

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

IN a letter to the Press in India Mr. C. F. Andrews says:—"Having witnessed with my own eyes the humiliation of Indians in the Punjab, Fiji, East Africa and South Africa, and watched this last humiliation of the infamous Turkish Treaty, I can see no possible recovery of self-respect except by claiming an independence from British domination not less than that of Egypt. This requires absolute unity of moral purpose for its fulfilment, not compromise or concession. "I deeply regret that at such a critical time I should have personally added one pang to Indian humiliation by weakly countenancing repatriation from South Africa."

Reuter in a message dated Nov. 3, says:—

A message from Bombay, giving a general survey of the non-co-operation movement in India, shows that the campaign generally has failed. No Indians have renounced responsible posts, and foreign goods are not boycotted. There is an abundance of candidates, including Moslems, offering to stand at the election for the new Councils, which are fixed for the middle of the month. Mr. Gandhi has been alienated by the responsible elements of the community, as the result of his vehemence and violence. Nevertheless, the policy of non-co-operation has undoubtedly grievously affected the prestige and authority of the new Councils. The country remains in a state of intense tension, violence, even bloodshed being expected at the polls. The only hopes are to re-establish confidence in British justice, and the determination to lead India by progressive stages towards self-Government.

The *United Empire*, the journal of the Royal Colonial Institute, London, has the following comment on Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation movement in India:—

Vigorous measures are being taken in Mesopotamia to restore order and relieve beleaguered garrisons preliminary to the drawing up by Sir Percy Cox of some scheme of Arab self-government. More troops are being sent from India, and the Maharajah of Kapurthala has generously placed his infantry at the disposal of the Imperial Government. This action is in striking contrast with the spirit of extremists like Mr. Gandhi, who has induced the National Congress to pass a resolution refusing to co-operate in the working of India's new institutions. India's idealist friends are her worst enemies. The resolution will be repudiated, but it makes for disquiet and uncertainty when every nerve should be strained in the interest of peace and order.

A Reuter telegram from Lahore dated Oct. 30 states:—Zafar Alikhan, editor of the *Zeminder* newspaper, has been convicted of seditious writings on the Khilafat agitation, and sentenced to five years transportation.

Simla, Oct. 30.—The trustees of Aligarh College (according to Reuters) have rejected by overwhelming

majority Mahomed Ali's motion for non-co-operation, refusal of the Government grant, and the disaffiliation of the College from the University. This decision is regarded as a blow to the promoters of the non-co-operation movement among the college students. The college resumes work in a month's time. [Aligarh College is a noted Mahommedan Anglo-Indian College in the United Provinces of India, 55 miles north of Agra.]

Whether the Aligarh College resumes work in a month's time or not, there is no doubt that the students themselves are at one with the non-co-operation movement which has rendered it impossible for the trustees to carry on. The decision of the Trustees is the decision of the few and not of the students who are many in number.

We take the following from the *Indian Social Reformer*:—

The position of an Englishman editing an Indian newspaper is exposed to serious disadvantages. The fact of his not being an Indian, obliges him to adopt the most extreme views in order to ward off the suspicion that he is not completely identifying himself with Indian interests. His ignorance of the under-currents of Indian life, makes him incapable of distinguishing between the froth and foam, and the genuine stream of tendencies. The antipathy of his own countrymen here, unless he is a very philosophic person which few Englishmen are, creates in him a bitterness which he cannot always keep out of his views on public questions. Apart from these practical inconveniences, the appointment of an Englishman to edit an organ of Indian opinion is not quite on all fours with our professions in regard to our capacity to govern ourselves. It cannot be said that Indian Editors have not proved their capacity to conduct newspapers.

Senator Harding, the Republican Candidate has been elected president of the United States of America and will take office in March next. For the first time in American History women voted at the elections since their recent enfranchisement.

The Young Moslem Sporting Club held their inaugural meeting in Durban on the 31st Oct. Mr. A. M. Vanker is the President with Mr. J. H. M. Vahed as Secretary.

Reuter's message from Bloemfontein dated Nov. 9 reports that at the recent periodical court, Mr. Marquard, the Senekal magistrate, sentenced 50 Native women to pay a fine of £2 or suffer a month's imprisonment for refusing to take out residential passes at a cost of 6d. each. The women, as a protest against the pass, refused to pay the fines and they all went to prison. They were marched to the Senekal gaol, a distance of 24 miles. One subsequently paid

the fine. Later, a special justice of the peace sentenced 12 other Native women for a similar offence. Another hundred have been summoned to appear, and in view of the declarations by women that they will refuse to obey the summons, extra police are being drafted into the district.

