

19th February, 1926.

Supplement to Indian Opinion:

12th February, 1926.

WHOLE INDIA SUPPORTS SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS' STRUGGLE.

There is no doubt that our deputation to India have rendered yeoman services to our cause. As a result of the able manner in which they presented our case, the deputation successfully enlisted the sympathy and support of the Indian public and of the Press throughout the length and breadth of that vast continent. This is clear from the proceedings of the many gatherings of Congresses, Leagues, and Associations, which met during Christmas week and which adopted strong resolutions condemning the action of the Union Government and wholeheartedly supporting us in our struggle.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

No sooner had Mrs. Sarojini Naidu delivered her eloquent and inspiring address in which she referred at some length to our case, than Mahatma Gandhi, amidst thunderous applause from an audience of over 16000 people, stepped into the rostrum and moved the following resolution:—

"The Congress extends its cordial welcome to the South African Indian Congress Deputation and assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of its full support in their struggle against the consolidated forces which threaten their very existence in that subcontinent.

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the proposed legislation known as the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill is in breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914, in that it is racial in character and is calculated not only to make the position of settlers much worse than it was in 1914, but is designed to make residence in that country of any self-respecting Indian impossible.

"In the opinion of the Congress if the interpretation of the said agreement as put upon it on behalf of the settlers is not accepted by the Union Government, it should be decided by reference to arbitration, as was done in 1893 in connection with matters affecting the Indian settlers of the Transvaal, and in matters arising from the administration of Law 3 of 1895.

"The Congress heartily endorses the suggestion that a Round Table Conference, containing, among others, proper Indian representatives, should be called to settle the question, and trusts that the Union Government will accept that reasonable suggestion.

"In the event of the proposal of a Round Table Conference and proposal regarding arbitration failing, the Congress is of opinion that the Imperial Government should withhold Royal Assent to the Bill should it pass through the Union Parliament."

MAHATMA GANDHI'S MEMORABLE SPEECH.

Mahatma Gandhi first spoke in Hindi. He said the Bill proposed by the Union Government marked the limit to which the Union Government could go to expel Indians. A deputation had come to seek their help and the resolution he was proposing promised that help in full measure. Before the Congress adopted this he wanted them to remember that they were pledging themselves not to treat the matter lightly. If South African Indians resorted to Satyagraha, as they did before (for they were tried soldiers of Satyagraha which took birth there,) then India would have to help them financially and otherwise. There were both Hindu and Muslim traders in South Africa and he

wanted an assurance about Satyagraha, and though he was looking very weak he would be strong and start Satyagraha here in India for South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi then delivered the following speech in English: He said: Srimati Sarojini Naidu and friends:—This is the resolution which I have not only the greatest pleasure in submitting to you for approval, but I consider it a rare privilege that I am authorised by Sarojini Devi to place this before you. She has introduced me to you as a South African. She might have added. "By adoption, though born in India." I was adopted there and you will discover that when Dr. Abdurahman, the leader of the deputation; to which you will extend your cordial welcome, will tell you that Indians of South Africa claim that they have given me to you. I accept that claim. It is perfectly true that whatever service I have been able to render—it may be disservice—to India, it is because I come from South Africa. If it is disservice it is not their fault; it is my limitation. Therefore, the evidence that I propose to place before you in support of the statement made here is that the Bill which is hanging like the Sword of Democles over the heads of our countrymen in South Africa, is designed not merely to heap greater wrongs upon their heads, but virtually to expel them from South Africa.

INDIAN'S FEELING.

Such is admittedly the meaning of the Bill. It is admitted by the Europeans of South Africa. It is not denied by the Union Government itself. If such is the result, you can imagine how keenly the Indians in South Africa must feel. Imagine for one moment that the Expulsion Bill is to be passed in the next session of the Assembly, expelling one hundred thousand Indians from India. What should we do or how should we behave under such a crisis? It is under those circumstances that you have the deputation in your midst. The deputation come here for support from the people of India from the Congress, from the Viceroy, the Government of India and through it the Imperial Government itself.

Lord Reading has given them a long reply, and I wish I could have said also a satisfactory reply. The reply His Excellency has given is as unsatisfactory as it is long, and if that was all the sympathy Lord Reading proposed to give to the members of the deputation he could have said that in a few words and spared them and spared this land the humiliating spectacle of a great Government confessing its inability to render proper redress to those who through no fault of their own, who, as many South African Europeans would admit, for their very virtues, are now in danger of being expelled from South Africa. To some of them South Africa is a land of their birth. It was no comfort to those friends of ours. It was no comfort to us to be told, that the Indian Government has always reserved to itself the right to make representation to the South African Government—the right of petitioning—that is to say by a mighty Government, a Government which is supposed to hold the destiny of 300 millions of people in the hollow of its hands. That Government confesses its powerlessness! And why, because South Africa enjoys Dominion Status.

DOMESTIC POLICY.

Lord Reading has told the deputation that the Indian Government or the Imperial Government cannot interfere with the domestic policy of a colony enjoying Dominion Status. What is the meaning of "domestic policy" when that policy is calculated to bring ruin upon the home of thousands of Indian settlers domiciled there to whom they deny the common rights of humanity. Well, what would be the case if instead of Indians they happened to be Europeans or Englishmen?

Let me quote a precedent. Do you know why the great Boer War took place? It took place in order to protect the Europeans of South Africa who were domiciled there, or "Uitlanders" as they were described by the Transvaal Republican Government. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain claimed for the British Government that even if the Transvaal was an independent Government he declined to believe that this was

purely a domestic policy or domestic question. He claimed to protect the rights of the "Ditlanders" of Transvaal, and that was why the great Boer war took place.

WHERE ARE THE DECLARATIONS ?

Lord Lansdowne said that it made his blood boil when he thought of the disabilities of Indians in Transvaal. He held that one of the potent causes of the Boer War was the disabilities of Indians in South Africa, or more accurately Indians of the Transvaal. Where are the declarations to-day? Why does not the British Government go to a war against the Union Government when the life, honour and livelihood of 150 thousand Indians are at stake.

No body questions the description I have given. No body questions the ever growing grievance of the British Indians in South Africa. If you have seen a little pamphlet by Bishop Fisher who had been to South Africa you will find that there he gives a summary of the wrongs that are going to be heaped upon the South African Indians. The Bishop has come to the impartial conclusion that for these wrongs the Indians are not to blame. It is the Europeans; it is the jealous European traders; it is the insolence of the European power that is responsible for these wrongs. He gives his testimony that Indians deserved better at the hands of Europeans of South Africa.

If justice can possibly vindicate this wrong, if admission by South African European statesmen could vindicate these wrongs, if right rules this world—for South Africa it will be impossible to bring about this Bill and it will not be necessary for me to waste your precious time and the time of the deputation and waste the money of the poor people of South Africa.

THRIFTY INDIANS.

But no! Might is right. The Europeans of South Africa have chosen to heap this wrong upon our countrymen, and for what purpose? Conflict of the two civilisations, as General Smuts said. He cannot put up with that and he thinks Europeans of South Africa consider that they will be overwhelmed by the East if they allow these hordes to pour down to South Africa from India. But how could we corrupt their civilisation? Is it because we live as thrifty men and women? Because we are not ashamed to hawk vegetables and fruits and bring them to the very doors of the South African housewife. This is the conflict.

Someone has said (I do not know where, but only recently) that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam that civilised Spain, that took the torch of light to Africa and preached to the world the Gospel of Brotherhood. They are afraid that the natives of South Africa are embracing Islam. If brotherhood is a sin, if it is equality of coloured races that they dread, then that dread is well founded. The thing is they want to become lords of the universe. They want to appropriate the land for themselves. The Kaiser, though down-trodden, fears, an Asiatic federation and speaks even from his haunt that it is a danger which Europeans should guard themselves against. That is the conflict of civilisation and that is why Lord Reading is powerless to intervene in their domestic policy.

UNEQUAL STRUGGLE.

