sentenced, together with three other gentlemen, to six weeks' imprisonment with hard labour as prohibited immigrants. I understand that, at the end of their term of imprisonment, an order for their deportation from the Colony will be put into operation. Mr. Imam Abdool Cadir and his compatriots, however, have been wrongly sentenced, the Court having unwittingly made a mistake through lack of information. The four gentlemen were registered, under the system of voluntary registration, some time during the months of February to May last. Their registration has been legalised under the new Validation Act. The fact that their registration certificates are destroyed is not to the point, because, so far as the Act is concerned, it is the fact of registration that counts. These gentlemen crossed the border to Charlestown a few days ago, and, on their return, were regarded as new entrants. They refused to produce their certificates and to further identify themselves, and, accordingly, they were regarded as prohibited immigrants, and sentenced as such, although, as I have before remarked, they are not prohibited immigrants at all, their rights being fully safeguarded under the new Act. I mention this case, because it shows how impossible it is for the Government to administer its present policy without being guilty of gross errors of commission and omission. I would add that Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer has already served a sentence of imprisonment with hard labour, for hawking without a licence. He is a priest, but, when he saw his humbler brethren suffering imprisonment, his conscience urged him to share their suffering, he himself took up the hawker's basket, and he was promptly sentenced. As a priest, he is a poor man, and, as a devout Mussulman, he has been content to leave his family, trusting in the providence of his Maker.

A few days afterwards, a number of other prominent Indians left Johannesburg for Charlestown, and, on return, they also refused to give their names or to produce means of identification. They were, however, not molested, on instructions from Pretoria, although it was utterly impossible for the examining officer to satisfy himself that these gentlemen were those referred to in his instructions. There is nothing whatever to prevent other Indians, who have not

been in the Colony before, from entering in this manner, and, apparently, the Immigration Officers at the border are prepared to admit them without question, if this may be regarded as a precedent. This is another instance of how the administration of the new Act and the Immigration Act can be paralysed, so long as the consent of the Indian community to their proper operation is not obtained.

There is a little boy in Volksrust Gaol. He is 12 years old. He entered with his father, who was regarded as a prohibited immigrant. Both were sentenced as such, the father receiving one month's imprisonment with hard labour, the boy receiving a fortnight's imprisonment without hard labour. Both, of course, were subject to a deportation order. The little boy was formally deported by the police last Friday to Natal. He was utterly alone in the world, he had no friends, he might have starved. Fortunately for him, however, he had courage, common-sense, and a sense of filial duty. He refused to be parted from his father, returned immediately to the Transvaal, was re-arrested, and is now enjoying the gaol atmosphere at Volksrust for the period of one month without hard labour. Even little Indian children have the courage of their convictions. It can be imagined what spirit moves the community as a whole, when the children set such an example as this.

To-day, some forty Indian hawkers in Johannesburg, another sixteen in Germiston, and several more in other Rand districts have gone to gaol for trading without licences. They have gone there joyfully. They have prayed to have the opportunity of going to gaol, and, in their view, their prayer has not been uttered in vain.

I was present at an Indian meeting, yesterday, when the strongest arguments were brought forward to induce the people to surrender. It was with the greatest difficulty that they were stilled from openly insulting the person who so advised them; and they broke forth into enthusiastic cheers, when they were asked if they were prepared, notwithstanding this advice, to continue to the bitter end.

It seems to me that there is an appalling ignorance, on the part of the Government, in regard to the nature of the British Indian, and almost as appalling an indifference, on the part of the Transvaal public, in regard to the true nature of the struggle that is now proceeding. Perhaps these incidents will lighten the darkness a little.

**A REIGN OF TERROR.** The daily Press report that the Durban suburb of Cato Manor is infested by gangs of robbers, masked and armed, who go about at night murdering and robbing poor Indian farmers. It appears that the police supervision is totally inadequate.

## The Hamidia Islamic Society's Meeting

Enthusiasm and Resolutions

[SPECIAL TO INDIAN OPINION]

On Sunday last, at the hall of the Hamidia Islamic Society, a meeting of members was held in connection with the recent imprisonment with hard labour of Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, the Chairman of the Society. Among those present were Messrs. Omarji Sale, (the Acting Chairman), who presided, Moulvi Hajee Ahmed Mukhtar, E. S. Coovadia, M. P. Fancy, M. A. Kajee, A. M. Cachalia (Chairman of the British Indian Association), Essop Ismail Mia (ex Chairman of the British Indian Association), E. M. Aswat, Mulji G. Patel, M. M. Khanderia, H. M. Gandhi, G. P. Vyas, and H. S. L. Polak.

Mr. Omarji Sale, in opening the proceedings, outlined the circumstances of Imam Abdool Cadir's arrest and imprisonment; and Mr. Shahboodeen Hooßen proposed the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. H. D. Maal, and supported by Mr. Ebrahim M. Aswat:—

"This meeting of members of the Hamidia Islamic Society hereby desires to congratulate Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer upon his imprisonment with hard labour for six weeks, for the sake of our holy cause, and desires to tender its deepest sympathy with Mrs. Abdool Cadir Bawazeer."

Mr. A. M. Cachalia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, next moved the following resolution:—

"This meeting of members of the Hamidia Islamic Society hereby respectfully urges the Imperial Government to take such steps as will result in a settlement satisfactory to the members of this society, by urging upon the Transvaal Government the need of granting the two requests preferred by its members."

It was seconded by Mr. M. A. Kajee, and supported by Mr. Essop Ismail Mia, ex Chairman of the British Indian Association, who was afterwards presented with a silver medal by Moulvi Saheb, on the occasion of his departure for Mecca the following day. After this resolution had been put and carried, Mr. H. S. L. Polak and Mr. Thambi Naidoo addressed the meeting, the former at considerable length reviewing the present position, and urging upon those present to continue the struggle to the bitter end. His appeal received an enthusiastic reception.

Resolution 3 is as follows:—

"This meeting of members of the Hamidia Islamic Society hereby requests the 70 millions of Indian Mussulmans to call urgent meetings all over India, wherever Mussulmans congregate, to protest at the treatment of their brethren and co-religionists in the Transvaal."

It was moved by Moulvi Saheb Hajee Ahmed Mukhtar in an eloquent speech. It was seconded by Mr. Ahmed Halini, and supported by Mr. Dildarkhan Osman Khan.

Mr. M. P. Fancy moved resolution 4, as follows:—

"This meeting of members of the Hamidia Islamic Society hereby tenders its respectful congratulations to the Transvaal Government upon the arrest and imprisonment of its respected chairman, thereby enabling members of this society to demonstrate that each one of them is a leader in a righteous cause."

This was seconded by Mr. Suliman Casinat, and supported by Mr. Suliman E. Suji of Vereeniging.

Mr. E. S. Coovadia then moved the 5th resolution as follows:—

"This meeting of members of the Hamidia Islamic Society hereby authorises the acting chairman and secretary to forward copies of the preceding resolutions to the proper quarters."

This was seconded by Mr. Ahmed Mia, and supported by Mr. Bhaijee.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, which had throughout been enthusiastic, Mr. Polak read telegrams of sympathy from the Natal Indian Congress and the Rhodesia Indians, informing the Transvaal Indians that they had cabled protests to London and India. Mr. Mulji G. Patel concluded by offering a few words of congratulation and sympathy on behalf of the Hindu section of the community.

## Restricting Education

### Age Limit for Indians

### Supreme Court Application

In the Supreme Court, on the 29th ulto., Mr. Tatham, K.C., moved for a rule restraining the Minister of Education and the headmaster of the Indian Higher-Grade School, Durban, from discharging certain pupils threatened with dismissal on reaching the age of fourteen years. This, counsel said, was to be done by way of retrenchment, but he argued that any such action would be *ultra vires*. There was nothing in the Act to justify it, and, while the granting of the order asked could do no harm to the Government, its refusal might seriously affect the pupils. Verbal notice had been given to several of the pupils at the beginning of the month.

The Court expressed disapproval of *ex parte* orders, saying when they could not possibly do harm. In the present case, the granting of the order might seriously interfere with the discipline of the school. The application was refused.—*Times of Natal*.

[We have since heard that the Government have withdrawn the notice.—Ed I.O.]

