

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

INTERVIEWED by the press representative in India, Mr. Gandhi gave his opinion of the terms of reference and personnel of the Asiatic Commission as follows:

The Commission is neither strong nor impartial, and so far as the terms of reference are concerned, I am not disposed to quarrel with them, and I would have, if it was possible, avoided the Commission altogether and obtained relief regarding land and trading by other means. But I am inclined to think it is possible for Sir Benjamin Robertson to secure the rights of ownership of land and trading which are in imminent danger. The whole situation hinges round the strength that the Government of India, through Sir Benjamin Robertson, puts forth.

At the annual meeting of the Beaumont 'Eslon Farmers' Association held on March 12, the president Mr. Fell, in the course of his address dealt thus with the Indian question:—

"Another very vital question to-day which will have to be achieved is the Indian question. Gentlemen, you must surely realise how serious this matter is. We know that Indians are becoming increasingly large property owners, and are getting very big hold in Natal. It is time that individuals recognised their responsibility in this matter. Surely, Europeans with any thought for their children will hesitate before they sell their land to Indians, and I would most strongly urge individual landowners to think of the future and refuse to sell any more land to Asiatics. One wonders why the present Government are restricting Natives from purchasing land in European areas, and yet they allow Indians to do so. This strikes me as a very unfair proceeding."

The following cable has been received by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee from Mr. C. F. Andrews from Zanzibar:—
"My Love to All."

A tram conductor Charles Wm. Channes was recently brought up before Mr. Oxley Oxland charged with assaulting an Indian named Kistan. The accused who was found guilty was fined £2 with the option of one week's imprisonment.

A Reuter's telegram states that thirty-two Indians are arriving in England for probationary training for the Indian Civil Service, also 14 Indian cadets, who will undergo a course of training at Sandhurst.

The delegation from the Khalifat Conference at Calcutta (says Reuter), waited on the Prime Minister at Downing Street and urged the restoration of the territorial status quo of Turkey, including the undisturbed presence of the Sultan as Khalifa at Constantinople, and no transference of authority over Moslem holy places. The delegation emphasised the desirability of fostering Indian Moslem friendship.

Mr. Lloyd George, replying, referred to Turkey's declaration of war on Great Britain in the midst of the most terrible struggle in history, owing to which the war was prolonged for two years. He said we were not going to abandon in the case of Moslem countries like Turkey the principles which we ruthlessly applied

to Christian countries like Germany and Austria. The same independence would be given to Mohammedans as to Christians. The principles of self-determination would be applied to non-Turkish peoples hitherto under Turkish rule.

In the interests of civilisation, said Mr. Lloyd George, the Allies were bound to exercise control over Armenia, where the Turks had shown incompetency to protect their own subjects, who were massacred wholesale. The Premier laid stress on the point that Indian Moslem opinion would be largely considered on the settlement of the Turkish question.

AN OPPORTUNITY

WE have had our attention drawn to the need of a hostel for Indian boys in Durban and in Maritzburg to enable parents residing in the country districts to send their sons to be educated in the higher classes existing in the schools of these towns. As is well-known, the ordinary Indian schools of this Province, both Government and aided, teach only up to the fourth standard. This is the limit which the Education Department has set for the country districts. If the parents wish to give their children a better education, they must send them either to Maritzburg or Durban where there are schools teaching up to the sixth standard. There are also in existence, as is well-known, classes for higher education up to matriculation. These are being conducted at the Carlisle Street School, Durban. We would like to say, in this connection, that it is a great pity these facilities for higher education are not more highly appreciated by the Indians of Durban. There ought to be sufficient students in Durban alone to fill to overflowing these classes. Failure to take advantage of the opportunity thus offered would mean a set-back for higher education and would be a great disappointment to those who have worked so hard to secure this boon. Meanwhile there are parents in the country districts who would, if they could, send their sons to these classes. But they are prevented from so doing because of the lack of a suitable home where they could be properly cared for. We have before us a letter from the father of a boy who has passed the 7th standard at the Higher-grade School, Maritzburg, but whose home is elsewhere. The father desires that his son, who is 17 years of age, should attend the higher classes in Durban but he is very anxious that his boy shall not be allowed to drift into evil companionship and waste his time in the streets. What is required is a home where the lad will receive proper treatment and be encouraged to pursue his studies. If any reader can offer a home to this youth we shall be glad to put them into communication with the parents. The question raised, however, is a much

