

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

MR. G. H. Hulett is introducing a draft Ordinance in the present session of the Provincial Council to amend Ordinance No. 4 of 1923 which is "The Rural Dealers' Licensing Law Amendment Ordinance." The text of the Draft Ordinance is reproduced elsewhere in this issue from the *Natal Provincial Gazette*. It seeks to limit the duration of the Licensing Boards to one year only instead of three, and to restrict their rights in connection with the granting of new licenses. According to section 3 of the above Draft Ordinance, if after the hearing of an application for a new license the Board are of opinion that the licence ought to be granted they shall recommend accordingly to the Administrator, and section 5 provides that the Administrator shall have a discretion to decide that the licence shall be granted or that it be not granted. Section 7, further, provides that the decision of the Administrator will be in the same position as a decision of the Board and all provisions of the Ordinance in regard to appeal and otherwise shall apply in respect thereof as if they were decisions of the Board, which means, that from the decision of the Administrator there will be the right of appeal to a Rural Licensing Board of Appeal provided for in Ordinance No. 4 of 1923—a body to be appointed by the Administrator for the whole Province or for any specific part of the Province.

The Draft Ordinance "To amend the Public Health Committees Ordinance 1923" which was passed recently by the Natal Provincial Council has been assented to by the Governor-General-in-Council and has been promulgated in the *Provincial Gazette* of the 16th instant.

At a special meeting of the Durban Town Council held on Monday the 20th instant, Councillor Smith's motion "that for the purpose of municipal elections in future the Borough of Durban be treated as one ward" was defeated after a lengthy discussion by nine votes to seven. The same mover moved another motion "that in order to promote public interest in the civic work of the Borough all Council meetings be in future held in the evening" which was carried by eight votes to seven.

At a meeting of the Transvaal British Indian Association held on Saturday the 11th instant Mr. E. S. Asvat was elected chairman and Messrs. A. A. Mirza and D. M. Nursoo joint hon. secretaries. Mr. Cassim Adam was chosen as chairman by the majority by means of nominations sent in, but owing to his departure shortly to Europe he expressed his inability to accept the position at present, and thanked the community for its appreciation. Mr. I. I. Hazaree, the retiring hon. secretary, submitted his report and declared that owing to many reasons he could not possibly take over the secretarial position again. He requested the community not to re-elect him as such, but he promised to assist the community to the best of his ability in all

matters affecting his countrymen. The meeting was adjourned *sine die* for the election of other officers.

At the annual conference of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa (natives) held recently at Johannesburg the pass law question led to a lengthy discussion, and the following resolution was adopted:—

"This conference is of opinion that all passes, no matter in what shape or form, are nothing more or less than an institution of the present capitalistic system of government to reduce the African workers to a state of abject servility so as to facilitate their uttermost exploitation.

"Furthermore, the conference condemns *in toto* the proposals of the Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives intended for submission to the Prime Minister, and, in the opinion of this conference, the only alternative is the abolition of the pass system, and should the Government insist on perpetuating the system this organisation resolves to embark on a passive resistance movement to the measure, with the co-operation of other organised bodies of the African peoples, particularly the African National Congress."

At the fourteenth annual conference of the African Native National Congress held in Johannesburg last week and attended by delegates from all over the Union, Mr. S. M. Magatho (acting president), in the course of his speech, explained that the fact of holding a conference at all was due to the natives being unable to understand why they should be treated with injustice. "We are not extremists, not exaggerators," he continued, "but we are agitators who will agitate until we get our just rights." They, he went on to say, were born in Africa, and they would die in Africa. It was for the rights of the native people, and the freedom of their country that they would fight. Whatever money the natives earned was spent in this country, but the Indians who were given the right to trade here and were treated a thousand-fold better than the unfortunate aboriginals, carried their money out of the country. Referring to the enforcement of the ordinance whereby native women would be compelled to carry night passes, he said that if, as was represented, that would prove a cure for immorality, the regulation should be made applicable to all women-folk—European, Indian, and Native.

