

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

**W**E heartily welcome Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee back home. He has done well and comes as the conquering hero. The postponement of the Asiatic Bill is no small achievement and a great deal of credit is due to Mr. Sorabjee for the energetic work he has done in this connection. Mr. Sorabjee is a Colonial-born and the Colonial-born Indians have reason to be proud of having an enthusiastic and patriotic worker amongst them like him. Let them imbibe half the spirit possessed by Mr. Sorabjee and a great deal of the difficulties suffered by Indians in this country will be removed. The highest tribute we can pay Mr. Sorabjee is that he is the living spirit of the Durban Indians. May that spirit grow and may he live long to reap the fruits of his services to his brethren.

A Capetown message states that an Indian who clandestinely entered the Union has after 17 years' residence in the Cape, been declared a prohibited immigrant. The Judge-President, Sir Malcolm Searle, and Mr. Justice Watermeyer, to whom a special case had been stated for decision, recalled that the Indian, Abdulla Sheik Ismail Parker, landed at Beira in 1909 when he was 16 years of age. He came overland through Rhodesia to the Cape, his object being to avoid the immigration officers as he could not read or write a European language. Their Lordships held that Parker could not acquire domicile after evading a law framed to keep out undesirable immigrants.

[We deal with the above in our leading article.—  
Ed. I.O.]

The sad death last week of the Rev. John Howard, the Wesleyan Methodist Minister of Benoni, removes from this earth one of the very few most sincere and loving souls. The Indian community remembers the late Rev. John Howard as one of the active members of the Committee of European sympathisers formed in Johannesburg during the days of Passive Resistance. His loss will be felt more by the Native and Indian communities who are constantly subjected to foul-play by the Union authorities as the late Rev. Howard was always an eloquent preacher of fair-play. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved, and pray that the soul of the departed may rest in peace.

The fifth anniversary of the above Home was celebrated on Sunday the 16th inst., at the Home grounds, before a fair gathering, prominent amongst whom were Messrs. A. E. Tyeb, Rooknoodeen, M. Singh, Miankhan, S. P. Butler, A. H. Moosa, M. A. R. Khan, Shaik Himed, B. Purmasir, B. Tilak Dhary, K. A. Chin. The President of the Society, Mr. Satyadev welcomed the visitors and enlightened the gathering of the various activities of the Society.

The secretarial reports of the Home and the School were then submitted by the Secretary, in which particular emphasis was laid on the erection of a new building to cope with the growing demands of the town. A list of contributors was

also announced as follows:—Union Government £25, Rustomjee Goorcoodoo Trust £25, A. Dookan £10, B. M. Singh £10, R. K. Kapitan £5, Morar G. Desai £3, totalling £78, and it is earnestly prayed that further donations will be received towards this worthy institution

Messrs. B. M. Singh, A. E. Tyeb, Rooknoodeen, B. Purmasir, M. T. Moodley, K. A. Chin, spoke enlogising the work of the Society, and would accord their support whenever desired. Further donations from the Maj-A-Mal Club of £5 5s., B. Purmasir £2 2s. 6d. and S. Rajpaul £1 1s. were thankfully received. The chairman in his closing remarks thanked the gathering for their presence and hoped that the sympathies of the community would be with the Society in this humanitarian cause.

### JUSTICE WITH MERCY

**A**N Indian, Abdulla Sheik Ismail Parker, resident of the Cape for the last seventeen years has been declared a prohibited immigrant. Parker, it is stated, landed at Beira in 1909 when he was sixteen years of age and came overland through Rhodesia to the Cape, his object being to avoid the immigration officers as he could not read and write a European language. The Judge-President, Sir Malcolm Searle, and Mr. Justice Watermeyer, to whom a special case had been stated for decision, have held that Parker could not acquire domicile after evading a law framed to keep out undesirable immigrants. The result will be that the long-established home and business of this person will be broken up and he will be deported. In so far as the judgment goes we have no fault to find with it. But justice must be tempered with mercy, and that is for the Government to do. Let us consider the merits of the case in question. Parker has been in this country for the last seventeen years and has been earning an honest livelihood. He has broken no laws of the country nor has he been punished for any crimes. He has remained a peaceful and law-abiding citizen of the British Empire in a British country. He has been an asset to the country in so far as he has been supplying the needs of the people, as others are doing, with a fair profit for his own upkeep. The only crime he is guilty of is that he entered this part of God's Dominion to seek a livelihood. He had to do this secretly in order to escape from the tyranny of unrighteous laws that deprived human beings of their natural freedom. Notwithstanding all the vigilance of the authorities he managed to enter the country without their knowledge and having entered it he

has proved not an unworthy citizen, for, are there not worse criminals in this country than Parker and consequently more undesirable with all their acquired domicile? These facts should be sufficient to awaken the authorities to a sense of mercy and stay their hands from taking any harsh action. If all the Indians who may have entered the country in the way Parker has done were to be subjected to the same fate it would certainly be cruelty and by no means a fair solution of the Asiatic question.

