

Indian Opinion

NO. 9 VOL XX FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD, 1922.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.
Price Fourpence

NOTES AND NEWS

MR. Mackeurtan, K. C. (S. A. P., Umbilo) has given notice in the Union House of Assembly that he would move the following resolution on Tuesday, March 14: "That this House requests the Government to consider the early introduction of legislation which will provide for the allocation to the Asiatic community, of any one or more of the Provinces of the Union, separate and district areas, rural and urban, where that community may develop in accordance with its needs and standards of civilisation, due regard being had in such legislation to the interests of the present and future European and Native population."

As was not unexpected the question of segregation of Indians will come for discussion during the present session of the Union Parliament. Whether the Mr. Mackeurtan's resolution will be adopted or not is doubtful, but the success of the policy will solely depend on the attitude taken up by the Indian community. We have expressed more than once in these columns our strongest protest against the policy of segregation but that will not help if our countrymen will not bestir themselves.

A Reuter's message from Delhi dated Feb. 26, states:—The All-India Congress Committee, after eight hours' discussion, has passed Gandhi's resolution confirming the suspension of a mass civil disobedience, but sanctioning all the other non-co-operation activities practically unaltered. It is understood that the resolution goes beyond Gandhi's personal views, and was drafted to meet the opinions generally held by the Congress leaders. Malaviya's views, favouring the abandonment of civil disobedience and non-co-operation, did not find any supporters.

Durban is favoured with the visit of Shriman Sangit Pandit Thakur Prabinsingh who has arrived here last week from Delagoa Bay. Pandit Prabinsingh hails from the Punjab where he was born and bred. He is well-versed in the Persian language and has also a very good knowledge of Sanskrit. He has dedicated his life to preaching the Vedic religion in which work he has engaged himself for the last twenty years. He has travelled throughout India preaching on behalf of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Before coming to Natal Pandit Prabinsingh was in East Africa for a year and three months touring round the Colony and from there he came to Delagoa Bay where he spent three months. He is now in our midst where he has been allowed to land on a temporary permit of one month which will be extended up to three months only. Pandit Prabinsingh hopes to visit the Transvaal and the Cape and then, after his long absence, to leave once more for the Motherland. Pandit Prabinsingh was given a welcome reception on behalf of the Hindu community at the Tamil Institute last Thursday Feb. 22. A meeting in his honour was also held last Tuesday under the auspices of the Hindu Sabha of the Indian Market and another meeting was held on Saturday in honour of the Pandit at the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. We join our brethren in extending

a hearty welcome to Pandit Prabinsingh and hope that his visit will prove fruitful to him as well as our countrymen.

TRUSTEESHIP OF THE NATIVES

THE Rev. Owen, Archdeacon of Kavirondo, in a letter to *The Times* (London), is reported to have appealed to Indians to take a broad and impartial view of the position of the Natives in Kenya. He points out that Indians hitherto have not shown any signs of devoting their lives to the welfare of Africans, but by indulging in a policy of non-co-operation they have, in a marked manner, demonstrated their lack of sense of responsibility towards Natives. Mr. Owen urges Indians, before demanding equality in the rule of Natives, to fit themselves for the trusteeship, then they will find it thrust upon them.

There is a great deal of talk both in South and East Africa about the responsibility towards Natives. Europeans who are protesting against the existence of Indians in their midst repeatedly bring forth the argument that Indians have not shown any signs of devoting their lives to the welfare of African Natives and that therefore they have no right to demand equality. Have these Europeans, we would ask, devoted their lives to the welfare of the Natives, have they really come to this country, as they profess to have done, with the sense of their responsibility towards Natives? We think not. No one has come to this country, we believe, but for his bread and butter. Both Europeans and Indians are alike guilty of being intruders in this country of the Africans. They are here solely for their own self-interest. And the self-interest of the white race exceeds that of the Indians in this respect that the Indians, mostly, wish to earn their livelihood and return back to their own country, while the white race who has usurped this land from the Africans wish to keep their hold fast on it by keeping all the other races down trodden. Moreover, apart from its self-interest, the white race has, in recent years, fallen so miserably in the clutches of the "superiority" devil that the white man is beginning to think that the complexion of his skin entitles him to be the superior being on the face of the earth, and any one who rises to his level or even endeavours to do so must be instantly pressed down under his iron heels. That is the policy in Africa, not towards Indians but towards Natives as well. Then to talk of the "trusteeship" Europeans may consider themselves to be the trustees of the Natives but we have witnessed with our own eyes that the latter derive more satisfaction from those that have not that obligation than the former who profess to have it and do not fulfil it. A Native utters with his mind as