## Notes on the Transvaal Struggle

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT)

### Imam Abdool Cadir

Every Indian in South Africa is rejoicing at the courage displayed by Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, and laughing at the ridiculous position in which the Government has placed itself, owing to the imprisonment of a man who is an authorised resident of the Transvaal. From Durban comes the message, in the name of the Natal Indian Congress, to the effect that the Congress has cabled to London in his regard. From Selukwe, Rhodesia, the British Indian Association has received a message to a similar effect.

### At Volksrust

Hira Mulji, who was recently sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment without hard labour as a prohibited immigrant, having entered with his father, was last week deported. He would have been left to starve, so far as the Transvaal Government was concerned, as he had no friends in Natal. Brave boy that he is—he is only 12 years old—he returned immediately, was promptly re-arrested, charged, and convicted, receiving a sentence of one month without hard labour. One would think that officials would blush at such cruelty as imposing imprisonment upon a child who has entered the Colony with his father and under his father's instructions. Mr. E. M. Cajee, of Paardekop, has been sentenced at Volksrust to pay a fine of £10 for trading without a licence, the fine to be recovered by distress levied upon his goods.

On Wednesday at Volksrust 34 Indians, who entered the Colony from Natal the previous night, were convicted as prohibited immigrants. They were among those who were detained on the hulk at Durban. Five were boys and twenty-nine were adults. The latter were sentenced to a fine of £25 or to go to gaol for 2 months with hard labour. Three of the children were fined £15 or sentenced to two months without hard labour. One was fined £5 with the alternative of 14 days hard labour, and the fifth was discharged. Three of the boys convicted were 10, 11, and 12 years of age. They all went to gaol.

### The Kathor Meeting

Mr. Peeran Mahomed, who presided at the public meeting of 2000 people, held at Kathor, Bombay Presidency, recently, has received the following telegraphic acknowledgment from the Government of India, in reply to a telegram sent by the public meeting on that occasion:— "I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram dated the

1st instant addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy, regarding the (Transvaal) imprisonment of Indians by the Transvaal Government. I am to say that the matter is receiving the attention of the Government of India, who will use their best endeavours to secure sympathetic treatment to the British Indian subjects in the Transvaal."

### Public Feeling in India

It has been suggested that public feeling in India in regard to the Transvaal is not nearly so acute as has been represented. The following impartial statement made by the Bishop of Lahore at Preston, Lancs., may do something to create a different impression:—If in any European State to-day Englishmen were exposed to terms of residence similar to those imposed upon Indians in the Transvaal, it would be considered a *casus belli*. It was extraordinary that what we should resent at the hands of a foreign Power should be inflicted upon fellow subjects within our own Empire with England powerless to prevent it. India was feeling the restlessness as Japan and China, and the resentment at the treatment of their fellow-countrymen in South Africa was more acute in India than Englishmen imagined. Nobody could prognosticate what was coming to birth in India to-day, and he trusted that England would deal justly, wisely, sympathetically, and honourably with one of the brightest ornaments in her crown.

### At Barberton

In view of the appeal lodged in the matter of Moosa Ismail Mia's conviction, the other prisoners have also decided to pin their faith to the decision of the Supreme Court and many of them have since been released on bail. Although notice of appeal has been lodged in the case of the others, I understand that all are working out of doors in prisoners' costume. Essop Dhaijee, who was recently sentenced to a month's hard labour for being in the Transvaal without a registration certificate, and who was deported two or three days ago to Komatiapoort, returned immediately, was taken to Barberton, but, for some unexplained reason, was released. Evidently the Government realised that a great mistake has already been made, or has committed a worse one.

### False Permits Et Seq

It will be remembered that, some time ago a Chinaman was arrested at Volksrust for entering the Colony on a permit which was not his own. He was charged and convicted as a prohibited immigrant, afterwards being deported, the assumption being that he was never in the Transvaal before, and had no right to be here now, and had acted fraudulently. It is a curi-

ous coincidence, perhaps to be explained by the Registrar of Asiatics, that this same man entered the Colony again a few days ago on an official document, dated the 26th instant. We understand that it is a voluntary registration certificate which has been issued to him.

#### Licensing Cases

On Monday, forty hawkers went to gaol in Johannesburg, being sentenced to seven days' hard labour each or a fine of £1 each, which naturally they refused to pay. Several of them were second offenders, and pointed this out to the Magistrate, asking for a heavier sentence. One, indeed, suggested that he might be allowed to spend six months in gaol. Mr. Cross, who presided, did not see his way to accede to the request and sentenced all alike. The work of dealing with hawkers who are, at the same time, passive resisters is so heavy now that it is being dealt with in Courts C and D. At Germiston, on the same day, 16 men went to gaol for a similar offence. Fifteen received 10 days' hard labour or 10s. fine, the latter, of course, not being paid; whilst one, who was a second offender and insisted upon this statement being made to the Magistrate, was fined £5 or sentenced to spend a month in gaol with hard labour. This brave man's name is Govindasamy. He insisted upon being driven to the Court in a cab, although he was very ill. Such a spirit as his should do much to inspire the community. At Krugersdorp, there have been two or three cases where Indians have gone to gaol for ten days rather than pay fines. At Roodepoort, Mr. Ebrahim Mahomed was sentenced to 7 days on Monday for refusing to pay a fine. At Pretoria, last week, ten hawkers were convicted and sent to gaol for three days with hard labour. One paid his fine; the others went to gaol without demur. In the case of Alli Esse, who was recently fined 5s. for trading without a grocer's licence, in Pretoria, an appeal has been noted on the ground that the Municipality has not the right to impose a tax of this nature, and that no breach of the law has been committed. On Tuesday, a dozen hawkers were arrested at Johannesburg for trading without licences; and several were released, one having already served two sentences, and being anxious for a third. On Wednesday last 70 more hawkers were sent to gaol at Johannesburg.

#### The Price of Outspokenness

*Het Westen* of Potchefstroom contains the following from Mr. J. J. Hartley, referring to the Rev. F. B. Meyer's attitude with regard to the Asiatic question:—

The position is always thus. The poor South African can never do any-

thing good. His bitter experience of many many years are not taken into consideration; he must suffer and remain silent under all offences. But the man who makes a short journey through the country, gives his judgment and is applauded and believed.

Shali we sit still and allow the Africander to be oppressed and our Government to be brought into contempt by the continual disturbance caused by the coolie and his English friends? Wake up before it is too late! The coolie is doing his utmost to carry his point. Let us be watchful to retain our Abraham's birthrights and not hand them over to the children of Ishmael. If the coolie gains the victory, what will be the impression among the natives in this country, who already have their eye on the franchise and all the rights connected with it?

#### The Real Reason

Speaking at a meeting at Volksrust the other day, Mr. Joubert M.L.A., in reply to a question, said that, regarding the Asiatics, some years ago they were weak, but now they were giving the Government a lot of trouble. They could not be thrashed out of the country as they were under the King, and were British subjects. The Government had a right to imprison and deport them, but they came back, and he did not know how the matter would end. He was certain, however, that the Government would be firm as they had the support of the whole of the country.

Immediately following him, Mr. Robertson, M.L.C., said that all realised that this was a difficult question for the Government. The Indians were very unwise in defying the law, with the object of obtaining sympathy from outside. The Government was anxious to get rid of as many of them as possible but there were great difficulties in the way. It was no fault of the Government that the matter was still going on, and they should urge the Government to carry out the law. They as a people were determined to see it out. (Cheers.) The Indians were hitting their heads against a stone wall, but they would be compelled to give in.

There is nothing like knowing what was really behind the anti-Asiatic legislation, and we do not ask for any better authority than that of two gentlemen who sit on the Government benches.

#### Johannesburg Mass Meeting

The British Indian Association of the Transvaal desires to convey to Indians through out South Africa its deep gratitude for the warm sympathy displayed by them on the occasion of the Johannesburg Mass Meeting last Wednesday. Their messages have greatly encouraged the Transvaal Indians.

#### Mr Essop Mia's Departure

Mr. Essop Ismail Mia, the ex-Chairman of the British Indian Association, left for Mecca on Monday last. He was seen off at Park Station by several members of the Committee of the Association, including Mr. Polak.

