

Indian Opinion

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"NO MONEY FOR MARTYRS"

UNDER the above heading, with the addition of the sub-headings, "Passive Resisters in a Pickle," "Indian Merchants against the Campaign," "Support Very Scanty," the *Transvaal Leader* published the following report in its issue of the 30th ultimo:—

The Indian passive resistance campaign is threatened with collapse. While Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Cachalia are proclaiming the opening of hostilities and urging their compatriots to fill the gaols, there are growls and curses from the rank and file, open defiance, and frank avowals of contentment with the present order of things. The passive resistance movement of a few years back culminated in the gaols of the country being flooded with Indians, there being in all 3,000 convictions. On this occasion Mr. Gandhi himself does not expect that more than 150 persons will go to prison in the cause, and a leading Indian merchant declares that if Mr. Gandhi finds 50 people in Johannesburg to support him to the extent of risking their liberty he will be fortunate. The Indian merchants throughout the Transvaal have dissociated themselves from the movement, and have withdrawn from Mr. Gandhi sources of revenue without which the campaign must fail. Enquiries amongst Indians in town revealed astonishing apathy in the agitation. More than that, there are heard in many quarters expressions of grave dissatisfaction at the manner in which the leaders are handling the situation, and there are not wanting signs of absolute distrust in them and their methods. It would not be surprising if before long the politics of our Indian residents developed in this manner. That a strong and influential organisation will be formed to advance the interests of Indians on legal lines, and that Mr. Gandhi and his followers will form a left wing, a sort of parallel being supplied by the Labour Party and the Syndicalists.

Cells Unseasonable

A *Leader* representative yesterday began his enquiries with a Parsee merchant in town who in the last Indian struggle sustained heavy losses.

"Are you going to join the passive resisters this time?" he was asked.

"No. We can't do anything. I might as well run my head against a brick wall. Trade is not good, and we suffered much in the past. The time is not convenient to go to prison."

Mr. Gandhi was next sought. He discussed the situation fully and frankly. He considers that the people of the Transvaal are all with the Indians in their demand for fuller rights. Everyone he spoke to, he said, was sympathetic.

"Then you do not consider that Parliament truly reflects the feeling of the country?"

"No, there you have professional men."

Mr. Gandhi said that the Indians were as steadfast and loyal to the cause as ever. Numerically they would not be so strong, but they were quite as earnest as before. The trouble, he said, had arisen to purify them. Asked why the number of resisters would be smaller, he stated that many who had experienced the discomforts of Transvaal prisons had no wish to return.

"Some merchants, too, are not joining your ranks?"

"They may not go to prison, but they will help us with money."

"Are you as well off in a financial way as on the occasion of the last campaign?"

"No, we are not."

He went on to say that it was not a question of 3,000 convictions this time. A different procedure will be followed. Instead of a large number of men being in prison for short periods, a hundred or so would bear the brunt of the attack, and, as the Government seemed disposed to inflict the maximum penalty, they would spend a long period in gaol, even if they were only arrested three or four times. They would be assisted by their compatriots in the other Provinces. In the Free State they were only fighting for a theoretical right.

"The thin end of the wedge?" suggested the interviewer.

"Hardly that, though perhaps in some respects it is," was the reply.

Mr. Gandhi went on to explain that the people in the Free State must first be educated on the question.

Straight Speaking

Enquiries were next carried into Indian business circles. One of the wealthiest Indians in the town, a Mahomedan who takes a very live interest in the social welfare of his people, made no bones about his disapproval of the passive resistance campaign. "What have we got as the fruits of this sort of thing?" he exclaimed. "Nothing at all. The Government have been fair to us. They have treated us with more justice. I have faith in our Empire. Full justice will come, and must come, without these methods. I am all against this agitation. White men, British-born, tried far more violent means than we have ventured on to improve their position, and you know what they have gained, and what they hoped to gain. Now, I believe in dealing reasonably with the Government. We asked them for a Gujarati school. They gave it to us. They spent £800 on it; we spent £80. We asked them for two Gujarati teachers; we got them. We asked for a physical culture instructor; he was sent. We asked for other teachers, and there was no trouble about getting them."

This Indian went into the grievances enumerated by Mr. Gandhi one by one, and then volunteered it as his view that there was very little ground for complaint.

and certainly no justification for the passive resistance campaign.