case in an Indian store or an Indian quarter than he does a European. When entering the latter he has a feeling that he is entering a lion's den. When entering the former he finds in it a homey atmosphere. He is treated by the Indian not as a master treats a servant but as a friend, an equal, or an ordinary customer. As such he receives courtesy the same as any other human being would receive. As a customer he is not discarded because of his dark complexion. He is treated just as respectably as one with a fairer complexion. This is why the Indian is able to thrive and conduct his store with better success than the European. This creates jealousy in the mind of the petty European trader and gives birth to the Anti-Asiatic movement of the type we see in South Africa and hear of so much in East Africa and it is supported by even such people as the Rev. Owen, Archdeacon of Kafirondo!

When this argument of "trusteeship" fails another method is adopted, the baseness of which is indescribable. That method is to ill-treat the Native in his own country and then to bring forward the argument that the Native has more right to this country than the Indian and he resents the Indian enjoying rights which he cannot enjoy. And the remedy is: not to allow the Native any rights but to deprive the Indian also of his rights. Thus the *Imperialist* a Durban Anti-Asiatic weekly says:—"The new draft Natives (Urban Areas) Act lays down that no natives, with trifling exceptions, may buy land in urban areas, except in locations or Native villages, marked out for them. The Natives are bitterly incensed at these restrictions being placed on them, African-born though they may be, while Asiatic-born *aliens* are free to buy land practically anywhere in these urban areas. The one way out of the trouble is to empower the local authorities to appoint separate areas for Europeans, Asiatics and Natives!"

This is planting the seed of enmity between the races, a trickery for which the *Imperialist* has very little to be proud of.

PROPOSED NEW LICENSING LAWS

FOR RURAL DISTRICTS OF NATAL

The following Draft Ordinance, to amend the Laws relating to the grant of Licences to Wholesale and Retail Dealers in the Rural Districts of Natal, intended to be introduced into the Provincial Council during the forthcoming session, is published for general information in the Natal Provincial Gazette of the 23rd February 1922—

Enacted by the Provincial Council of the Province of Natal, as follows:—

1. This Ordinance may be cited as "The Rural Dealers' Licensing Ordinance, 1922," and shall come into force on the 1st day of November, 1922.

2. This Ordinance shall extend to so much of the Province as lies outside the boundaries of Boroughs and Local Townships, and nothing therein contained shall apply to or affect Boroughs or Local Townships.

3. The expression "The Administrator" as used in this Ordinance means the Administrator acting under the authority of the Executive Committee. "Licence" means any licence to which Act No. 18, 1897, applies.

(4) (1) Licensing Boards for hearing and determining applications for licences shall be constituted in each county throughout the Province, save as is provided in regard to the territory of Zululand. The Northern Districts as defined in Natal Act No. 1 of

1903 shall for the purposes of this Ordinance be constituted as one county.

One such Board may be constituted for a county or combined counties, or Boards may be appointed for different parts of a county.

(2) Sections 4 and 6 of Act No. 18, 1897, in so far as they relate to the area to which this Ordinance applies, the proviso of Section 5 (1) of Ordinance No. 6, 1916, and Sections 6 and 7 of the same Ordinance, are hereby repealed. Reference in Act No. 18, 1897, and any amending laws to licensing officers or boards shall be construed as references to licensing boards under this Ordinance. The words "the next section" occurring in Section 5 of Act No. 18, 1897, shall be altered to "Section 2 of Act No. 22, 1909," and the reference in the last-mentioned section to any decision given under Section 6 of Act No. 18, 1897, shall for the purposes of this Ordinance be construed as a reference to a decision of a Licensing Board under this Ordinance.

5 (1) The Administrator may divide any county or any other area previously served by one Licensing Board into two or more areas or combine two or more such areas contained in one county, and may appoint fresh Boards for the newly-defined areas. In either case the existing Boards shall be dissolved as from the date fixed for the establishment of the new areas.