Such are the tremendous consequences of the struggle which this resolution describes as unequal, and it is in that unequal struggle that this Congress is called upon and is privileged to take its due share. I want to make an appeal, if my voice can go as far as South Africa, to the statesmen that are ruling the destiny of South African Indians.

I have so far given only the dark side of South African Europeans. Let me also say that I claim among them some of my most precious friends and I have received from individual South African Europeans the greatest kindness and greatest hospitality.

I claim also to know General Smuts, though I may not claim to be his friend. He was a party to the agreement on behalf of his Government. He it was he who said that the British Indians in South Africa deserved this settlement. It was he who said that this was a final settlement and that Indians should not threaten passive resistance and that the Europeans settlers in South Africa should allow rest to the Indian community.

BROKEN PLEDGES.

But hardly had I turned my back from South Africa than a series of wrongs began to be heaped upon them. Where is the plighted word of General Smuts? General Smuts will go one of these days the same way that every human being has to tread, but his words and deeds shall remain after him. He is not a mere individual. He spoke the right thing in his representative capacity. He claims to be a Christian and every one of these members of the South African Government is a Christian. They claim to be Christians. Before they open their Parliament they read out the common prayer from the Bible and a South African Divine opens the proceedings with a prayer that goes up to God, not of white men, not of the Negro, not of the Mussalman, not of the Hindu, but the God of all.

I say this from my place and position, and knowing my responsibility to its fullest extent, that they deny their Bible, they deny their God, if they hesitate for one moment, if they fail to render the elementary justice that is due to the Indians of South Africa."

MAULANA MAHOMMAD ALI.

Maulana Mahommad Ali seconded the resolution in Urdu. He said that it was because the nation had not taken to the spinning wheel and had on the other hand established many war fronts in the form of fights between Hindus and Muslims, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, No-changers and Swarajists, and now the latest between Swarajists and Responsive Co-operators, that they were feeling helpless in helping their brothers in South Africa. He, however, felt that Mahatma Gandhi had introduced a new force, the readiness to die—with which they could defy the most mighty. The speaker offered himself for service in South Africa any time that his life was required.

MR. KARANDIKAR.

Mr. Karandikar, Ex-member of the Council of State in supporting the Resolution said: Madam President, ladies and Gentlemen: Sometime ago this question was discussed in the council of state. I then came to know the attitude of the officials and I came to know that the government of India was anxious to do all that they could but in the end it turned but to be nothing more than an impotent rage that they could not do anything and I raised the question before the House as to who induced the Indian people to go to South Africa and settle there. On looking to the history of this question I came to know that it was under pressure from the Home Government that the Government of India, the Company Government, framed an enactment authorising the enrolment of indentured labourers for the benefit of white settlers in South Africa. They were then led to believe that those who would go there could settle there as citizens. It was under that impression that they went over there. It is now cruel to them, when the purpose of the whites has been served, that they are to be repatriated. These Indians there have as much right to live there as we have the right to live here. I should think that the Indians have a right to follow their brethren wherever they go and to see that they are respected and live as any other British citizen. It is the logic of national idea that if any individual goes from one country to another, it is the right of other individuals to follow him. It is therefore the privilege of India to look after our people who went there and to do our best for the amelioration of our people there. With these words I support the resolution.

The President: I put the resolution to vote. Do you support it wholeheartedly. (Cries of "all," "all"). Is any body against it? (Cries of "no," "no.") The resolution is carried unanimously. In addition to what Mahatma Gandhi had

said I like to add a few words of tribute to the distinguished sons of India who have come from South Africa to vindicate our honour. I now call upon Dr. Abdurahman to address the meeting.

DR. ABDURAHMAN.

Dr. Abdurahman then came to the rostrum to acknowledge thankfully the resolution passed, which he said was the first thing since their arrival in India that had inspired them with a little hope for the future (Applause.) He had no doubt that if only they could get Mahatmaji to put their case before the Indian people there would be no difficulty in getting the Indian nation to stand by the sons of India in their sufferings in South Africa.

The Union Government's Bill intended that the Indian community be either exterminated or hounded out. "The majority of us in South Africa are not going to give in (Hear, hear.) We feel we are fighting your battle; that when a wound is inflicted on us we feel it has been inflicted on our Motherland—the Great Indian Empire.

"LIFE OF EMPIRE."

As Mahatmaji has said, we are disappointed with the Viceroy's reply. He said that we could not interfere with the domestic legislation of South Africa. Why is it domestic? We are fortunately or unfortunately a part of the British Empire, and it is because we are a part of the Empire that the Government of India is impotent and helpless. (Shame.) If the British Empire only means exploitation of non-European races, if it stands only for letting Europeans exploit the weak—the sooner the life of this Empire is done with the better it is for the world." (Applause.)

He asked those in the Councils that if the Government of India failed to assist them, they should put the South African issue in their elections and throw out all Bills. "Do not sanction a farthing and hold up all government machineries until we, who are treated as political helots and are held in industrial serfdom, are treated honourably." (Applause).

MAHATMAJI WANTED.

Dr. Abdurahman pleaded that they should let Mahatma Gandhi go to South Africa just for a few months and all their troubles would be over. Mahatma Gandhi did not look ill. The longer he spoke the stronger his voice grew. Mahatmaji knew their difficulties. They had no schools to give education to their children or to learn skilled trade. The law of the land prohibited them from being so employed. (Cries of shame.) If only Mahatmaji could go with them, all troubles would vanish, just as snow melted before the morning sun.

They must have discovered again and again that they were suffering because they were members of the British Empire. "If you had some battleships to-day, if you had your army, a little handful of the so-called whites who were vomitted forth on the shores of Africa from the slums of Europe would not have dared do what they are doing to-day. No Englishman would be let to suffer these conditions for 24 hours."

BRITAIN MUST VETO.

We are going through the country. I have told the Viceroy we are going to ask the people of India to back him up. The Viceroy must tell Great Britain that she must exercise the power reserved under Section 65 of the South Africa Act. If they don't give us a Round Table Conference then the British Government should veto that Bill; and if the British Government does not use that power, then it will show that they have tricked us. They have betrayed us because they put that Section into the Act, and they refuse to use it. We are your soldiers. We are not beaten. We are not going to give in. It is your duty to say, "Go on boys; fight on in South Africa; we will stand by you; we will support you in every way. Then we will go on and maintain the honour of the great Indian Empire" (Loud Applause).

THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU'S SPEECH.

RETALIATORY MEASURES URGED.

The most important resolution was that relating to "Indians in South Africa." In moving the resolution Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said that the treatment of their countrymen, whether settled in the Crown Colonies or in the Self-Governing Dominions, had been a matter in which Indian public opinion had taken the most vital interest for the last 20 years. They had been watching the doings of the various Governments in the Crown Colonies and in the Self-Governing Dominions with the greatest concern and at times their legislations had evoked the greatest amount of indignation in this country. It seemed to him, however, that their greatest fears were on the point of being realised within the next few months, if not weeks.

They must have read, he continued a speech delivered by Dr. Abdurahman, the leader of the Deputation which had come from South Africa and the reply which His Excellency the Viceroy had given to him. They had been reading a great deal about the Bill which was now engaging the attention of the South African Government and they knew the steps which the Government of India had taken during the last few months. They also knew that the Government of India had sent a Deputation consisting of three or four gentlemen to South Africa. Sir Tej Bahadur did not wish to say anything on the present occasion with regard to that Deputation which might make its task, difficult as it was, more difficult.

UNDISGUISED TYRANNY.

But there was no use disguising from themselves the critical condition of affairs in South Africa. The South African Government had not used any diplomatic language—they had indulged in the bluntest possible language so far as the Indian interests in South Africa were concerned. Those who had read the speech of the Minister in charge of the Bill would remember that the South African Government did not make it a secret that the whole aim and object of their policy was to ultimately exterminate Indians in South Africa. When the Boer War came about, the conscience of many of the British statesmen was pricked and the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain said in effect that his blood boiled to consider that a section of His Majesty's subject should be treated in a manner in which they were being treated by the Boer Republic. Lord Lansdowne also made a similar observation.