A native boycott of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales when he visits South Africa was advised by Mr. Sidney Bunting recently, when, as reported by the Communist paper, the *International* of which he is the Editor, he addressed a meeting of 1,500 natives convened by the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union. Referring to the enemy of the native people Mr. Bunting is reported to have said:—"Your enemy, too, is not merely local. South African natives often appeal to Britain as a protector, when, as a matter of fact, British imperialism, whose representative is about to tour

South Africa, is largely responsible for your exploitation. You will be only asking for your bosses to remain your bosses for ever if you are so foolish as to turn out in the Prince's honour; instead of boycotting him as they did in India."

While the above speech is generally deplored, says the *Johannesburg Star*, it, at the same time, has occasioned considerable indignation, which is being freely expressed among all classes of the community.

In the course of a speech at Madras on the present situation Mr. Gandhi is reported to have said:—

"You will not expect me to speak on what may be termed the political side of the question. I am uninterested in it. Whilst it is an integral part of the Congress organisation, I have purposely refrained from interfering with it. I have no aptitude for it, and I have no faith in it."

The opening ceremony of the M. K. Gandhi Senthamil School generously built by the Bai Jerbai Rustomjee Trust in May Street, Durban, will be performed by Mr. S. B. Pather on Sunday the 26th instant at 9 a.m. All are cordially invited by the hon. Secretary to attend.

WELCOME TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

BEFORE our next issue is out it is hoped that the soil of South Africa will have been sanctified by the gracious footsteps of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. We, therefore, take this opportunity of extending to His Royal Highness a very hearty welcome on behalf of the Indian community of South Africa. We hope that his tour will be a very interesting and an enjoyable one and that when he goes back it will bring to him happy recollections of Sunny South Africa.

Now since His Royal Highness is on an official tour and since he has come to see with his own eyes the extent of the great British Empire and the condition of the British subjects resident in that Empire of whom he is to be the future King, it is only right that he should go with a knowledge of the true state of affairs. It is the policy of Governments, especially of countries where there are many evils existing, to place before their superiors only the bright side of the picture. As regards South Africa we are sure that great care will be taken in making His Royal Highness acquainted with only the bright side. We wish there were no dark side of the picture for His Royal Highness to be embarrassed with. That would indeed be an ideal position, but much to our regret it does not exist. We have deemed it our duty, therefore, to remove the misapprehension through these columns with the hope that perchance they should reach the eyes of His Royal Highness.

His Royal Highness might notice some peculiarity about the attitude of Indians, in some parts of the Union at least, in connection with the celebrations in his honour. He might see some Indians participating in the celebrations. If he does, His Royal Highness should not believe that all Indians are participating, or even, that those whom he has seen participating are doing so with a willing heart

or with any sincerity. Some ulterior motives have led them to do so.

Those that are not participating are doing so, in some parts of the Union, because the conditions under which they are asked to participate are most humiliating. That, however, is not the only cause for their non-participation. That cause can be remedied and in some cases it has been remedied to some extent. But there are other, much more important, reasons for them not to participate, and in this connection, it is most necessary that the attitude of the Indian community should not be taken amiss by His Royal Highness or by the members of the ruling class.

We wish to assure His Royal Highness that we, British Indians in South Africa, are not lacking in our loyalty to the Throne nor in our respect for His Royal Highness's person. The peaceful and law-abiding manner in which Indians have lived in this country, quietly suffering the ever-increasing political disabilities and assisted the British Empire whenever it was in difficulty is ample proof of their unswerving loyalty. But the reward for that is that with the granting of Self-Government to this country His Majesty's British Indian subjects have been sold to the rulers of this country. Such acts have been committed by the Union Government in the name of His Majesty the King that would stain the fair name of the British Empire. British fair-play and justice do not exist in this country in so far as the darker subjects of His Majesty are concerned. We need not enumerate here the various disabilities under which we are suffering. In a word, we are not treated in this country as citizens of the British Empire. We are treated as helots and that is the status we are offered and special laws for the purpose have already been enacted in the name of His Majesty the King and furthermore are under preparation. We have no voice to oppose these acts in this country. We were, however, hopeful that as loyal citizens of the British Empire the British Government would come to our aid; but to our utter disappointment we have failed even in that last straw. The reply we have received from that quarter is, that they cannot interfere in the internal affairs of this country!—not even to protect their own subjects from unjust treatment!! What then does the British Empire mean to us? What does the visit of His Royal Highness mean to us? Beyond welcoming him as a most distinguished personage of the Royal family this is not an occasion for us to participate in any jollification. Those to whom self-respect means anything must surely feel keenly the pangs of humiliation; and so long as they have not the strength to resist they can but quietly mourn the loss of their respect and honour and that is the state in which British Indians are at present in this country.