(2) The Administrator may also alter the boundaries of any existing areas, and it shall be in his discretion according to the circumstances to dissolve the existing Boards and appoint new ones or to allocate the existing Boards to the altered areas.

6. (1) Each Licensing Board shall consist of a Chairman and four other members appointed by the Administrator.

(2) No person shall be qualified for appointment as a member of a Licensing Board unless he is a resident, owner or renter of a house or land in the county or area and is enrolled as a voter for Parliament.

7. (1) Licensing Boards shall be appointed for successive terms of three years.

(2) When a vacancy occurs through the resignation of a member or otherwise, the Administrator shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy till the end of the current term.

(3) Should a member be unable to attend a meeting or be recused or otherwise disqualified from sitting upon any application, the Administrator may, without obtaining the authority of the Executive Committee, appoint any person to act in his place.

8. All appointments of Licensing Boards, with the names of the Chairman and their members; all appointments made to fill vacancies; the creation of all areas, and a description of the boundaries of all new or altered areas (unless such an area includes an entire county) shall be published in the *Provincial Gazette*, with a notification of the date on which anything so done is to take effect, and such publication shall for all purposes be sufficient proof of the matters notified.

9. (1) The Boards shall meet as often as may be required for the despatch of business.

(2) A meeting shall be duly constituted by a quorum of four members, notwithstanding that owing to a vacancy the Board may not at the time be fully constituted.

(3) In the absence of the Chairman a member may be chosen by those present to act as Chairman.

(4) No member shall sit upon any case in which he is directly or indirectly interested, or if a applicant or objector is his tenant or employee or that of his firm or partner, or if the premises in question are upon or within five miles from any premises licensed under Act No. 18, 1897, owned or occupied by him or his partner.

10. All applications for licences shall be addressed to the officer appointed for that purpose by the Administrator.

11. Any person resident within the area of the Board or within five miles from the premises sought to be

licensed, or owning or occupying similarly licensed premises within the same distance, or an officer of police on behalf of the police department, may lodge objections and oppose any licence, on compliance with the rules in that behalf.

12. The Board may in authorising a licence direct it to be suspended for the erection or completion of buildings according to approved plans, with any modifications that may be authorised, or pending the execution of repairs or of any necessary alterations in the existing premises.

13. If an application has been refused, no further application for a licence for the same premises may be brought till after the expiration of twelve months from the date of the application which has been refused.

14. (1) No licence shall be issued unless and until its grant has been authorised by the Board.

(2) Licences shall be signed and issued by the Receivers of Revenue upon a certificate from the proper officer that the licence has been approved.

A suspended licence shall not be issued until the Chairman of the Board, or in his absence, another member on his behalf, certifies that the required conditions have been complied with, nor, in the case of an appeal, till the appeal has been determined.

15. The following words shall be added to Section 2 of Act No. 22, 1909:—

Any person alleging that sufficient notice of the application has not been given in terms of the rules, shall also, if he would have been entitled to lodge objections, be entitled to apply to the Board for the application to be re-heard on proper notice. The Board may thereupon direct that its previous decision be suspended, and may upon the re-hearing decide upon the application *de novo*.

16. Subpoenas under Section 4 of Ordinance No. 6, 1916, may be signed by any member of a Licensing Board.

17. The reference in Section 7 of Act No. 18, 1897, to the Insolvency Law shall be altered to Section 139 of the Insolvency Act No. 32, 1916, or any amendment thereof, as regards the keeping of proper books or records in the English or Dutch language.

18. The taxation of costs in terms of Section 5 (3) of Ordinance No. 6, 1919, shall be by such officer as the rules may direct.

19. The rules under Act No. 18, 1897, may provide for matters of every kind incidental to the administration of this Ordinance.

Such rules may require the deposit of the licence money at the time of application, and its return if the licence is refused.

20. The territory known as the Province of Zululand shall be excluded from the operation of this Ordinance in so far as it relates to Licensing Boards, references to which in other parts of this Ordinance shall accordingly be construed in relation to the existing licensing authorities.

The Administrator may, however, by proclamation bring any part of Zululand not included in the Native Reserves under the operation of the clauses of the Ordinance relating to Licensing Boards, and upon the taking effect of such proclamation Licensing Boards shall be substituted for the pre-existing licensing authorities in the district so proclaimed, Sections 4 and 6 of Act No. 31, 1905, being to that extent superseded for the purposes of licences coming under Act No. 18, 1897.

