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VICTIMS OF INDENTURED LABOUR

MISS H. DUDLEY, of Suva, Fiji, writes to *India* as follows, under date the 4th November last:—

Living in a country where the system called "Indentured Labour" is in vogue, one is continually oppressed in spirit by the fraud, injustice, and inhumanity of which fellow-creatures are the victims.

Fifteen years ago I came to Fiji to do mission work among the Indian people here. I had previously lived in India for five years. Knowing the natural timidity of Indian village people, and knowing also that they had no knowledge of any country beyond their own immediate district, it was a matter of great wonder to me as to how these people could have been induced to come thousands of miles from their own country to Fiji. The women were pleased to see me as I had lived in India and could talk with them of their own country. They would tell me of their troubles and how they had been entrapped by the recruiter or his agents. I will cite a few cases.

One woman told me she had quarrelled with her husband and in anger ran away from her mother-in-law's house to go to her mother's. A man on the road questioned her, and said he would show her the way. He took her to a depôt for indentured labour. Another woman said her husband went to work at another place. He sent word to his wife to follow him. On her way a man said he knew her husband and that he would take her to him. This woman was taken to a depôt. She said that one day she saw her husband passing and cried out to him, but was silenced. An Indian girl was asked by a neighbour to go and see the Muharram festival. Whilst there she was prevailed upon to go to a depôt. Another woman told me that she was going to a bathing ghat and was misled by a woman to a depôt.

When in the depôt these women are told that they cannot go till they pay for the food they have had and for other expenses. They are unable to do so. They arrive in this country timid, fearful women, not knowing where they are to be sent. They are allotted to plantations like so many dumb animals. If they do not perform satisfactorily the work given them, they are punished by being struck or fined, or they are even sent to gaol. The life on the plantations alters their demeanour and even their very faces. Some look crushed and broken-hearted, others sullen, others hard and evil. I shall never forget the first time I saw "indentured" women. They were returning from their day's work. The look on those women's face haunts me.

It is probably known to you that only about thirty-three women are brought out to Fiji to every one hundred men. I cannot go into details concerning this system of legalised prostitution. To give you some idea of the results, it will be sufficient to say that *every few months* some Indian man murders for unfaithfulness the woman whom he regards as his wife.

It makes one burn with indignation to think of the helpless little children born under the revolting conditions of the "indentured labour" system. I adopted two little girls—daughters of two unfortunate women who had been murdered. One was a sweet, graceful child, so good and true. It is always a marvel to me how such a fair jewel could have come out of such loathsome environments. I took her with me to India some years ago, and there she died of tuberculosis. Her fair form was laid to rest on a hillside facing snow-capped Kinchinjunga. The other child is still with me—now grown up to be a loyal and true and pure girl. But what of the children—what of the girls—who are left to be brought up in such pollution?

After five years of slavery—after five years of legalised immorality—the people are "free." And what kind of a community emerges after five years of such a life? Could it be a moral and self-respecting one?—Yet some argue in favour of this worse than barbarous system, that the "free" Indians are better off financially than they would be in their own country! I would ask you at what cost to the Indian people? What have their women forfeited? What is the heritage of their children?

And for *what* is all this suffering and wrong against humanity? To gain profits—pounds, shillings, and pence for sugar companies and planters, and others interested.

I beseech of you not to be satisfied with any reforms to this system of indentured labour. I beg of you not to cease to use your influence against this iniquitous system till it be utterly abolished.

[Miss Dudley, the writer of this pathetic letter, is the pioneer Indian missionary in Fiji. She is an Australian Methodist and has done admirable and devoted service in undertaking the care of Indian orphan-girls whose mothers have been murdered and their fathers hanged as the result of the sexual jealousy produced by the scarcity of women, which is one of the many blots upon the system of indentured labour. We hope shortly to return to the consideration of the question of Indians in Fiji.—Ed. *India*.]

General Hertzog, criticising the Union Government of which he is no longer a member, in a speech at Smithfield on the 11th instant, is reported as follows:—
"Take the Indian question; if they read correspondence on this matter, which had been laid on the table of the House, they would see what extremely weak and deplorable a standpoint had been taken up with regard to the Free State. He saw the correspondence for the first time when it was laid on the table, and he was indignant when he saw the intentions in respect to the Free State." So we may count upon the gallant General, as an implacable foe of Indian aspirations.