Whilst once again according a very hearty welcome to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales we wish most respectfully to say that the visit of His Royal Highness would indeed have

been an occasion for joy to us if it were to redress even a few of our vital grievances and bring us peace and happiness but under the existing state of affairs it is an occasion for grief and sorrow.

DRAFT ORDINANCE

"TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 4 OF 1923"

The above Draft Ordinance proposed to be introduced into the Natal Provincial Council during the present Session, has been published for general information in the *Provincial Gazette* of the 16th instant. The Draft reads as follows:—

Be it enacted by the Provincial Council of the Province of Natal, as follows:—

1. The words occurring in Section seven, Sub-section 1, *three years*, are hereby deleted, and "one year" substituted, and the term of office of members of the existing Boards shall expire at the end of 1925.

2. All references in Ordinance No. 4, 1922, to the powers of Licensing Boards and appeals are to be construed subject to the provisions of this Ordinance.

3. Licensing Boards shall not have power to grant an application for a new licence, but if at the hearing of an application for a new licence the Board are of the opinion that the licence ought to be granted with or without any such suspension as is provided, they shall recommend accordingly to the Administrator.

A minute shall be drawn up by the Chairman before the close of the meeting embodying the recommendations and stating the reasons for the Board's conclusions.

4. The record and documents shall be forwarded by the clerk to the Administrator.

5. The Administrator shall have a discretion to decide that the licence, the subject of such application, shall be granted with or without any such suspension as aforesaid or that it be not granted.

6. If the Administrator shall require further evidence or explanation he may refer the matter back to the Board for that purpose.

7. The record, with the Administrator's decision, shall be returned and filed with the Clerk of the Licensing Board, and his decision, with any statement of the reasons he may choose to record, shall for all purposes of the Ordinance of 1923 be in the same position as a decision of the Board, and all provisions of that Ordinance in regard to appeal and otherwise shall apply in respect thereof as if they were decisions of the Board.

8. The Administrator may make any rules that may be necessary to give effect to this Ordinance.

SOME INTERESTING SCRIPTS FROM AN EXCHANGE

White cap (Gandhi cap) is no symbol of pure heart. We wish that both do correspond and remind the wearer constantly that it should be an outer token of inner purity.

Prostitution of knowledge is worse than prostitution of body. The latter may be due to mere struggle for existence, while former is always deliberate and purposeful.

Why did the Mahatma fail so far in getting Swaraj?—Because his followers were least Mahatma-like.

OUR LONDON LETTER

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

26th March 1925.

The death of Lord Curzon for the moment overshadows everything in London. Yesterday a service, solemn as it was impressive, was held in Westminster Abbey with the Archbishop of Canterbury officiating. All parties in Parliament, representatives of many nations, the great and the poor, were all there to pay their last respects to one who was a magnificent figure in the life of the British people. Whatever the views of Indians may be on his viceroyalty of India and among his other acts his association with Sir B. Fuller on the partition of Bengal, he was here looked upon as a great Viceroy and since his passing away the Government of India as also the India Council has given expression of the sympathy of India to the Marchioness Curzon and his family. To-morrow he will be buried at Kedleston—his country seat.

There is already speculation as to who is to be his successor in the office of the Lord President of the House of Lords. Among the probables the names of Lord Salisbury and Lord Birkenhead are mentioned.