Just after the termination of the Boer War when the South African Government desired the Parliament to incorporate them into a Union certain special provisions were laid down in the Act professedly with the object of protecting the interests of Asiatics, and in regard to Indians or Asiatics settled in the provinces, the administrators of the provinces were charged with a special duty to protect the interests of Asiatics and Indians. Similarly there was a provision in the Act reserving to the Crown the power to veto. So far as the provincial legislation in South Africa was concerned the speaker was not aware of many occasions on which the obligations cast upon the provincial administrators to protect Indian interests had been discharged with that care which they were entitled to expect from the administrators, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution.

YEARS OF NEGOTIATION.

The last fourteen or fifteen years went on the speaker, had been a history of negotiations between the Government of India and the South African Government—negotiations carried on by representations or by the despatch of special officers or the Deputations. Meanwhile during this interval there was an agreement arrived at between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi in or about the year 1913 which led Mr. Gandhi and the Indian settlers there to believe and hope that an amicable settlement had been arrived at which was consistent with the interests of India and their sentiments and the Indians here thought that their countrymen in South Africa would be treated with the ordinary rights and privileges which belonged to His Majesty's subjects in every part of the British Empire.

It was now said that the action which the Union Government proposed to take was by no means inconsistent with the settlement arrived at between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi. A remarkable point about the argument was that Mr. Gandhi, one of the parties of the settlement, had absolutely repudiated the interpretation which was now sought to be put upon it.

RETALIATORY MEASURES.

There were some countrymen of his who had suggested that the Government of India should adopt retaliatory measures. The speaker himself once suggested retaliatory measures so far as the South African coal was concerned. Similar suggestions had been made in regard to South African settlers in India or those employed by the Government of India. But it was no use disguising from themselves the fact that any retaliatory measure that they might take against South African settlers in India or those employed in Government service or even against South African coal, would at best demonstrate their indignation and their strong feeling with regard to the matter. So far as the course of conduct of the South African Government was concerned that would continue to be unaffected thereby. It would have been quite a different proposition if in India there was a fairly large number of South African settlers or Government employees. Therefore, while he supported that part of the resolution referring to the adoption of retaliatory measures, he was glad that the resolution did not suggest any specific method of retaliation but called upon the Government of India to devise means of adopting a policy of retaliation with the object of clearly demonstrating their feeling of indignation in regard to that matter.

There was, he proceeded, another power provided by the Statute which they invoked in their aid, and that was the power of the veto of the Crown. They had been told that they did not make allowance for the fact that South Africa was a Self-governing Dominion and that it was of the essence of Self-Government that the Dominion concerned might do anything it liked in regard to a matter of domestic policy. They were not oblivious of that fact. They knew to their regret that while South Africa was a Dominion and therefore could exercise that liberty or license in regard to the Indians, they were not a Self-Governing Dominion with the same amount of liberty or license. But taking facts as they were the position was that one part of the British Empire or the British Commonwealth was in truth waging war against another part of the same Empire. It was no use disguising that fact.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

The South African Government made no secret of its aims, objects and policy. There was no escape from the conclusion that that Government having built up its prosperity upon the labours of Indians, having taken them at one time from this country and having used them to their advantage, now wanted to turn them out—to cast them adrift as if they had no ties or connection with the British Empire. If there was an occasion when the power of veto by the Crown could be legitimately

used, that occasion was the present one. (Hear hear,) for it would not do for His Majesty's Government to say. Oh, we are not prepared to advise the Crown that resort should be had to that exceptional power, because one might very well ask if that power was not to be used on an exceptional occasion of this character, when was it going to be used than? Exceptional powers must be used to meet exceptional circumstances. Could they visualise a more exceptional occasion than the present one?

Continuing Sir Tej Bahadur said the resolution entered a protest against the policy of the South African Government and called upon the Government of India that when all other efforts had failed and negotiations had come to an end, to take courage in both hands and say to His Majesty's Government that now was the time for them to convince 350 millions of Indians that their interests, honour, liberty and freedom were as much the concern of His Majesty's Government as the interests of the Self-Governing Dominions. Leaving aside the above question he said that they had been told that the Government of India had been pressing the claims of Indians upon the South African Government and also of His Majesty's Government in ways more than one. They had been told that they had been urging upon the Government the necessity of a Round Table Conference. So far as the South African Government was concerned it had not shown any disposition to agree to such a Conference.

Whatever might be the result of a Round Table Conference the most important point was that the legal and the economic claims of His Majesty's subjects in South Africa should be placed beyond all doubt, recognised as being equal to those in South Africa. Any concession on that point would be strongly resented in India and no Government of India could hope to be excused if the Indian interests were sacrificed, merely because it had got to deal with a Self-Governing Dominion. He admitted that it was not a proud position for any Government to go on urging, pleading and supplicating another Government belonging to the same Commonwealth and the same Empire but taking things as they were perhaps that position was inevitable for the Government of India. But the real pressure ought to come from His Majesty's Government (Hear, hear.) If they declined to interfere in a matter like this, such little faith as they had in the Conservative Government would be absolutely destroyed. He would have very little faith in the Baldwin Government, if on an occasion like this the Premier did not rise equal to the Imperial interests which were no other than the interests of India and the interests of England at one and the same time. (Applause.)

THE ALL-INDIA KHILAFAT CONFERENCE.

Strong speeches were made at the Khilafat Conference and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"This All-India Khilafat Conference expresses its profound sympathy with its South African Indian brethren in their struggle for protection of their national and civic rights and assures them that every Indian fervently desires success to their cause and would do every thing possible for them in their present condition of helpless slavery."

ALL-INDIA NON-BRAHMIN CONGRESS.

Following resolution was passed unanimously. The All-India non-Brahmin Congress extends a hearty welcome to the Indian Deputation from South Africa and assures the South African Indians that this Congress and Non-Brahmins in the country will do everything in their power to help them in their just and moral fight for getting their legitimate rights of equal citizenship now not recognised by the White population in South Africa. The Congress desires to impress on the Viceroy, the Government of India and the British Cabinet that nothing is calculated more to impair the unity of

the British Empire than the feeling of resentment which is fast growing in the country at the iniquitous treatment which is now given and is in future-intended to be given to Indian settlers in a portion of the British Empire, and urges on them the necessity of giving a practical manifestation of their sympathy by taking such steps, retaliatory or otherwise, as would ensure the recognition of the just rights of Indians by South African Whites.

THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE.

The following resolution moved by Mr. Asafali of Delhi was unanimously passed at the 17th Session of the Muslim League :—

“The All-India Muslim League wholeheartedly supports the Indian settlers of South Africa in their just and honourable struggle against the consolidated-forces which threaten their very existence, and extends its most cordial welcome to the South African Indian Deputation, now in India. The League views with the greatest apprehension, and enters its emphatic protest against the Areas and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill which the Government of the Union of South Africa proposes to pass, during the next session of the Union Parliament. The League further urges upon the Government of India to make a strong representation to the Union Government and secure a Round Table Conference before any further action is taken—by the Union Government in respect of the proposed Bill, and should this reasonable proposal be declined, and the Bill forced through the Union Parliament, the Muslim League appeals to the Imperial Government, to withhold its assent and disallow the measure.”

INDIA'S HONOUR AT STAKE.

MOTHERLAND TO STAND BY HER CHILDREN ABROAD.

ENTHUSIASTIC MEETING AT EXCELSIOR THEATRE, BOMBAY.

"Do not sell India's honour. The whole country is behind you and you will have our whole-heart support in your life and death struggle. Do not yield." This, in effect, was the assurance given to our brethren in South Africa by the Citizens of Bombay at the mammoth meeting held at the Excelsior Theatre.

His Highness the Aga Khan presided and the speakers included all shades of political opinion and castes and creeds. This fact and the warmth with which the speeches were delivered proved, if proof were needed, that whatever our internal differences India was united on the point that the honour of her children abroad was the honour of the Mother Country and that she was determined that it should be vindicated at all costs.

