

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

THE *Natal Mercury* has been officially informed that at the end of the current financial year it is the intention of the Government to renew the scheme for the voluntary repatriation of Indians. The scheme was inaugurated in July, 1920, since when over 7,000 Indians have elected to take advantage of the offer of a free passage to India and other facilities. Of these more than half were women and children. The next shipment is due to leave Durban in about another week. It will number well over 600, and will consist largely of Indians from the Natal coal mines, as well as a fair proportion from the sugar estates.

In the course of a leaderette on the above subject, in which it expresses its approval at the proposed continuance of the Repatriation Scheme, the *Natal Mercury* states—

"Experience has proved that if the scheme of repatriation is to achieve the success desired, its advantages must be emphasised. To this end it is essential that those entrusted with the task of inducing Indians to take advantage of the Government's offer should use every endeavour to make the scheme thoroughly understood. It is not sufficient to rely solely upon the publication of the fact that the Government is desirous of assisting those who wish to be repatriated. There are many Indians who are naturally reluctant to leave a country where the conditions of living are by no means onerous, and where, in numerous instances, they have been able not only to live in comfortable circumstances, but to save quite a respectable sum. Could they be assured, however, that in leaving the country they would not suffer any serious disability, some of them at least would decide to take advantage of a free passage and other facilities provided."

The *Indian Social Reformer* writes as follows:—

The Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri returned to India on the 24th of November from his tour in Australia and Canada. That it has done some good, goes without saying. Whether that good is commensurate with the loss to the country from the absence during six eventful months of a leader of his capacity, is a doubtful point. There will be much curiosity felt as to what he has to say in his presidential address at the forthcoming Liberal Conference at Nagpur, as regards the position of Indians in the Dominions.

The *Indian Social Reformer* in its issue of the 4th November writes:—

The Rev. F. W. C. Kennedy contributes an illuminating article to the October number of *the East and the West*, the well-known quarterly review for the study of missionary problems. The population of Canada at present is about 3,769,489 and as the area approaches 3,620,000 square miles, there are only 2.4 people to every square mile in the Dominion. A country so thinly populated must have immigrants, and even if it will not, it cannot permanently close its doors to them. Mr. Kennedy, therefore, advises that

a wise policy of selection should be adopted, and he insists that "the all-important thing for us to remember is that it is not wealth nor power that determines our future, but the character of the citizens we create." Applying this test, he points out that statistics show that in New York, Italians lead in crimes of violence, kidnapping and blackmailing. The Russians and Poles are conspicuous in robbery, larceny and receiving stolen goods. The Hebrews are prominent in white slavery and prostitution. The Chinese are addicted to drugs and gambling. Now, these are the communities which supply the largest number of immigrants to Canada whereas the Japanese who make the best citizens from every point of view, are banned. During an interview with the authorities in Vancouver, writes Mr. Kennedy, the questions "which alien countries provided us with the fewest criminals? Which are most advanced from the stand-point of cleanliness? Which are most law-abiding and make the best citizens?" brought the answers, "Japan and the Japanese." Nearly 20,000 Japanese are now in Canada, and very seldom has a Japanese been found guilty of any crime. And yet, Mr. Kennedy remarks: Australia has always kept her doors tight closed against the Japanese, and Californians are erecting insurmountable walls round themselves, and adopting a hide-bound policy of exclusion against them. And we, who are clamouring for more and more immigrants to fill the unoccupied places in our Dominion, bring in Mennonites and Doukhobors, and other peoples from Europe who cause us trouble and anxiety, and try to keep out a people which is spoken of in the highest terms by the authorities as being polite, thrifty and law-abiding. Mr. Sastri, however, assures us that there is no racial prejudice, but only economic considerations, behind these prohibitions!