MARITZBURG NOTES

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

S. NOHAR'S LICENSING APPEAL

The proceedings before the Town Council of Maritzburg, on the 17th February, in which a colonial-born Indian named Sannanan Nohar appealed against the

decision of the Licensing Officer, present many features which vitally affect the Licensing interests held by Indians. The Town Council refused Nohar's appeal a report of which appeared in INDIAN OPINION last week.

I had a personal interview with Nohar, and went into the record of his appeal. Nohar was born in Maritzburg and is 25 years of age. In October last Longfoon a Chinaman storekeeper, desiring to go back to his native country, sold by public auction all his stock-in-trade and immovable property. Nohar at this public auction purchased the property No. 209 Retief Street, for £903. Europeans were also bidding for the property. It should be observed here that Longfoon carried on business as a Retail Dealer in these premises for the past 20 years. As the licence was attached to the premises, Nohar gave a big price for it, in the belief that he would have no difficulty, seeing the holder of the licence was an Asiatic himself, in obtaining a transfer. Nohar duly made application for transfer of the licence. It was opposed by several Europeans residing in the locality on the ground that the applicant was an Asiatic, and they proceeded to state "that the present holder of the licence is an Asiatic (meaning Longfoon), having sold the premises is retiring from the business. We therefore consider it a favourable opportunity for such licence to be allowed to cease, failing the transfer of same to a European, which would be an improvement to the locality, whereas an Asiatic holder is detrimental."

At the hearing of objections, which were signed by 33 persons, of whom six had withdrawn, Nohar submitted a petition signed by 85 persons Europeans and coloured in support of his application. The Licensing Officer before evidence was led commenced saying "that in the case of the application of H. Longfoon and his son Winsion for the transfer to them of this licence held by Longfoon only; and the case of P. L. Soni for the transfer of his licence to 293 Retief Street, the Town Council on appeal had decided against fresh interests being created in respect of similar businesses in the neighbourhood," to which Mr. H. H. Janion, who appeared for the applicant Nohar, quired: "Then I take it you have made up your mind to refuse the application: Licensing Officer: "Oh no. Cause for granting the application may be shown in this case. If I had already decided to refuse the application I should recuse myself."

Objections were mainly directed to the fact that the applicant was an Asiatic, the occupation by him of the premises for trading purposes would be a menace, and would depreciate the value of their property.

The Licensing Officer refused the application and gave the following reasons:—

"The application is one for the transfer of a retail dealer's licence in respect of the grocer's shop situated at 209 Retief Street (corner of Loop Street), from Longfoon, a Chinaman, to Sannanan Nohar, a colonial-born Hindu.

I have refused the application for the reason that it is contrary to the public interest that the class of business which would be carried on, if the application were successful, should be licensed in respect of the premises 209 Retief Street. The premises are situated in a European residential area, and the granting of this and similar applications would detrimentally affect the value of the property in the neighbourhood.

In the matters of the appeals made by Longfoon & Son, Parak Bros., D. K. Shaik, and P. L. Soni respectively the Town Council decided not to create fresh interests in respect of similar applications for premises in this neighbourhood, and the applicant has shown no cause why such decision should be reversed."

These then are the two stereotyped reasons given by the Licensing Officer, for almost similar reasons were given in the case of applicants named above. And upon these reasons the Town Council on appeal upheld the decision of the Licensing Officer.

The hard facts are that the premises to which transfer

was applied are situate in a "mixed" locality. Europeans, Coloureds, and Indians reside within easy distance of each other. The Licensing officer, and with him the Town Council, were persuaded in deciding that "it was contrary to public interest" to grant a continuance of this licence. I wonder whether the term "public" meant Europeans exclusively, who objected. The decision has closed the gates of law, so far as Indians are concerned, to successfully apply for licences in this locality. There is nothing to prevent Nohar from occupying the property for residential purposes. Will it, in that case, create a menace to the neighbours? The decision has created a storm of indignation among the Indians, who feel that the policy of the Town Council, and its servant, the Licensing Officer, of gradually squeezing out Indian licences in what is termed as the "European locality" has become more pronounced.

That Indians are burgesses, voters, land owners and ratepayers, does not enter into any consideration involving this question of licences. That is a well-known fact to need repetition.