wider one. The authorities are inclined to be stingy in regard to Indian education; and it is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the Indian community shall not allow it to be said that, when the Education Department does give facilities for higher education, Indians do not want it. If hostels could be started in Durban and Maritzburg, this would be a sure way of encouraging parents to educate their children beyond the elementary stage. This matter of hostels is essentially a matter for Indians themselves to take up. They could be run on business lines, and those who could afford it, would pay for the maintenance of their children. It would be the privilege of well-to-do people to make donations to assist poor parents to take advantage of the opportunity thus offered. No Indian child of high intelligence, wishful to continue his studies, need then be disappointed because of the poverty of his parents. Surely, some of the wealthy merchants and farmers will not let such an opportunity pass!

We are disturbed by the menacing attitude of politicians towards us. We fear that we may suffer materially and in status. But can we not realise that the best way to combat all prejudice and race hatred is to raise ourselves by educating our children? What power on earth can harm a community which is determined to sacrifice wealth for culture? If we have hitherto been known as mere money-grabbers, let us prove that this is not so. Let us show to the people of this country who are crying out for our segregation or repatriation, that we deserve better treatment; and, what is more to the point, are determined to get it. We can only obtain just and fair conditions by being generous to our own flesh and blood. Let us, to put it in another way, be patriotic. Money spent on schools, or hostels for students will be well spent. It will be a sound investment, paying a dividend, not in gold, but what is more precious, in well-educated, intelligent men and women, fit to hold their own in this country—which is just as much our country as it is the country of Sir Abe Bailey and his followers. In spite of a rather dark cloud at present hanging over us, there is hope for the future. That hope can only rest in our willingness to put education before business, culture before wealth and luxury. If we cannot rise to the occasion and are, in consequent degraded, ruined and eventually driven out of the country like dogs, we must not think that the anti-Asiatics have driven us out. They are wrong; their policy is based on selfishness; it could never succeed unless we are a lot of cowards. Let us speak plainly to those who imagine that they are so well established in business that they could never be ousted. Wealth sometimes melts away; business fail. What, then, is left? If there is education and culture; if there is a spirit of self-sacrifice, all is left—status, honour, respect, and all that is worth possessing. Let us then be up and doing in this first of all things—Education!

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL INDIAN CONGRESS

(DURBAN COMMITTEE)

It is notified for general information that the office of the above Committee is at No. 44 (upstairs), Queen Street, Durban, where a staff is in attendance from 8.30 a.m. The Honorary Officers may be seen during the day by appointment or anytime from 6 p.m. onwards. Any information in the interests of the Committee will be appreciated.

THE "TIMES" AND THE "BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

The *Bombay Chronicle* has the following leading article on the *Times of India's* comment on Mr. C. F. Andrews' cable message to India regarding the position of Indians in South Africa:—

Wrongs and perils that materialise at distance usually attract the notice of the *Times of India*; the nearer they are the more languid is the *Times* in its pronouncements of vehement protest. It thinks in continents, gambles up and down the corridor of centuries and delivers superb ideas about the evolutions of history. When unspeakable wrongs take place under its nose, it is found discoursing on the anguish of Poland and the deliverance of Ukraina. We take it that it is this strange liability to longlighted abstractions that makes our contemporary entirely misjudge the message of Mr. Andrews and accuse him of criminally wicked incitement. The distance at which events develop should give the *Times* a more lucid perception of the perils to which Indians are being subjected in South Africa. The *Times* has taken deep interest in the fate of Indians in that continent, and therefore it is with regret that we notice its impetuous denunciation of Mr. Andrews. Our contemporary possibly dissociates itself from Mr. Andrews' view on reasons of profound policy, expecting the Whites to take notice of the perfect composure with which Indians look upon adverse developments and evoking in them a sense of reciprocal obligation to see that we have not trusted in vain. But we cannot poise ourselves in this fashion by ignoring the conclusions of the local investigator. Thus, the *Times* commends the Government of India on their "sound and statesmanlike attitude," approves the "wise patience" of Mr. Gandhi, and condemns the violence and bitterness of Mr. Andrews. If Mr. Andrews had not gone to South Africa, the *Times* would have praised the judicial silence and wise restraint of Mr. Andrews. He was not criminally wicked when he remained in India and spoke on the South African question. We put it to the *Times* whether it is not possible that Mr. Andrews has come to declare the situation dangerous, just because he happens to know more than the Government of India, Mr. Gandhi, and the *Times*. The attitude of the Government of India may be all right; Mr. Andrews has been alarmed not because of the lack of an "attitude" like the Government of India, but because he came face to face with the staggering realities of the Anti-Asiatic movement. It is thoughtless presumption that makes the *Times* condemn Mr. Andrews as a wicked alarmist, and if the writer had reflected a little more on the advantageous position of Mr. Andrews to judge of the matter, and the comparative ignorance of himself we are certain that he would not have used the language he did in condemning Mr. Andrews. The message denoted the seriousness of the position, not the wicked hysterics of Mr. Andrews; there is such a thing as criminal stupidity; judging of men and events.