#### Letter from Sir Charles Bruce

Sir Charles Bruce, writing to the *Morning Post*, on the 1st ult., says: You have on more than one occasion done me the honour of admitting to your columns letters I have written on Colonial subjects. I shall be glad if you will allow me to say a few words on the subject of the British Indians in the Transvaal. Much controversy of late is tending to confuse the issue, and I will endeavour to explain the exact nature of the claims made by the Indians and urged on their behalf by their friends in this country. The grievances of the British Indians fall under four heads—restriction of immigration; methods of registration; civil disabilities in respect of residence; trade, education, and the use of facilities of locomotion by road and railway; exclusion from municipal and political franchise. As regards the franchise it is accepted that the Indians are at present excluded by the interpretation placed on the terms of the Treaty of Vereeniging. It is not, for the time, a question at issue. In respect of the restriction of immigration the real question has unfortunately been obscured by a false issue. It has constantly been asserted that a claim is made for unrestricted immigration. Even before the war, at the Colonial Conference in 1897, reasonable restriction enforced by reasonable methods was the claim advanced by Mr. Chamberlain, and since the Treaty of Vereeniging no claim for unrestricted immigration has ever been advanced either by the British Indian community or on their behalf. It stands to reason that wholesale immigration would be prejudicial to their interests. They claim only right of entry for those who can establish a legal domicile in the Colony whenever they choose to avail themselves of it; and for a certain number of educated Indians entitled to enter under the educational and moral tests required by the immigrants' Restriction Act. This claim is made to secure the admission of lawyers, doctors, priests, and teachers, and others whom the community deem necessary to preserve them from the communal degradation and eventual extinction which would be the result of the disabilities under which they lie in respect of education and other vital interests to which I shall refer. The question of methods of registration has done more than anything else to confuse the real issue in this controversy. When in



January last a compromise on the subject of registration by finger-marks was effected, it was declared both in Parliament and in the Press that the British Indian difficulty in the Transvaal was settled. The question of finger-marks was never more than a subsidiary question, and the compromise has been denounced by the Indians on the ground that they agreed to it under a misunderstanding. I am not going to confuse the issue by discussing this misunderstanding. Let it be accepted as a *bona fide* misunderstanding on both sides. What is important is the claim now made. It is claimed that the methods of registration agreed to in the compromise—and these are not disputed—should be accepted in the case of all Indians entitled to enter the Colony whenever they may deem it necessary to exercise the right. The principle having been admitted it is only a question of the limitation of opportunity—of what may be called a time limit. There remains the really important question which has been clouded out of sight by subsidiary controversies—the removal of disabilities—apart from the franchise. The Indians claim to be relieved from all degrading disabilities in respect of tenure of property, residence, trade, the education of their children, the use of public vehicles by rail and tram, the public post offices, &c. In the matter of this claim all that is advanced has been summed up in the words of Colonel Seely when, in the House of Commons on July 31, he declared the policy of the Government to be “that if any one is admitted under the British flag he must be a potential citizen, and must sooner or later be given equal rights with other men.” I have endeavoured to make clear the real issues in the case of the claims of the British Indians in the Transvaal. There does not seem to be one which has not been accepted in principle by His Majesty’s Government. I think I may add that there does not seem to be one which is not approved by the nation without distinction of political parties.

**Answers to Correspondents**

JOHN STALEY. With much of what you write we heartily agree, but on the whole, and especially in view of the length of your letter, we think that no good purpose would be served by its publication. We thank you, however, for your frank expression of opinion.—Ed. I.O.

H SCRIEF (WYNBERG). We agree with you that Indians should talk less and do more in connexion with the Transvaal struggle. You should do your utmost to induce your brethren to subscribe liberally to the funds of the Transvaal British Indian Association.—Ed. I.O.

**Press Comments on the Supreme Court Decision**

The *Times of Natal*, on the 29th ulto., wrote as follows on the Supreme Court decision in regard to the application of the Transvaal Indians to be released from the detention hulk: We cannot see that under existing conditions the Asiatic policy of the Transvaal Government is any concern of Natal officials. Nor can we see why Indian immigrants en route for the Transvaal should be penalised by the Natal authorities in anticipation of the immigrants’ refusal to conform with the laws of the Transvaal. Further, we do not think that it was ever intended that the discretionary powers vested in the Immigration Officer should be exercised as they were exercised in the present instance. The legality of the proceeding may be unquestioned, but its propriety seems to us more than doubtful.

Under the heading of “A Fundamental Mitter,” the *Transvaal Leader* writes:—

The judgment delivered by the Supreme Court of Natal in the case of the detained British Indians of which an account is given elsewhere, is of significance throughout the Empire. The facts are simple. The law authorises the Transvaal Government to take certain steps against British Indians in certain circumstances. Of course, these steps cannot be taken by our Government until the Indians are in our territory. Despite this, our Government apparently made private representations to the Administration at Maritzburg, asking that Administration to render assistance in preventing these people coming to this colony. This the Natal Government agreed to do—and has had its fingers smartly rapped in consequence. Mr. Smith, the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer, appears to have received written instructions from Maritzburg authorising him to detain and deport any Asiatics who refused to apply for registration at Durban—which, as need hardly be said, they cannot be made to do by our Government. Mr. Smith acted upon these instructions in connection with the arrival of Transvaal-bound Indians on board the *Gouverneur*; but Mr. Romer Robinson applied for an injunction from the Chief Magistrate at Durban against Mr. Smith, calling upon him to refrain from detention or deportation until the Indians’ status had been defined by the Supreme Court. Yesterday the Supreme Court confirmed this injunction, with costs against the Government of Natal. That is to say, the Court affirms that the Government of the Transvaal and the Government of Natal cannot carry out secret agreements to override the laws enacted by their respective Parliaments. If the Natal Parliament chose to give the Natal Government power

to stop at Natal ports people who said they were bound for the Transvaal, that, no doubt, would be another matter. As it is, irrespective of the merits of the controversy between the British Indians and our Government, we imagine that every lawyer in South Africa, and every other person who has a regard for law and liberty, will rejoice at a judgment which vindicates afresh the elementary rights of members of the British Empire. “The courts of justice in Natal or anywhere else,” said the Chief Justice of Maritzburg (we quote the *Star’s* report), “had to be absolutely uninfluenced by political considerations or by regard to the consequences that might result from decisions—decisions which were based upon the law they had to administer.” This rings as fine as that old Prussian story about Frederic the Great’s threatening a miller that he would take his mill from him because it was an eyesore from the palace, and the miller’s replying that the King would do nothing of the sort, “for there are Judges in Berlin.” “There are Judges in Maritzburg evidently.”

**Indian Trading at the Cape**

Commenting on the report of the Select Committee which recently inquired into the working of the Immigration Act and the general Dealers’ Act of Cape Colony, the *Times of Natal* remarks:—

It is worthy of note by the anti-Asiatic extremists of Natal that, while the Cape vigorously excludes Asiatics from entering the Colony, it does not attempt to apply repressive laws against those Asiatics who have in the past been permitted to take up their residence in the colony.

After quoting from the *South African News* that “There was a curious consensus of evidence to the effect that frequently the Indian trader sold goods below cost price, which can only be explained on the hypothesis that there was dishonesty somewhere, either in the mode of obtaining the goods originally, or in the mode of their disposition, or in realising the goods and leaving the wholesale merchants unpaid,” our contemporary concludes: The remedy for all this is obvious—to keep the Asiatic out, in the first place, and, with regard to those who have been allowed to come in, to enforce the ordinary laws in such a manner as to compel the dishonest or insanitary Indian to mend his way or close his business. Merely to suppress an Indian because he is an Indian, and for no other reason, is a particularly ugly form of injustice, although some seek to justify it in the colony on the grounds of self-reservation. Will the same doctrine be preached if, as is most probable, the natives ever enter into serious industrial competition with the whites?

## "British Indians in the Transvaal"

### Important Memorandum

#### Issued by the London Committee

The following important memorandum has been issued for publication by the authority of the South Africa British Indian Committee:

In the controversy regarding the position of British Indians in the Transvaal, two questions have been raised:

1. The identification by means of registration of Asiatics already domiciled in the Colony.
2. The control of future Asiatic immigration.

As to (1): Resident British Indians declined to conform to a Registration Law which received Imperial sanction on May 2nd 1907 because they deemed it insulting and reactionary and believed that their acquiescence in the principle it embodied, would open the way to the imposition of still further disabilities.

