

Indian Opinion

No. 36—VOL. XVII. FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1919.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper
Extra Duty Taxable

NOTES AND NEWS

WE trust that those who have undertaken the task of organising a Provincial Conference in Natal to frame a policy representative of the Indian community as a whole and to formulate grievances to place before the proposed Commission of Inquiry will not fail in their object. If the same be done in each Province, there is hope that the newly formed South African Indian National Conference may be founded on solid ground.

If we fail, at this juncture, when we are faced with extermination as a free people, to put aside all personal differences and show a united front to our opponents, we cannot expect to gain the sympathetic consideration of our claims however just they may be. Moreover, we are expecting distinguished representatives of both the Imperial and Indian Governments to come to this country to see for themselves what the position really is. Therefore let our communal affairs be in order and harmony.

It does not matter who is the chairman of an Association nor by how many votes he was elected. What does matter is that we ourselves realise our position so that we may be able to impress upon the Commissioners the importance and necessity of adjusting this great question of the status of Indians in the Union on a fair and just basis.

Discussing the question of electing delegates to the Congress on the Asiatic Menace at Pretoria at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Municipal Association, Mr. Houston (Krugersdorp), in urging the appointment of delegates, pointed out the necessity of dealing with the Asiatic question, saying that Krugersdorp had suffered in the past owing to Asiatic trading. The Chairman (Major J. W. O'Hara), pointed out that the Transvaal Municipal Association had only one policy from the start, and that was that Asiatic trading must be restricted.

"As far as we are concerned," said Mr. Burton at the Imperial Conference of last year, "it is only fair to say—and it is the truth—that we have found that the Indians in our midst in South Africa, who form in some parts a very substantial portion of the population, are good, law-abiding, quiet citizens, and it is our duty to see that they are treated as human beings, with feelings like our own, and in a proper manner."

That view, if it is not universally held in this country, has at least made very substantial progress in recent years, (says the *Cape Times*). Here and there, of course, there are reactionaries who regard an election contest at Johannesburg as of far greater moment than the larger interest of the Empire as a whole. But the case of the Indian will not be assisted and his many friends in this country may easily be alienated if those who head his cause overseas or in India shut-out from their view the South African aspect of the problem. Indians, for instance, who claim, in the terms of Lord Sinha's memorandum, the Parliamentary and municipal franchise in the Transvaal, must not forget that under the

South African Constitution, there are hundreds of South African-born adults of non-European descent who are debarred from the franchise. That we have always held to be a defect in the Act of Union, but the defect exists and is not likely to be rectified for a good many years to come. Until it is, how can the Indian who is not born in South Africa reasonably claim rights which are denied to those who have a prior claim?

Two wrongs do not make a right. Indians, of course, agree that all qualified persons, of whatever colour or race, should be entitled to exercise the vote.

Speaking at a meeting at Georgetown, Mr. Van der Horst said the Government attributed the unrest to divers causes, but the true cause was rotten administration. With regard to the question of Asiatics, the battle cry of the Nationalists was "Repatriate them bag and baggage" (loud cheers). With just compensation, the colour bar must be maintained, or the white man would be finished.

A deputation of Pretoria Indians recently waited on the Administrator to request, on behalf of the local British Indian community that the Provincial Council give Indian children: (a) Free compulsory primary education, that a school be built in Pretoria on the model of the Johannesburg Government Indian School, and that not only English be taught in such schools, but Hindustani, Tamil and Gujarati, the three leading languages of Indians; (b) Industrial education as presently taught to European children in Government schools; (c) Technical education as presently taught to European children in Government schools; (d) That Government Normal Colleges and Universities be open to both Indian students on a par with the European children of the Transvaal. The Administrator gave patient hearing to the deputation and promised to place its views before the Provincial Executive.

THANKS TO OUR ENEMIES

WE feel that we owe a debt of gratitude to our avowed enemies, the organisers of the Anti-Asiatic conference at Pretoria. By their exhibition of racialism and self-interest, they have shown to the world the nature of the ground on which they stand. Everyone may be accounted wise until he opens his mouth to speak; but now that the supposed lion has spoken, we know him to be but an ass. In spite of the great events of the past years of war and the supposed progress of the nations in realising the deeper meaning of life through their sufferings and sacrifices, we still find here in Africa, men who imagine that the question of a few Asiatic traders in the Transvaal is one of the most vital and far-reaching of all problems. The safety of the Empire seems to depend on the awful possibility of an Indian business man becoming the owner of his own property, or upon the dreadful calamity of another licence to trade being

granted to an Asiatic. "We must mend or end the Asiatic menace in South Africa," cries the chairman of the Pretoria conference. We are also told what appears to have been a secret: "The policy of Law 3 of 1885 is still the policy of the Union Government." We have heard a lot about the alleged breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement by Indians, and how advantage had been taken during the war to secure further facilities. But now we find the chairman of the Anti-Asiatics congratulating himself on our wickedness; for, saith he, "if the agreement had been honourably kept by the Indians, the public would have been deluded into believing that it was a solution of difficulty." So now we know that what our enemies are seeking is our total extinction and nothing else. It is better to have it so than a pretence that anyone cared about the "agreement." In order to curry favour with the trades unionists, who, by the way, are not easily duped or alarmed, they are told that this is not merely a question of trade. What was at stake was something much greater, and that was the possible demolition of that gigantic monument of fraud and hypocrisy—"A White South Africa." This is not a white man's country and it never will be. If the goal of the Anti-Asiatics is to crush all energy and enterprise out of the coloured races, no movement could be more unpatriotic and calculated to destroy the foundations of the Union of South Africa and the fabric of the Empire itself. We thank our enemies for showing us their true colours. We shall be better able to hold our own in the coming struggle.