The *Times* is facetious enough to attack Mr. Andrews over the phrase "worst situation since 1913," because, we are told, it is the only situation since 1913. There have been material changes, since 1913, in the situation which our contemporary could have perceived, if it had been content to be less facetious. From 1914 to 1918, there was the truce of war. Early in 1919, began the manoeuvres which ended in the introduction of the Asiatic Land and Trading Disabilities Bill, which became law in July. As the situation was, in this fashion, growing worst the *Times* consoled us with the prospect of Mr. Malan's comprehensive enquiry and the healing influence of General Botha and General Smuts who had been absent. On the return of General Smuts he gave Indians promise of fair treatment, and waxed eloquent over the unimportance of colour in the human family, and reminded his audience of his share in the grant of the Biko Commission to Indian

officers, as he himself believed in precedence by merit. Then followed a tremendous outburst of anti-Asiatic feeling, which completely changed the situation. On September 4, and 5, the Congress of the anti-Asiatic League met with delegates of Municipalities, Trade Unions, Chambers of Commerce, Soldiers' Leagues and Christian Churches! Mr. Montagu's attempt to have an Imperial Commission was spurned and forgotten, and not even one Indian has been allowed to accompany Sir Benjamin Robertson. The situation was growing worse towards the year, and it is absurd to suggest that it was unchanged, after the organisation and outcry of colourphobes. When Mr. Montagu was interviewed by Indians and Europeans in Britain, there was a faint hope of a fair hearing, which was dashed to the ground by the formidable movement of white settlers. The *Times* itself writing on the speeches of Mr. Wet and Sir Thomas Watt warned us that the situation was becoming worse and that the anti-Asiatic movement was growing. So much for the incidents of 1919, that betokened a situation the reverse of tranquil and stationary. The occurrences of this year are peculiarly unfortunate, because even courts of law overlooked the claims of justice and swelled the anti-Asiatic movement. The decision of the Potchestroom Municipality to refuse a license to an Indian, because he was an Indian, was upheld by the Magistrate on the plea that all Indians were, *per se*, "undesirables." In the case of Dadoo, Ltd., the Transvaal Supreme courts went against the intention of the law—which exempted limited liability concerns registered previous to May—and gave a decision fatal to land ownership. The *Times* was moved to declare that the "two legal decisions in regard to landowning rights are sufficiently serious, not only because they amount to a real curtailment of the rights which Indians have enjoyed, but because of the growing strength of the anti-Asiatic feeling in the Union." The atmosphere, no doubt, caused these lapses in judicial rectitude; but how on earth can it be said. With the growth of hostile feeling, the vacillation of ministers and the surrender of the judiciary staring us in the face, that there has been no change in the situation? It is silly to scoff at these developments as the substance of a platitude, because the change in the situation is literally a fact.

The *Times* has been, furthermore, pleased to declare that Mr. Andrews' brief statement, "every right endangered," is false and that Mr. Andrews is aware of it. As an allegation of deliberate falsehood, it can only be treated with contempt. The *Times* is well aware that even courts of law have come to pronounce Indians as "undesirables." When a class of people are branded "undesirables" in a community, it is to them a sentence of death as a part of the community. We may assure our contemporary that if a body of Englishmen, settled in a strange land, is declared "undesirables," all the rights it possesses become endangered, subjugation and extinction being only a matter of time. "Undesirables" have certainly no right to exist as part of a community and a declaration to the effect is notice that it is an excrescence deserving of no protection. And Mr. Andrews after visiting the spot and gauging the temper of the people has given us the warning, and it is, in the circumstances, perverse to try and discredit him, it may be in pursuance of the policy of coaxing the colonial into reason. The pity of the situation is that all political parties ignore the Indians. Mr. Andrews cabling to the *Hindu* says: "Greatest situation. All political parties neglecting Indian claims. Segregation widely advocated." Segregation is the outcome of the doctrine that Indians are "undesirables," and it will involve the uprooting of life and trade, and the driving of Indians to the wall. It is easy, in high composure, to look on these developments as immaterial events and call the man that reports them, a liar and a panic-monger. Does the *Times* still think, in face of organised persecution and the threat of extinction, that Mr. Andrews is trying to stampede the public with falsehoods and platitudes? All this, of course, is