An Experiment in Segregation

The *Transvaal Leader*, in its issue of the 2nd instant, deals with the question of segregation, and refers as follows to the township of Vrededorp from which old-established Asiatic traders have been recently driven:—

To-day, Vrededorp, thanks to its Stands Ordinance, coupled with the executive action of the Municipality, is legally and actually "white." A study of the local effects of this experiment in racial separation discloses some interesting conclusions. One is that widely different races may derive mutual advantage from juxtaposition. . . . The second is that an experiment of this nature may be injurious to the people it is specially designed to benefit. In this particular instance it has apparently not benefited the white residents, while it undoubtedly has stimulated the Asiatics to fresh commercial activity—a development which certainly it was not the object of those responsible for the undertaking to encourage. On the other hand, there is no valid reason to believe that the white residents themselves felt or expressed any repugnance for the Asiatic traders who had so long been settled in their midst. Racial repugnance for the Asiatic is too often found, when traced to its source, to be merely another term for the trade jealousy of his unsuccessful competitors. And since white Vrededorp does not engage in trade, it is free to regard the matter from the directly opposite aspect—namely, that of the customer and consumer.

The offending coloured element consisted of some 30 Indian and Chinese storekeepers. It should here be explained that the boundary between white Vrededorp and the remainder of the area (which fell ignobly into the Malay Location) is between Delarey Street and Eleventh Street from the corner of Delarey Street to the corner of Krause Street. Thus one side of a good portion of Delarey Street is in the location, and the opposite side of the street is in Vrededorp. . . . In most cases the exiled Asiatics were merely put to the inconvenience of crossing the street and opening new shops opposite their old places of business. Other traders, more remote, hastened from their corner sites to the new shopping centre, and a scene of commercial activity ensued as to which it is difficult to withhold

A Word of Praise

from these evicted but enterprising outcasts. On the forbidden side of Delarey Street the evacuated shanties present a picture of desolation which the segregation enthusiast may well ponder. Across the road you hear the chink of the bricklayer's trowel and the carpenter's hammer on the roof. The blocks of new shops are finer than anything ever erected in Vrededorp. They are a tangible proof of the Asiatics' conviction that they are just as necessary to Vrededorp as Vrededorp is to them. Perhaps one feels that they are a silent plea for toleration. Of course, the conclusion of the story should be that white Vrededorp and black location lived happily ever after—segregated, but satisfied. Alas, it is not so. It might also be supposed that old and respected inhabitants of Vrededorp, of the purest Caucasian origin, opened all-white emporiums, and, seated at the receipt of customs, enjoyed the exclusive patronage of their grateful compatriots. The veracious historian cannot so record it. There is a subtle and saving something about the Asiatic; and so it has fallen out quite otherwise. The Asiatic storekeeper would appear to have become

Necessary to a White Community

poor but honest, and which depends on somewhat casual earnings. He has a mysterious affinity for the class of trade. Competition he defies, and, strange to say, he studies the consumer's interests. But perhaps that is the reason. The whites open shops, but shortly close them, lest worse befall. Vrededorpers require credit. It is a condition of their custom. The Dutch storekeeper, who would give credit, can't, for lack of capital.

The Jewish storekeeper who could, won't, because he cannot bring himself to trust his customers. Curiously enough, the Asiatic gives credit, apparently freely, and he gets his money in. His prices are always moderate. So it is that his habit of cheapness and the Dutchman's habit of honesty fit together exactly, and they trade to mutual advantage. . . . The genuine Vrededorper is largely engaged on the mines and on the railway, and, all things considered, his employment is fairly regular. It is during the occasional intervals of enforced idleness that the coolie storekeeper still smiles and stands by him, and for which, when work is resumed, his customers show their gratitude by paying or at least reducing their arrears.

It is amusing to note that many a good housewife will walk the extra distance segregation imposes in order to shop with her coolie of old acquaintance, passing en route it may be the new white shop, which fails to distract her from her course. And further that people at the far end of Vrededorp, say in First and Second streets, are said to be feeling the inconvenience of segregation, and to be moving nearer the location for greater convenience of shopping. Accompanying all this, one hears the property-owners of Vrededorp complain. They can't let the abandoned shops, and the value of property is trending surely down. One case occurred last year in which £3,000 was offered for a block of shops. To-day the owner might whistle for a thousand. That may or may not be an extreme case. Perhaps a more significant illustration is the fact that since the eviction several Asiatics have crept back, and are trading in the classic region once more. The law provides the usual loophole for the ingenious. It is clearly a question-provoking affair. Is the whiteness of Vrededorp to be sullied still, and is the Asiatic undesirable or indispensable? Who shall say?