Merchants Meet

That this is not an isolated case, and that the influential sections of our Indian population are becoming tired of Mr. Gandhi, is shown by the following facts. On a recent Sunday a conference of delegates from several Indian communities was held at Krugersdorp under the auspices of the British Indian Protection Society. The Mahomedan merchants at Krugersdorp, Klerksdorp, Pretoria, and many country towns were represented. The Chairman was Haji Ibrahim Dindar of Klerksdorp; the Secretary was Yussuf Patel of the same town; and the delegates present numbered over 100. They decided to take legal advice as to their position under the Township Act and the Gold Law, which contain the real points troubling Indian merchants. They also decided to look after their own money themselves. A sum of £850 was subscribed on the spot, there being three donations of £150. But it was resolved that this money should not go to the passive resisters. Formerly lump sums were handed over to Mr. Gandhi, but now he will have to give sufficient reasons to justify any disbursements in his favour.

Mr. Gandhi's Reply

Immediately on seeing the report the community was stirred and Mr. Gandhi addressed the following letter to the *Leader* which, together with letters from Messrs. Ritch and Kallenbach and a communication signed by the leading Indian merchants, strongly supporting the struggle, appeared next day:—

I trust that you will allow me to correct the many misrepresentations made by your reporter with reference to the passive resistance movement. No doubt they are not all consciously made, but he certainly has been the instrument through which they have been made. "The Indian passive resistance campaign," you have reported, "is threatened with collapse." This statement will prove to be untrue even if there is one passive resister earnest enough to carry it on, and I prophesy that so long as there is one passive resister left to fight, the points we are now fighting for will be granted, not because of the strength of such solitary passive resister, but because of the invincible strength of the truth for which he will be fighting. That our demands are just you have admitted in your leading article, only you have asked us not to revive passive resistance, but to be patient and to petition. Which course is the better is a matter of opinion. I hold that the points at issue are to the community of such vital importance that passive resistance is the only remedy, petitions having failed.

Now for facts. Your report states:—

"The Indian merchants throughout the Transvaal have dissociated themselves from the movement, and have withdrawn from Mr. Gandhi sources of revenue without which the campaign must fail." The fact is that the great mass meeting of Sunday was attended by almost all the Indian merchants of Johannesburg, and telegrams in support of the objects of the meeting were received from all the principal towns of the Transvaal, sent by the Indian merchants of those places, and delegates attended from the towns which could send them upon hardly 24 hours' notice. If there is a split in the community, I assure you that it will not be because passive resisters are asking too much, but because they will be asking too little, for I admit that there are men amongst us who undoubtedly want passive resisters to go to the full length. They cannot be held blame-worthy, but they certainly will not represent the moderate wing. I do not know who the influential Mahomedan merchants are who gave your reporter the information that there is very little ground for complaint, and that those who attended the Gold Law Conference were against passive resistance. Your reporter is free to see the names in my

possession of the principal merchants in the Transvaal who have expressed themselves heart and soul with the movement. It is true that they have not all offered to go to gaol, but they have certainly offered to help with their purses. But I need not carry any further the refutation of the misrepresentations contained in your report, for the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and time will show whether the movement collapses either for want of men or of money. This, however, I will add, that the movement does not necessarily depend upon financial help, as I endeavoured to make clear to your reporter yesterday. Indeed, my view of passive resistance is that it is impure so long as it has to depend upon any pecuniary assistance whatsoever. It is essentially a religious force, but I do not claim for the movement in which I am a humble participator that it has reached the purest stage. When it does, it will be independent of any public demonstration in the shape of public meetings, resolutions or appeals to even England and India. Our ideal is that truth, in order to assert itself, needs no such props. We are striving to reach it, and we can but die in the attempt.

Lastly, permit me to say that the statement that passive resisters "demand payment for their penance, there must be compensation for enforced confinement, martyrdom is on a money basis," is an atrocious libel, and a cruel wrong to the men and women who have suffered during the last campaign, and who will suffer now. A statement of disbursements was published some time ago, and details are open to inspection by any person who may care to go through them. There never has been any payment to passive resisters for their services as such. There has been maintenance given to the dependents of those who were in gaol, and the payments were made for barest necessities of life. Your reporter should challenge his informants for facts in support of the statements made by him. Indeed, fairness should have dictated this course to him before he undertook to publish them in the confident and emphatic manner in which he has. Nothing could have been easier for him than to have at least come to me and asked me to refute or corroborate them. He admits that there was no want of candour on my part in replying to any questions he put to me.