Unfortunately recently the Natives of Port Elizabeth went on strike for an increase in the rate of wages paid to them and were reported to have resorted to violence in their attempts to rescue their leader Masabalala who was in prison awaiting trial. But the native women of Senekal have set a noble example by adopting passive resistance.

Last Sunday at a meeting of the Durban Sakaya Buddhist Society, Mr. R. H. Little of Johannesburg, a member of the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland delivered a lecture on Buddhism. Mr. G. Mackeurtan has presented this Society with an image of Lord Buddha.

Messrs. Haycock, Gregory, Seidle, Harp, Revd. Bone and Mesdames Wise & Bone and Miss Clark contributed to a pleasant musical evening at the Indian Y. M. C. A. last Wednesday vocal and instrumental selections interspersed with humorous recitations. But why no Indians figured on the programme of an Indian Institution intended for their encouragement in things that matter to their happiness we are at loss to understand. It appeared to be a gathering managed by European well-wishers of the Indian. All honour to them but we cannot believe that the members of this Association are altogether helpless.

Mr. G. Narayanasamy Naidoo will address a general meeting of all sections of the Indian community in Kimberley on Wednesday evening the 17th inst., at the Indian Political Association Hall. The speaker will outline the schemes to form a South African Fruit Syndicats Company. Mr. S. R. Naidoo will preside.

The Congregations of St. Aidan's and Christ Church are arranging for a farewell meeting of the Revd. & Mrs. C. M. Bone, (Principal of St. Aidan's College) and for the welcoming of the new Superintendent of St. Aidan's Indian Mission, the Revd. Mr. Hibbert Ware.

#### THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

**W**HEN the South African Indian National Congress was held in Johannesburg last year, the feeling of the delegates was in favour of a central Indian organisation for the South African Indian community with provincial bodies. To give effect to this idea District Committees of the South African Indian National Congress were formed in Durban, Maritzburg and the northern districts of Natal, from which to evolve the Natal Provincial Congress and to admit to it other District Committees when such committees were formed in districts which are not yet sufficiently strong to have such a committee. Last Sunday, however, at the invitation of Mr. P. K. Naidoo a number of representative Indians who met in the Tamil Institute resolved on the resuscitation of the Natal Indian Congress and appointed Mr. Naidoo with Mr. Amod Bayat to convene a meeting of Natal Indians for that purpose. We notice that the draft constitution of the Congress will be published for the information of the public, and while this is as it should

be, we would remind those who are responsible for the drafting of the constitution that among other reasons the Congress was interdicted as it was said to have then ceased to be thoroughly representative of the Indian community of Natal. On Durban, the most populous and important Indian centre, rests the grave duty to see to it that in the proposed constitution fair and just provisions made for the representation of the other districts in which Indians are not so great in number. The membership qualification of an annual fee of £3 in the later years of the Congress was found to operate against the admission of many who were desirous of becoming members and as it was then ascertained that those who were then members had years before ceased to pay the annual subscription, it has been realised by all that that sum was a prohibitive amount if it were intended really to make the Congress representative of the people, and we trust if a subscription qualification is necessary for membership, it should be a nominal amount, so that membership is within the reach of every Indian. We welcome the present movement as we understand that it is intended to absorb all the existing Indian political institutions in Natal in order that the Provincial Congress shall be the supreme Indian political body in Natal with its district and other committees and that this Provincial Congress with other provincial Congresses in the Union shall on an improved basis continue to constitute the South African Indian National Congress for the defence and advocacy of the rights of the Indian community.

#### ANTI-ASIATIC MOVEMENT

##### MEETING HELD IN DURBAN

A meeting called under the auspices of the South African Industrial Federation, other associations of white employees, and the South Africans' League, was held in Alexandra Hall last Friday night to discuss and decide what steps should be taken to check the Asiatic menace and to safeguard the spheres of employment suitable for Europeans in the Union of South Africa.

Mr. Frank Nettleton, M.L.A., who was voted to the chair, said that as long as Europeans had to pay £10 or £12 a month for a house they could never hope to compete with the Asiatics, three of whom would willingly sleep behind the counter. White workers were handicapped and persecuted by the capitalistic class which exploited Asiatics and other classes of cheap coloured labour, and this, unless a check were put to it, would bring down the wages of European workers.