What the Experiment has Proved

Mr. L. W. Ritch writes to the *Leader* as follows:—

"The significant facts to which you draw attention in your leading article will, I trust, furnish profitable material for reflection to a certain type of doctrinaire politician. The airy generalisations of the advocates of segregation whom I have in mind have obtained a certain publicity and perhaps also acceptance, chiefly because such pronouncements appeal to the selfish and not infrequently sordid instincts of those to whom they are addressed. Nothing is easier than to talk or write glibly about painting South Africa white, and perhaps few of us Europeans would refrain from applauding the sentiment that the plums of commerce and employment should be preserved for ourselves from encroachment by non-whites. To desire a thing is, however, not always to accomplish it, and some of us learn to be thankful that it is so.

"The experience derived from the Vrededorp experiment will not, I trust, be lost. When in London in 1907, I did my utmost to induce the Secretary of State for the Colonies to advise His Majesty to disallow the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance, and will admit that I was deeply chagrined at my failure. Without wishing to be spiteful, I may perhaps be forgiven if I suggest that some few at least of the owners of Vrededorp property are now a little sorry that I did not succeed.

"What has this experiment proved? It has proved three things at least. The first is that there is a consumer's answer to this question of trading by Asiatics, and naturally I feel gratified to find you, Sir, advancing this view which for years past I have vainly been urging. The Asiatic shopkeeper or hawker is almost invariably the poor man's purveyor. There are no Asiatic Stuttards or Ansteys or Thrupps. The Indian or Chinese caters for the humble spenders of ticeys and even pence, and, as you have shown, this class deals with him because he is useful and necessary to them. In the outcry against the Asiatic trader, this point of view is, I am afraid, all too frequently lost sight of.

"The second thing proved by the Vrededorp experiment is the somewhat stale truth that Partingtonian

methods are a failure, and also that theories should be fitted to facts and not facts to theories. If I wished to be party to defeating the law, I could

Fill Vrededorp with Asiatics

and keep it full without the law being able effectually to touch either landlords or occupants, and this, I think, the Municipality already knows. As it is, the Asiatic store-keepers have simply removed a few hundred yards and their customers travel the extra distance to buy from them. Short of a law to prevent Asiatics from trading, the latter will continue to do business because consumers want to buy from them. The central fact is that we are not a homogeneous community, but a compound of which the elements are white, black and coloured, European, South African and Asiatic. The sooner a polity is framed which will recognise this fact, the sooner will South African statesmen have abandoned profitless theorising for something practical and constructive. That policy must include a place in the South African economy for each of the component elements and afford freedom for each to develop the best that is in it, so that the whole may advantage thereby. For good or ill, the native, the coloured and the Asiatic are with us and we with them. The association is an accomplished fact, and has produced certain concrete results which cannot now be unmade. It is too late, at this stage, to talk of segregation, even if segregation were desirable. The third thing proved by the Vrededorp experiment is the hollowness of the taunt, so often flung at the Asiatic trader by his rivals, that he spends no money in the country but parasite-like, exploits it and sends his gains to India or China. Those 'blocks of new shops finer than anything ever erected in Vrededorp' are the first-fruits of the small measure of opportunity afforded the Asiatic openly to invest his capital in the country. They merely indicate what he would do in the way of investing his capital, did the laws of this Province not prevent his owning fixed property outside of locations. Indeed, so far is it from being true that the Asiatic sends all his earnings out of South Africa, that to my certain knowledge many thousands of pounds are invested by Asiatics in Transvaal fixed property either as mortgagees or in equitable interests.

"You conclude your excellent article with the interrogation 'Is the Asiatic undesirable or indispensable?' The true answer is probably to be found neither in the one extreme nor in the other. You yourself, Sir, have clearly demonstrated that he is at least useful, and that much being conceded to him, justice demands that we should afford him every opportunity for the increase and even the expansion of his usefulness. Ghettos are not conducive to healthy growth. The ghetto system is bad—bad for the ghetto dweller and bad, too, for the country that foolishly clings to it."