Protest from Indian Merchants

We have read the report you have published to-day with reference to the passive resistance movement, and we most emphatically repudiate the statements that the merchants are opposed to the passive resistance movement or that they are standing aloof from it, or that they will not contribute to the funds. As a matter of fact, we, not only speaking on our own behalf, but on behalf of the merchants throughout the principal towns of the Transvaal, beg to state that we are in full sympathy with the movement, and that the merchants along with the others are contributing both men and money to the movement, and we cannot conceive it possible that any Indian who can call himself a leader, can possibly be either against the demands made in Mr. Cachalia's letter, or against the remedy adopted by the community.—We are, etc.,

E. S. Coovadia, Amod Moosajee and Co., A. F. Camay and Co., I. A. Moolla, D. S. Bamath, A. M. Suliman Mia and Co., E. E. Surtie, B. P. Ebrahim and Co., Ismail Amod Maimie, N. A. Cama, Mahomed Vally, A. E. Waja, Moosa Esakjee, S. H. Daya and Son, M. M. Akhalvaya, I. E. Daya, E. I. Aswat, M. P. Fancy, Fakir and Ebrahim, A. Mahomed Hussain and Co., Rissol Sultan, K. M. Kagdi, Moosa Homu, Hassan Rajah, V. Naidoo, Chita Hari and Co., J. P. Patel and Co., Mahomed Cassim, Abdool Rahman, Mahomed Ali, P. Dulubh and Co., R. Patel, Patidar Trading Co., M. S. Coovadia, Mavjee Premjee, Madhav Purbhoo, I. C. Ashabhai and Co., Nausari Hindoo U. Trading Co., Manchha Gosai, P. Lalchand, J. E. Tavarria, Tavarria

and Co., M. E. Kunkay, Abdool Kader, Teckchand Dayaram, and H. D. Maal.

From Ventersdorp

The next day the following letter appeared:—

The report published in your issue of the 30th ultimo, as to the scanty support accorded to the mass meeting on Sunday last by the Indian merchants throughout the country, and that the merchants are not supporting the passive resistance movement, etc., is not true.

In fact, some of the merchants of this town had been trekking by cart all through Saturday night to catch the Diamond express for the sole purpose of attending the meeting. Certainly this district is heart and soul with the passive resisters. It is a cowardly act to sit at home while Indian sisters are fighting the battle; it is a shame on the part of those untruthful informers to suggest that passive resisters depend upon money. It may not be surprising to hear before long that passive resisters have started in the country. We certainly support the passive resisters and the action taken by the British Indian Association in the demand put forward by Mr. Cachalia in his letter to the Minister.—We are, etc.,

Abdool Rahman, Imam A. K. Bawazeer, Ajam Abad and Co., A. Halim, Ismail Moosa, Galal Hira, S. Amodjee, A. P. Randree, Ismail Ebrahim, Sanyor Lall, A. R. Noorbhai, N. Ariff and M. Amodjee.

From the Editor's Chair

THE FIVE POINTS

It has been suggested in some quarters not necessarily hostile that the points raised by Mr. Cachalia in his letter did not convey to the general public any such sense of grievance as would justify the community in reviving passive resistance by reason of their importance. It would perhaps be as well, therefore, to examine those points a little more closely.

It is evident that, unless the £3 Tax is removed, the community will suffer from a running sore. Beyond this, it is clear that, so long as the tax is maintained, its tendency is either to drive the tax-payers back to servitude or to subject them to moral degradation, or to drive them out of the country.

It must be equally clear that if, in law, *de facto* monogamous marriages are not recognised, immoral relationships are bound to arise, families are bound to be disunited and, if such wives and their children are excluded from South Africa, the husbands and fathers must sooner or later follow them, which will entail the closing down of businesses and the gradual elimination from South Africa of a substantial and influential portion of the Indian community.