A mammoth meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held in the Excelsior Theatre on Friday 16th January 1926 to record their protest against the Anti-Asiatic Bill proposed to be passed in South Africa. H. H. The Aga Khan presided on the occasion. The auditorium galleries and the stage were packed to the utmost by 5 p.m. and when H. H. the Aga Khan came with the conveners of the meeting he received a tremendous ovation. Amongst those present were Dr. Abdurahman and Sorabji Rustomjee, members of the South African Indian Congress deputation also Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Lady Petit, Sir C. H. Setalwad, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Sir Stanley Reed, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. Joseph Baptista, Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, Miss Mitha Tata, Hon. Mr. Ruttonsey D. Morarji, Mr. Lalji Naranji, Mr. Fazul Ibrahim, Mr. Byramjee Jeejeebhoy, Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Mr. P. Joseph, Mr. H. P. Mody, Mr. J. B. Petit, Mr. J. K. Mehta, Mr. Meyer Nissim, Mr. Jalbhoy Rustomjee, Mr. Feedahoosen Mahomedally, Mr. Ismail A. H. Moosa, Dr. Rajabali V. Patel, Dr. Y. G. Deshmukh, Mr. Mawji Govind, Mr. K. Natrajan, Mr. B. S. Turkhad.

Mr. B. G. Horniman who arrived a little late when His Highness the Aga Khan was addressing the meeting received a hearty reception by continued cheers.

The chief feature of the meeting was the presence of a number of ladies who evinced a keen interest in the proceedings and also a few English clergymen who were seated on the stage.

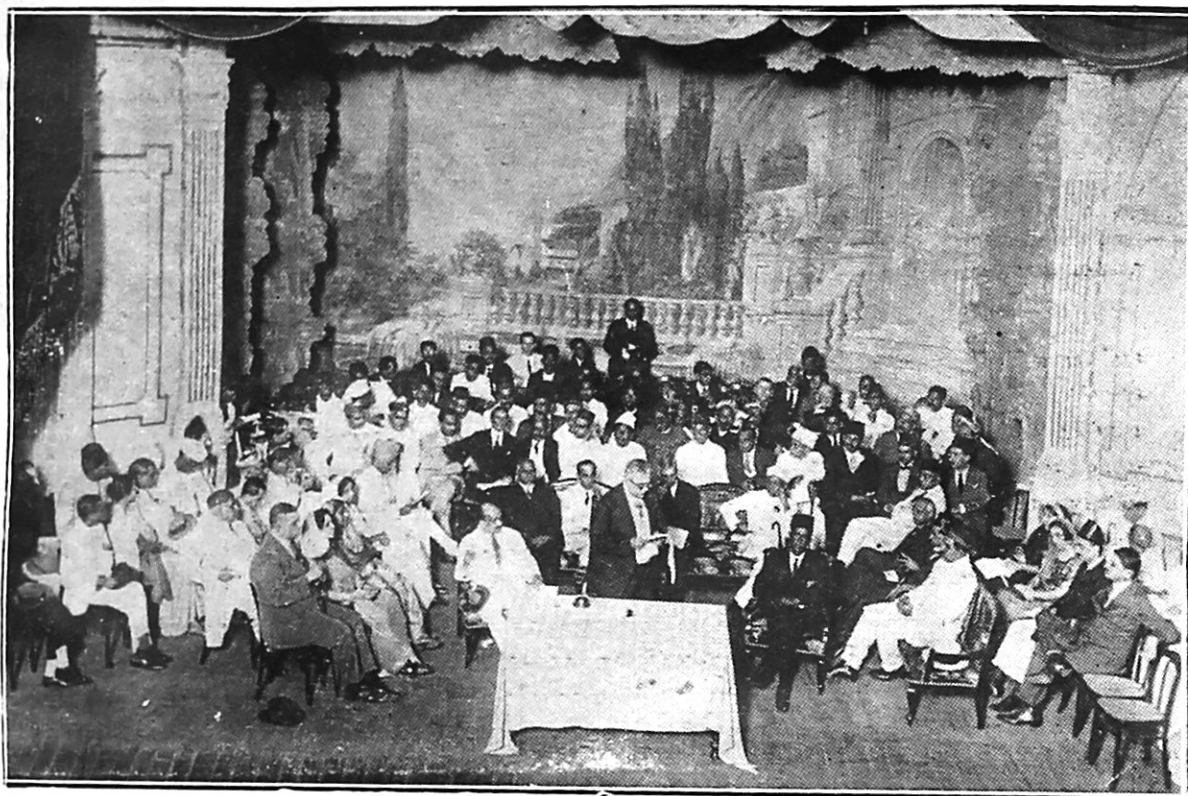
Mr. J. B. Petit at the outset read letters and telegrams from Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, South African Indian Congress, and Cape British Indian Council who sympathised with the object of the meeting. The South African Indian Congress in their message said they expected mother India to respond to their appeal in the hour of their supreme need and trial.

H. H. AGA KHAN'S SPEECH.

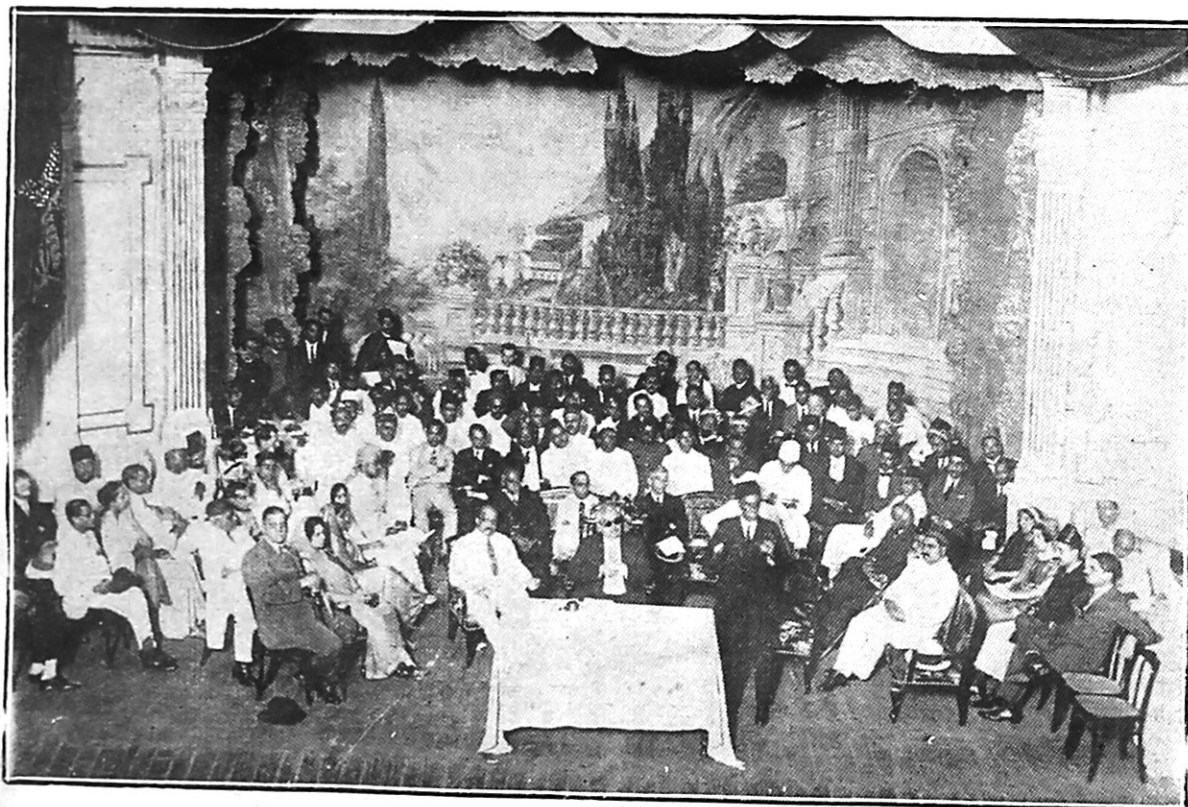
His Highness the Aga Khan said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is thirty years since I first had the honour of presiding at a meeting of my countrymen to protest against the treatment of Indians in South Africa. I should be sorry indeed if I had to try and remember how many public meetings in this town and in other places in India, in the Carlton Hall, how

BOMBAY'S PROTEST MEETING.