the penalty of a mission of truth and righteousness, and it is a pity that the *Times* should have, instead of realising the gravity of the crisis, declared it a sensational hoax.

JALLIANWALA BAGH

(BY M. K. GANDHI)

There was an unfortunate hitch about the purchase of this Bagh for the nation. Thanks to the efforts of the Hon'ble Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sanyasi Swami Shri Shraddhananda and the local leaders, it has now become the property of the nation subject to the full payment of the purchase price within three months from the 6th instant. The purchase price is Rs. 536,000. And the amount must be raised within the prescribed period.

It is, therefore, necessary to examine the propriety of making this purchase on behalf of the nation, especially as it has been questioned even in enlightened quarters. With the Cawnpore Memorial before us the attitude is not to be wondered at. But with all respect to objectors, I cannot help saying that if the Bagh had not been acquired, it would have been a national disgrace. Can we afford to forget those five hundred or more men who were killed although they had done nothing wrong either morally or legally? If they had died knowingly and willingly, if realising their innocence they had stood their ground and faced the shots from the fifty rifles, they would have gone down to history as saints, heroes and patriots. But even as it was, the tragedy became one of the first class national importance. Nations are born out of travail and suffering. We should forfeit all title to be considered a nation, if we failed to treasure the memory of those, who in our battle for political freedom might innocently or for the crimes of others, lose their lives or otherwise suffer. We were unable to protect our helpless countrymen when they were ruthlessly massacred. We may decline, if we will, to avenge the wrong. The nation will not lose if we did. But shall we—can we afford to—decline to perpetuate the memory and to show to the surviving members of the families of the dead that we are sharers in their sufferings, by erecting a national tombstone and by telling the world thereby that in the death of these men each one of us has lost dear relations? If national instinct does not mean at least this much kinship, it has no meaning for me. I hold it to be our duty to tell the present generations yet unborn that in our march towards true freedom we must be prepared for repetitions of the wrongs such as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. We must provide against them, we must not seek them, but we must be ready to face them if they come again. I would not have us flinch from the battle of national life. The supreme lesson of the Amritsar Congress was that the sufferings of the Punjab did not dishearten the nation but that the nation treated them as a matter of course. Some of us made stupid mistakes and the innocent suffered for them. We must in future try to avoid the mistakes but in spite of our best effort, we may fail to convert everyone to sanity. We must, therefore, be ready for the repetition of the sufferings of the guiltless by telling the country now that they and theirs shall not be forgotten but that the memory of the innocent dead shall be regarded as a sacred trust and that the surviving relations shall have the right to look to the nation for maintenance in case of need. This is the primary meaning of the memorial. And has not the blood of the Mahomedan mixed with that of the Hindu? Has not the blood of the Sikh mixed with that of the Sanatanist and the Samajist? The memorial should be a national emblem of an honest and sustained effort to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity.

But the objector's objection still remains unanswered. Will not the memorial also perpetuate bitterness and illwill? It will depend upon the trustees. And if I know them, I know that that is not their intention at

all. I know that such was not the intention of the vast assembly. I do not wish to convey that bitterness was not there. It was there not in any way suppressed. But the idea of the memorial had nothing of bitterness in it. The people want to, they must be encouraged to forget the doer and his madness. What General Dyer did we may all do if we had his irresponsibility and opportunity. To err is human and it must be held to be equally human to forgive if we though being fallible would like rather to be forgiven than punished and reminded of our misdeeds. Nor does this mean that we may not ask for General Dyer's dismissal. A lunatic cannot be kept in a position from which he can do harm to his neighbours. But just as we do not bear illwill towards a lunatic, so too may we not bear illwill even towards General Dyer. I would therefore eschew from the memorial all idea of bitterness and illwill but treat it as a sacred memory and regard the Bagh as a place of pilgrimage to be visited by all irrespective of class, creed or colour. I would invite Englishmen to appreciate our feeling in the matter, ask them by subscribing to the memorial in the spirit of the Royal Proclamation to make common cause with us in our endeavour to regain consciousness, to realise the same freedom that they enjoy under the same constitution and to realise Hindu-Muslim unity without which there can be no true progress for India.—*Young India*.

SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Commission has at last been appointed and the personnel announced. It is not an impartial Commission; it is not a strong Commission. The terms of reference are not bad. They include both the rights of property and the rights of trade. The reference covers the whole of the Union. Our countrymen have tried to have the whole position overhauled by the Commission. The members who are to serve on the Commission could hardly have done justice to such an Imperial question. In the circumstances, therefore, we welcome the restricted reference. We do not think that time has arrived for considering the full status. The relations between the two communities—the European and the Indian—are too strained to permit of a dispassionate view being taken of the question. There is a parallel near home. Much as many of us would like to obliterate the many cruel disabilities that Hindu prejudice inflicts upon the miscalled depressed classes, most of us are powerless to do more than deplore the fact and plead with the prejudiced to rid themselves of their prejudice. So it is with the European trader and the simple-minded but prejudiced Boer. Recognition of this position is necessary to make us patient so far as the ultimate goal is concerned. Political equality will come only after a tough and prolonged fight and then perhaps not until we have cleared the atmosphere in India itself. But there can be no patience about rights which no prejudiced can be permitted to *take away*. They must be defended against all odds. That power to protect life and prosperity must be inherent in a constitution that calls itself liberal or civilised. The interested European trader may not rob the Indian settler of the right to hold property or to trade, subject to his observance of the general laws of sanitation. No commission can take *that* right away with impunity. Our strength, therefore, lies in the inherent and absolute justice of our case. But even a strong case may be lost by a weak advocate. Happily the Government of India represented by the Viceroy and Sir George Barnes is firm on the question. Let us hope that they will so remain to the end and instruct Sir Benjamin Robertson to insist upon the preservation of the rights of property and trade remaining in tact. Not even a decision of a court of justice can be pleaded as a bar to the preservation of that right. If the law is held deficient, it must be remedied. We hope that this simple issue will be kept steadily before the country and all would be well.

The *Times of India* is needlessly hard upon Mr. Andrews. 'Worst situation since 1913, every right endangered,' is a cryptic sentence, but it is perfectly clear to those who know. Mr. Andrews has by his message warned the country against being belogged by any side-issues. He has not gone there to achieve the political status for the Indian settler nor has he gone there to secure unrestricted immigration from India. But as a Christian and as an Englishman he cannot tolerate any attack on rights of property and trade. And he says that even these rights are in danger. Our countrymen have no other rights.—*Young India*.

THE ASIATIC COMMISSION

EVIDENCE AT CAPETOWN

Capetown, March 23 (Reuter).—At the sitting on Saturday morning of the Asiatic Commission, Chairman (Sir John Lange), a petition was presented on behalf of the Cape British Indian Council calling for an amendment of the existing legislation affecting the granting of removal or transfer of trading licences on the ground that the lack of necessity on the part of the local authority of giving any reason for refusing to grant a licence had resulted in severity towards the Indians.

Capetown, March 22.—In giving evidence before the Asiatic Inquiry Commission this morning, (says the *Natal Advertiser*), Dr. Jasper Anderson, Medical Officer of Health, said he had observed an improvement in the condition under which the Indians lived in Capetown since his administration began in 1901.

Most of the Indians were unmarried or had left their wives in India. In 1918, 697 general dealers' licences had been granted, 73 butchers' and 121 greengrocers'. The Indians lived on the same premises as their shops, and some in a small room behind. They lived very simply on rice and butter-fat, in a room unfurnished except for sleeping-mats, which were rolled up by day, making it very difficult to ascertain what number occupied the room.

As regards public health, the Indians, as a whole, were not cleanly in habit, but were sober, quiet and law-abiding. It was extremely difficult to get a conviction, as they studied the regulations very closely and took advantage of every loophole. Their standard of life was lower than that of the coloured people. What could be described as the better-class Indians were from 5 to 10 per cent. of the whole Indian population.

The Indians in Capetown, he thought, were generally of the lowest caste. He did not think the disproportion of sexes a healthy condition of affairs. Indians in common with the coloured people went down before any epidemic—they went down like flies during the influenza and were particularly susceptible to tuberculosis and other pulmonary diseases, due, he believed, to underfeeding, overcrowding and their low standard of life.