The right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape Province may not appear to the lay mind to be very substantial, but, analysed, it comes to this: That, if this right may now be yielded up by the community because it has not been in previous years necessary for South Africa-born Indians to exercise it by way of entering the Cape, every such right may also be taken away on the strength of such argument by the Legislature. That the Cape right itself at a critical moment proved to be of the greatest value both to particular individuals and to the community was shown during the last passive resistance campaign, when two South Africa-born Indian youths who were as passive resisters deported to India—to them a foreign land—and who in pursuance of their vow returned to South Africa at the first opportunity, and succeeded in effecting a landing at the Cape. These lads were refused a landing at Durban, declined to prove their right to enter the Transvaal, and would not, certainly have been obliged to go back to India, had they not been able to compel the Immigration

Officer at the Cape, by proving their South African birth, to land them. This was of no consequence from the European standpoint, but to the community it was of the greatest assistance. If rights may be easily yielded up or taken away, the time cannot be far distant when a community of helots will be created or Indians must leave South Africa.

Take, again, the demand for the removal of the racial bar. Twenty years ago, in Natal, the demand that legislation in a British Colony should not be racial was made by the Indian community and, when the then Natal Parliament at its first session passed a Bill excluding Indians by name from the exercise of the franchise, the measure was vetoed by the Imperial Government for reasons set forth by the leaders of the Indian community. Later on, when the Natal Government desired to introduce an Immigration Restriction Act excluding Asiatics by name, the attempt was dropped by reason of the warning issued in the same terms by the Imperial Government, with the result that the Act of 1897, which was of a non-racial character, became the model for Colonial legislation on immigration, until the Transvaal Immigration Act of 1907 was passed and became the object of passive resistance by the Transvaal Indian community. It must be clear to all who look beneath the surface that any community that is content to accept legislation differentiating against it must, sooner or later, be extinguished, because the acceptance of one measure containing a racial bar becomes a precedent for the passing of a series of enactments similarly designed and with the object of crushing that community.

Lastly, there is the question of a liberal and just administration of existing legislation affecting Asiatics. The Indians of South Africa know better than anyone can tell them what have been the results of the harsh administration of its laws. Under the Immigration Act, men have been driven out of the country penniless. Businesses have been closed down under the Cape and Natal Licensing Acts, and merchants in the Transvaal all but ruined under the administration of the Gold Law and the Townships Act. And if these are not practical, real and tangible grievances, it would be difficult to know what are.

When all these five points are considered cumulatively, the conclusion is irresistible that the policy of the Government is to reduce the community to a condition of serfdom or to compel them to retire from the Union of South Africa. Neither alternative is acceptable to any community with a sense of self-respect. Passive resistance, therefore, means not merely a struggle to obtain relief on these five points, but it is a demonstration, and a most powerful one, against the insidious attempt of the Government to compass the ruin of the community.

News of the Struggle

Messrs. Medh, Pragji Desai and Manilal Gandhi, although they were released on their own recognisances, could not sit still whilst they were free and awaiting the day of their trial under the Asiatic Act. This trial was due to come on on the 14th instant. They went out hawking, therefore, on Wednesday morning, and were accompanied by Messrs. Daya Parbhoo, Bhaqa Mancha, Soopis Pillay, Anamaly, Khushal Morar and Verasamy Francis—an old hand. They were brought before Mr. Sladen in the Johannesburg Court and sentenced on Thursday last to 19 days' imprisonment with hard labour. Whilst they were in the lock-up at Marshall Square they sent the complaint that there was meat mixed with the food that was provided for them. No doubt this was not done intentionally. Mr. Cachalia has now addressed the Commissioner of Police asking for relief. When the attention of the authorities was drawn by them to the food that was supplied to them, the poor warder removed the meat from the rice and gave it to the prisoners in custody.

but of course the food having become contaminated they could not take it. On Thursday Messrs. Willie Morgan and Rajoo Morgan were marched to the Court House from the Fort at Johannesburg to attend their trial under the Asiatic Act. They were marched handcuffed in company with the native prisoners. Their cases were again remanded, pending instructions, for eight days. They, therefore, still remain under detention, their desire being not to be bailed out.