Mr. Leo Macgregor explained the aims and aspirations of the South Africans' League. The Asiatic was not only an economic menace, he was a social, moral, and political menace. Surely Europeans were not willing to see that heritage they had fought for go down before the Asiatic menace. It was due to the lack of education that we had so many of the so-called poor whites in this country. What they had to fight was not only the Asiatic menace, but those who stood behind them.

Mr. J. Hunter, organising secretary in the Transvaal of the South Africans' League, said that in the Transvaal the white cross was sent round, and the white men and women were rallying to the standard. In touching on the history of South Africa, he said that the pioneers worked for white ideals, and then came the modern parasitic growth, the outcome of the capitalistic system, which was thrust upon them, and which they sought to combat with white ideals and

white standards. He was prepared to say that in the Transvaal no European with a capital of £1,000 could make good in a country store, because an Indian would come along and open in a tin and wood shanty and beat the European everytime. At Vereeniging, in 1902, there were 17 European stores, but these have now dwindled to five, owing to Asiatic competition.

The constant interruption of one man in the audience at this stage eventually led to his expulsion from the hall with the instruction not to come back again.

Mr. Leo Macgregor said that the meeting was not called for the purpose of hearing International Socialists. They were asked to co-operate in the proceedings, but their reply was that they could not co-operate, and under the circumstances none of them had the right to speak at a meeting called to discuss the Asiatic menace, in which the International Socialists did not believe.

Mr. Hunter then proceeded to deal with the League, which he said was started in September, 1919, and now embraced 40 branches in the Transvaal. The second congress was held at Potchefstroom in March, and a petition was drawn for submission to Parliament. It was signed in the Transvaal by or on behalf of 83,000 people, and it was the biggest petition that had gone to the Union Parliament. He asked whether Natal was going to let the Transvaal fight the battle alone. The Transvaal was not going to be swamped by the Asiatic, and if the Government did not take the necessary action the people would fight the battles for themselves. The Transvaal wanted the active support and co-operation of Natal. Influences were being brought to bear to prevent Indians returning to India, and Arabs were taking a prominent part in the agitation on their behalf. The time was rotten ripe for something to be done in Natal. A branch had been started here. They must not be satisfied with that, but send around the fiery cross and draw many more into their ranks.

Mr. W. Cox, M.P.C., detailed what had been done by the Maritzburg branch. They realised that when the State was in danger they should all organise without any political label. He believed that from the ranks of the workers in Maritzburg, with those who assisted them, they would kick up such a dust that the Government would have to sit up and take notice. They would have a Vigilance Committee in Maritzburg which would watch the Asiatics closely, and would find means to bring them to book or kick them out of the country. Asiatic money would speak through European mouths, but eventually they would have on their public bodies only those who believed and worked for the supremacy of the white man in South Africa.

Six resolutions were proposed, seconded and carried.

The first was as follows: "This meeting declares that Asiatics are a serious moral, social, economic and political menace to South Africa, and particularly to the Province of Natal. We, therefore, call upon the Government to promptly initiate legislation providing for the compulsory repatriation, as speedily as possible, of all Asiatics not born and domiciled in the Union of South Africa."

The second resolution was "Whereas Asiatics and other low-paid coloured workers are the cause of serious unemployment and social degradation of the white people in the Union of South Africa by their unfair economic competition and low standards of living, this meeting urges the Government to introduce early in next session of Parliament legislation enforcing the payment of wages or salaries in accordance with the desirable white standards in all trades, industries, and all occupations suitable for white persons in this country. The new law to provide drastic penalties for any evasions or offences under the Act."

The third was worded as follows: "This meeting

earnestly requests the Government to initiate during next session of Parliament legislation providing for: (a) Prohibition of any further sales of land to Asiatics and the compulsory expropriation, subject to fair compensation, and within a period to be defined by the Act, of all land, buildings, trade or financial interests acquired by Asiatics in past years, whether as individuals, partners or shareholders. (b) The segregation as speedily as possible in reserved areas and trade bazaars, to be defined by legislation, of all Asiatics other than employes in service of Europeans. (c) The prohibition of any new Asiatic trading licences, save in the reserved areas and bazaars mentioned above."