"Nations are like men in their ambitions and their jealousies. They are ruthless in their desires, determined in their aspirations, and difficult to restrain from doing wrong and injustice when they become inspired with the belief that a certain line of policy may be of advantage to them or the action of their neighbours apt to injure them. Modern civilisation is, after all, but a crude gloss on a raw surface of elemental human nature. When strain and stress are greatest, as in such tales of the sea as the loss of the *Titanic* and the heroic incident of the *Narrung's* return to port, the best qualities of mankind come to the front, but when the goal is not death in a remorseless and pitiless sea, but perhaps wealth and prosperity in a fight against the wit and judgement of our fellowmen, our savage, and not our civilized and Christian, instincts, gain the ascendant. We succumb and scramble in the gutter for worldly treasure, which, when the final hour of summons arrives, avails nothing, and naked of our earthly gains we have to render a due account of the talents and the opportunities provided for us."—*Natal Mercury*.

From the Editor's Chair

DOES IT MEAN PASSIVE RESISTANCE?

We are in possession of information of the utmost importance to the Indian community throughout South Africa. We may next week, give the whole history of the matter, which bids fair to bring about a revival of passive resistance which we had hoped would not be necessary. We understand that the Government are not keeping their promise regarding those British Indians who, in terms of the settlement, should be given rights of residence in the Transvaal or the Union as the case may be. It would appear that they decline to accept all the names submitted by the Passive Resistance Committee. Delicate communications are still proceeding and we hope that they will end satisfactorily. There are also other points which, directly or indirectly, bear upon and arise out of the settlement, any one of which may produce a conflagration in the community. We warn the Government to be careful. We hope that they will. But if they do not, we know that the seasoned soldiers in passive resistance will give a good account of themselves at the call of duty.

THE INDENTURE SYSTEM

If any further testimony were needed to bring home to the mind the evils of the indenture system, Miss Dudley's letter, which we reproduce from *India* elsewhere in this issue, would supply it. This lady's experience of fifteen years' missionary work in Fiji leads her to say that the system is past mending, and entreat her readers not to be satisfied with any reforms but to continue to use their influence against the system until it is abolished. We are grateful to Miss Dudley for her outspoken letter. Such independent testimony is worth much. Other European friends, we are sure, could add their testimony against the system and so bring nearer the end which is almost in sight. We are confident that the Hon. Mr. Gokhale means to see this thing through. The National Congress, only the other day, again brought forward a resolution dealing with this matter, Mr. Gokhale being the mover. So long as women and children can be dragged away into a state of slavery under the guise of indentured labour, with results too horrible to mention, so long must we continue to advocate the total abolition of this most iniquitous, cruel, and immoral system.

INDIAN EDUCATION

In the *Natal Provincial Gazette* we read the following among the rules framed for the guidance of teachers in the Government Schools:—

No Native, Indian or coloured children are to be admitted to schools other than those specially provided for them.

No pupils under standard II. may be admitted to an Indian School under European teachers.

No subject not included in the Standard Syllabus for Primary Schools may be taught during ordinary school hours in an Indian School in charge of European teachers.

No pupil who has passed Standard IV. will be allowed to remain at an Elementary Indian School.

Hitherto there have been no Gazetted rules specifically debarring Indian children from entering schools other than those specially established for them. But the rules before us have altered all that. The Provincial Administration have thrown down the challenge. They have made it a matter of law. The rules, moreover, hamper Indian education in many other respects. Their effect is to prevent the teaching of vernaculars in the Government Schools and to prevent our children from receiving other than elementary education in Government Schools. The duty of Indian parents is obvious. They ought to make adequate provision for the education, along national lines, of their own children. There should be established our own schools affording

our children opportunities to learn their own vernaculars and, through them, their own history. It is a serious reflection on us that our children are being brought up without a proper foundation to build character upon.