The secretary of the British Indian Conference, Capetown, in giving evidence, said the licensing laws were impartial, but their administration discriminated unfairly against Indians as such. The Licensing Committee consisted of butchers, dealers, etc., who refused fair consideration of the applications.

Capetown, March 23 (Reuter).—At the sitting of the Asiatic Commission this morning, Mr. Knox Baxter, representing the Cape British Indian Union, presented a memorandum praying for the safeguarding of the existing rights of the Indian community in the Cape Province, particularly the right to acquire land and trade.

In reply to questions, Mr. Baxter said that in view of the more liberal treatment, his Union no longer urged that the authority for dealing with licences should be taken from the local authorities and vested in the magistrates. They only urged now that the local authorities should have to furnish reasons in the case of a refusal, and asked for the right of appeal. The

fear of a great rush from India, he said, has been allayed by the cessation of immigration. He was against any policy of segregation, but he believed it could be managed by common understanding. He did not see how it could be embodied in law.

INDIAN LABOUR IN NATAL

(BY C. F. ANDREWS)

I have had a great many opportunities of seeing, at first hand, the state in which the Indian labourers in Natal live; I wish to write something about it, before my departure, which may be published when I am on the s.s. *Karagola*, returning to India.

First of all, I have been very greatly distressed at the condition of the Indian labourers on the sugar estates. While in Natal, I have spent a considerable time in the country; and I have not only visited estates, but have had many quiet talks with Indian labourers, whom I have met on the road, when out walking. I have also spoken to the labourers themselves in little groups, at different barracks. In these and other ways, I have come into close and intimate touch with the estate labourers, and though my time has been comparatively short, I have been able to make the most of it, because this same subject has been so often before me during my many wanderings about the world and I could therefore very easily compare the condition of the labourers here with that of the Tamil labourers in Malaya, or in Ceylon, or the Hindustani and Tamil labourers in Fiji, or the labourers in India itself. I do not think that my impressions concerning Natal would have been very much altered, if I had been able to spend months instead of days at the task of investigation. I have seen the best sugar estates and the worst.

What, then, are the results? They have been extremely disappointing. I had expected that the great relief from the £3 tax and from the complete stoppage of all further indentured labourers coming out from India, would have immensely improved the condition of the labourers on the sugar estates. But the facts have told in the opposite direction. The labourers, who came out originally under indenture, had evidently lost the desire and energy for progress, which is absolutely necessary if men are to rise. Therefore, when they gained this full freedom, they were not able to use it. Furthermore, the sugar companies have been able to draw on a new supply of labour from Zululand and elsewhere, and to create a sharp competition between African and Indian labour. This has also helped to keep the Indian down.

I have seen quoted, in the South African Official Year Book, a statistic which must be accepted as accurate, coming from such a quarter, but which is nevertheless astonishing. It is a comparison of the years 1916 and 1917, in respect to wages earned, per worker. The European wages have remained practically stationary at £186; the coloured labourer's wages have also remained stationary at about £42; but the Indian's wages are said to have declined, in that year, from £31 to £26.

Such a figure even at its maximum is a miserably low one. It means hardly more than £2:10:0, per month. Of course the wages for the year 1919, if they had been available, would have shown an increase on those for the year 1917, just quoted; but the rise in the cost of living has been far more rapid than the rise in wages, and so the *net* result has not been in favour of the labourers. I have asked many who would be able to give me exact information on such a subject as this and all without exception have told me that it is quite probable that the estate labourer to-day is being underpaid and that the actual condition of the Indian labourer is *worse* than in 1914 or 1917, even though his wages may be higher.

One who knows the condition of the Indian village labourer in India far better than I do, and who has just

come out from India to South Africa, has independently studied this same question. He had come to his own conclusion, before I had given him any idea of mine. When we compared notes, the conclusions were identical. The Indian labourers on the Natal sugar estates, according to his own opinion and my own opinion, are not so well cared for as the labourers on Indian estates. The miseries and hardships, which are always bound up with poverty, are greater among the Indians in Natal, than in India itself.

This is a very serious conclusion. I see no way to remedy these conditions except to offer inducements to any Indian labourers, who like to take them to return to India and to try there once more to build up a healthy family life. Natal has been but a cruel step-mother to most of these Indian labourers who came out under indenture; it is time that they returned to the mother-land and there 'made good.'