Resolution the fourth read: "This meeting expresses its strong disapproval of the employment of Indians or low-paid coloured men in positions of responsibility, such as directing street-traffic, and as clerks, storemen, drivers of motor cars, and motor driven lorries, etc., and considers that the Durban Municipality, business firms, and individuals responsible for this most objectionable policy should fill these positions by engaging Europeans, of whom thousands, including many gallant ex-soldiers, are unemployed in this Union, and could be quickly trained to carry out such work."

The fifth resolution carried was: "This meeting requests the Government to introduce legislation prohibiting Asiatics or any non-Europeans from trading under or in any way adopting or using European names or trade titles which camouflage or disguise their true origin and nationality."

The final resolution was as follows: "This meeting heartily approves and supports the policy of the South Africans' League, as declared in the objects of the Durban and Coast branch, and records its determination to make the Asiatic menace the vital issue politically and economically, and appeals to all Europeans to unite in demand for legislation and other measures necessary for safeguarding their national heritage."—*Natal Mercury*.

## THE MEANING OF THE EMPIRE

(BY M. K. GANDHI)

The following circular has been issued by the Education Department:

"Teachers and educational officers of this Presidency should be asked to co-operate in bringing about a right understanding of the meaning of the Empire and in dispelling the idea that the Empire is based on force and militarism, by encouraging the parties concerned to look upon each other as brethren in advancement of the liberal aims and mutual friendship and sympathy particularly in India, where a contrary feeling is gaining ground."

It is dated at Poona the 1st instant.

The circular in my opinion is a triumph of non-co-operation. We have been told authoritatively that the Empire is based finally on force. When an attempt is being made to isolate this force, and to show by not meeting it by force that it is utterly useless when it is not backed by the co-operation, conscious or unconscious, of the people, we have a circular calling upon the teachers to co-operate in showing that the Empire is based not on force or militarism but that it is based on mutual friendship. This I consider a triumph of non-co-operation because force recedes into the background. Sir Michael O'Dwyer flouted his brute force in the face of the nation, and terrorism reigned supreme for a time. It did not answer. Now it is to be covered under soft-sounding phrases. It too must fail.

The circular is hypocritical. The talk of friendship and sympathy between territorists and their victims is to add deception to tyranny. The way out is through non-co-operation.

It is a vain attempt to expect to secure friendship

by false pretensions. The best and only way to secure the real friendship of the people and to prove to them that the Empire is not based on force and militarism, is to withdraw the superfluous military force even at the risk of losing the Empire to trust the people, and for Englishmen in general to regard us in every way their equals in thought and in deed. This presupposes righting the Khilafat wrong in accordance with the Mussalman sentiment and to give full reparation regarding the Punjab.

But this seems impossible for the general body of Englishmen to do. They have been brought up to work upon us as mere chattels. I invite the attention of the reader to the account of the treatment of our countrymen in New Zealand. I cannot conceive anything more wantonly brutal than the doings of the white men of New Zealand. It is not as if the colonists are a depraved people. They are brave, generous, charitable and cultured in their own sphere. But they are thrown off their balance immediately they come in contact with us. We are their natural prey. And a culture is no bar to their maltreatment of us even as culture is no bar to the killing even say of snakes by the majority of mankind. I have not used a far-fetched illustration. Thousands of Englishmen cannot bear the idea of an Indian claiming or living on terms of equality with them. White superiority, as Mr. Andrews has shown, has become a religion. Present Kruger used to say that God had ordained Asiatics to be whitemen's slaves. He even introduced the idea in his statute book. He was frank and he avowed it. Others believe it, practice it, but would fain break its force by using euphemistic language or worse.

It is not possible to blame anybody but ourselves for this badge of inferiority and we alone can remove it by supreme effort.—*Young India*.

#### THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

At the invitation of Mr. P. K. Naidoo a number of representative Indians met in the Tamil Institute in Durban, last Sunday, to consider the revival of the Natal Indian Congress. Mr. Amod Bayat presided assisted by Mr. S. D. Moodley. Much discussion took place but the spirit of the meeting was for the resuscitation of the Congress. A resolution was passed by the meeting authorising Messrs. Amod Bayat, and P. K. Naidoo to convene a meeting of the Indians in Natal at Durban on the 16th December, and that due notification be given thereof to the public and that the proposed constitution of the Congress be published in the press for the information of the community.