A monster meeting was held at the Excelsior Theatre Bombay under the Presidentship of His Highness the Aga Khan to protest against the Asiatic Bill in South Africa. His Highness the Aga Khan is seen addressing the gathering.



Dr. Abdurahman, leader of the South African Deputation now in India made an impressive statement regarding the position of Indians in the South African Union.

many committee meetings of the Indian Overseas Association in England, how many private consultations with Sirs Phirozsha Mehta, Bhownagree, H. Wadia, Sapru and Messrs. Gokhale and Polak and others I have attended during these last thirty years. Looking back it seems to me one long and unending series. Nor can I forget that when in 1896 I first attended a meeting of this description this was already an old grievance and that for already more than a decade it had been agitating the minds of our settlers in Africa and thinkers in this country. Ladies and Gentlemen, these simple and dull statements of biographical facts are to my mind more eloquent than any words at my command to describe what our people have gone through in that part of the world. It means forty years of humiliations inflicted upon them of harassing legislation and ordinances, of offensive rules and regulations, of constant pin-pricks and of many bludgeon blows borne with characteristic patience with forbearance, with fortitude; and these forty years have seen also on the part of the leaders of the Indians in South Africa and of the leading Indians in this country the succession of concessions of the so-called compromisers to give up the inherent rights for the sake of peace and in order to save the small number of our people out there from total ruin and the final destruction of their self-respect. Not only the claims of a common Imperial Citizenship, not only the respect which their willing services to the cause of the development of South Africa but many promises have been forgotten. I need not now remind you of the heroic struggle carried by Mahatma Gandhi in 1906 which lasted till 1914, of the Natal Boroughs Ordinance, Township Franchise Ordinance, of the Licensing Ordinances, of the social and political humiliations which have been heaped on our people. Gentlemen, you will soon hear from the representatives of our countrymen out there the disastrous effects of the now proposed legislation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, some twenty years ago I had the honour of presiding at a meeting of the citizens of this city in the Town Hall and of those who then addressed that meeting I think there are but two now alive who will address you to-day, namely, Mr. Baptista and myself. I then urged immediate steps towards retaliation and reciprocity. But now to-day and on this occasion and speaking as man to man I want to make one final and I hope not unfriendly appeal to the leaders of South Africa. Before it is too late they should not finally close the doors of understanding and conciliation in our face. I appeal to them first of all that the great concessions made by Indians in the well-known Smuts-Gandhi Agreement should be accepted as final in the letter and in the spirit and that nothing should be done to go back on that agreement. I appeal to the many right-thinking men in South Africa to whom Mr. Andrews has referred in his despatches to use all their influence that the spirit of that agreement should be for ever kept alive. The overwhelming majority of the Indians in South Africa are African born or natives of that country or descendants of those who worked for Africa and they themselves work for the common welfare and development of that vast dominion. Many were brought to labour on a mere pittance so that the capitalist Whites should prosper. I appeal to them to remember that the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement and the many present laws and restrictions make White domination in South Africa a certainty and that there is no real danger to their narrow ideas from our competition, which is in fact co-operation towards the economic development of that country. I appeal to the conscience of the White races out there and I should like to put a few definite questions to them.

Do the statistics prove that the Indian is a law-breaker, a criminal? Certainly not. Is he an anarchist, a revolutionary, a bomb-thrower? No.

Is the Indian the owner of the dram shop of the house of ill-fame of the gambling-hole? No.

UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS.

We are told by historians that the Arab dominions came to grief because they took good care to take with them the family feud of the desert beyond the

Pyrénées and as far as the great Wall of China. Has the Indian taken his unseemly Hindu-Muslim squabbles, his caste and sectarian bickerings to South Africa? Certainly not. Out there and beyond the seas the instinctive common-sense of the Indian has asserted itself, and in the smaller India outside we do find United India. Well then, gentlemen, let us take another series of accusations. We are accused of the sanitary dangers from our customs and habits. Has the Indian been the champion of conscientious objection to vaccination in South Africa? Has he objected to inoculation against plague or has he by his careless use of water helped malaria? Certainly not.

Is he a debaucher or drunkard? Most certainly not. Throughout that continent he has shown his qualities, patience, hard work, simple and innocent domestic enjoyment, and if in some way his standard has not been that of the European, it is because as labourer he was not protected and was forced for the welfare of his master to accept wages which reduced him below the White Standard.

Ladies and gentlemen, once more I make this final appeal to the conscience of the White men out their not to forget our common Empire, our membership of the League of Nations, our common humanity, the earnest pleadings of Sapru during the last Imperial Conference, the many friendly concessions of Gokhale and Gandhi, and above all the loyal co-operation in the daily business of life for more than fifty years of the Indians of South Africa and to voluntarily and graciously drop this needless and humiliating Bill.

DR. ABDURAHMAN.

FINAL "ROUND-UP" OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Dr. Abdurahman next addressed the meeting on the present situation. After thanking the public of Bombay for the very cordial welcome accorded to the South African deputation and expressing his indebtedness to the Press for the publicity given to their cause and the manner in which their grievances were espoused, he expressed gratification at the bold stand taken by the Congress, the Muslim League and other Associations in India towards the sad plight of her countrymen and women in South Africa. He analysed the disabilities of Indians settled in that country and outlined the implications of the various pieces of legislation passed against them. South Africa, he proceeded, consisted of four provinces—the Cape Province, the Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal with an aggregate white population of 1,600,000 and an Indian population of 160,000 only. In the Cape Province, the Indians lived mostly in the towns, more than one-half of them in Cape Town, and they had all gone there as free men, and not under any system of indentured labour. But in the other provinces, particularly in the Orange Free State, miscalled a Free State but actually a slave State of the British Empire, no one, whether he was an Indian or a coloured man, was permitted to live there except under certain prohibitive conditions. They were rigidly excluded and such of them as continued there could only do so as long as they continued to remain in the service of the white men. In the Transvaal, there were 15,000 Indians, free men, who did not go there under any system of indenture, and were mostly traders from the vegetable hawker to the wholesale merchant. In Natal, they had 140,000 Indians, many of whom went there as labourers from India in response to a very urgent appeal made by the Government of Natal to the Government of India to ship labourers out there to save the colony from bankruptcy and ruin. The Indians had transformed that colony into a prosperous condition it now held, and it was called the Garden Colony of South Africa.

WHAT INDIANS HAVE DONE FOR THE COLONY.

Dr. Abdurahman declared that what the Indians had done for the Colony neither the whites nor the natives could do.

Continuing, he said the Indian settlers, after serving their indenture, settled down there and by dint of hard labour, thrift and enterprise grew to be prosperous, so that to-day in Natal the Indians constituted a very important proportion of the population of the Colony. They fell under three groups, namely, traders, agriculturists, and the Colonial born Indians. The latter though not quite as good agriculturists as their forefathers, had, nevertheless, built up a position of importance in South Africa. He said that the whole South African position, put in a nut-shell, amounted to this, namely that, except in the Cape Province, the Indian was virtually a political helot and he had no representation in Parliament or legislatures of the country or in any local body.

It was a long drawn out struggle which the Indians had waged during the past quarter of a century or over for their rights and liberties; and matters had now reached a climax in the introduction of the Areas Bill which not merely sought to impose iniquitous restrictions upon them, but bade fair to bring about their total extermination from that country.

Dr. Abdurahman pointed out that the members of the deputation and other Indian leaders of the community had done everything possible to bring about some settlement before the deputation left South Africa. They had waited on the Minister responsible for the Bill and appealed to him to withdraw it and called for a round table conference consisting of representatives of the Indian people, the representatives of the Union of South Africa and the representatives of the Imperial Government. The Union Government had spurned this offer.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE BILL.