On May 9th 1907 they entered upon a campaign of passive resistance and between that date and the end of January 1908 went to gaol in large numbers and were, apparently, prepared to continue this form of protest almost indefinitely. On the 26th January 1908 their leader, Mr. Gandhi who was then in gaol as a passive resister, was invited to communicate to the Government a proposal of voluntary registration in place of compulsory registration under the Act. This course the community had already repeatedly proposed, pointing out that their objection was to the sting of compulsion. A letter signed by Mr. Gandhi and two of his fellow prisoners was, in response to the above invitation, forwarded to Pretoria. A reply to this dated the 30th January was received from the Colonial Secretary. A personal interview took place the same day, the prisoners were released, and much correspondence and many interviews subsequently took place between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts. Mr. Gandhi contends that the net result of all this was an understanding that the offensive Registration Law should be repealed. General Smuts denies that he intended to convey any such impression. The Asiatics practically all succeeded in establishing their *bona fides* and faithfully carried out the undertaking of their leaders to register voluntarily. Learning eventually that General Smuts had finally decided not to repeal the Registration Law, such repeal being the goal aimed at by them, they applied for the return of their applications for voluntary registration. This was refused and as they understood that a Bill was about to be introduced to validate the voluntary registrations as if they had been

effected before the expiry of the time (three months) allowed by the Registration Act, the community felt that the only way to avoid being brought under the Act was to destroy their certificates. This they did and so returned to the *status quo ante*. This Validation Bill was subsequently amended and has since been enacted by the Transvaal Government and sanctioned, legalising the voluntary registrations, but the original Registration Act is still retained on the Statute Book and the British Indians decline to be satisfied with anything less than its repeal for much the same reasons as they originally advanced against it.

As to (2): Up to January of this year immigration into the Transvaal was regulated under the Peace Preservation Ordinance which in general terms, excluded people dangerous to the peace, order, and good government of the state. Shortly after the sanction of the Registration Law above referred to (May 1907) a new Immigration Law was enacted and submitted for Imperial sanction. It was not, however, finally approved till about eight months after the sanction of the Registration Law. The Immigration Law defined a prohibited immigrant as being in effect a person incapable of passing an educational test and who, on that account, or on the score of poverty, immorality, criminality, or physical unfitness, was an undesirable. In addition to these tests:—

"Any person who, under any law in force at the date of his entering or attempting to enter this colony would be liable if found therein, to be removed from or to be ordered to leave the Colony whether on conviction of an offence against such law or for failure to comply with its provisions or otherwise; provided that such conviction be not the result of the commission by such person elsewhere than in this Colony of an offence for which he has received a free pardon"

was also a prohibited immigrant. Thus an educated Indian entering the Transvaal would, as not being registered, forthwith become liable to expulsion.

It was pointed out at the time that the sub-section above quoted might in conjunction with the Registration Law be construed to neutralise the benefits of the educational test in the case of Asiatics. As, however, the British Indians had firmly decided not to accept the Registration Law, this particular sub-section was, from their point of view, innocuous. They had all along accepted the principle of restriction provided that it was applied in a manner that did not pointedly insult them. There was, and is, no objection to the educational test being made very severe, but, without any desire to influence any further Asiatic immigration, they

claim that their own healthy existence in the colony demands that the door shall be left sufficiently open to admit, as of right, a priest, a doctor, a lawyer, or such other highly-educated British-Indian in order that they, themselves, may not become decadent or be ultimately "frozen out."

It has been contended that passive resistance has been resumed because the Transvaal Government having now conceded the original demands, other concessions are being required of them, and that the admission of Indian strangers who are capable of passing an educational test in an European language is such a new demand.

The only modification of the Immigration Law suggested by the Indians came about thus: During the negotiations between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi, and when voluntary registration bade fair to reach a satisfactory completion, the question arose as to how such voluntary registration should be legalised, seeing that as previously explained, the time prescribed by the Registration Act had expired, and Mr. Gandhi still expected that the Act itself would be repealed. Mr. Gandhi suggested as a simple and satisfactory method a slight amendment of the Immigration Law, which, while it retained the definition of prohibited immigrant, excluded from that term those who had taken out voluntary certificates, as well as domiciled absentees who should, within a certain period, voluntarily apply for them. General Smuts appears to have had no objection to this course provided that Mr. Gandhi consented to a further amendment completely shutting out Indian strangers irrespective of their educational qualifications as imposed by the Act as it then stood. He was willing to repeal the Registration Law if Mr. Gandhi would consent to such an amendment. Mr. Gandhi declined, arguing that he had bargained for repeal of the Registration Law upon one condition viz, voluntary registration, which condition his people had practically fulfilled and that if there had been a misunderstanding and repeal was not to take place, he must revert to the *status quo ante*. General Smuts, he argued, was at liberty to construe the Immigration Law as already shutting out all Indians as such by reading it in conjunction with the Registration Law. He declined to do this, preferring to read the Immigration Law by itself, and the construction that he placed upon it was that Indians were by its terms under no other disabilities than any other class of would-be immigrant.

To test this contention, Mr. Sorabji, an educated Parsee from Natal, undertook to enter the Transvaal. Notice was given to the authorities of his intention; he was permitted to enter and was then prosecuted, not under the Immigration Law, but under the Registration Law.

The only test case brought by the Government under the Immigration Law, that of *Laloo v. Rex*, would appear to bear out the contention of Mr. Gandhi and not that of General Smuts. In the latter case the Appellant failed because it was proved that he was unable to fulfil the requirements of the educational test; *i.e.*, to write out from dictation a sentence in an European language. The British Indians acknowledge that the Validation Act is a considerable improvement upon the Registration Law No. 2 of 1907. They hold, however, that the retention of the latter on the Statute Book of the Colony is a constant menace to their community, but the principal ground of their objection is that if the Government of the Transvaal are correct in their interpretation of the bearing of law 2 of 1907 upon the Immigrants' Restriction Act, the domiciled community are completely debarred from renewing the inevitable wastage in their body corporate. They point out that the inability to replace priests, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and other professional men of education and culture, must eventually result in communal deterioration, corruption, and final effacement. They recall the repeated warnings in certain quarters that registration is but a preliminary to other and yet more drastic steps, the ultimate purpose of which is to get rid of them altogether and they regard their isolation under the Registration and Immigration laws as the first stage in what is finally to be their complete destruction or decay. Their demands are very modest. They have expressed themselves satisfied with the right to acquire a maximum of six highly-educated British Indian recruits in any one year, which claim is made in the interests of the resident community. They point out that they are thereby claiming no more than is conceded as their right by Colonel Seely in his speech on August the 1st., in the House of Commons, and further that the Registration and Immigration Laws are of the nature of a subtle and deadly poison with which they have been inoculated in spite of their protests and that those Laws are, therefore, in direct antagonism to those rights that Colonel Seely conceded to be their due.

They appreciate the provision in the Validation Act whereby the Governor may permit the entry of visiting Asiatics, but they point out that temporary permits of this character have all along been obtainable, so that this constitutes no new concession, but they especially emphasise the difference between the status of such visitors and of new-comers, however few in number, who might enter as of right inasmuch as the former are unable to engage in any independent calling and are liable to the summary cancellation of their permits.

#### The Precis

JANUARY 26th, 1908.—Letter ad-

ressed from gaol to the Colonial Secretary suggesting voluntary registration be allowed within a limited period to all Asiatics over 16 years, and to all who so register the Act be not applied. Such mode of registration should apply to those also who being out of the Colony may return and otherwise possess the right of re-entry, the Government to take whatever steps they deem advisable to legalise such registration. It is pointed out that opposition to the law was principally directed against the element of compulsion contained in the Act itself. The letter adds willingness to find a way out of the difficulty provided that "no violation of conscience, infliction of indignity, or casting stigma on us."

Interview at Pretoria between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts.

JANUARY 30th, 1908.—Reply of Colonial Secretary. That in default of Registration under the Act which is no longer possible after the expiration of the notice, the Colonial Secretary can only accept registration in a form similar to that prescribed by the Act and subject as regards regulation to the small alteration you mention.

JANUARY 31st, 1908.—Letter from Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts refers to a conversation with Mr. Chamney after which he sought an interview with the Colonial Secretary; saw his Private Secretary but not the Colonial Secretary himself, explains that impression now made on his mind is that Registration that will now proceed will be legalised under the Act. That at that interview with the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Gandhi did not understand any such thing at all and that the joint letter from the gaol makes that clear. He requests re-assurance on this point and says that to legalise voluntary registration under the Act would be to re-open the question at the sorest point.

"You were good enough to tell me the method of legalisation will be discussed later on between us. I have already suggested that the best way to do so would be under the Immigrants' Restriction Act by amending it so far as may be necessary."

JANUARY 31, 1908.—Wire from Mr. Lane to Mr. Gandhi.