THE PROPOSED COMMISSION

SIR BENJAMIN ROBERTSON APPOINTMENT

Bombay, Sept. 4.—Reuter's Simla correspondent says that the Viceroy in opening the session of the Imperial Council, referring to the question of the trading rights of Indians in the Transvaal, said the Government had fully pressed the Indian point of view with his Majesty's Government; and urged that recent legislation in South Africa was not justified. He pleaded for coolness and moderation, and admitted the strength of feeling in South Africa.

The Viceroy said he proposed to send Sir Benjamin Robertson (who served on a special duty in South Africa in 1912, with the Commission of Inquiry into the grievances of Indians within the Union) on a deputation to represent Indian interests in the Union on the Government Commission.

The *Times of India*, commenting on the Indian deputation to Mr. Montagu (Secretary of State for India), says: "There is little reason to doubt, the Union Government accepts the suggestion of an Imperial Commission of Inquiry, of which India will be represented; events may be said to have taken a hopeful turn. No statesman can ignore the strength of feeling particularly in the Transvaal, on the colour question; but General Smuts may be able to reduce the evils under which Indians suffer. How far he will be able to go in moulding public opinion will largely depend on the conduct of the Indians themselves, and until the Commission fails to grant relief no useful purpose will be served by noisy agitation."

The *Delhi Chronicle*, the organ of the Indian Home Rulers, expresses the hope that the Indian representatives on the Commission will both be Indians, not Europeans, and suggests Mr. Gandhi as the best official representative.

The *Chronicle* adds that if the Commission is a failure it will be a calamity of the first magnitude, but the Union Government must not be free to repudiate in secret what it accepts in the open.—Reuter

THE ANTI-ASIATIC CONFERENCE

"LAW 3 OF 1885 STILL THE POLICY OF THE UNION GOVERNMENT"

FORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN LEAGUE

Pretoria, Sept. 4. (Reuter).—The Congress to consider the Asiatic question began here this morning, in the Town Hall. A very large number of delegates, representing various public bodies, Town Councils, Local Boards, the Comrades of Great War, Chambers of Commerce, political and agricultural societies, &c., being present.

The Mayor of Pretoria (Mr. Giovanetti), in opening the Congress, counselled moderation.

The Chairman (Mr. Philipps) said there need be no foreboding on that score. They did not forget they represented a British Colony, and were actuated by a sense of British fair play, which was synonymous with South African fair play.

Mr. Philipps in his opening speech, said that, referring to what he described as the Asiatic menace, it threatened the Union in its very foundation. Unless the Union realised the danger, South Africa would not remain a country for white men and women. (Applause.) After referring to the representative character of the gathering, the Chairman said they all felt they would not be showing their loyalty to Great Britain if they were disloyal to themselves. (Applause.) He asked for the question to be lifted above party politics. Proceeding, the speaker maintained that Law 3 of 1885, which precluded Indians trading in the Transvaal, except in prescribed areas, was still

THE POLICY OF THE UNION GOVERNMENT

and he condemned the policy of drift of successive Governments. Dealing with the passive resistance movement and the Gandhi-Smuts agreement, the speaker said that if that agreement had been honoured by the Indians the public would have been misled into believing that it was a solution of the difficulty. Mr. Philipps maintained that certain commercial and other bodies were not given opportunity of being heard by the Select Committee, the result of whose work was that Act 27 was a Magna Charta for the Indians on the Rand. But the latter were not satisfied. They wanted full civic and political rights. If the claim of the Indian was equality before the law, it was not a question of trading—the real underlying question went much further than that. The question was: Could South Africa remain

A WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY

if Indians were allowed to progress on their own lines, unrestrictedly? (Applause.) If that question were answered in the negative, their duty was plain. It was a duty, not to a few traders, but to every white woman and man in the country—not to this generation alone, but to posterity. (Applause.)

The speaker then turned to the position in Natal, where he said: to the exclusion of white people, there were Indians in nearly every trade and calling. They had surrendered to the Indians in Durban. It was as inevitable in the Transvaal as it was in Durban that the white man would be ousted by the Indian, or the white man would sink to the level of the Indian.

The Chairman suggested that a deputation of four or six members of trades Unions should go to Natal and see for themselves, and if they said there was no danger from Indian penetration, he would resign from that League.