Messrs. Medh, Pragji Desai and Manilal Gandhi were also marched from the Fort on the 8th instant, when they completed their first term of imprisonment, handcuffed, to the Court House. The latter complain that, whilst, generally, the gaol officials' conduct towards them was unexceptionable, Dr. Visser, who, it may be remembered, when the passive resistance campaign was started, wrote to the press stating that passive resistance prisoners should be employed as labourers for white people, who might thus be set free for better work, and who is also Medical Officer at the Fort, used most insulting and vulgar language towards these passive resisters. The worthy Doctor asked them to strip themselves bare for medical examination, in the presence of the other prisoners. They submitted that they could not do so as it was against their notion of decency and morality. But the Doctor would not hear them. He became impatient, called them "b-coolies" and asked the warder to charge them with disobedience. The resisters complained to the Superintendent of the gaol who respected their scruples, and had them examined privately. Nothing came out of Dr. Visser's charge. They also complain that there was no ghee or vegetable fat supplied with their meals. They complained to the Superintendent who curtly remarked that they would not have it. Mr. Cachalia has now addressed the Director of Prisons for relief.

At Germiston six women, Mrs. Somar, Mrs. Mandar, Mrs. Bandu, Mrs. Behari, Mrs. Doowat and Mrs. Maharajah and ten men, namely, Messrs. Bhawani Dayalsing, Pujari Gulabdas, L. B. Sing, Ragbeer Sing, S. M. Sing, Gaysidin Maharaj, Tilokising, Lahoria M. Sing, H. Sing and R. S. Sing, went out courting arrest. They hawked about the streets, and, on failing to get arrested, they went on to the platform. This is how the whole incident is described by the *Transvaal Leader* correspondent at Germiston:—

"Excitement reigned for a while at the Germiston railway station this morning. From 50 to 60 Indians, male and female, took possession of the central section of the spacious new platform. About 20 of them carried hawkers' baskets, containing a few bunches of bananas, a pineapple or two, or a few handfuls of monkey nuts, which they offered for sale to the white people assembled. As hawking on railway premises is prohibited, the police intervened. It then transpired that the affair was a passive resistance demonstration. One Sing, said to be the secretary of the local branch of the Indian Association, stood out as the leader, and said they wanted to be arrested. It was explained to them that no one, of any race or colour, could trade on railway premises unless expressly authorised by the railway authorities. The reasoning appeared to impress the party with the absurdity of the proceedings, but Sing, the leader, said they must have instructions from Mr. Gandhi. He therefore sought out a telephone, adjourning the demonstration for the nonce. After a little he returned and said that Mr. Gandhi said they must persist, and compel the police to arrest them.

The 20 odd candidates for martyrdom resumed their hawking, and eventually ten men and six women were arrested, as they desired, and charged with trading on railway premises. The business afforded onlookers much amusement, and, from the comic opera point of view, was a success, but from the political point of view it was a fiasco. It is not even certain that the case will be brought before the Magistrate."

However, these men and women are determined to force themselves on the attention of the Government

and to be imprisonment. Seven of them have already joined the party that entrained on Friday last for the Natal border, there to challenge arrest. This party includes the brave ladies who have been courting arrest at Vereeniging. They set out for Charlestown by the early morning train on Friday. They were met by a host of friends at Park Station where they had to transfer to the Natal train. They were looking perfectly happy and most determined. They spoke in glowing terms of the hospitality of Mr. Aswat and the other Indian merchants of Vereeniging. No pains were spared to make them happy and comfortable in their strange position. They declare also that the European population of Vereeniging, amongst whom they hawked their wares, showed marked attention to them, and most of them made no secret even of their sympathy with the Indians. It may be noted here that the Vereeniging merchants paid all the expenses of the keep of these ladies during their stay in Vereeniging and their fares to the Natal border, by no means an inconsiderable sum. The party reached Volksrust on Friday and were taken off the train, although their destination was Charlestown. They were told that, although they were detained, they were not arrested. The leader of the party demurred. They insisted on the authorities finding food, quarters and lodging for them. Mr. Badat and the other Indian merchants offered all these, but the leader said that the Government were bound, if they were detained, to provide these things for them. The next day, the party were told that they were to go where they pleased. They thereupon proceeded to Charlestown by the Saturday Kaffir-mail that was also carrying Messrs. Kallenbach and Gandhi to Durban. The party got down at Charlestown and now they are at Newcastle, guests of the community, awaiting developments. The rule is that, if in those towns where passive resisters court arrest, they are not arrested, the Indians of that town should be requested to provide fares for the next destination and, if they do not wish to do so, the passive resisters should perform their journey walking. They should also beg for their food and lodgings from place to place. The Volksrust Indians promptly offered all assistance. They found the fares for Newcastle. Mr. Vallibhai accompanied them to Charlestown to look after them.