One of the outstanding places of interest in London—Madam Tassand's Waxworks—known far and wide, has been burnt down. The loss runs into many thousands and there is some indication that the Waxworks will be restored. About two-thirds of the exhibits have been salvaged and in addition the moulds and other necessary information is available to the Directors of Madame Tassand's, but some valuable and irreplaceable exhibits such as Napoleon's carriage are lost.

The signal victory of Zaghlul Pasha in his election by 125 votes to 85 as the President of the Egyptian Parliament as also the election of Zaghlulists to the Vice-Presidentships has not been well received in London. Tiwar Pasha is the favoured. But Sir Valentine Chirol warns the public against the delusion that Zaghlul and his Wafd have represented nothing but a small minority of desperate agitators and urges that the British and the Egyptians must return to the reasonable methods of negotiation recommended by the Milner Report, of which the rejection by Mr. Lloyd George's Government has been one of the chief causes of the present impasse. Meantime the Egyptian Parliament has been dissolved and a Commission has been appointed to draft a new Electoral law which is to be based on money and educational qualifications. It is difficult to say whether the new election will in any way strengthen Tiwar Pasha's party and if he does succeed it is believed in this country that his Government will make for peace and progress in Egypt.

The Geneva Protocol comes before the Assembly of the League of Nations next September but the present Government does not favour the Protocol. Lord Parmoor, Sir Gilbert Murray and others think it is just the thing that will help towards the world peace but the Government thinks it will be the cause of wars. On the other hand France and other Powers support the Protocol. Germany may enter the League of Nations but unconditionally.

The special restriction of the employment of Germans on the Mercantile boats is about to be removed by an Act of Parliament. This does not mean that they will get any better treatment than other aliens employed in the mercantile fleet. They will also be subject to the Aliens Act.

The preparations for the opening of the Wembley are going apace and this year there are to be many new attractions.

The appeal of Robinson against the Midland Bank otherwise known as the "A" case, has been dismissed. Many will be happy to hear the last of this case. It attracted at the trial unparalleled attention and was far from edifying.

Signs of early spring are everywhere—daffodils and crocuses—and promises of a new life for a short space to the vegetation of the country—such as thrive but during the season.

To sit on the little piers on the banks of the Thames and watch the smaller ocean and river-boats is a pleasure to those who come from seaport towns.

A NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA

Under the above caption the *Natal Mercury* writes the following leading note:—

The proffering, with becoming hesitation, of an olive branch to Lord Birkenhead by Mr. Das is the outcome of recent important developments in the political situation in India. The failure of the non-co-operation movement and the extinction of Mr. Gandhi have brought more and more into prominence the fundamental differences which separate Hindū from Moslem. Religious bigotry and intolerance have led to fresh outbreaks of violence, and such incidents as the murder of Mr. Day and the Bengal policemen, from which many prominent Swarajists emerged with reputations anything but enhanced, have been temporarily forgotten in the light of what occurred at Kohat and in the Punjab. These sanguinary encounters between Hindus and Moslems show that despite the undoubted success (from its own point of view) which Swaraj has achieved, it still has in its paths obstacles which are formidable if not insuperable. The temporary consolidation of all shades of Indian political thought against Lord Reading's much discussed Bengal Ordinance has ceased to be a reality, and although Mr. Das criticised that measure in his reply to Lord Birkenhead, he also tacitly admitted the existence of sedition and unrest by inviting the Secretary of State for India to make a searching inquiry into the revolutionary movement. Mrs. Besant, a woman of courage and also of advanced views, has admitted the necessity of the Ordinance, even though she considers it to be regrettable. It is probable, therefore, that with the distinct turn in the tide which is causing the Swarajists to trim their sails and take stock of their position, the visit of Lord Reading to England will be of the greatest importance. Whether or not he will return to India is a matter of surmise. Lord Birkenhead is reported to be not altogether averse to filling the position of Viceroy himself; at any rate he has frequently dropped hints since taking office that he intends, should circumstances allow it, to visit India and gain first-hand information in that country. But when Lord Reading arrives in London there will be two "first-class intellects"—we use the term in all sincerity—concentrated upon the problem of India's future. Poles apart in political thought, these two eminent lawyers are two of the clearest thinkers and most far-sighted men of their day. Perhaps it is the knowledge that they can be relied upon to see through bluff and arrogance, and whilst pursuing the paths of progress resolutely to oppose anything in the nature of coercion, that has put Mr. Das into a more reasonable frame of mind. There is a section of public opinion to-day which is prone to regard India as a Dominion already well-nigh lost to the British Empire. If Lord Birkenhead and Lord Reading can prove this pessimism to be unfounded they will have rendered an imperial service whose value it would be impossible to over-estimate.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. C. F. Andrews writes in *Young India* dated March 12:—