Mr. Philipps, referring to the Indians on the Reef since 1902, said that, according to their own estimate, they had invested in capital there some six millions, which probably meant, on the last count, 18 millions. The ultimate elimination of the white trader on the Reef was inevitable if things went on as they were. There was no longer a colour bar in Johannesburg contended the speaker. As competition became keener and the white man realised that he could not compete

with Asiatics he would go to the Government and would say he could not compete unless he was allowed to have Asiatic assistance, and then would follow inter-provincial migration from Natal into the Transvaal, with the consequences which the speaker pictured as disastrous. They would invade all the businesses and employ their own people. He asked, if that danger had any significance to their Trade Unionist friends. If not, there time was wasted in coming there. He gave them his word of honour that if the question were a wide matter only he would not be there that day. He was not prepared to see

WHITE MEN REDUCED TO THE POSITION OF NEGROES IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY. (3 minutes.) If the Indians continued to be supported it would be contrary to every principle of Trade Unionism which was to raise the working man, but if white men were neglected for the support of the coloured men the time was coming when the Trade Unionist would be asked: How could they claim to retain the colour bar for themselves when they broke it for others.

In conclusion, the chairman said the evidence was against the contention that the Imperial Government was answerable for the position to-day. It was not as if force had the Royal Assent had been given to restrictive legislation. Every true Briton would acclaim the services of the fighting castes of India to Great Britain, but when the Indians in South Africa fell back on the service of the fighting castes of India they challenged comparison. The Indians of South Africa had produced 560 stretcher bearers and 42 other members of medical units, 702 in all, as against 159,298 who had remained behind and waxed fat.

Senator Munro said it had been a mistake to allow Indians to

TRADE IN LOCATIONS.

and not confining them to basins as was the case in India. Referring to the Simon-Gandhi agreement, Senator Munro said it was understood that no new licences were to be issued. Well, 684 new licences had been issued since 1914. He gave all honour to Native contingents who had gone to the war, but the Indians in South Africa had no claim on that ground.

Senator Munro moved: "That this Congress views with greatest alarm the serious menace to the economic and social welfare of the inhabitants of the Transvaal occasioned by the continued encroachment of Asiatics, and is of opinion that immediate measures should be adopted to deal with such encroachment."

The Rev. McCullum seconded.

EUROPEAN WORKERS' STANDPOINT

Mr. George (Reduction Workers' Trades Union) said his union recognized the danger of cheap competition. The workers of the Reef were with others in the idea of getting rid of the Asiatic altogether. He deprecated half measures. Referring to the Low Grade Mines Commission the speaker said it was an honest body, but he believed the evidence would be that nothing could be done without removing the colour bar. (Cries of "Shame.") If the commercial community wanted protection they should in turn help the mine workers and protect them. Regarding the resolution he assured the gathering that the Trade Unionists did not feel any alarm at anything. (Laughter.) He moved that the word "Asiatics" be substituted by "non-Europeans."

Senator Munro said he could not accept the amendment.

Mr. Gilman (Mine Workers' Union) who said he represented 15,000 workers, seconded the amendment. If the commercial community did not support the workers in the broader movement the workers could not support them on the mere exclusion of Asiatics. The speaker and others drew on coloured and Native competition.

The amendments were dismissed, and the resolution of Senator Munro was carried by an overwhelming majority.

AGAINST CIVIC RIGHTS

Advocate Blackwell moved: "Inasmuch as all legal restrictions against such encroachment in the past have failed by reason of persistent evasion of the laws by Asiatics and ineffective administration thereof by the Government, this Congress strongly urges their stringent application in future, and protests against any relaxation or modification of these laws and the grant of any civic rights to Asiatics."

Mr. Blackwell urged moderation. He admitted previous sympathy with the Indians, but they had systematically flouted the laws. Referring to the small effort of the South African Indians in the war, the speaker expressed the view that there were not ten South African Indians who gave their lives for the great cause of the war.

A Voice: It is not true.

The speaker repeated his statement.

Mr. Houston seconded.

Mr. B. J. D. Pieterse, M. P. C., supported.

He described the embarrassment of the Imperial Government over this question as a bogey. The Imperial Government would not interfere in local politics.

Mr. Piet Grobler (Rustenburg Member of Commerce) moved to delete all the words after "Government" to the end of the paragraph and to insert the following: "This Congress strongly urges and insists that the Government pass legislation at the forthcoming sitting of Parliament appointing a special Court of Arbitration with power to expropriate on a basis of just compensation all the interests whatsoever of Asiatics in the Union of South Africa and repatriating all Asiatics holding trading licenses in the Union, and, further, prohibit the issue of any kind or class of licenses whatsoever to Asiatics, either individually or as a body, and also the grant to Asiatics of any civic rights whatsoever."

Mr. Grobler disclaimed any anti-Asiatic feeling. It was a question of self-preservation.

Eventually Mr. Grobler withdrew in favour of the following rider to Mr. Blackwell's resolution, which was moved by Mr. Vorster: "And further, this Congress urges upon Parliament to legislate as soon as possible in accordance with the object of this Congress."

It may be pointed out that one of the objects of the proposed League is "expropriation, subject to just compensation, of all immovable property vested in Asiatics, and the general elimination, by all reasonable and statesmanlike means, of Asiatics resident and trading in the Transvaal."

The resolution, with the rider, was carried by an overwhelming majority.