ENGLAND'S BIGGEST CUSTOMER

A LETTER has been addressed to the English press by Messrs. R. Knight & Sons, of the *Calcutta Statesman*. In this letter they point out that India is now England's largest customer. In 1911 India's purchases from England amounted to £52,246,000 as against £39,284,000 from Germany, the great rival of England. These gentlemen further point out that the percentage taken by India of British produce and manufacture is 14½ whereas the percentage taken by Australia is 8 and Canada and South Africa 6 each. These figures carry a moral which should be driven home to every well-wisher of the Empire. The Colonies we have named have been the worst offenders in regard to their treatment of British Indians. And their trade with Great Britain is extremely small compared with India's. When India recognises her own power, it will be difficult for British statesmen to justify their policy of *non possumus* when dealing with the disabilities of British Indians in the self-governing Colonies. They will, for instance, not look forward to another crisis which we see distinctly coming in South Africa, unless the Minister of the Interior removes the many points of soreness among the Indians here. The Immigration policy is becoming simply intolerable.

East London Indians

Indians of East London have always suffered more than those of any other town in the Province of the Cape of Good Hope. For them it has been the Cape of Bad Hope. Now the Municipality intends to pass certain bye-laws in which we observe the following offensive sections:—

All natives and Asiatics above the age of 16 years, including such as are exempted by Act 11 of 1895 or any other Act, residing within the Locations, shall personally report themselves for registration to the Superintendent, once in every three months, that is to say between the 1st and 15th days of January, April, July and October in each year.

No registered occupier of a site within the Municipal Locations shall permit any unregistered native or Asiatic to reside on his premises, and shall notify the Superintendent of any change in the occupants of his premises; and shall also state whether he intends to take in lodgers or not.

The registered occupier of a site within the Municipal Locations shall at each registration supply the Superintendent with the names, sex and age of all natives and Asiatics under the age of 16 years, residing on his premises.

No native—including any native specially exempted by law—or Asiatic shall be permitted to reside within any Location unless he is following some lawful calling or satisfies the Superintendent that he has some lawful means of subsistence.

Any native or Asiatic who is twice convicted within twelve months, of any crime or misdemeanour, or of a breach of any Municipal Regulation, may be ejected from the Location; provided, however, that the said native or Asiatic may after the lapse of twelve months from the date of such ejection, subject to being able to prove his subsequent good character, be allowed again to reside in the Location.

No natives or Asiatics, save such as are specially exempted by the provisions of Act 11 of 1895, or any other Act conferring similar privileges upon natives, shall reside within the limits hereinafter set forth, except in conformance with these Regulations and no natives or Asiatics, save such as are specially exempted as aforesaid, shall, between the hours of 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., be in the streets, public places, or thorough-

fares within such limits without a pass or certificate signed by their employer or the Inspector of the Police or the Superintendent of Locations, which said pass or certificate shall bear the date of issue thereof, and shall be available only for the period commencing at 8 p.m. on such date.

The East London Indians have lodged a protest against these regulations. We trust that they will succeed in having the bye-laws vetoed.

An Interesting Letter

Mrs. Isabella Fyvie Mayo, the well-known writer, in a private letter to a friend says:—"For some time there have been two relatives staying here—missionaries from China, and I own I was a little "shy" of meeting them, for "missionaries" in the modern sense are seldom much of my ways of thinking. But I was most agreeably disappointed. These two—husband and wife—love their people, without any Anglo-Saxon sense of superiority; they declare that they know they are learning rather than teaching, and they quite grasp that the ideal of a missionary should be to *earn his living* among the people. They say that they look to China to play a great part in the future of Humanity, and that China is closely watching India to avoid the mistakes which put India into the power of an alien race, and that India is also closely observing China and taking note of all that goes on there. These missionaries' furlough is now coming to an end, and they are growing happier and happier in the thought of return to their 'friends' and their 'place.' The husband has said that, if there be truth in re-incarnation, he hopes he will appear next time as a Chinaman.

"We have had a flying-man and his machine in Aberdeen this week, and there has been much interest and excitement. He went up 2,000 feet—then 4,000 feet—and steered with the greatest precision, but to-day was nearly defeated by a gale that has been blowing. I should feel more interest in aviation, if I could escape from a haunting conviction that it means mainly (at least for many years) only a new horror added to the horrors of war. An old friend of mine used to say that what was wrong with our times was that mechanical improvements had been so hugely out of proportion to mental and moral advancement, that, instead of enlarging human freedom, they had increased human slavery, by making man the weary serf of a machine."