Things are clearly going from bad to worse in South Africa and there is no telling where they will end. In two separate measures, which have been put forward by the Government in power, 'Asiatics' are discriminated against and classed with 'natives' as contrasted with the 'coloured' people. It is somewhat difficult for those who have never been to South Africa to understand clearly what such discrimination means. What has to be realised is, that the great bulk of the 'native' population is entirely uneducated. On the other hand, the 'coloured' people (i.e. those who have a slight mixture of European blood in their veins) are on the whole a 'fairly literate community.' It appears that the policy of the new Government under General Hertzog is to depress still further the 'Asiatic' and to raise the status of the 'coloured' people.

A further measure is scheduled, whereby South African citizenship will be confined to the pure white population, which has been born and bred in South Africa. An Englishman coming out straight from England will not have his citizenship in South Africa as an inherent right on account of his English birth and origin. He will have to take out naturalisation papers in South Africa. Leading newspapers in South Africa suggest that a compact has been made between the Labour Party (which relies chiefly on the British labour vote) and the Nationalist Party (which relies chiefly on the Dutch vote) on the understanding that the Nationalist will support a strong anti-Asiatic labour policy provided that the labourites will support a strong 'burgher' policy.

In addition to this, we have the further news that a new segregation measure, of even more drastic character than the late 'Class Areas Bill,' is already being prepared. It will be remembered that the Municipal Franchise Act for Natal, depriving Indians in future of Municipal Franchise, has now been passed and sanctioned by the Governor-General. If a racial Segregation Act is also passed, it will be difficult to see what will still remain of the 'vested rights,' which were to be strictly observed under the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914.

In the Transvaal, a picketing system and a boycott of all Indian trade has again been started. This time,—in the present inflamed atmosphere,—it has met with some measure of success. The repatriation of Indians in Natal by means of Government 'recruiters' is still proceeding. I have personally cross-examined those in Madras who have returned. They have told me, that they have been unable to find employment in India. They are therefore now to be found, after great misery and privation, entering the emigration depot for Malaya, asking to be sent out of India to the rubber plantations of the Federated Malay States. Truly the whole situation of Indians in South Africa has reached the lowest point where even stout hearts may find it difficult to look forward to the future with hope. There is one redeeming feature, however, which continually meets us in every fresh information that reaches us in India. The Hindu-Muslim problem out there does not exist. In face of common suffering Indians are one people,—one in heart and soul as well as one in Indian birth.

Mr. Gandhi adds the following foot-note on the above:—

In view of the foregoing gloomy study of the situation in South Africa, the remarks of General Smuts quoted last week in these columns derive an added interest. The picketing referred to by Mr. Andrews is nothing but veiled coercion. If with all the elaborate precautions it did not remain peaceful

everywhere in India in 1921, how less likely is it to be peaceful in South Africa, only those who know its white population can realise.

INDIA IN THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT

The Earl of Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, introduced the Government of India (Civil Services) Bill, the object of which is to amend the provisions of the Government of India Act by exempting proposals for expenditure on certain salaries, pensions, and other payments from submission to Indian Legislatures, and to enable rules made under the Act relating to the Civil Services of the Crown in India to be dispensed with or relaxed in certain cases.