### THE OLD AND THE NEW YEAR

WITH this issue ends the present year. Before entering into the new year it would not be unwise to take stock of our position so as to enable us to see what progress we have made during the year and also to enable us to be vigilant in the coming year and remedy the failings that may have been in the way of our progress. We wish we were able to present to our readers a cheering balance sheet but that, unfortunately, seems to be out of question. The balance sheet we are able to present is one which can only give the readers an idea of how much vigilance is required on our part and a good beginning may bring better results.

Speaking on the general situation we cannot but say that it has been a gloomy one. It is pleasing, however, to record that the ending has to a certain extent removed the gloom, which brings us a ray of hope for the new year. When the great War ended, every soul heaved a sigh of relief and hoped to once more enjoy peaceful days. But Providence seems to have willed otherwise. Instead of peace the world has

passed through exceptionally trying times ever since. Though man slaughter on a wholesale scale was stopped, on a smaller scale it has continued all along. Turko-Greek War, Ireland and India have lately drawn towards them the attention of the whole world, and one cannot but view with profound grief the sufferings humanity is subjected to in these parts. It is a strange irony of fate that the Turko-Greek War, and the situation in Ireland and India are the result of the unstatesmanlike spirit of our great British statesmen. It is satisfactory to note, however, that the end of the year has seen the end of the war between Turkey and Greece and it is to be hoped that it will be the final end.

Ireland and India are fighting for their very existence. They are both struggling for freedom and freedom's battle has never been an easy one. The sacrifices they have both made have taken them nearer their goal, but many sacrifices will yet have to be made before the goal is finally reached. We can only pray that they may not fail in their strength and resoluteness. India has lately given cause for more anxiety. There are elements at work which are striving to misguide the people from the true path set out. If these elements succeed India will be doomed. Councils are institutions of co-operation and do not exist for non-co-operators. Boycott of British goods shows enmity towards the British for which there is no room in non-violence. We hope that the true meaning of non-violent non-co-operation will have been understood by our brethren in India and that they will have recovered from the wavering disease that has unfortunately caught hold of them. Infringement even by a hair's breadth on the principle of non-violent non-co-operation will bring ruination to India.

Let us now consider South Africa. The echoes of the Rand revolution seem to be just coming to an end. It has been a most tragic affair in the history of the Union. Government were obliged to take stern steps to end the revolution and since the end the severity of the punishment imposed on the guilty persons has caused some dissatisfaction among the public. Government have acted wisely in commuting the recent death sentences in the Brakpan murder case to those of imprisonment. It is to be hoped that the present year will finally close this sorrowful chapter.

As regards our own position we find that while our credit side is practically blank the debit side is overflowing. In Natal the revival of our Congress has been to our credit. It has, through its influence, succeeded in preventing the passing of some dangerous Ordinances introduced in the Provincial Council such as the Townships Franchise and the Rural Dealers Licensing Ordinances. On the other hand we have the Durban Land Alienation and the Tramways Ordinances hanging over us, and there are racial clauses in the Railway Regulations. Immigration difficulties are great and the Repatriation Scheme, the term of which the Government propose to renew, is a standing humiliation to the community.

Thus the so-called achievement is no achievement, for, the same Ordinances are to be introduced in the next session of the Provincial Council. The loss is exceedingly great and dangerous to our existence in this country.

The time has come for the Indian community not to take things lightly. The Congress will have to be more practical than it has hitherto been. While it is the duty of the Congress to exert itself to safeguard the interests of the community, it will be the paramount duty of the

community to give its whole-hearted support to the Congress. If the community fails in its duty the Congress can do nothing.

In the Transvaal our brethren have not succeeded in having their old grievances removed. Law 3 of 1887 is still hanging over them and in addition they have the Act of 1919 which totally forbids them to own landed property. As in Natal, so in the Transvaal, the grievances have of late become more acute. In the Cape there has been no notable change.