It was decided to appoint a deputation to wait on the Prime Minister and lay the resolution of the Congress before him. The following were appointed: Messrs. J. J. Phillips (Reef), W. J. Holmes (Ventersdorp), J. H. Houston (Klerksdorp), T. J. Kleinberg (Pieterburg), P. Grobler (Rustenburg), J. George, the Rev. B. J. de Klerk, E. Day, and the Rev. M. Bambergel.

A resolution was passed urging public bodies, etc., to collect all available information regarding Asiatics, and lay same before the Commission and also that the candidates for Parliament be pledged to support suitable legislation. It was further resolved to form a league to give effect to the resolutions passed.

The Conference decided on the formation of a league to be called the South African League, the objects of which, *inter alia*, are to aim at the expropriation and elimination of the Asiatic residents in the Transvaal.

Sir Abe Bailey was elected president, and a vote of thanks for his stand on this subject in Parliament was carried with acclamation.

An open letter was read from Lieut. Col. M. Norton protesting against the action of the Congress, and warning that retaliatory measures in India, China, and Japan were inevitable.

DURBAN CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

LAST SUNDAY'S MEETING

A special meeting of the Indian community was held last Sunday afternoon at Rawat's Hall, to hear the report of the delegates to the Johannesburg Emergency Convention of the South African Indian National Conference, held last month. Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim presided, and was supported by Messrs. S. Emmamally and V. S. C. Pather (joint secretaries of the Durban committee).

The following is the speech from the chair:—

Since we last met, death has removed from our midst, one without whom our gatherings were ever incomplete, one who played his part in our communal struggles in this country, one who by his wit, versatility, and knowledge of human nature, was a source of strength and inspiration to us—Mr. Dawad Mahomed has gone but the memory of his services, life and sayings will be cherished by us for many generations to come.

By the death of General Botha, South Africa has sustained an irreparable loss which she could ill afford at a time like the present. We are not able to see eye to eye with him on many matters concerning us. But we cannot forget his great services to the Empire in face of much opposition by some of his countrymen in his endeavour to be true to his pledged word.

Though these men, great each in his own world, have passed away, may there be among you, many who, as they have done, may lead a life of usefulness to your fellowmen.

Gentlemen: To return to the business of this meeting, in your name it gives me great pleasure to welcome our delegates to the South African Indian National Congress recently held in Johannesburg on their return home. Our gratification is the greater, in that good reports of the work done by them had preceded them and that they were helpful in assisting to bring about an unanimity of feeling and opinion in the proceedings of the Conference with the happy result that the Indians in this sub-continent were able to speak through the medium of the Conference as one man on all vital matters affecting their very existence and communal honour.

I take as a good omen for the future of our community that the Delegates has chosen to submit a report of the proceedings of the Conference to the community in Mass Meeting assembled. Though the proceedings have appeared in the News Journals, you have before you *pro forma* the report, to which you will no doubt give your assent.

I know that the spirit and enthusiasm that permeated the Conference will also be evidenced by you and that you will in all seriousness and earnestness set about strengthening yourselves so that in the hour of your trial you may prove yourselves. You are often misunderstood, for, those who are opposed to you either through a lack of knowledge or for other reasons give utterance to statements that are not true. You have but to glance at the reports of the proceedings of the Anti-Asiatic Conference. The public are told by the chairman and other speakers at this Conference that the Indians did not do enough war service and glibly talked of only about 700 stretcher-bearers having served in the war while thousands of you are said to have remained behind. But they who claimed to know all about the Asiatic and indulged in figures appeared to have forgotten that on the declaration of War by British against Germany on the 4th of August 1914, we held a mass meeting within six days after and offered our services to the Union Government to bear arms or serve in any capacity in the theatre of War in Europe. But it was not till some months afterwards that the Government decided to accept the services of two companies of stretcher-bearers for service in Flanders. As the Units were ready to leave, Government ordered them to the East African Campaign in which it had undertaken to participate. When they returned, over 700 had seen service there. A number made the

supreme sacrifice, some were incapacitated, many were broken down for life. Among the Medical Units, they were the first to win distinctions. Officers in contact with whom they came, and troops they had served, have testified in the public press to their work and qualities. On their return, our boys again offered their services for Europe. The Government, however, replied that they did not propose to raise such a corps. Are you to be blamed because Government said, so much and no more do we require?

How many of the public are aware that the boys received 12/- a month and were the poorest paid Unit in the East, not excepting the Natives. When the establishment of the Unit and the rates of pay, etc., was published, Senator the Hon. (afterwards Sir) Marshall Campbell was seen on the subject when he counselled the Community to accept the rates of pay, for he said, if better rates were asked for, Anti-Asiatics may accuse us of mercenary motives. Our boys went forward, but the Governor-General's Fund was denied their dependents until Sir Marshall moved in the Executive Committee of the Fund in Pretoria and received the Governor-General's Assurance that the dependents of all officers and men serving in South African Units would participate in the Fund. On their return they were denied even the War Gratuity which is awardable to every soldier but the Indian who has tried to do his bit. His widow must be satisfied with a gratuity of £12, which sum must carry her through life, for there is no pension for her; but the widow of an European soldier receives a pension. If he loses a limb, he is awarded 7/6 a week, but if he be an European, he receives on an average £3 a week. I mention these facts to show, even though we were permitted to serve, it was under most discouraging conditions, and yet our boys answered the call whenever it was made. As you have endeavoured to do the utmost you were allowed to do in the war service, you will always manifest the same strong desire to bear the responsibilities of your manhood in the defence of the country—which some of you have adopted and which to others of you is the land of your birth.