Dr. Abdurahman next dealt with the implications of the Bill which, he declared, struck at the very root of the existence of Indians in South Africa. He quoted examples to show in what way the different classes of the Bill would affect them. For instance, an Indian dared not purchase or lease immovable property in any part of the towns outside the proclaimed areas. The effect was that with the passing of the Bill and the proclaiming of areas no Indian in South Africa to-day would be permitted to buy an inch of ground outside those areas. What was worse, if an Indian, who was fortunate enough to possess immovable property in those restricted areas, happened to possess no progeny his land would be sold to the whites. Another clause laid down that no new trading licenses would be given to Indians to trade outside the proclaimed areas, nor the old licenses be renewed. The effect of all this, said the speaker, was that in a short time no Indian would be permitted to trade whatsoever, as leases of properties would cease to be theirs either on the death of the property-holder or on the expiry of the lease. He quoted the opinions of the Chief Justice who had severely criticised the ethics underlying the system of segregation. The other offensive clause dealt with the agricultural population of Natal. There a thirty-mile belt had been proclaimed and no Indian could acquire immovable property outside this belt.

He said the whole intention and purport of the Bill was to crush the Indian trader outside the segregated areas and reduce them to a state of serfdom. The law made no provision for compensation for loss and deprivation of properties owned or leased by Indians.

A NEGATION OF SMUTS-GANDHI AGREEMENT.

The Bill was a complete negation of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement. The provisions of the new Bill were not only absurd, but simply inhuman. One clause laid down that if an Indian failed to bring his wife to the Colony within five years from 1st August 1925, he would not be able to bring her at all. (Cries of Shame.) The same clause applied to children as well (laughter.)

FINAL "ROUND-UP" OF ALL INDIANS.

Dr. Abdurahman referred The Colour Bar Bill which was in process of being placed on the Statute Book. According to it no Indian or native would be permitted to be in charge of any machinery. This was intended, he said, to keep the Indian out of job.

He emphasized the fact that all these laws were intended to have the cumulative effect of hounding the Indians out of the land or else reduce them to abject slavery. That was the prospect before the South African Indians at the present moment.

With the loss of Parliamentary and Municipal franchise and the deprivation of all other rights of citizenship, it would end in a final "round-up" of all Indians residing there. The prospect reminded the speaker of a wild hunt, where the animals were chased from the hills and the only escape was the relentless seas where they were slaughtered. Moreover, the racial stigma which the Bill sought to inflict was keenly resented by every Indian. The Indians did not claim that they were superior to the white, but the fact remained that the Europeans had yet to show that they were in anyway superior to them.

APPEAL FOR INDIA'S SUPPORT.

The prospect before the Indians was no doubt gloomy, but the Indians were determined to fight to the last ditch. But they wanted the moral support of the people of their Motherland to stand by them in their struggle, because they were not fighting their own battle, but for the fair fame of India. They were like soldiers in the battle, and looked forward to their Motherland for generalship. But if India was to give no help they were going to stand their test in the final act in the long drawn-out struggle to uphold the good name of India. (Prolonged Cheers.)

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD,

HISTORY OF BROKEN PLEDGES, INSULTS AND HUMILIATIONS.

The Chairman called upon Sir Chimanlal Setalwad to move the principal resolution, which read :—

- (a) " That this meeting of the Citizens of Bombay, held under the joint auspices of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, the Central Khilafat Committee, the Bombay Swaraj Party, the Bombay Muslim League, the National Municipal Party, the Rashtriya Stree Sabha, the Home Rule League, Parsi Rajkiya Sabha, National Home Rule League, British Indian Colonial Merchants' Association, the Bombay Progressive Association, the Bombay Presidency Association, and other Associations, views with the gravest apprehension, and enters its emphatic protest against the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, which is in violation of the 1914 Gandhi-Smuts Agreement, and has for its object the compulsory segregation of Indians, the deprivation of their trading and proprietary rights, and the ultimate elimination of the Indian community, as openly declared by Dr. Malan, Minister of the Interior.
- (b) This meeting earnestly requests the Government of India to urge upon the Union Government the necessity of a round table conference before any further action is taken by the Union Government in respect of the proposed Bill; and should their reasonable proposal be declined and the Bill forced through the Union Parliament, this meeting appeals to his

Excellency the Viceroy to advise the Imperial Government to disallow the measure under section 65 of the South Africa Act."

In moving the resolution, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad said that the treatment of Indians in South Africa had been for many long years the history of broken pledges, plighted words and a series of insults and humiliations with the express and avowed object of squeezing the Indians out of South Africa. He recalled the period when the treatment of Indians was one of the contributory causes of the Boer War. When the Transvaal Republic was under President Kruger a legislation was introduced which provided for residential segregation of Indians. Even President Kruger did not attempt commercial segregation. When the Boer War was declared, Lord Lansdowne mentioned that the treatment of Indians was one of the causes of the War. The speaker read out from Lord Lansdowne's speeches where the principle of residential segregation was condemned in unequivocal terms. Then came peace between the Boers and the British and it was hoped then that the policy of segregation would be a thing of the past, but, looking to the recent happenings since the declaration of peace and the establishment of the Union Government it was no exaggeration to say that the South African Government had broken all their pledges. The inevitable effect of the new legislation, to protest against which the deputation had come over to India, must be to drive them out of South Africa. But what made their blood boil was the fact that such a treatment was made possible within the British Empire.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

Memories were short, otherwise those who were responsible for or condoned the present humiliating treatment of Indians in South Africa ought to realise that they were heaping coals on those very people who came to the timely rescue of the Empire at a most crucial moment in her history. Have they forgotten the battle of the Marne? If India, which stood steadfastly by the Empire in her sorest trial, was going to be treated in this manner, and if the Imperial Government would not respond to their appeals for the barest justice, if these inhuman things could possibly happen under the British Empire, the speaker said he had his own serious misgivings about the future of the British Empire.

Sir Chimanlal concluded by warning the South African Government and its ministers to take heed before things took a more serious turn and, if there was any statesmanship yet left in them, to set right the evil by dropping the bill.

MR. M. A. JINNAH.

"DO NOT YIELD".

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in seconding the resolution, said that the subject had passed the stage of discussion and debate. The matter had not been attempted to be treated as a subject that could be discussed on its merits by the Minister of the Interior who had from the beginning frankly told them that the Indians as a race formed an alien element. Not only this, but the Minister saw no other solution to the question except the one which would result in a very considerable reduction of the Indian population in South Africa. The whole object of the present Bill was meant to eliminate our countrymen, and thus carry out something more than the recommendations of the Asiatic Enquiry Commission.

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION.

Mr. Jinnah pointed out that the provisions of the bill were intended to bring about commercial, residential and land segregation. The conclusion was obvious. The Union Government was trying to drive out the Indians. He referred to the

Smuts-Gandhi Agreement which contained a most vital clause safeguarding the vested rights enjoyed by those Indians residing in South Africa. The Minister at the time had given a promise on behalf of the Government that they would always continue to administer justly and fairly the existing laws so far as it related to vested rights. But what do we find to-day? asked the speaker. An additional law is being enacted before the Union Parliament to segregate the community commercially, residentially and with regard to land.

Mr. Jinnah said he had read in the past of some Czars who were capable of such inhuman deprivation of property, but here they had a member of the British Commonwealth trying to legislate for the complete destruction of the vested rights of the Indian subjects within the Commonwealth.

LORD READING'S REPLY TO DEPUTATION.

Referring to Lord Reading's reply to the deputation which waited on him, Mr. Jinnah said that he did not consider it a full and real statement of the Indian position. The Viceroy had stated that he fully understood the depth of the Indian feeling with regard to the bill, but he told the deputation to remember that the issue was now in South Africa. South Africa was a Dominion and its Parliament had full power to pass legislation regarding its internal affairs. Mr. Jinnah said that he most emphatically protested against that statement (cheers.) When the South Africa Act was passed, a section was deliberately provided in the Statute under which his Majesty had power to disallow any measure that the Union Government might propose. He wished to know whether that was not the time to veto a bill, which was calculated to deprive the Indians of their property. He urged the Viceroy to reconsider the position and ask the Imperial Government to disallow the bill.