Thus, while in its political life the community has gone backwards, in its communal life, too, there has not been the progress that one should expect. The older people may afford to be careless about themselves but it will be a grievous sin on their part to be careless about the younger generation. In educational matters more activity on the part of our countrymen is required than they have hitherto shown. The community should rely less on the help of the Government in this respect and should know its own responsibility to its children. There is for this matter an Educational Advisory Committee formed in Durban and a better account is expected from it.

The retrospect is gloomy enough and in addition attempts to degenerate, still more, the community by establishing the principle of segregation, "voluntary" in name, but in spirit compulsory. All this points to out only one thing, viz, the necessity of much more vigilance on the part of the community. We have had sufficient experience of the fact that when we have been awake and active our work has never been without success. Our organisations whether they be political, educational or social will have to give a better account of themselves than merely to show that they exist. With this short review of the old year which should not only make us stop and think, but also act, we wish our readers renewed strength and

A HAPPY, ACTIVE AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

## INDIAN SITUATION

### MORE OPINIONS ON COUNCIL ENTRY

Mr. Abbas Tyabjee writes as follows to the papers in India:—

At the end of two years of Non-co-operation we are practically told by four of our great leaders that we have failed to understand what real Non-co-operation means! I suppose some of us are too old, and some too young, to understand—not what Non-co-operation stands for, but the reasoning of the brilliant lawyers who have set themselves to prove to an astonished world that you can have both light and darkness in a room at an identical moment. Non-co-operation to most of us simples, who have accepted the Mahatma's creed in its essence, consists of two distinct factors, viz., (1) non-recognition of Government institutions, and (2) no more carrying of the beggar's bowl to the high authorities who imagine the future destiny of India to be in their hands.

Now I have not found either in the Civil Disobedience Committee's Report, or in the very elaborate statement of the President-elect of the next Congress, that it is challenged that these two factors constitute the essentials of Non-co-operation. If so, in common with most of my friends who are working in Gujarat I fail to understand how it can be argued that standing for election to the Councils and taking the oath, by even the most sophisticated reasoning be proved to non-recognition of the Councils? The act of offering oneself for election is sufficient for ordinary minds to establish that a recognition of the Councils has taken place, and no amount of ingenious hair-splitting arguments can demolish this fundamental fact. That such

recognition of Councils is opposed to the principle of Non-co-operation is a faith with most of us workers in Gujarat, and it was on that account that at a meeting of the Gujarat District Congress Committee out of some 50 or 60 workers only one was found in favour of entering the Council. So far as the masses are concerned, they are not much troubled by the special pleadings of our lawyer leaders. They have full faith in the programme of the Congress, and simply cannot believe that the next Congress at Gaya is going to give a go-by to a principle established at the Special sessions of the Congress which met in Calcutta, and affirmed and re-affirmed in successive Congresses. It is only our workers who are bewildered by the unexpected that has happened. They had expected only a definite answer to the question whether the country was prepared for mass civil disobedience or not. With the exception of those who had only accepted the Congress programme because it was the Congress programme, and not because they were convinced of the intrinsic merit of each item of such programme, no one desired the committee to tinker with the principles of non-co-operation and advise activities absolutely irreconcilable with such principles. The advice to enter the Councils is a triumph for those gentlemen who were in its favour at the Calcutta Special Sessions of the Congress, and who had thus far worked the Congress programme more as a matter of expediency than of faith. My friends in Gujarat and I deny that the C. D. Committee was in any way authorised to pronounce on the question of entry into the Councils. All that our great leader Deshbandhu Das says in justification of Hakim Saheb, Pandit Motilal and our very astute friend Vithalbai Patel's taking the bit between the teeth and galloping through the fence of Non-co-operation is, in the opinion of the majority in Gujarat, merely camouflage. These gentlemen were not entitled to break the essential principles involved in Non-co-operation just because they could find no other way to keep up, as they imagined, the flagging spirit of the people. It is their spirit that had flagged and not that of the solid mass that is behind the movement. On this point some of us will have a great deal to say at the next Congress.