#### ANTI-INDIANISM IN NEW ZEALAND

A correspondent from New Zealand, who has himself gone through bitter experiences there and has been in that colony for a number of years, has sent to *Nav Sivan* a graphic account of the Indian condition there. As it is a telling account and bears internal evidence of truthfulness, we give below the substance of the account from the pages of *Nav Sivan* :—

There is a population of nearly one thousand Indians in New Zealand. 75 per cent. are from the Surat District of Gujarat, the rest from the Punjab. Barring a few traders the majority are labourers. Till recently the condition was tolerable but difficulties have now commenced. From the beginning of this year to the time of writing, 581 Asiatics have entered New Zealand. Of these 410 are Chinese and 171 Indians. More still are coming in. The Chinese pay a poll-tax of £100 each; Indians being British subjects are exempted. This incoming of the Asiatics provides daily food for the newspapers. They incite the white people by all kinds of Anti-Asiatic writings. The

result is that the white colonists look down upon the Indians. They cannot secure labour and when they do, difficulties are put in their way.

Last week seven Indians entered Auckland. They took up a contract for road repairs in Christ's Church. They commenced operations in due course. The white labourers on seeing them working on public roads struck work. The white engineer also declined to inspect the Indian work and agitated for the cancellation of the contract given to Indians and for a stipulation that no Indian would be given such work in future.

A Gujarat young man was working in a hotel in Christ's Church. The manager acted in such a barbarous manner that the poor man had to leave. He became a newspaper vendor. The first day passed peacefully enough. On the second day appeared a blazing placard containing the head line, 'Bombay coolie as a paper boy.' The article severely criticised the employment of the youth. On the third day the manager declined to sell him the newspapers.

Last Thursday eight Indians were employed in another town for trimming hedges. After finishing the work they went in search of other work to Masterton. They could not get a landlord who would let a house to them. So the poor men went to Carterton. With difficulty they were able to hire a cottage. But hardly had they been in it for half an hour when from 70 to 80 Europeans went there and asked them peremptorily to vacate it. They used the most abusive language against them which is unmentionable, called them all sorts of names and told them that if they did not voluntarily leave the town, they would be forcibly ejected from it. The poor men remained still. Upon this the Europeans were further enraged and fell upon them. At last two Policemen came, they asked the Europeans to disperse, told them not to harm the Indians and warned them of the legal consequences of this act. The mob retorted: "We will brave any danger in order to drive these Indians." They disregarded the Police-warning, and their attitude became more threatening and so the poor Indians went back to Masterton and passed the wintry night out in the open.

Some days ago in another town a meeting was held to consider steps to be taken for preventing Indian immigration. One of the speakers suggested that the existing Indian settlers should be driven out, New Zealand must be retained exclusively for white people. In another town an Indian went to a land-agent to buy a farm. Instead of receiving a courteous 'No,' he was rudely insulted for the presumption.

During the past fortnight there has been a conference known as 'Auckland Provincial Conference of the returned soldiers' Association.' This Conference considered the propriety of asking the Parliament to pass an Asiatic Exclusion Act. One of the speakers objected that the Indians competed with the white men, accepted less wages and undersold white traders. He advocated complete boycott of Indians. Another member opined that the Indians of New Zealand were not to be compared to the Sikhs and the Gurkhas and said that they had taken no part in the war, and yet I know that many Gujarat labourers left Gujarat for France and Mesopotamia. Gujarat also contributed to the crores that were paid by India and Gujrat shared the expenses of the salary paid to the Sikhs and the Gurkhas.

An Indian youth who collects bottles for a factory was mercilessly beaten by a returned soldier. He went to lodge a complaint with the police but none was taken. Most of the associations have passed resolutions asking for Asiatic exclusion. In Auckland itself there are 200 Indians without work and without proper residence. They can get houses only in questionable quarters and in these places for want of accommodation over 16 or 17 men remained huddled together in a single cottage.

In Wellington too, Indians are in the same pitiable

conditions, living in quarters of ill-fame, and thus being unable to procure decent accommodation they are obliged to live in stinks of iniquity.—*Young India*.