"I can quite enter into your feeling of the sympathy and gratitude of *tended* trees and plants. Besides their own individual life, we do not know what *other* lives may be 'possessing them' or at least 'using them.' I would go almost further than you—to a point which even you may think rather crazy—and declare that I feel *something* of a response when I mend an old garment, or re-habilitate an old piece of furniture. I think I told you of a strange, *seer-like* man I once met at a friend's house, who called our attention to the *undoubted fact* that every *thing* is, at bottom, the *creation of Love*, that wages are earned thereby, *through love* for parent, wife or child, or, at the very last reckoning, through that *righteous self-love* which is determined not to be a burden on the resources of others—yet still, always Love. I am very fond of *mending* (I actually like it better than making) I mean of clothes, etc. I always feel that if anything has been worth the trouble of making, it should get as long a life as possible. All this feeling stands rather aghast before factory-made articles, never intended to last.

"Do you remember that John Ruskin said that the spending of money is the greatest *responsibility* of life, because it has the most subtle, unconscious, far-reaching power? I think, if people realised this, they would call a halt in the making of great fortunes. Carnegie, Rockefeller, etc., do not possess their fortunes, they are possessed by them, and lie helpless under their weight. I really do not see how they *can* rid themselves of vast

amps of money, without doing even more harm than they did in accumulating them. I have never had much money, but I fully realize that I was never more helpless and useless than when I had most, and that when I sought to do good, evil was very present with me.' I have learned that human energy and influence are the only vitalising or re-vitalising agencies for the world, and as these increase, money will be less and less sought after or needed. I know well enough that earnest and sincere books and periodicals do not sell, and one and another are heard regretting that those who desire to promulgate them do not have 'enough capital.' But just advise that. It means that people are not willing to buy them because they are not ready to receive them, and that others are not willing to give their own time (leisure) and enthusiasm to help them to be ready. 'Capital' cannot be anything more than human vital energy transformed into a dead form, and likely to corrupt whatever it touches.

"A Point of Honour"

The Chairman of the British Indian Association has received the following reply, dated the 14th inst, from the Secretary for the Interior, regarding visits to prisoners by Passive Resisters:—

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th inst in which you ask that the Government may be pleased to advise the Governor-General to issue a general free pardon to members of the Asiatic community who took part in the Passive Resistance Movement of the Transvaal, and to inform you that the Right Honourable the Minister of the Interior has the matter under consideration."

English Press Opinion

The Capetown correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, writing on November 4th last, says:—

Of all South African questions yet remaining to be solved perhaps the most disturbing is the question of the Indians. In its immediate effects it is, of course, small compared with the native question, but in its consequences and ramification it spreads far, and in its history it contains much that is bitter to reflect on, so that altogether it frets and galls as the Irish question in the United Kingdom. President Steyn once said to the present writer that he had no fears of the native question, which would settle itself, but had grave fears of the Indian question, which was difficult and chafed the spirit of many nations. The solution of this question would be an unsurpassed boon to this country and many others, and as it can only be solved by the exercise of much mutual forbearance based on the understanding of several positions apparently fronting each other, it may be well to remember several things too easily forgotten.

To begin with, we have a record which we would gladly be without. Of the 150,000, Indians in South Africa 130,000 are in Natal. Almost all of these have been brought into the country as indentured labourers, or are their families or descendants. These men were introduced for the sake of white tea and sugar planters, and when they came brilliant prospects were sketched for them illustrative of the good fortune reserved for citizens of the British Empire. In Natal coloured men have no vote in practice, though they may have by law, but otherwise the Indians there have been well treated, and they now out-number the whites, and in some cases have amassed considerable wealth. In the Transvaal and the Free State before the war there was no very great feeling on the subject, but gradually Indians began to find their way into the towns all over South Africa, and especially in Bechuanaland, where they now hold almost a monopoly of the petty trading, and when this tendency had declared itself at Johannesburg and Pretoria and Bloemfontein a great outcry arose, principally among English-speaking

traders, and the Governments passed restrictive legislation. In the Free State, at any rate, this was done expressly to satisfy the trading community. As feeling rose after the Raid this was adroitly seized upon by the Conservative Government in England, until in 1889 Lord Lansdowne declared that the one thing which filled his bosom with wrath and convinced him that the Transvaal must be conquered was its treatment of the British Indians. When the republic were annexed the scene changed. Then it was found that the chief persecutors of the Indians were not the Boers but the most clamorous of the self-styled loyalists, and the British Government, of which Lord Lansdowne was a leading member, became responsible for the system which had filled him with rage when contemplated from a comfortable distance. Sir Starr Jameson's Government at the Cape passed drastic anti-Indian legislation despite the Liberal protests of the South African party leaders, and finally Lord Selborne drafted an energetic despatch definitely ranging himself on the side of the white traders.