The Deshbandhu would, after getting into the Council, ask for an amendment of the Act constituting the Councils. Is not this again presenting the beggar's bowl for some scraps from the victuals possessed by the Government whose institutions you are to eschew, and therefore a breach of the second principle involved in Non-co-operation?

Not only do the entry into Councils and asking for amendment of the constitution involve a breach of the fundamental principles of Non-co-operation, but to expect the achievement of the object for which you have first to smash N. C. O. itself, i. e., the wrecking of the administrative machinery fashioned to support the present bureaucratic system, is simply futile. Your wish to enter the "Steel Frame" where the poor Moderates who desired to work for their country's cause have already been crushed into pulp, and hope to achieve your ends. Well, do so! But do not attempt to drag the Congress at your heels too! The Congress is big enough to hold within its fold even men hypnotized by the suggestion of the great possibilities of what the Deshbandhu calls "Non-co-operation from within the Council." Let such men "gang their own way."

Mr. T. Prakasam writes from Madras:—

"Entry into the Councils at this juncture is national suicide. It would prove our weakness and unfitness for the national struggle. No nation will be fit for Swaraj if it be so fickle and wavering. Having laid the hand to the plough, we cannot now turn back. The reasons given by Pandit Nehru and his friends in favour of entry are unconvincing. Our leaders have told us so

often that Swarajya could never be a gift by one nation to another, and that we have to establish it ourselves. I am unable to understand why they are thinking of entering the unholy and corrupt house without going forward to establish Swaraj themselves. Mr. Das once declared that we, Congressmen, are responsible for the peace of the country, that we are responsible even for the crimes of robbers and dacoits. Having said so, to think of Council entry to-day is subversion of the fundamental principles of the great movement. The country can certainly ignore the co-operators and press forward to the goal. If we persist in entering the Councils with the avowed object of obstructing good measures and bad, we shall be acting like children, and it will not be long before we are disillusioned. But have every hope that our leaders will see their error before it is too late, and give a proper lead to the country."

#### BEHAR LEADERS AGAINST COUNCIL ENTRY

An Associated Press report states:—

It is understood that objections against entering Councils were raised by the Non-co-operation leaders of Behar in a recent informal conference held by Mr. C. R. Das at Patna. They held that it was against Mr. Gandhi's principle. Obstruction in the Council would produce no good result, on the contrary it would eliminate the sympathy of Co-operators and a large number of Non-co-operators if beneficial measures like the release of the non-co-operating prisoners were opposed in the Council. Doubt was also expressed as to the possibility of capturing the majority of seats.

Mr. Das replied that they were not going to co-operate in the Council and therefore they were not violating Mr. Gandhi's principle and that they were not co-operating in the beneficial measures of the Government even now as in the case of the Bengal Flood Relief. It was agreed on both sides that the Non-co-operation movement received a set back. It was necessary to make some alteration in the programme to infuse a new life into the movement which Mr. Das declared would alone be achieved by entry into the Council. No definite conclusion was arrived at on the point. The Behar leaders expressed themselves generally against the entry into the Councils.

#### MRS. SARAJINI NAIDOO

An Associated Press report says:—

Opinion in Bombay is sharply divided on the entry into the Councils among the staunch adherents of Non-co-operation and among those desirous of seeking election.

Interviewed by the Associated Press, Mrs. Sarajini Naidu declared, entry into the Councils for any form of co-operation, responsive or otherwise, must ultimately vitiate the principles of Non-co-operation. She believed any form of entry into Councils would be a triumph for Government and a confession of failure.