### MR. PENNINGTON'S LETTER TO MR. GANDHI

Dear Sir,

I do not like your scheme for "boycotting" the Government of India under what seems to be the somewhat less offensive (though more cumbersome) name of "non-co-operation"; but I have always given you credit for a genuine desire to carry out revolution by peaceful means and am astonished at the violence of the language you use in describing General Dyer on page 4 of your issue of the 14th July last. You begin by saying that he is "by no means the worst offender," and, so far, I am inclined to agree, though as there has been no proper trial of anyone it is impossible to apportion their guilt; but then you say "his brutality is unmistakable." "his abject and unsoldierlike cowardice is apparent," he has called an *unarmed crowd* of men and children—mostly holiday makers—a rebel army." "He believes himself to be the saviour of the Punjab in that he was able to shoot down like rabbits men who were *penned* in an enclosure; such a man is unworthy to be considered a soldier. There was no bravery in his action. He ran no risk. He shot without the slightest opposition and without warning. This is not an error of judgment. It is paralysis of it in the face of *fancied* danger. It is proof of criminal incapacity and heartlessness." etc.

You must excuse me for saying that all this is mere rhetoric unsupported by any proof, even where proof was possible. To begin with, neither you nor I were present at the Jallianwalla Bagh on that dreadful day—dreadful especially for General Dyer for whom you show no sympathy,—and therefore cannot know for certain whether the crowd was or was not "unarmed." That it was an "illegal", because a "prohibited" assembly is evident; for it is absurd to suppose that General Dyer's 4½ hours march, through the city that very morning, during the whole of which he was warning the inhabitants against the danger of any sort of gathering, was not thoroughly well-known. You say they were "mostly holiday makers," but you give no proof; and the idea of holiday gathering in Amritsar just then is incredible. I cannot understand your making such a suggestion. General Dyer was not the only officer present on the occasion, and it is impossible to suppose that he would have been allowed to go on shooting into an innocent body of holiday makers. Even the troops would have refused to carry out what might then have been not unfairly called a "massacre."

I notice that you never even allude to the frightful brutality of the mob which was immediately responsible for the punitive massacres reluctantly adopted by General Dyer. Your sympathies seem to be only with the murderers, and I am not sanguine enough to suppose that my view of the case will have much influence with you. Still I am bound to do what I can to get at the truth, and enclose a copy of some notes I have had occasion to make. If you can publish an *exact* account of what happened at Amritsar on the 10th of April, 1919 and the following days, especially on the 13th, including the demonstration in favour of General Dyer, (if there was one,) I, for one, as a mere seeker after the truth, should be very much obliged to you. Mere abuse is not convincing, as you so often observe in your generally reasonable paper.

Yours faithfully,

J. R. PENNINGTON I. C. S. (Ret)

25 Victoria Road,  
Worthing,  
Sussex,  
27th Aug. 1920.

for 12 years Chief Magistrate of Districts in the South of India before reform by assassination and otherwise, became so fashionable.

P. S. Let us get the case in this way. General Dyer, acting as the only representative of the Government on the spot shot some hundreds of people, (some of them *perhaps* innocently mixed up in an illegal assembly,) in the *bona fide* belief that he was dealing with the remains of a very dangerous rebellion and was thereby saving the lives of very many thousands, and in the opinion of a great many people did actually save the city from falling in the hands of a dangerous mob.—*Young India*.

### A NOTABLE INTERVIEW

MR. GANDHI AND BABU MOTI LAL GHOSE

The following is a description of an interview between Mr. M. K. Gandhi and Babu Motilal Ghose, given by one present during the interview. It first appeared in the *A. B. Patrika*, Calcutta:—

I was present at the interview that took place between Babu Moti Lal Ghose and Mahatma Gandhi at the former's house on 10th September last and I shall try to give a summary of their conversation which, I think, will prove interesting and profitable to the general public. Mahatma Gandhi was accompanied by Babu Giridhari Lal, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru and Shrimati Sarala Devi. After mutual greetings Mahatma Gandhi opened the conversation by inquiring if it were a fact that Babu Moti Lal had written to the President of the Special Congress opposing the boycott of councils.

MOTI BABU: It is not a fact. I only sent a message to the Congress and its Subjects Committee through the President suggesting that the non-co-operation resolution should not be disposed of in a hurry but its consideration should be postponed till the Nagpur Congress was held.

MAHATMA: What is your opinion about the boycott of councils and other items in the resolution passed by the Congress?

MOTI BABU: I have been a non-co-operationist for the last fifty years. As regards the councils, I have always regarded them as a farce, a delusion and a snare. I myself have never sought to enter any of them and have always counselled our public men to do the same. But I must say both this and other items in the resolution affected only an infinitesimally small number of people. It mattered little whether the handful of title-holders give up their titles or not or the few men, who go to the council, do or do not go. The all important question is how to rouse the masses. You must raise a cry which the masses will understand.