"Your letter received. Can you come over by the 11.30 train to-day to see my chief? Answer please."

Interview follows.

FEBRUARY 1st, 1908.—Cablegram from Mr. Gandhi to the South Africa British Indian Committee:—"Compromise contemplates repeal Act and same as voluntary offer before."

FEBRUARY 1st, 1908.—Letter from Mr. Gandhi to the South Africa British Indian Committee:—"At the end of three months if the registration is not satisfactory, the law can be made to apply against those who have not registered. On the other hand it is understood that if we fulfil our contract the law will be repealed by

amending legislation. A Bill will be introduced at the next session of Parliament legalising what has been done.

INDIAN OPINION, February 8th, from the *Transvaal Leader*: "The compromise contemplates the ultimate repeal of the Act which was the soul of the objection."

Interview with General Smuts, *Star* of 1st February: "These people have insisted that *before* they register, the law must be repealed," but the Government has refused, as it considered it a preposterous proposal, and now the Indians have dropped it."

FEBRUARY 10th, 1908.—Assault on Mr. Gandhi. Registration proceeds.

FEBRUARY 10th, 1908.—Speech by General Smuts at Richmond:—

"He wanted them to scrutinise very carefully the terms.

The first was that the Asiatics wanted to register voluntarily and not under the Law. . . . So he, (Mr. Smuts) said 'alright.' The Indians' second contention was that they would never register until the Law had been repealed, that the Law was an indignity and a disgrace. He has told them that the Law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered, and, like wise men, the leaders of the Indian community had waived the question of repeal. Until every Indian in the country had registered, the Law would not be repealed."

FEBRUARY 15th, 1908.—Letter from Mr. Gandhi to the South Africa British Indian Committee:—"The repeal of the Act was the fixed goal undertaken in the name of God, so far as I am aware, in making for that goal we have never swerved from that path, and have not reached the goal in the least possible time and with the fewest scratches?"

FEBRUARY 22nd, 1908. INDIAN OPINION reports satisfactory progress of voluntary registration. That ten finger-prints are now freely offered because it is being recognised that the whole struggle was in connection with the Asiatic Act itself and not with the mode of identification. Reports that up to Saturday, 1-o'clock over 600 applications had been received.

FEBRUARY 22nd, 1908.—Mr. Gandhi to Mr. Smuts. In accordance with permission given by him now takes opportunity of sending Draft Bill to amend the Immigrants' Restriction Act No. 15 of 1907. The time is ripe to submit it, inasmuch as there is every evidence now of the Asiatics loyally accepting the compromise. Mr. Gandhi explains his Draft Bill and that, "If there are any Asiatics who do not avail themselves of the voluntary offer, that even against them the Asiatic Act will not need to be retained, because by the Amended Bill he is submitting they become *ipso facto* prohibited immi-

grants and therefore liable to an expulsion order. His Bill proposes to repeal *inter alia* the Registration Law."

MARCH 7th, 1908.—INDIAN OPINION reports up to Saturday last over 3 400 applications for registration have been received.

MARCH 12th, 1908.—Reply from the Colonial Secretary to Mr. Gandhi. Much obliged for Draft Bill. Not yet had time to go into the question.

MARCH 14th, 1908.—INDIAN OPINION reports about 4 900 applications for registration received.

APRIL 11th, 1908.—INDIAN OPINION reports 7 637 applications. 4 590 permits issued.

*Pretoria News* praises the Indians for their readiness in carrying out their pledge.

May 9th, 1908.—Period for voluntary registration closes. 8,000 odd applications have been received; 6,000 already approved and passed. INDIAN OPINION calls upon the Government to do their share and repeal the Asiatic Law Amendment Act and to legalise the registrations in a manner acceptable to the Asiatics. The Colonial principle having been accepted by the community, there is no need for further friction.

MAY 12th, 1908.—Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts. Letter.

That he has received a telegram from the Registrar of Asiatics saying that all Asiatics who at the time of the compromise were outside the Colony and who are now coming in and who have arrived after the 9th instant, should apply under the Act. Mr. Gandhi writes:—"I am sure you do not mean this at all after the clear statement in the letter addressed by me from the gaol. I venture to hope that the necessary instructions will be issued and that voluntary registration will be accepted from those who may now come in."

MAY 13th, 1908.—General Smuts to Mr. Gandhi (through Mr. Lane).

Replies that he cannot agree with Gandhi's contention. Says that the arrangement was that all Asiatics over 16 should be allowed voluntary registration within three months; that the period allowed having elapsed, further applications can only be received under the Law.

MAY 14th, 1908.—Mr. Gandhi to Mr. Lane, (for General Smuts).

Replies that the letter just received raises a tremendous question and gives rise to a great misunderstanding. Adds that the limitations only applied to those then resident in the Transvaal. Reminds the General that in his original letter, Mr. Gandhi purposely added the words "Such mode of registration should apply to those also who, being out of the Colony, may return, and otherwise possess the right of residency." He repeats that the essence of the compromise is that the undertaking of the Indian community being fulfilled as he

claims has been done, the Act should be repealed; refers to the Draft Bill he has forwarded to the Colonial Secretary. Requests telegraphic reply.

MAY 15th, 1908.—Mr. Lane to Mr. Gandhi, letter stating that the Colonial Secretary cannot depart from the position he has taken up.

Mr. Essop Mia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, is violently assaulted by Pathans.

MAY 21st, 1908.—Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts, writes that General Smuts' decision not to register returning Indians under the Compromise, has created a turmoil among the Indians; that the people believe he has betrayed them and begs that a very simple thing may be done; and announce that the Act will be repealed.

MAY 22nd, 1908.—Colonial Secretary to Mr. Gandhi. Letter in reply that the General is not able to meet Mr. Gandhi's wishes and announce that new arrivals may voluntarily register. That his decision is final on this point. The letter is silent about repeal of the Act.

MAY 25th, 1908.—Mr. Gandhi informed of General Smuts' intention to legalise voluntary registration *under the Act*; communicates this fact to the Secretary, The South Africa British Indian Committee, London.

MAY 26th, 1908.—Leaders of the Indian community apply to Mr. Chamney for return of their applications for voluntary registration because they have just learned of the above intention of the Government.

JUNE 4th, 1908.—Mr. Lane to Mr. Gandhi. Writes that the Colonial Secretary has under consideration a Draft Asiatic Bill which it is proposed to introduce into Parliament at the approaching session and requests Mr. Gandhi to come over to Pretoria and discuss it with him on Saturday at 10 a.m.

Writing to Secretary, The South Africa British Indian Committee, Mr. Gandhi remarks *apropos* this, that he gathers that the Act is to be repealed, it being only now necessary for the Progressives to concur.

JUNE 6th, 1908.—Interview between Messrs. Smuts and Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts. Letter, in which writer refers to the above interview pointing out that it was not satisfactory because General Smuts still hesitates to repeal the Act and is emphatic that if the Act is not repealed it is under it that Asiatics who return after the 5th ultimo, must register. The letter continues:—

"The repeal of the Act was the goal of the Asiatics. I have gathered also that you admit the Act to be wholly bad and that amendment of the Immigration Restriction Act is not an undesirable way of solving the problem. I once more remind you of what you told me at the interview on the subject, that, if the Asiatics carried out their part of the compromise, you would repeal the Act.

I know you added also, that if there was one recalcitrant Asiatic who obstinately refused to take out a registration certificate, you would enforce the Act against that Asiatic. As a matter of fact, within my knowledge no such recalcitrant Asiatic is left.

I do hope you will allow me to make a definite statement that the Act is to be repealed, otherwise I shall be compelled to fall back upon my letter to Mr. Chamney as to withdrawal of the application forms."

Discusses the Draft Amendment to the Immigration Bill he had proposed.

JUNE 13th, 1908.—Further interview between Messrs. Smuts and Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts. Letter, referring to above interview; to the amendment of the Immigration Act and after defining the Asiatic position concludes, "I take it that as you have promised, you will let me see the Draft Bill before it is published."

JUNE 20th, 1908.—Interview between Messrs. Smuts and Gandhi by appointment. Mr. Gandhi requested to see him again on Monday to discuss a few of the details which, in Mr. Gandhi's opinion, "means that the Act is to be repealed and I have just to understand how."

The South African Press generally publish report that the Asiatic Law Amendment Act is to be repealed.