Referring to the Civil Disobedience Committee report she said: "I am entirely opposed to the recommendations for the removal of the boycott of Councils because I believe it is the only real focus of Non-co-operation. I am deeply grieved to find myself at variance on such a vital issue with the considered opinion of such distinguished leaders as Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. C. R. Das whose magnificent services to the country have entitled them to the abiding respect and confidence of the people. But I am convinced that to compromise on any essentials of our programme must imperceptibly but inevitably, lead to an unconscious compromise on the principle which instead of wrecking the reforms will ultimately wreck the ideal of Non-co-operation itself. I am aware that they advocate entry into the Councils as a more intensive and dynamic form of Non-co-operation to stimulate the energy and enthusiasm of the country, but I believe that a nation that does not feel the shame of subjection as a subject and does not

hope of freedom as a sufficient inspiration, and is not prepared to accept drudgery as part of its daily discipline and duty, is not fit for any kind of Swaraj."

Questioned whether she was averse to any change in the programme, Mrs. Naidu expressed her readiness to accept a change provided she was sure that it was necessary and more effective and did not by a hair's breadth imperil the ideal of Non-co-operation. She advised her countrymen to carry on the Congress work intensively towards the fulfilment of the Calcutta resolution on Non-co-operation in its entirety. Asked whether she apprehended any split in the ensuing Congress on the question of the Council boycott, Mrs. Naidu expected no such split and averred whatever the majority decided in the Congress, would be loyally accepted by leaders and workers of all parties because the will of the majority was the true basis of democracy. Incidentally she, however, remarked that Non-co-operationists should bear no ill-feelings towards those entering the Councils.

### THE UNREST IN INDIA

Thus the *Natas Mercury* :—

It was not to be expected that the introduction of representative institutions in India would pass without friction, and the present unrest is the outcome of what many experienced Anglo-Indian statesmen considered a dangerous surrender to the demands of a few extremists who did not represent the bulk of the Indian people. It is asserted that the majority of the people do not understand and do not desire responsible government as they fear that they will be thrown back on the old bad practices which prevailed before the introduction of the British Raj. India has been prosperous and made enormous strides since she has been governed by English administrators, and their elimination will mean, it is feared, that the old system of corruption will once more be the rule. Lord Reading, however, appears to think that the new Indian Government will not dispense with English officials, that the Indianisation of the Civil Service will not continue. It is difficult to understand on what basis his view, for the tendency so far is to eliminate all English influence, and that is the chief point in the programme of the National Congress which is to assemble at Gaya. It may be true that the great majority of the people do not want the change, do not even desire the franchise, but it has been granted to them, and it would appear that the assemblies have come under the influence of the Bolshevik emissaries. It is well known that the Moscow authorities are determined to strike their chief blow at Britain through India. For some time past there has been a special seminary where young Indians are trained in Bolshevik opinions, and they are to be sent to India to propagate revolutionary ideas, and this is the danger that such experienced men as Lord Sydenham see in the attempt to eradicate all English ideas from the Civil Service. The only bulwark left of English power in India. The Indian Civil Servants have been the saviours of the Indian people, and they have been a pattern for all civil administration throughout the regions where subject races have to be governed. The whole position in India is fraught with grave dangers, and there can be no good done by minimising them as the Governor-General appears to be doing, and his speech is apt to make people believe that things are better than all the other authorities lead one to think.

### THE GENERAL DISPOSITION OF THE POOR IN JAPAN

(By TOYOHICO KAGAWA)

The poorest class in Japan is, on the whole, far gentler than that of any foreign country, and woman in our poor quarters, in particular, is superior in character and nature to the same class of people in another

country. The students of the poor are surprised to see how woman can stand the strains of poverty, but the patience and perseverance of a Japanese poor woman are really wonderful. A Japanese woman is known for her faithfulness in her household work and kindness to the other sex, and her faithfulness and kindness are better witnessed in the poor quarters than in any other place. All through the lower classes, woman is much superior to man in many good points. When in a great trouble, man often deserts his home, leaving his wife and children helpless and without means to support them, but woman bravely bears her distress, and takes faithfully to the bringing up of her children. Did the woman of the Japanese poor not stand firm in her troubles, as she now does, the conditions of our poor quarters would be much worse than they are at present. Nor is a Japanese woman, in general, much given to gambling or to drinking; she is rather timid and mild.