Mrs. Sheikh Mehtab, accompanied by her mother and son, and an Indian servant and friend of the family, left Durban on Wednesday evening for Volksrust to court arrest. They were seen off at the station by a gathering of friends who presented bouquets and supplied refreshments for the journey.

The City Meeting

A large gathering of Indians met at Pietermaritzburg on the 5th instant, under the Chairmanship of Mr. V. R. Pillay, in connection with the struggle, when the following resolutions were passed:—

Proposed by Mr. R. M. Moorgas, seconded by Mr. N. B. Naik and carried unanimously:—

"1. That this Mass Meeting of the Pietermaritzburg Indians entirely associates itself with the demands of the letter, dated the 12th September last sent to the Government by Mr. Cachalia, the Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, and resolves to take up a firm stand in the passive resistance movement, until the Government concedes the provisions of the said letter."

Proposed by Mr. N. B. Naik, seconded by Mr. D. P. Desai and carried unanimously:—

"2. That this Mass Meeting congratulates the 16 pioneers of the passive resisters, consisting of men and women, and also the five men of Pietermaritzburg and others from Natal and Transvaal, who are now incarcerated in His Majesty's Prisons, to defend the national honour."

It was also unanimously agreed that the above resolutions be forwarded to His Excellency the Gov-

ernor-General, the Hon. the Prime Minister, and the Hon. the Minister of Interior, and also that His Excellency be requested to forward copies of the resolutions to the Imperial Government and to the Government of India.

A meeting was held at Tongaat on Sunday last to discuss ways and means of assisting the campaign. Mr. Valji Lalla was voted to the chair and Mr. M. K. Kothare was appointed Secretary *pro tem*. The latter explained the objects of the meeting, one of which was to inaugurate a fund to support the families of the six passive resisters who had gone to gaol. Mr. Ayob Sayan said that he was prepared to help the families as far as possible. The sum of £6 5s. was subscribed and thirty men promised to give each half a bag of rice, some dholl and a bottle of oil. A committee was appointed consisting of the chairman and others. Mr. Ramgar Maharaj offered to find and support one passive resister.

Patidar Support

As briefly reported by us last week, an enthusiastic and largely attended meeting of the Patidar Association was held in President Street, Johannesburg, on the 5th instant, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Jivan Premji, to discuss the present critical situation and to devise means to meet it effectively. Messrs. Gandhi, Kallenbach, and Polak were present. At the Chairman's request, Mr. Gandhi addressed the meeting at some length, and thereafter a number of members announced their intention of going to gaol immediately, and they also contributed funds. Over £30 was subscribed in all, of which about half was announced as a monthly subscription.

The following resolution was unanimously passed:—

"This meeting of the Patidar Association resolves that, in its opinion, the *Transvaal Leader* report, to the effect that the mercantile section of the Indian community is against passive resistance and that only some of the poorest in the community are likely to take part in the struggle is unjust and false; the meeting is heart and soul with the movement, approves of Mr. Cachalia's letter to the Government, and will undertake to support the movement with men and money, and requests the Government to end the sufferings of those already incarcerated by conceding the just demands of the community."

Mrs. Sheikh Mehtab and party were sentenced yesterday at Volksrust to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. The Magistrate, however, refused to convict the seven-year-old son of Mrs. Mehtab.

The Transvaal Hindus' Meeting

A special meeting of the Transvaal Hindus was called at Johannesburg on the 9th instant in Rev. Mr. Phillips' hall. Mr. Mawji Premji, the Vice-chairman of the Patidar Association, was in the chair. Mr. Hosken, Messrs. Ritch and Kallenbach and Miss Schlesin, as also Messrs. Cachalia, Ebrahim Coovadia and other friends were present by invitation. The hall was well filled. Mr. Hosken, on entering, received an ovation. He was decorated with garlands by the Chairman amid vociferous cheers.

Mr. P. K. Naidoo read in English the Presidential speech from which we take the following:—

"It is not often that it becomes necessary for us to hold sectional meetings. We Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians, coming from India, labour under the same disabilities and enjoy the same rights, such as they are, in this land of our adoption. And if, this evening, we have met together as Hindus merely we have met in order to emphasise the demands made by Mr. Cachalia in the name of the British Indian Association, and to show that the passive resistance movement commands

the approval of the whole of the Indian community throughout South Africa."