Great Britain has ever been magnanimous to her enemies. She conquered the Boer, and gave him his freedom. She beat the Hun; but to-day she opens the doors to his commerce and to-morrow she will embrace him. We are glad to see this manifestation of Christian forgiveness. But she forgets her subjects who stood true to her even unto death in the hour of her need; and while we wonder whether this forgetfulness is to be attributed to our colour, we are forcibly reminded by the Anti-Asiatic Conference that this is a question of self preservation though it be at the cost of the extinction of men who were their comrades of yesterday.

To give effect to the provisions of the Constitution of the South African Indian National Conference you will be asked to form a representative local Committee to serve the community until a Provincial Congress is convened which shall lay the foundation for one representative political organisation for the whole of the Province; and your Committee will arrange for such a Provincial Congress at a very early date in order that the necessary work in connection with the submission of our grievances and all information bearing thereon to the proposed Commission may be put into motion.

In this and all other matters, you will, I am sure, work with heart and skill, honest in your desire to appreciate the difficulties in this country and patriotic to yourselves to be men.

THE RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were adopted:

"That this mass meeting of Indians desire to place on record its sense of grateful appreciation of the many and varied services of the late Mr. Hajee Dawad Mahomed to the Indian community extending over a period of 30 years." "That this meeting thanks the delegates for their service, appreciating as it does the

work accomplished in the South African-Indian National Conference held in Johannesburg on Aug. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, 1919." "That this meeting is grateful for the services rendered by Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim, chairman, and Messrs. S. Emmamally and V. S. C. Pather, as secretaries, in connection with the delegation to the South African Indian National Conference." "That the Durban delegates to the South African Indian National Conference, together with the following: Messrs. E. M. Paruk, Parsee Rustomjee, Amod Bayat, G. D. Hansraj, M. C. Anglia, V. Lawrence, S. R. Pather, J. M. Francis, H. I. Joshi, C. V. Pillay, P. S. Aiyar, V. S. C. Pather, R. K. Naidoo, Jack Moodley, B. A. Mephray, R. Bughwan, Ebrahim Asmal, A. H. Moosa, M. S. Randeree, R. B. Chetty, Rooknudin, and a representative from each of the Indian Press, with power to add to their number, and with Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim as chairman, Hack Kazi and L. Gabriel as secretaries, and Mr. S. Emmamally as treasurer, to be the Durban Committee of the South African Indian National Conference with power to carry on the work of the Committee, and to convene a Provincial Congress at an early date, and generally to do everything in the interest of the community." "That this meeting confirms the appointment of Messrs. Abdoola Kajee, M. Bethesee Maharaj, Leo. R. Gopaul, M. B. Naik, and A. Christopher as Durban representatives to the South African Indian National Conference." "That this mass meeting respectfully urges on the Imperial and Indian Government the appointment of the Right Hon. Lord Sinha and Mr. M. K. Gandhi as members of the proposed Indian Commission, or as alternatives with Mr. Gandhi, would suggest the names of the following: Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Hon. Mazrula Hack, Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, Hon. G. H. Kelker, Hon. K. V. Rangasami Ayengar, Hon. Mahomed Ali Jinnah, Hon. Babu B. Basu."

PRESS COMMENTS ON THE ANTI-ASIATIC CONGRESS

The *Natal Advertiser*, in the course of a leading article, says—

The chairman's speech at yesterday's Congress was of the kind one would expect in a frankly partisan movement. He said the Asiatic question was the "most important in South Africa." It is not. It is important, but it is far from being as important, for instance, as the native question on which we do not notice any popular clamour expressing itself.

The great difference, of course, between the black man and the Indian, so far as either constitutes a peril to a "white South Africa," lies in the fact that the black man, being a hewer of wood and drawer of water, is a profitable and docile neighbour of the European. The Indian, on the other hand having become an economic competitor, has become an extremely undesirable person in South Africa. His colour has nothing to do with the antipathy felt towards him. Mr. Philipps would doubtless dislike him just as acutely were his skin as white as that of Naaman the Syrian.

Mr. Philipps yesterday said very ambiguously that "they all felt they would not be showing loyalty to Great Britain if they were disloyal to themselves." No one quite knows what this sentence means, save that it smacks of a Shakespearean injunction inspanned to do service in a somewhat pugnacious trader's agitation. He added that their object was "to end or mend" the Asiatic menace in South Africa. The sentiment sounds heroic enough. But it is difficult to reconcile it with "loyalty to Great Britain." We should imagine that loyalty to Great Britain in this matter would have prompted the Anti-Asiatic Conference to have sat within closed doors, (if it were necessary to sit at all) and not to have thrown fuel on the fire of racial antagonisms in our midst. Mr. Philipps

has only to study the cables of the last week, both from London and from India, to know that Great Britain is vitally aware of the problems in this country demanding solution: Loyalty to Britain is but indifferently shown by still further harassing, by pugnacious speeches, sentiment in the Union.