VALUATION OF PROPERTIES

The Corporation valuers made a fresh valuation of the city properties, and increased the value of properties to a million sterling. There was a general outcry both among the Europeans and Indians, who objected to the increased value put upon their properties. Strong protests were made at meetings by the European section of the community, which sent resolutions to the Town Council to let the old valuations stand.

Mr. C. N. Moodley one of the Indian objectors, appeals to the Council, and I append a press report of the proceedings:—

"This was an Indian application, and appellant said that the property adjoined the Dorp Spruit and was liable to flooding. The condition of all the streets and lanes below Retief Street where Indians lived was a disgrace to the City. It was alleged that Indian ownership deteriorated the value of property, but, on the contrary, the neglect of the Council was seriously deteriorating the value of the property owned by Indians. Appellant said that the neglect shown by the Council in the way of looking after the Indian portion of the town was so marked that Indians were seriously considering adopting an attitude of passive resistance and refusing to pay rates.

Replying to Mr. Forsyth, witness said he bought the house in April 1921, for £800.

Mr. Harrison said the house was constructed of burnt brick and up to twelve months ago had been occupied by a European lady. There were 3½ acres of land with the house.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

We have received the following from Mr. A. I. Kaje, Manager of Messrs. Amod Bayat & Co., (Durban branch), who led the Christopher's Sporting Contingent that recently went to India and is now returning after having had a ripping time. Mr. Kaje's impressions of the Indian National Congress will no doubt be read with interest by our young men in South Africa:—

To me, who had always had the misfortune to hear and be told that Indians did not and could not hold a political meeting with any sense of organisation or system about it and that their capacity of fitness and consistency in these respects was lacking in comparison to the Western world, the Congress and Khilafat gatherings came as a great surprise. If there is such a science as town planning, it was to be seen in its perfection at Khadi Nagar (or Khadi Town) and Muslim Nagar (or Muslim Town). If there is such a thing as

discipline it was among the Congress and Khilafat volunteers. If there is such a law as the laws of debate and its strict observance it was prevalent and observed in all its strictness at the Congress and Khilafat sessions. If there is oratory and eloquence to be heard it was to be heard at Ahmedabad during Congress week; but, mind you, this was all done when such great men as Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Ali Brothers and others were the guests of His Majesty King George in his various prisons. What would it all have been like, if all these great patriots had been present none can conjecture or imagine. Every leader, man or woman, of any consequence was at Ahmedabad during those great and memorable days; it is said and rightly said that if there was one man that went in and out of Khadi and Muslim Nagar there was a million and over.

Even men who should know the progress India has made were surprised at the awakening and interest that her sons and daughters from every nook and corner of her vast house manifested by their presence at the Congress. It was not a great big tamasha as some Anglo Indian might say but every countenance showed that a question as serious as life or death was at stake. But it was plain and evident to any observer that the whole Congress and Khilafat Conference and for that matter the whole of India revolved round that one figure small in stature but great and saintly in character, Mahatma Gandhi. When this man, whom I had seen pass along the streets of Durban unheeded and unnoticed, spoke, whether at the Working Committee or at the All-India Congress Committee or at the Congress itself, every word of his was quite audible in the farthest corner, and his call and his message were heard with that reverence and respect that is only given to men who are born in a century, nay, one in ten centuries, who rule not the bodies of men but the hearts of men.

What work and what resolutions were passed is no concern of these impressions but the perusal of these alone in every newspaper will show the awakening of Mother India.

I am etc.,
A. I. KAJEE.

TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN INDIA

(By Mr. M. H. DESAI in *Young India*)

(Continued from page 48)

For bathing purposes there was a long paved channel joining with the reservoir mentioned above. We were all to sit in it and bathe. As for food, we were given *Dalia* (a porridge of powdered wheat) in the morning, wheat bread and *dal* at noon and the same bread and a vegetable in the evening. What shall I say as to how I liked this appetising menu? The other prisoners were taking it all right and so I can hardly describe it as falling within your definition of food unfit for human consumption.

But let me now come to other matters. There is a rule that a newly arrived prisoner is only confined and not given any work for the first ten days of his term. So my friends of the Provincial Committee and myself, having no work, were given books which we read, heard the bitter language of the jailer and the superintendent in the mornings and saw prisoners striking and abusing one another. The second day I requested the superintendent to give us spinning wheels or let us have them from our home. He replied that wheels were given to women and that Government who spent 10 rupees on each prisoner had somehow to manage to raise a like amount out of his labour, and that therefore grinding was given to him. I said that if the Government had commonsense, they could earn 500 rupees out of our work. He angrily asked if he was to get us to write articles.