MAHATMA: Will you kindly be a little more explicit?

MOTI BABU: I shall explain my position by citing two instances. You have no doubt heard of the great combination of the indigo ryots of Bengal in 1896 to expel the planters from this province?

MAHATMA: Oh yes.

MOTI BABU: Do you know how this was effected, the unity of six millions of people in the course of six months which has no parallel in the history of any country in the world? It was only by raising a cry of a great wrong felt keenly by all the ryots equally and which went straight into the heart of every one of them as soon as it was raised.

MAHATMA: Yes, I have heard of it.

MOTI BABU: It happened in this wise. The ryots were groaning under the oppression of the planters. They came to see that their deliverance lay in not sowing indigo. So a few intelligent among them took a vow in some sacred place that they would have nothing to do with indigo-sowing. They then persuaded others to take the same vow. The cry was "no ryot should touch the indigo even if he was tortured to death." And though they were tortured in a most brutal way by the planters they did not yield. When the planters failed, the authorities interfered and coerced them both by threats and entreaties. They remained as firm as the rock. "Saheb, you say you will put us in jail. Do it, but this hand shall never

again touch indigo." "Sow it for this season only and you will be free to do what you like afterwards." "Saheb, we have taken the vow in the name of God. We can never break it"—that was the bold and spirited reply of the down-trodden and illiterate ryot.

Moti Babu next referred to the cry of "land" by Ireland to bring about unity among Irishmen. He said "you know the Irish leaders failed to rouse the Irish masses till Parnell raised a cry of 'land' which affected every Irishman. The Irish understood it because it was a common grievance. And the Land League was the result which formed the nucleus for Irish nationality.

Mr. Babu, addressing the Mahatma, said: "Dear friend, you should think of a common cry for the masses which will appeal to their heart directly. It seems to me that there are two things which sit like a dread night-mare on the breast of both the masses and the educated class. One is the police 'zoolum' and the other is the pitiless character of the criminal administration. Can't these go to make a common cry?" Mahatma Gandhi said that he would think over the matter.

Mahatma Gandhi next gave his view on the boycott of councils. He said that councils demoralised most of those who went there. Thus our representative men can do greater service outside the council than inside it. Moti Babu agreed.

Next came the question of boycotting British courts. Mahatma Gandhi said, that the courts, as much as the councils, are the great instrument to keep our people under moral and intellectual domination. We must get rid of these evils.

Moti Babu replied that he agreed with him but the evil must be struck at the very root. The vast majority of the lawyers won't give up their practice which enables them to keep motor cars etc., and indulge in other luxuries. You must go to the people and advise them to stop litigation. Mahatma Gandhi replied that he knew of many lawyers who were prepared to give up their practice. Moti Babu said it was very hard for him to believe that story. However, if there be some willing to do it, the great majority will not. We are to stop the evil at the very source.

In regard to the question of the withdrawal of children from schools Mahatma Gandhi said that the boys get their mentality from the school. On being pressed to say what the boys would do if they were withdrawn from schools, Mahatma Gandhi said that if the boys were withdrawn new schools would be started. So long as our boys, who are the makers of the future of the country, continue to be intellectually fed in the present day schools there is little hope for the country.

Babu Moti Lal replied as the existing schools and colleges are maintained by our money and not by money brought from England so he did not see why our boys should not avail themselves of the education imparted in those institutions till we have got our national educational institutions established. Of course, we must be on our guard that our boys are not in any way demoralised in the Government schools and colleges.

The last question discussed was the deletion of that part of Babu Bepin Chandra Pal's amendment which contemplated the raising of a fund in the name of Lokmanya Tilak. Babu Moti Lal regretted that this should have been dropped and was added to Mr. Gandhi's resolution. The first thing we want now is propaganda not only in this country but also in England and America. We also need funds for starting national schools and colleges and establishing arbitration courts. Babu Moti Lal appealed to the Mahatma to start such a fund at the Nagpur Congress.

The interview ended by Moti Babu's warmly embracing Mahatma Gandhi and giving him his blessings. He said to the Mahatma that the ideal which he wished every child to keep before him was the saintly character and the noble discipline of his dear friends.

These two patriots one, the Nestor in the Indian political world, and the other one of the greatest political personalities of modern India, were locked in loving embrace for some time before they parted, and it was really a sight for the gods to see.

M. K. B. in the A. B. PATRIKA, Calcutta.

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