There is no question that the encroachment of the Asiatic constitutes a menace to the white trader in South Africa. It is equally, unhappily, true that the Asiatic to-day is a helot in this country. We say "unhappily" because, so long as he is a helot, it is impossible to deal with the economic menace as many people wish it dealt with, without, at the same time, sinning against the spirit in which the British people have traditionally administered the law. Nothing would be more desirable from the European point of view than that the further influx of Indians into this country should cease, and that no more trading licences should be granted. But nationally our hands would be immeasurably strengthened if, at the moment we took this definite stand we showed a little more liberality towards the Indian (as we should also do to the educated native) who is within our gates. It is probably a little old-fashioned to talk of gratitude towards the Asiatic. At the same time, though we may ignore it, the fact remains that the Indian brought prosperity to the South African sugar industry. He came here at Natal's invitation; and if the larger Union now decides it will no longer welcome him from his mainland, it becomes the more obligatory to treat no longer as helots that small minority which has "made good" in Natal and the Transvaal. There is a great deal of humbug talked at times about the Asiatic traders in the rural Transvaal. It must not be forgotten that such traders batten, when they do batten, largely on the kafir. In this they do not differ very much from the white trader on the fringe of the large towns. The eagle may be white or it may be brown. The carcass on which it battens is unvaryingly black. What Mr. Philipps and his associates are fighting for is privilege: the prerogative of being middlemen, between the native and the European producer.

Mr. Philipps thinks South Africa is "threatened in its very foundations" by the Asiatic menace. He is wrong. The only thing that can "threaten South Africa to its foundations" is consistent injustice and intolerance shown by those in our midst who exercise authority towards the "lesser breeds without the law." No man, nor nation ever weakened itself by erring on the side of intelligent liberality.

"PRETORIA NEWS"

Says the *Pretoria News*—

The object of the assembly, as far as we can make out, is to penalise; banish and expel from South Africa all Asiatics.

Parliament is to be asked to pass certain disabling laws directed against loyal, law-abiding British subjects, and those who will benefit chiefly by these disabling enactments are Russian and Greek refugees and people who have had from the Balkan, men and women who have left their country for their country's good, the scum of Europe. The people who have created all the trouble by their trading along the Reef. The worst description of parasitic middlemen, utterly without any altruism or public spirit, revolutionary by instinct and dangerous to the community. These are the people in whose favour Mr. Hunter is asking us to pass Anti-Asiatic legislation.

We have already reminded Captain Blackwell of his experiences in the East African campaign, when he and his men were only too glad to have the Punjabis, Cashmeris and other Indian regiments come to the rescue of the broken South African Brigade. How any one who served in that campaign can take part in an attack upon the civil rights and privileges of the Indian in this country is inconceivable.

The Conference, will probably pass drastic resolutions which Parliament will, of course, disregard, and,

even if Parliament were inclined to give effect to the disabilities which our Russian and Greek, Balkan and Mediterranean friends propose imposing upon the Asiatics, there remains above and behind all a gentleman known as the Viscount Milner, His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, who would not hesitate one moment in putting his pen through the colour and class legislation of the sort proposed by the Asiatic Conference.

LETTER FROM MR. GANDHI

ON AFFAIRS IN INDIA

The following letter from Mr. Gandhi to a lady friend in South Africa will, we feel sure, be read with interest by many people in this country.

At the rapid pace things are moving, it is difficult to do full justice to any particular movement. Economic distress, political repression and an awakening amongst the masses in particular in all countries have all played an important part in bringing about the present world conditions where, enquiring of every country, you find them affected without exception by worst of a deep-seated character. In America, it is class warfare; in England it is the labour unrest; in Russia Bolshevism, and in India it is an all-round unrest due to repression, famine and other causes. The situation which now faces the western nations was inevitable; for western civilisation, based on the basic principle of brute force as a guiding motive, could have ultimately led only to mutual destruction. But in India, against all odds, the high principles of our hoary civilisation have still a strong hold on the masses; and in the rapidly widespread growth of Bolshevism which is attacking one nation after another in Europe was to be successfully arrested in India, and even any possibility of its finding a congenial soil safeguarded against, it was necessary that the people of India should be reminded of the legacy of their civilisation and culture, which is comprised in the one word "Satyagraha"—the highest *mantra* one can know of.

In the last week of January, 1919, the Government of India published the text of two Bills, now popularly known here as the Rowlatt Bills. The Bills secured to the Government of India arbitrary powers which they had under the Defence of India Act, specially passed as a war measure for the duration of the war and six months after. But what could be tolerated in a time of war cannot be permitted in times of peace when the Government should solely devote their attention to Problems of Reconstruction and not instead be over-anxious and stubborn in claiming arbitrary powers as essential for maintenance of peace and order. At a time when the Parliament itself has felt the need of Indianising the administration of this country and the Montague-Chelmsford Reform proposals were before the country for criticism, and when the members of the Civil Service and the Anglo-Indian capitalists, fearing that they may lose the privileged positions they have been holding at the expense of the Indian masses, employ fair and unfair means to nullify the utility of the Reform proposals, and the Viceroy, the highest authority in India, openly countenances thereby an announcement in the Imperial Council akin to a surrender to the clamour of vested interests, no Indian can calmly contemplate the future of public life in this country, with the Rowlatt legislation in the Statute book. The opposition in the country to the Rowlatt legislation has been unanimous beyond comparison, and in the Imperial Council when the Rowlatt Bill No. 1 was passed into law on March 18th, not a single Indian member voted for it. On account of the strong opposition to the Bill the Rowlatt Act No. 1 was made temporary for three years and also specially designated as "The Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act." But these concessions amount to nothing practically.