The Bill was read a first time.

The Earl of Birkenhead moved a resolution declaring that it was desirable to appoint a Standing Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament on Indian Affairs. He said that such a Committee had been established each Session since 1921. It was apparent to every one that great advantages might be derived from having in existence a body representative of both Houses, and including much Indian administrative experience. There were a considerable number of members of Parliament especially qualified to deal with Indian subjects, who would be in touch with the developments from month to month of Indian affairs, and available to advise on questions arising from time to time as to the amendment of rules framed under the Government of India Act. He was anxious not to make any general statement on Indian affairs, either to the Committee or to the House itself, until he had had the advantage of a personal discussion with the Viceroy after his arrival in this country at the end of next month. He hoped the House would agree in due course to refer to the Joint Committee the Bill to amend the Government of India Act, which he had just introduced, and which had been framed to enable effect to be given to certain recommendations in the report of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India, presided over by Lord Lee of Fareham.

The motion was agreed to.

THE CAPITALISTS' PRAYER

We cull the following interesting prayer of the Capitalists from the *International*.—

Lord from whom all blessings flow,
 Let the Glory all be thine.
 Keep us on top, and the other class below,
 And let all the Swag be mine.
 O Lord, ere I go out to biz,
 I leave with you my soul,
 Grant that I may draw the profits,
 And the other chaps the Dole.
 Mansions thou hast prepared for me,
 I thank thee for my whack,
 Grant, Lord, the other chap may be,
 Contented in his shack.
 I pray for the masses, O Lord, the lost sheep,
 And I hope that you never will find them,
 At the Labour Exchanges they are drawing
 the Dole,
 Gracious Lord, till I'm ready to grind them.
 Thy curse O Lord, on Bolsheviks,
 Those monsters of pollution,
 And guide me, O my Saviour, guide,
 Away from Revolution.
 My War Bonds, Lord, are 5 per cent,
 I pray thee, make it ten,
 My needs are small, God grant them all,
 For Jesus' sake, Amen!

શ્રી ટી. શ. ઇન્ડિયા સ્ટીમ નેવી ગેરેશન કુ.

વાસ દિવસમાં મુંબઈ પહોંચાડનારી સ્ટીમરો

સ્ટી. "કારાગોલા"

એપ્રિલ તા. ૨૭મીએ મુંબઈ જવા ઉપડશે.

મુચના—ઉતારોએ પોતાના મોટા દાગીના થનીવારે ૧૧ વાગા અગાઉ કરકમમાં પહોંચતાં કરવાં.

ટીકટના ભાવો

સેકન્ડ ક્લાસ: પાઉંડ ૨૪-૦-૦

ઇન્ટર: પા. ૧૫-૦-૦

ટેક પા. ૭-૧૦-૦

મુસતમાની વીશી રૂ. ૪૦; હિંદુ વીશી રૂ. ૩૪.

સેકન્ડ અને ઇન્ટર માટે એક મહિના આગાઉથી બદોખરત કરવો.

દરેક હીંદીને જણાવવામાં આવે છે કે તેમણે પોતાની સ્ટીમરની ટીકટ વિગેરેનો બદોખરત ડરખન આવી કરવો. દરેક ઉતાર માટે જગ્યા અને સામાન વિગેરેનો બદોખરત અમો અમારી જાતે કરી આપીએ છીએ.

વધુ ખુશાસા માટે લખો યા મળો:—

શેખજી હીમંદ,

Tel. Add. ૩૭૭ પાર્શન સ્ટ્રીટ, ડરખન.

"Karamat Durban."

Ex-Service Men's Reception

Prince of Wales' Reception

NON-EUROPEAN EX-SERVICE MEN who have attested for service on the side of Great Britain or South Africa in any war in which Great Britain or South Africa was involved who are residents of Durban are invited to call with their discharge papers at the undersigned on or before the 30th April.

B. BUGHWAN,
 43, Stratford Road,
 Durban.

"INDIAN OPINION"

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