Mr. Jinnah next took exception to the Viceroy saying that they could not interfere in the "domestic affairs" of another Government. He wanted to know whether protection of a number of their British subjects from an illegal piece of legislation was interfering with "domestic affairs." The situation was a grave one. He could only say this: that the case of the South African Indians was morally and legally and in every other respect a just one. He assured the deputation that the country would help them to keep the fair name of India (cheers.) He added: "Do not yield, do not yield, even your elementary rights." (Loud cheers.)

SIR STANLEY REED.

IGNOBLE ATTEMPT TO GO BACK UPON SMUTS-GANDHI AGREEMENT.

Sir Stanley Reed, supporting the resolution, said that there was one question on which there was absolutely no division of opinion and that was they were determined to secure to every Indian abroad the full rights of citizenship. The Areas Bill, he thought, was an ignoble attempt to go back on the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement which secured full development for Indians in South Africa. It gave him great pleasure to support the resolution, because he felt Indians had a right, wherever they might live, to avail themselves of every opportunity of reaching their full social and economic stature. It appeared to him that the policy now threatened by the Union Government had a far-reaching effect, in that it not only hit their countrymen socially and economically, but it went even beyond this by threatening to strike at the root of civilization itself. (Cheers.) If his reading of history had taught him one lesson, it was that no Government could thrive, on injustice in which all civilizations must inevitably rest. For these reasons he supported the resolution and commended it to their unqualified support (Loud cheers.)

MR. H. P. MODY.

A DESPERATE SITUATION.

This resolution was further supported by Mr. H. P. Mody who said that they had held numberless meetings and sent various despatches and deputations, and framed petitions and protests: All these practically proved to no purpose. The situation had steadily grown worse and they were faced with a position in which the honour of of their countrymen was threatened and their existence made intolerable.

Proceeding, the speaker said that he for one was not surprised at it. On the one side was a country which believed that its economic life was threatened by the existence of a frugal and industrious population, and which was determined to hound them out of the country regardless of all ethical or political considerations. On the other was a Dependency which had just learned, to raise its voice and which, inspite of its representatives at "Imperial Conferences," and the "League of Nations" sittings, had no more influence on international relations than a third class Indian State. On the one hand there was a Government determined to protect its Nationals against even a fair and open competition; on the other, there was a Government which was indifferent even to the most unfair and insidious competition and which looked placidly on while countries with depreciated exchanges and sweated labour benefited our markets and pushed their goods out.

The Imperial Government, while it was supremely indifferent, was supremely impotent and would not and dared not impose its will on the Government and people of South Africa.

Concluding Mr. Mody said: "The situation therefore is desperate and I do not see what else was left to us but retaliation if this last effort at settlement by negotiation fails. Even if its scope is limited, the moral effect would be considerable. If, in the result, the lot of our countrymen in South Africa is made more difficult, I hope India will stand by them and give them all the moral and material assistance they will need in the hour of trial. They have played their part worthily in this great struggle. Let us make them feel that the part we play is no less worthy."

The resolution was unanimously carried.

MR. J. B. PETIT.

BEGINNING OF A GREAT WAR. "

Mr. J. B. Petit moved the following resolution:—

"That this meeting further urges that the Government of India should at the earliest possible opportunity, in consultation with the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State, send a strong deputation to England consisting of Indian leaders of all parties, including representatives of the South African Indian Congress, to place before the British Cabinet, Parliament and public the grave consequences of the Anti-Indian policy of the South African Union Government as illustrated by the Asiatic Bill."

He said that India had always refused and would always refuse to assume that the question of treatment of Indians in South Africa or for the matter of that in any Colony was purely a matter of internal management. He declared that this country would insist on maintaining that this problem of Indians in South Africa was very important and could not be dealt with in a rough and ready manner.

Mr. Petit said it was the consensus of opinion among all parties that a representative deputation should be selected by the two Houses of Legislature of this country to be sent to England at the earliest possible moment in order that the intensity of the feelings and the depth of their resentment could be placed before the British Parliament, Government and the public.

He desired this deputation to go and tell the British public that the patience of the Indian people was exhausted, that the South African policy was not merely wanton insult to the South African Indians, but to humanity. Not only this, but tell them that if the present policy was carried to its logical conclusion, the South Africans would have to turn out even Jesus who was born an Asiatic. (Laughter)

Concluding Mr. Petit said the time had arrived when the British public should be told that this country was determined to fight to a man this iniquitous Bill. "We wish to tell them in unequivocal language that this is the beginning of a great war—a war which is going to be mightier than even the war of 1914. It is going to be a war between the entire white races on the one side and the coloured nations on the other. We feel that our cause is just and righteous."

MR. BHULABHAI J. DESAI.

A LAWLESS LAW.

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai in seconding the resolution observed that it was really puerile from the point of view of International law to say that because a majority had an overwhelming voice in the Legislatures, therefore the minorities must be deprived of any vestige of property. It was nothing short of a lawless law. The speaker thought that when they found a race was conceited, was lost to its sense of justice, when it failed to recognise that there was anything wrong in what it was doing, the limit was reached and called for strong concerted action. He thought the present crisis was the beginning of the end of the struggle. He quoted the historian Seeley to show that when a nation became arrogant and dealt in injustice, that nation was doomed.

The resolution, on being put to the vote, was carried.

MR. JOSEPH BAPTISTA.

TALE OF INDIGNITIES.

Mr. Joseph Baptista, The Mayor of Bombay, moved:—

"That this meeting authorizes the Secretaries to forward resolutions Nos. 2 and 3 to the Government of India."

Mr. Baptista referred to the conflict between the white and the coloured races, which, he said, had grown worse. The Indians had suffered and were suffering a great deal at the hands of South Africans in spite of the fair promises of British Ministers. The tale of indignities told by Dr. Abdurahman made his blood boil. But now matters were getting worse as the anti-Asiatic legislation clearly showed. But the speaker was proud to find such leaders as Dr. Abdurahman in South Africa, who, he was convinced, would put a stiff fight for the outraged honour of Indians.

Mr. Lalji Naranji supported the motion, which was carried.

MR. M. R. JAYAKAR.

EPISODE OF HUMILIATION.

Mr. M. R. Jayakar next moved :—

"That this meeting pledges itself whole-heartedly to support the Indians in South Africa morally as well as financially in their just, noble and honourable struggle against the consolidated forces which threaten their existence in that part of the British Empire."

Mr. Jayakar said that the resolution entrusted to him called upon this meeting to support the Indians in South Africa in their struggle. A number of speeches had already been made which clearly indicated the nature of the struggle. He did not wish to tire the audience with a long speech at that hour. He only wished to say that the moral significance of this struggle was very great because on its success or otherwise would depend the claims of England to establish a Commonwealth consisting of various races and creeds, all sharing the burdens of a united Commonwealth. It was to his mind a rather difficult experiment because one nation alone had tried it in previous times and failed. It now remained to see whether England would now succeed in this experiment and the test of its success or failure was largely involved in the way in which the claims of Indians in South Africa were met.

The speaker continuing said that he should have thought that having regard to this essential element of the struggle, Englishmen would be more anxious that it should succeed than Indians would be because the onus of making this experiment a success would lie more upon the Englishmen than upon anybody else.

The story of the Indian struggle in South Africa, he said, was one continuous episode of humiliation after humiliation. There were very few redeeming features in it and there were many people in India and outside who were watching the result of this struggle, as proving the important moral whether it was possible for a white and coloured people to share the privileges of a United Empire.

Concluding Mr. Jayakar said that the deputation must make it clear that if they did not get justice in this case, the country and its people would have lost their faith in British justice and the loss would be England's. Nay, even more, England would lose this country. (Cheers.)

The motion was seconded by Mirza Ali Mahomed Khan.

MR. B. G. HORNIMAN.