After consideration of all the circumstances, I came

to the conclusion to inaugurate the offering of "Satyagraha" against the Rowlatt Act. At the end of February, 1919, the Satyagraha pledge was taken by me and other leaders and the public were also invited to take the pledge, which states that, having conscientiously convinced of the injustice of the Rowlatt legislation, and it is repeated the signatories will resort to Civil Disobedience and binding themselves to follow Truth and refrain from violence. I toured over India, preaching the principles of Satyagraha, and after the passing of the Rowlatt Act No. 1, recommended, as a first step, a *hartal* and 24 hours fast, and 30th March, 1919, was fixed for the same. Later it was postponed to 6th April, but in some places it was observed on 30th March, and on that day, at Delhi, the mob was fired upon, on some ground or other, by the authorities, resulting in some deaths and many wounded. This incident roused such feeling in the country that the demonstration arranged for 6th April was largely attended and even Anglo-Indian critics had to admit it was an unprecedented demonstration. On 7th April, copies of prescribed literature, including "Hind Swaraj" were sold by the Satyagrahis in all the centres. On the evening of 8th April, I left for Delhi to personally acquaint myself with the conditions at Delhi, and I was served with an order by the Punjab Government and the Government of India, not to enter the Punjab by the former, and to reside within Bombay Presidency by the latter. As a Satyagrahi, I could not obey the order, and on entering the Punjab, was arrested. I felt so glad at it, for the soul was now free while the body was taken care of by the Government. I sent a message to the people asking them to welcome it as happy news and celebrate the event. But, instead of being kept in confinement, I was brought into the Bombay Presidency and set free. I returned to Bombay only to find the city full of disturbances. That evening, I addressed a huge mass meeting on the sea sands, where I gave expression to my keen disappointment at the misguided action of the people, and characterised their action as "Duragraha," and told them that, if they should again betray the trust reposed in them by acting as "Duragrahis," the only course open to me would be to offer Satyagraha against them by observing "Dharama" and giving up this body as a penance for inaugurating Satyagraha and taking the huge moral responsibility for the well conduct of the movement and its followers. But disturbances in the Punjab at Lahore, Amritsar and other places and at Ahmedabad; near which the Ashtam is situated, have been of very grave character, involving the proclamation of martial law. Loss to life and property have been enormous. But the disturbances in the Punjab are not due to the Satyagraha movement, but the outbreaks in Bombay and Ahmedabad were sufficient to show to me that real Satyagraha would consist in suspending the Civil Disobedience programme and in preaching the principle of Ahimsa. The Satyagraha Sahas, accordingly, suspended civil disobedience on 20th April, which event was shortly followed by the deportation of Mr. B. G. Horniman, a noble-hearted Englishman and the fearless Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*. Orders of forfeiture of security and pre-censorship was passed on the *Chronicle*, and it is only for the last fortnight the *Chronicle* has been appearing without comments under pre-censorship, and it is only few days ago censorship has been removed from the paper, the maximum security of Rs. 10,000 having been deposited by the proprietors. During the six weeks from 20th April, the events in the Punjab have been of an unprecedentedly cruel character. Martial law has been proclaimed in several areas and was withdrawn only a week or two ago. Aeroplane has been used to throw bombs, machine-guns have been used, and educated public leaders have been arrested under serious charges of waging war against the King, etc., and are being tried by Martial Law Commissions. Mr. K. N. Roy, Editor of the *Prithvi*, has been tried for seditious writings and tried by Special Tribunal and denied legal help of his

choice and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. After perusing the connected records, I am convinced that in Mr. K. N. Roy's case, a serious miscarriage of justice has occurred. The actions of the mobs during the disturbances also have been unworthy and highly condemnable character.

The circumstances that led to the suspension of Civil Disobedience exist no longer and the Civil Disobedience campaign might be safely begun now with sufficient safeguards to see that Satyagrahis do their part of duty in keeping the peace.

In order to keep the people fully engaged and teach them that the best way of expressing one's sympathy with the principles of Satyagraha is to practice them, I have begun an active Swadeshi campaign; and within the short period of six weeks, it has spread very rapidly. Many Indian sisters have bravely volunteered in the cause of the movement, and, in addition to themselves observing the vow by wearing Indian-made clothes woven from Indian yarn and also setting up handlooms and finding men to work them. A true sympathiser's duty with the Swadeshi movement is not only to wear Swadeshi clothes but also to help in producing them. In Bombay, the Shoodh Swadeshi Stores have been already opened and other centres will also be opening similar stores soon. Shoodh Swadeshi consists in wearing clothes handwoven from handspun yarn. Of course, at this early stage, it will not be possible to get fine Shoodh Swadeshi clothes, but one should not mind that.