Confucianism and Buddhism may have had a great deal to do with the good morals which sustain the women of our poor quarters in chastity and devotion at home, and I entertain a sort of fear, in this connection, that should times come in future when the good virtues of the Japanese poor woman will have been done away with, Japan would then require ten times as large a relief fund for the poor as she is now paying.

What strikes me most in the behavior of a man in the poor quarters is that he is much less given to drinking than those of a foreign country. Gambling is more prevalent among the Chinese poor than the Japanese, while the spirit of mutual assistance is stronger in the latter.

I am strongly opposed, on principle, to subjective materialism, my chief reason being that some beautiful social instinct is witnessed among our poorest class of people, who being deprived of all material means, seem to have practically nothing to do with material economy. To cite an instance of mutual assistance in the poor quarters of Japan, they have among them an organisation which is a sort of a "fraternal" society for mutual help and relief. Those who chance to live side by side on the street or on the same side of a "long-house," or tenement-house, are sure to have among them a "mujin," or a mutual loan society, paying in instalments say 5 sen a day as mutual relief funds. The "mujin" system has seen the most remarkable progress in our poor quarters. If the "fraternal" instalments fail to be of much relief to them, they begin a kind of payment called "paternal" instalments, the first payment going to the most needy of the members. Hundreds and thousands of the poor have been thus relieved in our poor quarters. It is another remarkable fact that altruism has made almost an abnormal development in the poor quarters of Japan, for they always have some male lepers, invalids, sick tramps, ill-famed women, etc., under the protection of their "dens." It is a remarkable fact that they are always ready to give shelter to any sufferers, and you will find such people in almost any poor "den" or "long-house." When the altruistic spirit is combined with love of gambling, the possessor of the spirit is called in Japan by the special term of "kyokaku" or a "man of chivalry." The "chivalrous" spirit of the Japanese may be attributable to various causes, but the true altruistic spirit, which is found in a certain class, and which is so characteristic of the Japanese at large, will account for the existence of the "chivalry," which has formed such traditional morals among the lower classes of the Japanese as are not seen in any foreign country.

The lowest class of the Japanese is upheld in its morals by this spirit of "chivalry." Whatever their social situation may be, and however distressed a condition they may be in, the poor in Japan fully understand what it is to be kind and helpful to the weaker and to keep down the stronger, and in this respect Japan has an advantage over foreign countries. And this is the reason why I say that the poor of the

Japanese are better behaved than people of the same class in foreign countries.

The poor, as a rule, show little religious fervency, but a little training will easily make the poor class of Japan zealous devotees of the "Ikko-shu" Sect, or the Salvation Army. Generally speaking, the poor class is disposed to commit crimes when it is leading a vagrant or roaming life, but when it is once settled at a dwelling place, it gets kind and reliable, keeps order and respects others. The poor class of the Japanese shares in no small measure, in the national love of nature, for foreign visitors are surprised to find beautiful cultured-flowers in every nook and corner of a Japanese slum. The dwellers of the Japanese poor quarters are never too tired to attend to their tiny flowers after their hard day's work. This national love of nature manifests itself in many other ways. Beyond all comparison with the dirty poor class of China, the Japanese lowest class gives much time and money to keep its dwellings as clean and tidy as possible. Though living a hand-to-mouth life, the poor try everything in their power to keep their dwellings in order and cleanliness, all beyond comparison with foreigners of the same class.—*The Journal of the Indo-Japanese Association.*

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## देशवाणी पुस्तकें

नीचेनां पुस्तकेना आवे लभेला ते पेशरेव साचे ते. मभावनासोने पास विनंति ते ते सोने ओरर मेकलती वचते पडसा साचे नीदी मेकलवा अने नाम अने शीरनाथ सोप्या अक्षरे लभवां. वी. पी. ना ओररने ध्यान इवामां आवसे नाह. ओरर मेकलवातुं ठाणुं नीचे सुचण ते :

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