When normal circumstances re-established themselves in South Africa and the Governments of Lord Milner, Lord Selborne, and Sir Starr Jameson disappeared, the old laws were continued, but various efforts were made to appease feeling in India, which had now, not unnaturally, become exasperated. On the other hand, colour prejudice had increased, partly because of the great increase in the native population and partly because of the striking achievements of the Japanese in the war against Russia. For a long time we were treated to long scenes of opera bouffe, quite in the style of the old Transvaal Government, General Smuts clapping Indians in gaol with a tremendous demonstration of force for the crime of not submitting to regulations which they considered degrading, and then discussing with the prisoners the propriety of revising the regulations and debating the point with them as man with man, as Liberal with Liberal; and as citizen of the world with his fellow-citizens. Still no final settlement was reached, though it was part of the play to have everlasting peace periodically proclaimed. Deep feeling was stirred in India by the continued refusal of Governments under a British flag to recognise the title of British Indians to treatment as men and citizens. The Liberal Government kept a steady pressure on the South African authorities, and a bill was agreed upon, which, however, was talked out last session, the Free State members objecting to allowing Indians into their province and others denouncing the measure as illiberal. Now General Smuts has left the office in charge of the question, and his place has been taken by Mr. Fischer, formerly Prime Minister of the Free State (then the Orange River Colony), and at this moment Mr. Gokhale is in South Africa.

Mr. Gokhale was welcomed to the country by the Mayor of Capetown and by Mr. Schreiner and other liberal-minded men, and has been cordially received by the Government, but he has spoken in no doubtful tones, and it is not his fault if the Indian point of view is misunderstood. It is, he tells us, no exaggeration to say that British rule in India is being jeopardised by the trouble in South Africa. Indians do not object to restriction on immigration, but they do object to the treatment of their countrymen as pariahs under the British flag. If the white people were able to feel that no more Indians would be allowed to enter the country and this point were conceded, he hopes that the Indians in the country would be granted the liberty they desired and be allowed to live under equal laws. It was unreasonable to subject the Indian in South Africa to trade restrictions and merely on account of jealousy to deny them liberty in this respect, and England could not govern India on the theory that this Empire belonged to the whites and that Indians should be hewers of wood and drawers of water.

This is Mr. Gokhale's position. It is, it must be admitted, extremely tolerant. It recognises the not unnatural uneasiness of the small white population,

South Africa, confronted as it is by multitudes of natives, in the face of the forerunners of another race far more numerous than either and incomparably more capable than the natives. It offers a settlement, and asks South Africa only not to be afraid of 150,000 Indians. It is indeed a generous offer and Mr. Gokhale can and does make it in the name of the Indian people. It will be a sorry day if South Africa is mad enough to reject it and to force on a situation in which it may be compelled to pay a much larger price for a much smaller advantage.

News in Brief

The Secretary for the Interior has written to Mr. Cachalia in reply to his representation regarding the refusal to issue visiting passes to Transvaal residents, to the effect that the matter is receiving attention.

The Durban Red Crescent Society this week remitted a further contribution of £1,000—being the fourth instalment to the Ottoman Red Crescent Society at Constantinople, making, in all, up to date, a total of £4,000.

Mr. John X. Merriman, advising the coloured people of South Africa, says:—"It is by doing, and not by desponding, that any race elevates itself. *Labor improbus labor* is a much surer foundation than politics upon which to build future fortunes."

Mr. Gandhi has removed to Phoenix, together with his school which he was conducting at Tolstoy Farm. Phoenix will be his headquarters for the time being. It is Mr. Gandhi's intention, if passive resistance is not revived and if the expected Immigration Bill is passed during the forthcoming session of the Union Parliament, to go to India about the middle of this year.

Mr. A. Bhayat the well-known merchant of Maritzburg, had the renewal of his licence refused on the ground that Mr. Bhayat had contravened Municipal Regulations. Mr. Bhayat appealed to the Town Council which has sustained the appeal and made an order for the granting of his licence. The question, however, is, why was the licence of such a well-known Indian refused at all?