BOOKS FOR SALE

To be obtained from the *Indian Opinion Press*, Phoenix, Natal. Postal Orders to be made payable at Durban. We have just received the following books from India. The prices given include cost of postage.—

	Price post free	s.	d.
Mr. Gandhi's Speeches and Writings—1896 to 1912	3	3	
Mrs. Annie Besant — A Sketch of her Life	0	7	
Nation Building, by Annie Besant	0	7	
Warfare in Ancient India	0	7	
FRIENDS OF INDIA SERIES:— Lord Morley, Sir Wm. Wedderburn, Rev. Dr. Miller, Sir Edwin Arnold, Lord Hardinge, Chas. Bradlaugh, Edmund Burke, Lord Minto, Sister Nivedita, Henry Fawcett, John Bright, A. Q. Hume, Sir Henry Cotton, Lord Macaulay and Lord Ripon.			
	each	0	7
New Indian Tales	0	7	
The Story of the Raja and Appaji	0	7	
Tales of Komati Wit and Wisdom	0	7	
Tales of Tennalirama	0	7	

BIographies OF EMINENT INDIANS:—

Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, M. K. Gandhi, Babu Surendranath Banerjee, Bodhidatta Tyabji, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, The Right Hon. Sayed Amir Ali, H. H. Shri Sayaji Rao Gokhwar, Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, H. H. the Aga Khan, Swami Rama Tirth, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Kristo Das Pal, Dewan C. Rangachari, Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar, W. C. Bonnerjee, A. M. Bose, Behramji M. Malabari, Ravi Varma, Lala Lajpat Rai, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Swami Vivekananda, Toru Dutt, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Sir Sahar Jung, V. P. Madhava Rao, Dr. E. Wacha, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Rahimtulla Mohamed Sayani, Dr. Kash Behari Ghose, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Lal Mohun Ghose, Raja Ram Mohan Roy	each	0	7
---	------	---	---

Peeps at Many Lands, with 12 coloured plates — Ceylon, Siam, Burma, House Life in India	each	2	10
Bhagavad Gita — Mrs. Besant's Translation			
Life of M. K. Gandhi (in Tamil)		1	0
" " " (in Hindi)		1	0
Mahomed 'The Great Arabian,' by Meredith Townsend		2	0
Stories and Sayings of India, Ceylon and Burma		1	0
From Colombo to Almora: Lectures by Swami Vivekananda.		1	10
From Colombo to Almora		1	11
Essays in Indian Art, Industry and Education, by E. B. Havell		2	1
Rabindranath Tagore, a Lecture by the Rev. C. F. Andrews of Delhi delivered at Capetown		0	7
Hinduism, by Dr. Barnett		2	2
Letters of John Chinaman		2	9
A Study in Indian Economics by B. Bannerji		4	4
The Golden Number of "Indian Opinion"			
Paper covers		1	0
Bound in cloth		2	0
Position of the Women in the Vedas		0	11
Memoir of the late J. J. Doka		0	11
The Ethics of Passive Resistance		0	2
Indian Home Rule, by M. K. Gandhi		0	6
Hindu Social Ideals, by P. J. Mehta		0	2
M. K. Gandhi, " "		0	1
The Story of the Ramayana, the Epic of Rama Prince of India, by J. L. P. Erasmus		2	7
The Hon. Mr. Gokhale and the Indenture System			6
The Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Tour in South Africa			
Special INDIAN OPINION Souvenir.		2	4
A Letter to a Hindu, or the Subjection of India, its Cause and Cure, by Leo Tolstoy		0	1
Fields, Factories and Workshops, by Prince Kropotkin		1	5
Unto the Last		1	10
English Traits and Representative Men, by Emerson		1	10
Society and Solitude and other Essays, by Emerson		1	10
War and Peace, Vols 1, 2, and 3, by Tolstoy, each		1	10
Reflections on the French Revolution, by Burke		1	10
Asiatic Law Amendment Act (1907) and Regulations, in English and Gujarati			6

અહવાલિક પંચામ

વાર	પ્રીત્વી	હિંદુ	મુસલમાન	પારસી	સુર્યોદય	સુચરિત
	૧૯૧૯	૧૯૧૫	૧૯૧૭	૧૯૧૯	ક. મી.	ક. મી.
	સપ્ટેમ્બર	સાપ્તમ્બર	ઓક્ટોબર			
શુક્ર	૧૨	૧૬	૩	૨	૬-૭	૫-૭૪
શનિ	૧૩	"	૪	૩	૬-૨	૫-૭૪
રવિ	૧૪	"	૫	૪	૬-૩	૫-૭૪
સોમ	૧૫	"	૬	૫	૫-૪૬	૫-૭૪
મંગળ	૧૬	"	૭	૬	૫-૫૮	૫-૭૪
બુધ	૧૭	"	૮	૭	૫-૫૭	૫-૭૪
ગુરુ	૧૮	"	૯	૮	૫-૫૬	૫-૭૪

Printed and Published by Manilal M. Gandhi at Phoenix Settlement, Phoenix, Natal.