In answer to my companions the superintendent said, 'Owing to you disloyal people having arrived, I could not get my leave for ten days sanctioned. We have to suffer much on account of you. You must behave properly. Do not think I am alone. I have fifty millions of people behind me' (referring to the population of England).

This went on for a few days. The ten days' period of the Provincial Committee people was soon over, and they were made to wear an iron neckring and a wooden tablet showing the section against which they had offended and the term of the sentence of imprisonment. They already had irons on their feet. The same day they lost their lousy clothes and got new ones. My clothes were still the same but I had remained bare-bodied for two days and washed them thoroughly with earth. Thus the stink had disappeared and my friends had combined for one or two days to pick out the lice from my blankets in the sunshine.

When the friends left I felt somewhat lonely and so gradually grew very friendly with the other prisoners some of them dacoits. An old man with a term of seven years' imprisonment came near my cell and sat near the door. I read the Ramayana to him and he expounded it. He was a man of much common sense and knowledge. He had the Ramayana by heart. Then we recited bhajans and many prisoners began to sit near my cell. Prisoners here are finely divided into two classes, national and Government prisoners, i. e. ordinary prisoners and politicals. The politicals are gratefully admired and served by the others.

While my new friendships were thus flourishing, I heard that the Provincial friends had been given hard labour. Eleven had to grind fifteen *seers* of corn every day, and the deputy jailer had ordered the convict warder to harass them in all possible ways in order that they might weaken and apologise. All had warts on their palms but had in three or four days progressed up to about nine *seers*. When I received the news that the Government had directed that I should be treated as a political prisoner. I was sorry. While my friends were given hard labour, I was denied the privilege of spiritual elevation through physical suffering. My own clothes, in which I had arrived in jail and in which I was furnished up for the day when Devdas and Durga were to see me in order that she might not take fright at the convict's dress, were returned to me, but the 'Gandhi cap' was withheld. I asked the superintendent the reason. He could not explain anything beyond saying that it was like the one I wore and that I would not be allowed to wear it. I might change the shape, he added, or wear a *kes* like Sherwani's. I laughed and said I would do neither. 'Then you must go bareheaded', he said. I agreed. I thought of refusing to take the ordinary clothes, but then I remembered your 'Model Prisoner' and quietly submitted.

I passed my first day as a political prisoner in great trouble. But the next day I was at ease, as I realised that even so there was an opportunity of suffering. Some of my friends described their personal experience. 'There is a young man named Kailasnath still in his teens, the son of a well-known pleader of Cawnpore and a political prisoner. Being religiously minded, he takes food after bath, worship and the application of sandal paint etc. to the forehead. The jailer allowed sandal and other things for him, but when one day he saw the sandal mark, he ordered Kailasnath to rub it out. The young man obeyed but refused to take food. And so the jailer arrived on the scene and threatened punishment, but Kailasnath persisted in his refusal. For this he received filthy abuse, was severely flogged with a wooden cudgel and kicked with boots. His utensils were dashed to the ground. The hero responsible for this is Hamilton, an Englishman who has been promoted to jailership for his services during the war. This incident got into the newspapers, though not in detail, and there was an inquiry. The Inspector-General visited the prison and told

Kailasnath that he must obey all orders. Apparently he took the jailer also to task, as the latter came to Kailasnath and abused the Inspector-General before him!

On hearing this, I could see that life even as a political prisoner need not be uneventful. Meanwhile the attitude of the jailer and the superintendent towards me had changed and I had friendly conversations with them about non-co-operation and other topics. I did not quite relish this development as I was afraid that these officers might be trying to win me over as a prelude to oppressing the rest.

The same evening I heard successive cries of 'Gandhi-ji-ki Jai.' In the morning I read your observations in *Young India* and wished I could communicate them to the friends who had been given hard labour. There was no means of doing so. The cry started from one block and response from other blocks one after another. To the superintendent and the jailer it looked like a mutiny. They ran up. One of those fifteen friends was seized, and the warder fell upon him like a wolf. The poor man was greeted with foul abuse and flogged with lathis along with an ironical order to repeat 'Gandhijiki Jai.' After he had received ten blows of a lathi one inch and a half in diameter his magnificent frame tottered to the ground and then he was beaten with fists etc.