The departure to India of any considerable number of Indian labourers, who had been keeping the price of labourer down by their own weak and helpless condition would immediately give a better chance to those who remained behind, to improve their position with their employers. The shortage of labour could at once be felt by the sugar companies and they would be obliged to raise the rate of wages in order to get the remaining labourers to come to them. Indians, who had worked before on the sugar estates, would have more scope for starting on their own account as growers and producers, and thus the present vicious circle would be broken.

We may look at the matter from a different standpoint. All over Africa, from Mombasa down to Capetown, no European of any kind is allowed to land who has not got a certain amount of capital. The actual amount varies from £50 at Mombasa to £20 at Capetown; the same principle holds good, everywhere along the coast. Only the European, with a certain amount of independent means, is allowed to land. Thus the miserably poor Europeans, who may be seen in thousands in Europe, are not to be seen in Africa. Whether this restriction is right or wrong is not now the question; I am only pointing to the *fact*.

If this is the fact with European, then 'it is obvious that great harm has been done in the past to the Indian name and reputation by bringing out ship-load after ship-load of the poorest Indian labourers who were made to live almost as serfs under indenture. It is quite clear that, from such a mode of immigration, the European and the Indian would tend more and more to diverge from one another in the *class from which they came*,—not merely in race. The great bulk of the Europeans would be independent; the great bulk of the Indians would be dependent. This was one of the greatest evils of the indenture system.

To-day we are trying to redress the balance, to make all Indians in Natal independent,—that is to say, free men, who can hold their own with their employers. But Rome can never be built in a single day. The evil effects of nearly 60 years of the indenture system cannot be obliterated at once. There are many old indentured labourers who cannot, even now, regain their independence; they go back time after time, under fresh indentures; they return to work, time after time, at the old rates of pay; they drag themselves down and they drag others down with them.

If therefore the balance between the Indian and European in Natal is ever wholly to be redressed; if Indians and Europeans are ever to meet in Natal on an equal basis of independence and freedom and citizenship, then it is unmistakably necessary to reduce, as far as possible, the number of those Indians who, coming out under a vicious system, have not been able to 'make good' in this country at all. Of course, it need hardly be stated, there must be no compulsion in this matter. Every Indian who wishes to stay and does not wish to return, must be allowed to act according to his wishes. His own choice, in the matter, must be absolutely free. But those Indians who would gladly return, if they only had the means, might be assisted to

do so, without any principle being endangered, and in this way a reduction might be made in Natal of those dependent and poverty stricken Indians, who, through no fault of their own, are obliged in present circumstances, to keep down the economic level of the Indian community far below that of the European.

(To be continued)

HUNTER COMMITTEE REVELATIONS -
BRITISH PUBLIC THOROUGHLY ROUSED
MR. HORNIMAN'S WORK

Allahabad, Jan. 12.—The *Independent* publishes a letter from Mr. Horniman to a friend, dated London 17th December, in which he writes he hopes he is coming out soon.

Speaking of the Dyerian Massacre of citizens, he writes: "At last we have succeeded in rousing public here. It would be more fair to say perhaps that General Dyer has done it himself. We have spoken all over the country of the Punjab atrocities and Labour audiences are fairly familiar with them. But, it required, the worst story of all to be confirmed from General Dyer's own lips to shock the whole country. I do not suppose anything has created such indignations throughout almost every class and shade of opinion for years. We are working the Press for all they are worth, and they are eager for everything they can get. If there is any attempt to whitewash General Dyer and Sir M. O'Dwyer now, there will be a howl."

We are trying to get adjournment of the House moved, but Labour members are scattered over the country for by-elections and Independent Liberals are moved by Mr. Montagu's appeal to wait for full report of the Hunter Committee. It will be surprising, however, if this does not finish Lord Chelmsford as well as Sir Michael O'Dwyer, especially as Mr. Montagu is pretending that Lord Chelmsford kept him in the dark. Papers are furious with Reuter for letting them down over this and it has afforded an opportunity to let them know what Reuter habitually does."

Further Mr. Horniman writes, "I did my best to prepare the ground for revelations and certainly there has been unparalleled sensation. If only it had come a fortnight earlier, I think it would have had more effect on the Bill. I hope I am coming out soon."