JUNE 22nd 1908.—Mr. Gandhi to Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, writes:—"Smuts will repeal the Act but on conditions I cannot accept. The conditions he makes are:—

Dutch certificates not to be recognised;

Pre-war refugees who have not Peace Preservation Certificates, cannot enter;

Those voluntary applications that have been rejected not to be considered by a Court of Law;

Those possessing educational qualifications are not to be recognised (Smuts thinks they are disqualified under the present Act. I think that is not the case).

It is not possible to accept the above conditions because I consider that they miss the spirit of the compromise."

Above letter written after interview between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts at which the General submitted to Mr. Gandhi the Draft of a measure to amend the Immigration Act.

JUNE 24th, 1908.—Mass Meeting of Indians. Chairman explains that General Smuts' offer to repeal the Act is accompanied by conditions impossible of acceptance. Meeting resolves to withdraw their applications.

(To be Continued)

## Opinion in India

### Strong Feeling on the Transvaal Position

The *Khatardar* (Bombay) writes editorially as follows:—

There can be no question about the fact that the attitude of the Transvaal Government towards the Indians is most unfair and extremely repugnant. The public opinion in England—if there is at all a public opinion there on Asiatic affairs, seems to hold a similar view. In fact no sane man can think it to be otherwise, unless he has been misled by one-sided and incorrect statements from the "white colonists." The British Indians are as much the subjects of the King as the people who want to usurp the entire trade and the entire land of that country. If the latter want to make the Transvaal "a white men's country" exclusively, they have full liberty to achieve that object by all legitimate means in their power. But let them on no account tyrannise over their coloured fellow-subjects. Let them not by a mere stroke of the pen deprive others of the rights of true British citizenship. The Indians in the Transvaal have in the past always yielded to the prejudices of the "white colonists" and have meekly submitted to the humiliations imposed upon them; but the situation has become intolerable now and an incessant campaign of tyranny has driven them to desperation. They have found no other alternative but that of making a bonfire of their certificates and entering unanimously upon passive resistance. Even a man like H. H. the Agha Khan advised the Government of India the other day in a public speech to adopt a policy of retaliation if the Transvaal Government does not come to its senses by itself. If the treatment accorded to Indians were accorded to Englishmen in a foreign country, British interference and even recourse to arms would have at once been requisitioned. Even mishaps and accidents to European Missionaries have been enough to bring foreign countries into trouble. In a British Colony, matters should improve more smoothly. Colonisation, in spite of self-government, implies subordination to the mother country and no pleading to allow the South African Colonists to have a free hand in the settlement of their internal affairs should prevent the Imperial Government from dictating its own terms in the matter of the British Indians. There can be no doubt that the matter is very important and, if remained unsolved any further, may affect the prestige of England not only in India but in foreign countries as well.

### Protest from Sindh.

The Secretary, Sindh Hindu Sabha, writes the following to the *Tribune* (Lahore):—

Hyderabad, Sept. 25.

A large public meeting in which there were few students was held here on Wednesday evening in Holmshed Hall to protest against the persecution of Indians in the Transvaal. Mr. Chuharmal, Retired Public Prosecutor presided.

The first resolution condemned the conduct of the Transvaal Government, sympathised with the Indians and expressed admiration for their heroism.

The second urged the Imperial Government to insist on better treatment of Indians.

The third resolution suggested retaliation by the Indian Government.

The same paper reports that the country continues to be deeply stirred from one end of it to the other with the sufferings and humiliation to which our countrymen in the Transvaal are exposed by a perverse and unbending Colony. The Bombay Presidency Association led the way, and moved the Government in England to intervene without delay, and the ball set rolling by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta has been kept up by other leaders of public opinion in the country. The Madras Mahajan Sabha has already sent a telegram to the Secretary of State calling attention to the ill-treatment and oppression of British Indians in the Transvaal, and asking for justice. We have already noticed in these columns the sensible and feeling representation of the British Indian Association, Calcutta, and have now before us similar reports from Sindh, Surat, and Nagpur. The Nagpur meeting expressed indignation at the treatment being accorded by the Transvaal and exhorted the Indians in the Transvaal to bear their present ordeal with courage and determination. The Surat meeting of all classes of people expressed "deep resentment and disapprobation" at the hard punishments being meted out to men of education, position, and respectability among the Indian community and asked for the intervention of the Home Government to save Indians from the degrading and unbearable position they have been put in, and inviting them to exercise their influence with the Transvaal Government to bring about the repeal of the obnoxious clauses of the Asiatic Registration Act.

### A Sympathetic Message.

The *Tribune* of the 30th Sept. in a leading article says:—

Sir George Clarke [Governor of Bombay] may not have the power to remedy our suffering countrymen's long-standing and deeply-felt grievances in the Transvaal, as the matter obviously rests with the Imperial Government in England, or the Government of India at Simla. But Sir George at any rate knows when to put in a word that may soothe the ruffled feelings of the people or assuage

the pain and humiliation they are undergoing. And in his reply to the telegram of the Honourable Saiyid Zain-ul-Edroos, President of the public meeting called by the Surat District Association on the 22nd instant to protest against the iniquities being perpetrated in that Colony, His Excellency has once more shown that he can sympathise with the people committed to his charge. The reply sent by the Private Secretary to His Excellency runs as follows:—

"His Excellency has received your telegram of the 22nd instant, and sympathises cordially with the feeling expressed at the meeting. His Excellency desires to say that the question is one which can be dealt with only by the Imperial Government which is doing all that lies in its power to secure the just rights of Indians in the Transvaal; and that the question is not yet settled. His Excellency earnestly hopes that a satisfactory solution may yet be arrived at."

We cannot anticipate the future course of events, though we have the fullest faith in the righteousness of the cause for which our countrymen are standing up manfully in the land of voluntary exile, and the ultimate destiny of our people, but it is something to know that Sir George cordially sympathises with our feelings, and has the courage to say so. We are assured that the Home Government is trying its best to secure our just rights. We hope with Sir George that success may await their efforts, for it is idle to conceal the feeling that although on the one hand, England is averse to interfere in the internal affairs of a Colony, so far as the grievances of British Indian subjects of the Crown are concerned in the Transvaal and other British Colonies, the highest statesmanship of England is face to face with an ordeal that will severely try its courage and capacity, and we can only pray that it may come out with flying colours out of the grave ordeal.

Commenting on this question the *Parsi* (Bombay) says:—The Transvaal difficulty appears to be approaching a crisis, where it will hardly be possible for the Home Government to withhold its interference and maintain its honour. The imprisonment with hard labour of four leading members of the community has brought about what is practically an extensive strike; shops are closed, and Indians both actively and passively refuse to obey the oppressive laws designed with the sole object of worrying them out of the country at all costs—including that of justice. The resident community has appealed for aid to India, where, it is to be hoped, the Viceroy and Governors will represent the potential dangers of the situation strongly to Westminster. There is no doubt as to public opinion in India—even that of the masses, wherever among them the situation is understood. It does not

redound greatly to the credit of the British Parliament that Lord Amphill's voice should cry in the wilderness for justice. The whole situation is a most disgraceful example of the lengths to which a profession of righteousness and a shirking of its performance can be carried. With high-flown maxims about liberty the Liberal Government granted a constitution to the Boers for the sole purpose of dodging the responsibility for the many difficulties which the settlement of the country presented. We see the results of this "courageous and enlightened statesmanship."

### The Voice of the Prophet

The following characteristic letter from Mr. Ritch's earnest pen was published last week in the *South African Jewish Chronicle*:—(On the "Yom Kippur" day I sat in the house of prayer heart-heavy with the weight of sin, the self humbled with a sense of human impotence.