After reviewing the demands and dealing at length with the marriage question in view of the recent Natal judgment, the speaker said:—

"You will be called upon, this evening, to pass a resolution which seeks to support Mr. Cachalia's submission to the Government, to encourage passive resisters and to congratulate our brave brothers and sisters who are already in gaol and who are now courting imprisonment. You will be agreeably surprised to know that hardly a day passes when some passive resisters do not come forward throughout the Union; there are already 30 who are undergoing three months' imprisonment, having crossed the border from Natal, and there are nine in the Fort at Johannesburg; nearly 40 more are in some part or other endeavouring to secure arrest, and of these 40, 20 are ladies. They represent all classes and sections, and their sole idea is to serve their country. We may well be proud of them, and the greatest honour we can do to them is to follow their good example. But I am aware that all of us are not able to do so. With some, though the spirit be willing, the flesh is weak; with others, domestic duties claim exclusive attention; with yet others, business obligations make it impossible for them to seek imprisonment, but it is given to every one of us to do something towards furthering the movement, to do something which will bring relief nearer to us. Most of us could give such pecuniary support as may be needed in a national struggle of such magnitude. Those of us who are too poor to do so, and may not be able to seek imprisonment, can give personal services to the cause, and all of us can pray to the Almighty to grant us and ours speedy relief. I am sure that the European citizens of the Union do not look upon the progress of the struggle without anxiety and in many cases without pity and sympathy. We are asking for nothing of which they may not fully approve; nothing which could in any way interfere with them. The local European Committee, presided over by that generous-hearted citizen, Mr. William Hosken, has already moved in the matter and they, although they may not be espousing a popular cause, have shown, by their courage, that South Africa is by no means devoid of Europeans who desire that justice be meted out to those races who may be living in this sub-continent. That great nobleman, Lord Amphill, and his Committee are ceaselessly watching the progress of the movement, and our distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, who is now in India, restored, thank God! to health again, will leave no stone unturned to see that India and the Indian Government give us the fullest assistance. There is everything to encourage us. Above all, the admitted justice of our cause is the greatest encouragement, and the purity of the instrument we are using to secure relief is the truest guarantee of success. Let us hope that we who have assembled here this evening will not fail to do our duty."

The following resolution was then put to the meeting and passed unanimously. It was proposed by Mr. Tekchand, of Messrs. Kewalram & Co., silk and fancy-goods merchants. Mr. Tekchand said, amid cheers, that he was himself preparing to go to gaol. Mr. Thambi Naidoo, chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, seconded the resolution. Messrs. Naranji Desai, Mak-anji, Ramji and others spoke in support of the resolution:—

"This meeting of the Hindus of the Transvaal fully supports Mr. Cachalia's letter to the Government and pledges itself to encourage passive resistance in every way; this meeting also congratulates the passive resisters who are already in gaol and those who are seeking arrest for conscience' sake; and this meeting requests the Government to grant the demands of the community—demands which have been universally recognised to be just and fair; this meeting respectfully urges the Imperial and Indian Governments to use their good offices to secure relief and trusts that the public in South Africa, the British Isles and India will support

the Indian community of South Africa in its efforts to ameliorate its position."

The speeches of Messrs. Hosken, Ritch and Kallenbach will be given in our next issue.

Over £37 were collected.

An Official Statement

The situation to-day in regard to the Indian passive resistance movement is explained in the following statement which has been officially communicated to Reuter's Agency, and the press. The demands of the Indian community are:

(1) The removal of the annual tax of £3, which ex-indentured Indians—men, women, and children—are liable to pay as the price of their remaining free from re-indenture in Natal.

(2) (a) An amendment of the marriage law of the Union, so as to recognise the legality of monogamous Indian marriages celebrated, whether in India or South Africa, according to the rites prescribed by the Hindu and Mahomedan religions. Although both of these religions countenance polygamy, statistics show that only 1 per cent. of Indian marriages are polygamous.

(b) Administrative admission of existing plural wives (not more than two in all) and their children, of Indians already domiciled. This was the position at the time of the inauguration of Union. Legal recognition of polygamy is not asked for.

(3) Restoration of the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape Province, a right that they possessed at the time of the introduction of the Immigration Bill, and its retention may in practice mean the admission of hardly more than a dozen Indians annually to the Cape from Natal and the Transvaal.