Miss West, who had been working at Tolstoy Farm and assisting Mr. Gandhi in his school work, on her return to Phoenix with Mr. Gandhi, was seen off at Johannesburg station by a number of Indian ladies. She was presented with a handsome bouquet and a Gladstone bag and travelling rug. Mrs. Moodley made the presentation. Miss West thanked the ladies for the presentation.

In view of the fact that their applications for registration under Act 36 of 1908 are still under consideration by the Registrar of Asiatics, the cases under the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Act against Messrs. Bhawani Dayal and Devi Dayal and their wives have been remanded for a further period of 14 days, no evidence being taken.

A branch of the Shri Hindi Jigyasa Sabha National Society has been formed at Mayville, which will work in conjunction with the Sabha of Sydenham and conform to the same rules and regulations as laid down by the senior body. The objects are to promote friendship and union, to improve in general knowledge by reading, to cultivate the art of speaking, to encourage the growth of the national script (Devanagiri), to spread the Hindi language, to create a love of the Motherland and to render assistance, if possible, to members and others, either by advice or pecuniary means. Those who require further information may write to the Secretary, c/o Indian Post Office, Grey Street, Durban, or to the Chief Secretary, Private Bag, Sydenham.

A free Indian farmer named Muthu, was sentenced by the Magistrate of the Inanda Division of Natal, to six weeks' hard labour for, it was alleged, setting fire to the grass on a farm. Mr. Justice Broome, before whom, in the Durban Circuit Court, the matter was brought in appeal, said the evidence for the defence was more consistent than that for the prosecution. He could not understand the evidence of the witnesses for the Crown as to where they were when the fire started. There were various discrepancies, and the general impression he had was that the case gave room for doubt, and that the Magistrate should have hesitated to convict. The prosecution had failed to show that the prisoner was the man who wilfully burned the grass. There was reasonable doubt, and therefore the appeal would be upheld, the judgment set aside, and the appellant's conviction quashed.

Upon instructions from the Attorney-General, a preparatory examination is to be held, in the case of the Boksburg Location Superintendent, on a charge under sec. 32, of Ordinance 58 of 1903, before the Boksburg Magistrate. It is alleged by certain Boksburg Indians that the Superintendent received bribes in connection with various matters arising out of the duties of his office. The complaints were forwarded to the Boksburg Municipality by the British Indian Association, and taken up by the Public Prosecutor. The penalties under the section if the charge be proved, are permanent dismissal from Municipal service, the recovery by the Municipality of the amounts received, and a fine of £50, and in default of payment thereof, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months. The preparatory examination is to be held at an early date.

Replying in a printed answer to a question in the House of Commons by Captain Peel, Mr. Harcourt (Colonial Secretary) said:—"The circumstances which prevented His Majesty from assenting to the Bill passed by the Legislature of Natal in 1905 for amending and consolidating the laws relating to municipal corporations were that the Bill contained provisions imposing disqualification on racial grounds which appeared to the Secretary of State to press unfairly upon natives of India who were domiciled in Natal. His Majesty's Government explained their views to the Natal Government, and it was hoped in 1908 that a settlement had been arrived at, but at the last stage of the Parliamentary session in Natal in that year it was not possible for the Government to undertake the passing of the necessary legislation and the matter dropped. The Bill was reserved by the Governor on the advice of the Minister of Justice and in accordance with the Royal instructions. These instructions were general in character. The provisions to which exception was taken have not been re-enacted."—*South Africa* (30th November, 1912.)

The Hon. Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Aiyar, High Court Vakil, Madras, is reported to have recently said in a public lecture:—"There was an excellent reason why young men in this country [India] should not long to become lawyers. It was that a lawyer did not add to the resources of the country. What this country required at present was not that sort of people who were merely engaged in work which merely involved the transfer of wealth from one person to another. . . . At this moment vakils were the worst hated men in the country, the officials hated them, the non-official Europeans hated them, and their own community did not look upon them with friendliness. In those circumstances, seeing that their patriotic duty lay in giving their assistance to developing the resources of the country, seeing that the profession in which they wished to enter was looked upon with disfavour by the great majority of people in this country, they would see the desirability of reconsidering their decision of making Law their profession."