The morning service was drawing to a close, and the "Maftir" was intoning the Portion from the Prophets with characteristic unction. The "Maftir" was obviously either unmusical or not in voice; his personality was commonplace, the environment a typical London congregation in a typical West End synagogue. As my mind became focussed on the text, the commonplace vanished, dissipated before the magic of the stern old Prophet's reproof and exhortation. The voice was the voice of the gratified recipient of the "Mitzvah," but the words were the words of the S. er, the Man of God. The grim, long-drawn tragedy of this People of Sorrows was being foretold with scientific precision, the logical consequences of specific causes defined with mathematical exactness. The dispersion; the black record of persecution and segregation within the Ghettos of Medieval Europe; the latter-day Yudenhetz; Dreyfusism; the vogue of the Pogrom, and similar phenomena of twentieth century "rishus" stood out in sharp, eloquent relief, stretching, so it seemed, back, back, and still back to the scene and hour of the Isaac Prophecy. Then of a sudden (how, I know not—association of ideas, perhaps: Pogroms,—Russia,—Refugees, my thoughts turned to South Africa, my "home" for seventeen years, and the refuge of many thousands of prosperous ecclereligionists escaped from Russia's Red Terror. And there, too, in the Transvaal, I saw the picture of a persecuted people, an Eastern people, albeit not mine own, oppressed, reviled, despoiled, penalised for their frugality, their inoffensiveness, ability and strength of character, which, coupled with their complexion and Eastern origin, constituted their offence. And mine own people looked on supine! Looked on, that is, when they did not join the

"hue and cry" of the "Coolie" baiters. And the words of the stern old Prophet stood out in letters of fire and rolled forth in peals of thunder—

"Is such, then, the fast which I have chosen; that a man should afflict his soul for a day? Is it that he should bow down his head like a bulrush and spread sackcloth and ashes for his couch? Shall this be called a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord? Verily, this fast I choose, to dissolve the bands of wickedness, to loosen the oppressive burthens, and to let the oppressed (slaves) go free; and that ye should break asunder every yoke; to distribute thy bread to the hungry; and bring the miserably poor afflicted into thy house, when thou seest the naked that thou clothe him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth like the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily; thy righteousness shall go before thee. Then shalt thou call and the Lord will answer; 'thou shalt cry and He will say, 'Lo, I am here.' If thou remove from the midst of thee every oppression, the threatening finger, and the injurious speech, if thou pour out thy soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness shall be as the noon-day. And the Eternal will lead thee continually, and satisfy thy soul with heavenly splendour; He will moisten thy bones; thou shalt be like a well-watered garden, and like a flowing spring, whose waters never fail. And they that spring from thee shall build the ancient ruins; the foundations of old times shalt thou raise up, and thou shalt be called the repairer of the broken mound; the restorer of paths to be frequented by inhabitants."

And I understood, for, though the voice was the voice of the little commonplace "Maftir," the deathless prophet had once more spoken his words of warning.

THE KING'S MESSAGE TO INDIA—London, November 2nd.—The fiftieth anniversary is being celebrated of the termination of the East India Company, and the establishment of the present rule of the Indian Empire by the Government of India, whereby the Company's territories were vested in His Majesty. The King has sent a message to the people of India dwelling upon the blessings of British rule, and declaring that it is the paramount duty of the Government sternly to repress conspiracies which are abhorrent to hosts of Indians. The Royal message foreshadows an extension of the principle of representative institutions at a very early date, and announces the remission of sentences on prisoners who took part in the recent disorders.—*Reuter*.

### Diocesan Synod

#### Treatment of Indians in Natal

At the meeting of the Natal Diocesan Synod last week, presided over by the Bishop of Natal, the report on Indian Missions was moved by Canon Smith of the S. Aidan's Mission, in the course of which it stated:—

Though the sympathy for Native Missions is growing and spreading amongst Church people, the popular outcry against the Indians in this Colony, which, during the past year has increased in intensity, seems to stand as a barrier in the way of that sympathy being extended to our Indian Mission. And yet this popular outcry against the Indians should awaken in all true Christian hearts a deeper sympathy for them. For what must it be to a sensitive people like the Indians to live in an atmosphere of, not only unsympathetic, but even antagonistic thought and feeling—an atmosphere which surrounds them, from which they cannot escape, which generally takes the insidious form of dealing out to them petty slights, and roughness of speech and manner, at all times and in all places, but which now and again crushes them with the heavy weights that a race (which here seems to misread unjust domineering for just dominance) can impose upon them. As, for example, to take two recent instances: (1) The Government deletes from the Supply Bill the grant for training Indian teachers, which means, not only further crippling for our own Training College, but also the total extinction of the Government's Training Class, held in Durban; and, at the same time, with this deletion of the training grant, it reduces considerably the grant for the Higher Grade Schools, so that the Education Department has to dismiss from the Government Higher Grade Schools all boys over the age of 14 years. (2) The Corporation of Durban is bent on replacing all Indians in their service, where possible, with Europeans, but, as it seems, without any discrimination. And so, amongst those who have received a month's notice, is one who, as a colonial-born Indian, at the age of 14 was employed in the P.W. Department. He has served faithfully for 19 years to the satisfaction of his immediate superiors in the P.W. Department. "He is everything we could wish," was the acknowledgment made to me by one of the Council, when I was speaking in his behalf. And yet he is cast adrift. I have just learnt that the month's notice has been prolonged to two months; let us hope that it may be withdrawn altogether, for what is the man to do? He has a wife and family to provide for. He cannot go to India—a Brahmin here, he would be a stranger and outcast there. And what likelihood is there now of his getting other employment in this land of his birth, when the general tendency is to

dismiss, not to employ, Indians? And this after 19 years' faithful service under one employer! These two recent instances are given as being conspicuous indications of the general atmosphere in which the Indians of this Colony live and move, and, as such, they should awaken within all true Christian hearts a truer sympathy for them.

Archdeacon Gregson described the condition of some indentured Indians as "Egyptian slavery," and said the position of the Indian who appealed to the Protector was a most difficult one; because he might be subjected to more pains and penalties. On more than one estate Indians were compelled to work longer hours than the law provided. The protection the Protector gave could not in all cases be adequate. He suggested the formation of a Christian Social Union.—*Times of Natal*.

### Joh'burg Mass Meeting

#### Huge Gathering

#### Tremendous Enthusiasm

#### European Sympathisers Present

On Wednesday afternoon, the 4th inst., at 3-30 p.m. Mr. A. M. Cachalia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, opened his presidential address to a packed meeting of British Indians who had assembled within the compound of the Hamidia Mosque, Johannesburg, to discuss the present situation. There must have been nearly 3,500 people present, and not a square inch of standing room left. The vast throng stood for some two hours silently, except when wild bursts of cheering interrupted a speaker or expressed the gratitude of the community towards him. That sea of upturned, earnest faces alone must have struck the imagination of even the casual onlooker. Amongst those present on the platform, besides Messrs. Leung Quinn, representing the Chinese element, H. S. L. Polak officiating as scribe, and Moulvi Hajee Ahmed Mukhtar, were Mr. William Hosken, M.L.A., Revs. John Howard, J. J. Duke and C. Phillips, and Messrs. Walter Evans, David Pollock, H. Kallenbach, Griffiths, W. M. Vogl, Adv. L. Blackwell, A. Beatley, W. Kimberley, E. Dallow, and several others representing well-known European firms. Mr. Hosken, who supported the first resolution, was met with a storm of cheering, which lasted some moments, and at the conclusion of his speech, he was garlanded in Indian fashion, by the Chairman, the incident evoking a fresh outburst of cheering. A similar ovation was accorded to all the other European speakers, Messrs. Duke, Howard, Cartwright, and Pollock being specially singled out for this expression of gratitude. At the conclusion of the meeting, in a brief but eloquent

speech, Moulvi Sahab expressed the thanks of the community to their European friends, and sprinkled each with rose water. Letters of sympathy were read from Rev. Canon Berry and Adv. Herschersohn, and Rev. J. Perry sent his regrets. Some 45 telegrams of sympathy and encouragement were received from all parts of South Africa, including Durban, Port Elizabeth, Capetown, Kimberley, Lourenco Marques, Selukwe, and Barberton, and many from districts and towns in the Transvaal. Delegates were sent from Pretoria (60), Germiston (121), Roodepoort (21), Boksburg (15), Krugersdop (30), Vereeniging (5), Heidelberg (2), Pietersburg, and Klerksdorp.

#### The Resolutions

The following are the resolutions:— "British Indians affirm their unquenchable loyalty to the Throne, and, in thanking the King-Emperor for his gracious Proclamation, ask that the blessings of peace and justice, which have characterised his rule in India, may be bestowed also upon his loyal Indian subjects in the Transvaal, by the removal of the grievous disabilities now placed upon them."

Speeches supporting this resolution were made by Wm. Hosken Esq., M.L.A., and Albert Cartwright, Esq.

The Rev. J. J. Duke, H. Kallenbach Esq., and the Rev. Chas. Phillips spoke to the following resolution:—

"The British Indian community of the Transvaal hereby pledges itself to continue passive resistance until the officially admitted unworkable Asiatic Act has been repealed."