(4) The Government say that there is no racial bar in the Immigration Act. Therefore an admission from them is necessary that no declaration will in law be required from an Indian at the Free State border that will not be equally necessary from a European. In practice, this does not mean that any Indian will necessarily enter the Free State, but, if he does, he will still remain liable to the prohibition to own land, to farm and to trade.

(5) A declaration that existing laws, such as the Transvaal Gold Law and Townships Act, the Licensing Laws of the Cape and Natal, and the Immigration Act, shall be administered in a liberal spirit, and with due regard to vested rights. The policy of the Government is, for example, to prevent Indians with *bona fide* proof of previous residence from re-entering their respective Provinces, if they have been absent for a long period. This situation is intolerable.

The first point was the subject of a definite promise to the Hon. Mr. Gokhale. The others arise out of the provisional settlement of 1912.

What Indians do not Want

Indians do not fight for equal political rights. They recognise that, in view of the existing prejudice, fresh immigration from India should be strictly limited, provision being made for the entrance of a sufficient number annually for reasonable wear and tear.

Passive Resistance

As no relief could be obtained by prayers, petitions, or negotiations, Indians started passive resistance on Sep. 15 by 12 men and four women setting out from Natal to court imprisonment at Volksrust.

The movement is spreading. There are already in gaol 35 passive resisters—a larger number than when the two previous campaigns started or when the provisional settlement of 1912 resulted in a suspension of passive resistance. Numbers of men and women are coming forward daily to seek arrest. Several of the women have taken their babies with them, as they have not yet been weaned or are incapable of being looked after

otherwise. Arrest is courted by crossing the border or by hawking without licences or by refusing to show licences or permits, or by breaking other civil laws which do not involve a breach of the moral law. The Free State border is left untouched, as there is no desire to inflame public opinion so far as it can be avoided, and there is every desire to show that Indians wish to respect the Free State prejudice. The movement will also consist in advising indentured Indians to suspend work until the £3 tax is removed. The indentured Indians will not be invited to join the general struggle. On the strength of the promise made to Mr. Gokhale, and which promise was brought to the notice of the House of Lords by Lord Amptill, these men were assured by Indian leaders, at meetings of thousands, that the tax would be repealed during the last session of Parliament. Meetings in support of the claims of the passive resisters have been held at Capetown, Port Elizabeth, East London, Woodstock, Durban, Maritzburg, Tongaat, Verulam, and Johannesburg (representing all the principle towns in the Transvaal), and similar meetings are being held at other centres.

The Way to Grant Relief

If the Government wish to grant relief, fresh legislation will be necessary only on the marriage and the £3 tax questions. All other points are capable of easy adjustment without legislation. The marriage difficulty can be solved by a brief amendment of the Immigration Act without in any way interfering with the general marriage law of the Union.

The Unionists and the Asiatic Question

Speaking at a great meeting in Durban recently, Mr. Drummond Chaplin, M.L.A., is reported by the *Natal Mercury* to have said that the Government had to rely on the Opposition to lick their Bills into shape. He could not give a better example than one of the most important Bills of the session—the Immigrants' Regulation Bill. If it had not been for the Opposition that Bill would never have gone through, or it would have gone through in such a shape as to cause endless trouble. And that brought him to a most important question—the Asiatic question. They would all admit that this was an important matter, not only for South Africa, but for the Empire. They were all agreed there could not be unrestricted immigration of Indians. ("What about the Chinese?") The Chinese had gone, never to return, and the Indians were in a different position, for they were fellow-subjects. They were not prepared to alter the Franchise Law in favour of the Indians, but there were some things which they could see to; one of them was that they should see that the Indians were fairly treated. So far as the Natal Indians were concerned, there was one grievance which should be remedied, and that was the £3 tax. It brought in a paltry sum, that could be well dispensed with. Surely they could afford to be generous, and repeal this tax. He was not going to deal with the causes of passive resistance, for they were highly technical and were matters of principle, rather than matters of actual loss. He thought the Government would be wise to do nothing which would raise a suspicion that they were doing anything as the stronger race which was unjust to the weaker race. The Immigration Act, of course, did not apply merely to Asiatics; it applied to all who came to South Africa. It did seem to him, however, that the Government had made a great mistake in putting the Immigration officers on the Appeal Board to consider appeals from their own decisions. He did not say they had been guilty of injustice, but it was not a desirable state of things. The removal of these officers from the Boards was a concession which could be easily made by the Government.