Mr. B. G. Horniman who was not put on the programme but was forced to speak by the continued request of the audience then came out and was received with prolonged cheers. He apologised for unwittingly intruding upon the programme. (cries of No, No.) He was grateful, however, for the opportunity of giving his cordial support to the cause of South African Indians. It was a remarkable achievement to have brought on the platform representatives of all the parties and sections in the country. He however thought it was not a remarkable achievement for such a cause. It appeared to him a very natural thing in a cause like that for the self-respect of every man and of every party no matter with whom they associate was affected. Was it not, he asked an outrageous thing that at a time when they were face to face with appalling issues involving the honour and future of India that their leaders should be divided on the main questions. When Dr. Abdurahman addressed the meeting his

(Mr. Horniman's) blood boiled as an Englishman that there should be Englishmen capable of such treatment towards their fellowmen, that his fellow subjects in India should be called upon to protest. If Indians would not continue to accept the badge of inferiority in their own country it would not be possible for the Colonial Government to impose it. But they should be ready, he said, to set aside their differences, and be ready to join together, co-operators and non-co-operators and no changers and be united for the battle of achieving self-Government and the question of South Africa from that moment would be solved by itself and no Dominion Government or Crown Colony would dare do anything if the whole country was united. He, therefore, made an appeal on that occasion from that platform to all parties to try and come together as they had come together that day and they would achieve great things and would speak to the Government of South Africa in regard to the status and self-respect of Indians in that country as a right.

Mr. Mirza Ali Mahomed supported the resolution.

MR. M. NISSIM.

Mr. Meyer Nissim in further supporting said that there was no need of eloquence or special pleading on his part to commend for their acceptance the proposition that had just been moved. "The plight of their countrymen in South Africa is too well-known to need reiteration. That it is our duty to stand by our countrymen to solace and assist them in their righteous struggle is simply unquestioned and unquestionable. Let there be no wavering, no hesitation on the part of the people of India in their inflexible resolve to make their own the struggle of their countrymen in Africa who are threatened with extinction from their very homes. As a nation and as individuals, it behoves us to render every possible help to our oppressed and suffering countrymen. It is up to us to stand wholeheartedly by our brethren during their hour of trial and suffering and carry on a holy war against the forces of exclusiveness and unreason. I need not say any more to claim your whole-hearted adoption of this resolution."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu then in according a vote of thanks to H. H. the Aga-Khan for presiding on the occasion said 161 thousand Indians in South Africa were looking that day for lead to India and she hoped the chairman would take up the lead in their struggle. When she was in South Africa in her message and mandate to Indians she said "continue your fight within the Empire if possible, outside the Empire if necessary. Let South Africa decide the issue." Indians should pledge that day to the utmost to get that mandate across the sea in South Africa. She appealed to all men and women not to let castes, sects or creed come in the way of India's honour.

The following is the Editorial of The "Bombay Chronicle" of Saturday, January 16, 1926.

THE LAST DITCH

The proceedings of the public meeting held yesterday to protest against the South African oppression were characterised by painful restraint. The organisers were anxious that the demonstration should be blameless and decorous, and they are entitled to a feeling of satisfaction that the speeches were delivered in moderate key. Mr. Jinnah however, presented the incongruity of dialectical protests after the futility of forty years; indeed the general sentiment was that Indians should frame a programme of action in view of the obduracy of the South African Government and the silent collusion of the Imperial Government. In the ultimate analysis of constitutional relationships and racial antipathy, we cannot minimise the responsibility of the British Government. The South African deputation appealed to India for the protection of Indians against persecution, but in it there is the desperate monotony of past experiences. As H. H. the Aga Khan pointed out, we have for forty years protested against the growing harassments of our brethren abroad and it is difficult to recall the incidents of remonstrance without losing heart on the eve of the last and most critical struggle. If anything, the Indians have in their peril under-stated their claims. Instead of giving a final statement of their irreducible demand, they have been asking for a round table conference to discuss the issues. A conference involves no commitments, and the refusal of the Union Government to entertain the proposal marks their hideous stubbornness against all suggestions of compromise. Speaking in the South African parliament, Dr. Malan confessed that the object of the Bill was to reduce the Indian community. With the object thus flagrantly avowed, it is difficult to rely on the arts of persuasion. The Union Government seem to be so set upon their evil course that they are afraid of facing contrary facts in straight negotiations. Let it be observed that Mr. C. F. Andrews in his despatches, does not harp upon the efficacy of a round table conference without some concurrence of principles. The policy of the South African Whites is to exterminate the Indian and to exploit the African with a free hand, and we see encouragement in the recognition of the "natives" that the Asiatic is incidentally fighting for their own interests. We are for a life and death contest, and what the meeting has done is to suggest a deputation to England while pledging India to the full support of their brethren in South Africa during the struggle that is imminent.

Dr. Abdurahman's statement was congenial and convincing, and it was a timely answer to the Cape press which had launched upon the business of explaining away the obligations of the Gandhi-Smuts agreement. The White community is perfectly safe in abiding by the agreement and it is arrant greed to represent the existence of the Indian as a trespass on South Africa. The Indian in Natal had been invited as a guest of honour and when the province was on the verge of arid bankruptcy the Indian rescued it. South African history refutes the mendacious afterthoughts of the White exploiter. Morally the domiciled Indian has as much right to pursue his peaceful avocations as any unit of the offscourings of Europe. The Indian is no trespasser but a citizen whose contribution is at least as vital and authentic as that of the European squatter. The meaning of segregation, residential and commercial was lucidly explained by Dr. Abdurahman and his description of calculated tyranny thoroughly warrants the censure of Bishop Talbot. The South African dislikes the condemnation of religious testimony. While he tries to wriggle out of General Smuts compact, he chafes at the exposure of his selfishness by the canons of his own faith, and therefore Mr. Andrews and Bishop Talbot are being advised to give pulpit homilies without any allusion to the iniquity of current practice. Nearly three thousand years ago, an attempt was made in the northern region

of Africa to keep a slave population. The Pharaohs of the Oppression decreed that the sons of their Hebrew-serfs should be slaughtered in order to keep them reduced on Dr. Malan's principle of safety. The attempt failed and the story is a commonplace among preachers whom the South Africans petulantly want to keep sermonising. We are grateful for the testimony of men like Bishop Talbot, which goes a long way to corroborate the account of the South African deputation. Think of the humiliation of Indians being driven from pillar to post, by the trick of proclaiming, deproclaiming and re-proclaiming areas. It is a deliberate attempt to concert the extermination of a section of the community for the aggrandisement of another; it is the policy of massacre in disguised and diffused form.

Mr. Jinnah asked whether we were not past the stage of deadening remonstrance. The delegation to England may do some good, but South Africa is bent on her course of despoliation. Two things a delegation may be able to achieve, the first to persuade British statement that the occasion justifies the use of the imperial veto, and the second to impress upon honest Britishers that it is India's impotence at home that is at the root of her humiliation abroad. With regard to the first plank of propaganda, the resolution of yesterday's meeting was right and pertinent. The provocation of South Africa has been so great that a firmer demand is justified, but tentatively the proposal of constitutional veto is a valid expedient. The case for intervention is further strengthened by the decision of Imperial Conferences that Indians already domiciled should be safe-guarded from persecution. To say that the problem is economic, is a scholarly way of camouflaging the race-arrogance behind the propaganda. If Indians are underpaid, the solution is to standardise wages at a high level instead of decimating a loyal, industrious and well-behaved population. The second plank is really the most vital, and Mr. Horniman drew attention to the attainment of self-respect in India as the avenue of esteem overseas. Dominated and despised in India, the Indian is treated with scant respect in the Colonies; and from the determination of Indians in South Africa, we wish we had more of that indomitable type in India itself. The public meeting pledged itself to the support of Indians in the imminent struggle. Mr. Jinnah said "Do not yield," but when it comes to our turn to help we should not be content with mere vociferation. As race-arrogance is a common trait of the Britisher whether at home or in the Colonies, we should be prepared for bold action in India to synchronise with the struggle of Indians in South Africa; else our assurances to the South African will be condemned as ornate mockery.