The friend who thus suffered is Lakshminarayan Sharma, a pious and inoffensive young man of twenty-two who was once Secretary Aligadh Congress Committee. The other prisoners could not bear the sight of this suffering and offered to retaliate upon the warder. But Lakshminarayan prevented them all and said it was their duty to suffer. The others however were greatly enraged and continued the cries of 'Gandhijiki Jai' for which about fifty or sixty of them were cruelly flogged. As if this were not enough the next morning all the prisoners were taken outside including the Provincial Committee men, and in the presence of all of them, two prisoners who were suspects had their hands fastened with a stick and then caned. The caning was so severe that the cries of the sufferers could be heard in my cell at a distance of two or three furlongs. When a prisoner swooned after some blows, he was given rest; and as he revived the caning was continued. In this way two of them received 23 cuts. It is worthy of note that at each cut the sufferer and his fellow prisoners sent up a joint cry of 'Gandhijiki Jai' in spite of the jailer and the superintendent, and these cries stopped only when the authorities were tired of inflicting any more punishment. After this three or four were flogged with sticks and fists. Two or three are in hospital. I was told that prisoners had died in this jail before in consequence of such oppression.

Having performed his 'dirty job' (Dyer's phrase) in this way, the jailer came to see me. I asked for an explanation of the trouble. He replied that there might have been a big mutiny and severe punishment was necessary to prevent it. I told him that be that as it might, I would fast and pray for the day. He asked me why? I said I would not pray only for my brethren who were no doubt in error but for those who despitely used them. The jailer asked me what was the value of prayer. The talk then turned upon the Bible. I explained to him that Jesus and the Bible were not the sole property of Christians like himself but the joint estate of humanity at large. He then appeared to melt somewhat. I said how good it would be if I was permitted to read to the prisoners Mr. Gandhi's observations pertinent to their case and I offered to meet all of them and talk to them about our duty. But this was not at all acceptable to the jailer. Only last evening he was saying to the prisoners, 'There is no victory to Gandhi here, the victory to Government. So you must cry for victory to Government.' He was however abashed a little, said it was no use crying over spilt milk and then left me.

After the jailer came the superintendent. He also

tried to tease me saying ironically how obedient my non-co-operator friends were. I was quiet and only said that he at least was amused by the whole affair. He told me I did not know the utility of punishment. I replied I did not care to as there was a world of difference between his mentality and mine, and that he on his part had no appreciation of our methods. He then expatiated upon the value of 'force' and said, 'You Indians are unpractical visionaries. We are practical. You only talk big.' I was listening quietly and contented myself with asking whether it was I or he that was talking big. He said nothing more and left me. Meanwhile I obtained permission to see Lakshminarayan, that friend who had been so cruelly dealt with. I saw him. He showed me terrible marks of the flogging upon his body. I told him we were forbidden to cry 'Gandhiji Jai' and that I read about it in the papers only the other day. On hearing this the young man burst into tears and said at once he must then tell the superintendent that he had done wrong. Thus he evidenced the incomparable tenderness of his soul. But what does the enemy know or care about our tenderness? So that we can only learn to send forth like sandal-wood greater fragrance, the more roughly we are handled. I assure you after the experiences that I have had that our people are mastering this lesson in some miraculous manner.

But now I must close. There is much to say but I shall rest content if this much reaches you by post for the present. We are not permitted to post letters but how long should these facts be kept from the public? It is also a question to be considered how far we should obey the order not to give out anything.

I have had no sleep last night, am thoroughly fatigued and must seize an early opportunity of posting this. I will write in English if possible but perhaps there may be no time.

We are all on our way to Agra, 39 in all including the members of the Provincial Committee and some Allahabad volunteers. Since he received the orders of removal, the superintendent was kindness itself to us. He must have heaved a sigh of relief at our departure as of some great trouble. On the last day he said, 'You are an awful nuisance. I should get an allowance of Rs. fifty for each one of you.' We are being removed, for the fear that we might influence the prison population and bring them to a knowledge of their slavery and ignorance.

But now we are reaching a station. And so I close. You—(The sentence abruptly ends here.)

(Concluded)

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