Mr B. G. Horniman, in his letter, dated the 18th December, addressed to another friend, writes:—

You will have seen from the cables I have sent that the public here have been thoroughly roused by the revelation of the Hunter Committee. People are so indignant and the papers so excited about it that I don't think there is any possibility of whitewashing Dyer, O'Dwyer, etc., now and they will, I trust, meet with their deserts. For once in a way opinion in England is thoroughly awakened about India. People here would never believe anything or listen to anything. But when a British General out of his own mouth tells the awful story of the Amritsar massacre, they have suddenly realised that things are very grave indeed, and they will now insist on knowing everything. I am doing my best to supply the papers with all the information possible to keep them up to the mark and we shall see, too, that Parliament does not sleep over it.—*Bombay Chronicle.*

NORTHERN NATAL INDIAN ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of Indians was held at the Mosque School-room, Ladysmith, on the evening of the 10th instant to which representatives of Newcastle, Dundee and Dannhauser were invited. Mr. A. E. Moola was voted to the chair. Speeches were made by Mr. Advocate Gabriel and others on the question of the Asiatic Commission.

The next question was the formation of a political body representing Ladysmith, Dundee and Newcastle.

It was felt that as Northern Natal had quite a large Indian population which had very large interests in the three Divisions, the time had arrived when the three towns should join hands and form themselves into the "Northern Natal Indian Association" and the following officials were elected by the meeting. President: Mr. Sheik Ameer, Vice-Presidents: Advocate Gabriel, Messrs S. E. Seedat and M. H. Rangila (Newcastle), Advocate Godfrey, Messrs. K. Pillay and Hajee Ebrahim Khan (Dundee), Messrs. A. E. Moola, Kharva and V. S. Pillay (Ladysmith). Honorary Secretary: Mr. D. Lazarus (Dannhauser), Treasurer: Mr. M. H. Rangila.

"Indian Opinion" Supplements

We have the following supplements on this paper for sale at one shilling per dozen, post free —

The Hon. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr V. A. Chettiar (Chairman), Tamil Benefit Society of Johannesburg, Mr. Budree (Vice President of the Transvaal Indian Association), The Late Mr. Narayansamy, South African Indian Stretcher-Bearer Company, Hon. Mr. Gokhale's visit, taken at Heidelberg station, Mr. L. Hans Raj R.A. (Hon. Principal D. A. V. College, President Lahore Arya Samaj), Mr. Imam Abdul Kadir Bawzeer, Mr. Omar Haji Amod Johari, Mr. Joseph Royce B.A. (A Natal born Graduate Passive Resister), Mr. Royce (A Barrister-Hawker), Indian Volunteer Stretcher-Bearer Corps, Three Transvaal ladies as passive resisters (Mrs. Sivprasad, Miss Minnatjee and Mrs. Somar). Mr. Amcefoodin Fajandar, Mrs. Srikh Mehtab, Asiatic Ordinance (A Chess Play Cartoon) India's Great Loyalty (Cartoon), The Late Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta, Mr. Ratan J. Tata, Mrs. R. M. Sodha, Sir William Wedderburn, Lt., Pioneer Settlers of Tolstoy Farm, The Late Count Leo Tolstoy, The Late Rev. Joseph J. Doka, The Late Mr. S. Nagappan, The Right Hon. Lord Amthuff, G.C.I.E., The Triumphal Arch outside Park Station (Mr. Gokhale's Visit), Shri Saayasi Swami Shankerand, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji of Adajan, Hanifa Bibi, H. H. The Amir of Afghanistan, Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Kallenbach as seen walking from the Tolstoy Farm to Johannesburg, Mr. Henry S. L. Polak, Picnic Party at Tolstoy Farm, The Late Mr. M. H. Nazar, Shri Gopal Lal Hindu Temple Vardham, The Late Miss Valliamah Moodliar, Sons of the Empire (L.F.W. Sodiers), The 60 Indians Deported to India by the Transvaal Government, The Indian Monument in Johannesburg, The Late Mr. Hajee Hooeen Dawad, Indian Merchants who suffered imprisonment at Standerton, Babu Rabinchandra Tagore, The late Hon. G. K. Gokhale, C.I.E., Right Hon. Syed Anwar Ali, C.I.E., Sir Benjamin Robertson and Staff, Some of the Addresses presented to The Hon. Mr. Gokhale, Vrededorp Properties, The Late Mr. Abdoola Ladij Adam, Indian Strikers at Durban, (Three Pictures).

वेद्यवाना गुजराती पुस्तकें

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