"British Indians demand that the right of free immigration under the general Immigration Act of the Colony be conceded to six highly educated Indians yearly, in order to minister to the spiritual and intellectual needs of the people, and unhesitatingly rejects the humiliating proposal of the Transvaal Government that temporary permits be granted to priests, professional men, and teachers."

David Pollock Esq., the Rev. John Howard, and Walter Evans, Esq., were the supporters.

The Chairman proposed: "This Mass Meeting of British Indians hereby authorises the Chairman to forward copies of the foregoing resolutions to the proper quarters."

A *Natal Mercury's* special telegram states:—

The Rev. J. Howard condemned the Government for not keeping its pledge to repeal the Asiatic Act.

Mr. Hosken congratulated the Asiatics on their big demonstration. He thought that legislation so degrading should be resisted to the utmost, and if they persisted, success would ultimately crown their cause. He hoped that they would go on with the movement: Their requests were moderate and reasonable, and they were old-established residents and peaceable citizens; therefore, he would be with them.

Mr. Albert Cartwright said if the Government would come to the Asiatics and honestly buy them out and compensate them for their rights in the country, he would be prepared to pay his share of the taxation involved. The only other logical policy was to allow them to raise themselves, so that they could be full citizens in course of time. So far, neither of these honourable courses had been adopted. He trusted that a way would be found out of the difficulty.

The Rev. J. J. Duke proposed a resolution pledging the British Indian community to continue passive resistance until the officially admitted unworkable Asiatic Act had been repealed. The appeal to Government having failed, he said that nothing remained but to join the Indians, and see the fight to the end.

The Rev. Charles Phillips said they would not stop the struggle until they had secured peace with honour.

### Latest Telegrams from the Transvaal

#### [SPECIAL TELEGRAMS]

Johannesburg, Thursday.

To-day twelve more hawkers went to gaol at Johannesburg. Two went to gaol at Boksburg. Seven hawkers received seven days' hard labour at Germiston.

At Volksrust to-day two more men were sentenced to two months' hard labour.

Mr. Gandhi was to-day removed to Volksrust Gaol in convict clothes.

To-day's *Transvaal Leader* urges the Government to reconsider the whole position in view of yesterday's Mass Meeting with Europeans, and invites more Europeans to join the movement.

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**વેકસરસ્ટનો જોડમાંથી**

નીચેના કાગળ પ્રાપ્ત કરવા અખને  
એ શનિવારે મળેલો હતો

વેકસરસ્ટ, તા. ૨૭ અક્ટોબર ૧૯૦૮  
સ હેતુ,

આજ દીને અત્રેની જોડમાં ઇંદને તહે  
વાર ઉજવવા માટે અત્રેના તથા આરસ  
ટાકિના સખખા મુમત્તગાન લખખો આજ્યા  
હતા. ઇંદ તહેવારની મુખારકાદીન: સખ્યા  
બધ તારો દક્ષિણ અફ્રિકાના ઘણા ભાગ  
માંથી આજ્યા હતા હીંદુ, મુસ્લમાન,  
પારસી વિગેરે કે મેને ઠરાંસવાલની હડને  
કેટલીખથી એકી તથા એકસ પી બા  
વી છે તે તેમના: કેટલાક તારો ઉપરથી  
માત્રમ પડ્યુ હતું. અગર જો કે ધર્મિક  
રીને આ તહેવાર મુસલમાનોનો ગણાય  
છે તથા દીવળીનો તહેવાર હીંદુઓને છે  
તથા તારોમાં સરવે કે મો તરફ દિવસોજ  
તથા લાગણી ધરાવનાગ વિચાગે જણાવ્યા  
હતા. આ તારોમાં અમારી તરફ દિવસે.જ  
તથા લાગણી અતાવવા માટે સરવે સ હે  
ખોનો તમારા પત્ર મારફતે આભાર માની  
એ છીએ. કારણ કે અમ.રાથી દરેકનો

હુયો ઉપકાર માની શકાતો નથી. સરવે  
લાખખોને હડનમાં પુરની મદદ આપવની  
અરજ મુખરીએ છીએ. અને આ જોડ  
ના મકાનમાં પણ હમેશ ખુખાક પ.સે  
મ.ગીએ છીએ કે અમારા હુખી લાખખો  
ના બધન તે કાવવાની મદદમાં સખ્યાન ધ  
લોકો દિલોખની લખે લ.ગ લેય. આખીન  
લી. સેવકો.

પા:સી રસ્તમજી જવણજી,  
શ.પુરજી જવણજી રાંદેરીઆ,  
સોરાખજી શપુરજી અડાળ.ણીઆ.

રૂટર લડનથી એક તરમાં જણાવે છે  
કે લેરક એમથીજ અને હ.ઉસ એક  
લોરડસ તથા ઠામન્સના ૧૩ મેખરે:ના એક  
રેપ્યુટેશને ઠરાંસવાલના હીંદી સવાલ વિષે  
વીચેચન કરવા કેલોની ખાતાના વડા પ્રમાન  
ની મુલાકાત લીધી હતી. તેની સઘળી  
હકીકત ખાતગી રાખવામાં આવી છે.  
રેપ્યુટેશને હીંદીની હીમાયત ઘણા સખત  
શખ્દોમાં રજૂ કરી હતી. અરજ કર્યુ  
તથા લોરક મોરલીએ આ સવાલ વિષે  
પુનતુ ખ્યાન આપવાતુ: વસ્ત અપેક્ષુ છે.

**વેપારીઓને અમુલ્ય તક.**

અમારા કેટલાક માનવતા મંદોલન  
અ.અહથી અમેએ હાલમાં અમાગ ચખ  
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કારીગરોથી કામ લખ અકેજી મારને ઠકો  
મારે તેની મજબુત અને તરેહવાર સીખી.ક  
રંગની પેડીઓ ખનાવીએ છીએ.

દરેક ખાતના ચખુ વિગેરે ઠામ કામ  
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એક વખત અમારા માલની અનાવેજ  
કરવા લલામણ કરીએ છીએ પ્રાપ્ત  
લીટ માટે લખો.

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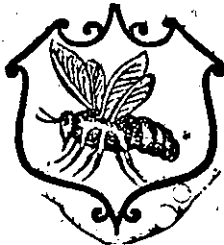
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રજલ ધોડાજ વખત માટે.

શેરો લખ નાણાં રોકના:ને આજહીન સુધી નહિ મળેલી ઉત્તમ તક.

ના પછી મેક' ઠકાના માલિક શેર હોલ્ડરો છે.

ફીનીંગ, વીવીંગ અને મીલને લગતું ખીણું તમામ ક.મક.જ શીખવવા આજહીન  
સુધી નહીં યએલી ગોઠવણુ.

નો મરૂય ઇન્ડસ્ટ્રીયલ કોટન સ્પોનીંગ એન્ડ વોવીંગ કુ. લીમીટેડ

શાખણુ જા. ૭૦૦૦૦૦—વધારવાની સત્તા સહિત.

મીમડું બધિકામ માહ છે, મેખીનરી આવવા માકિ છે. શેરો તંગ ૭૦૦૦ હરેક રૂ. ૧૦૦ને  
કાનવામાં આપ્યા છે. તેમાં નાણાં નામે લખવા પ્રમાણે લખમાં. જા. ૧૭ અગસ્ટ સાથે, જા. ૧૭ એલે.ક  
બીન્ડ સાથે અને માલોના ફીખ્યા કામપેઠેરો ઠરામે ત્કારે આપમાં પડશે.

વધુ વિખતા અને અરજનાં શરમે મીમે સહી ઠરાનાઓ પાસેથી મળે સહશે.

આજીકલાસ અખાસાંકરની કુ.—સિકેટરીઝ; હરેઝર્સ એન્ડ એજન્ટસ—વડખ.

એન મદમદ કુ.

નાખીએરનો જથ્થાખંવ અને સારો  
માલ કીકાયત લાવે અમારે ત્યાંથી  
મજશે  
વધુ વિગત માટે લખો:— યોકસ ફરક  
ના ૨૮ કેપેટરસ રોડ, ઠરાખન.

ઈ. ઈ. કાલાભાઈ

૨૨ મી સ્ટીટ, મગાજ લોકેશન.

યોકસ ૨૩૯૮ જોહાનસબર્ગ.

કાલેકેટ ઉપારટર અને હોલસેલસરસકે  
ઉદિખન તથા ઉત્તીચ મોસરી હમેક  
જમાખંધ હીશખત લાવથી મળશે.