Whilst we are appealing for mercy to be shown in this and other similar cases we wish it to be clearly understood that we do not advocate the entry of Indians in this country by fraudulent means. We have no sympathy for those who endeavour to do so and we would have nothing to say against the Government taking action to deport them. We are asking for mercy to be shown only to those who are already in the country and have long-established homes in the country.

It is unfortunate that the Colour Bar Bill should have passed and pin-pricks such as these still be continued when the Union Government have demonstrated such an admirable spirit in consenting to a Round Table Conference to finally solve the Indian problem in this country. We would urge the advisability of postponing all such actions at least until the end of the proposed conference in order that the friendly feelings established between the Indian and the Union Governments may not be marred and the Indian community in this country may rest at peace.

## Union Jack In Danger "No Compromise!"

We take the following interesting portion from leading article of the *Natal Advertiser* dated May 17, under the above heading on the Flag Controversy:—

There are some things in life about which men desire neither to argue nor to protest over much. The love of a son for his mother; a man for his wife; of a parent for his child; these have long since passed (even if ever they were in it) out of the range of discussion. For mother, wife or child a normally minded man would die if needs be. But a normally minded man would be hard to find who would rise up and make eloquent protestations about his sentiments towards any one of the three.

The love of a man for his Flag is not far behind these as a moving impulse in his life; and history probably has more cases to record of men dying for their nation's emblem than for any other cause. This, of course, is because the challenge to one's Flag is usually staged where one has no alternative but to fight for it or to betray it: and heretofore traitors to their Flag have been rare.

To-day, however, the British Flag in South Africa is in great danger; and the speculatively-minded are wondering whether Natal (which, in the past fifteen years, has seen its traditions invaded and its identity challenged, and has lain down under the assaults) will permit this culminating outrage to be committed on what is Natal's especial heritage in South Africa. Will Natal stand dumb and apathetic while the Union Jack is legislated out of existence?

### No Act of Union

On this matter there is no room for anything else but the plainest of plain speaking. Any man of

British stock ought to be above arguing the merits of his Flag, just as a decent man would forbear proclaiming aloft the virtue, and extolling the graces, of his wife. Faith in these merits should be intertwined in the roots of his heart; they should be part of his being; and no man should be able to pluck at his national standard without his feeling at once the attack is upon the very source of his race-existence. Whether or not the Government's proposed measure is simply an impudent "try-on" to see how much the Briton really will endure; whether or not it is part of International Labour's subtle device for bringing all nationalism into disfavour, and preparing the ground for the day when the Red Flag is over all; or whether or not the Government really thinks that English people no longer care about their Flag: we will not pretend to say. All we know is that if Natal allows the Pact to flinch the Flag away, then Natal deserves to have the harrows of the Pact Triumphant drawn exultingly backwards and forwards over its supine form till in its agony it cries aloud and there is none to heed or to help it.

## Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee's Arrival Indian Community Accords a Hearty Welcome

There was a representative gathering of Indians present at the Point last Wednesday morning to accord a hearty welcome to Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, Secretary to the South African Indian Congress Deputation, who arrived by the *s.s. Karna*. Mr. Sorabjee was heartily cheered by the crowd on landing and was garlanded on behalf of the South African Indian Congress by its Deputy-President Mr. J. W. Godfrey who made a short speech welcoming him.

Mr. Sorabjee was then taken to 110 Field Street where many prominent members of the Indian community had assembled to welcome him and all were served with light refreshments. Mr. Sorabjee thanked them all for their kind welcome.

Mr. Rustomjee's premises were occupied by crowds of Indians during the whole day constantly dropping in to greet Mr. Sorabjee.

In the afternoon a tea party was given in honour of Mr. Sorabjee by Mr. B. M. Singh at his residence at Overport.

### Reception at Rawat's Hall

At 5-30 p.m. Rawat's Bio Hall in Victoria Street was packed with Indians in response to the call of the South African Indian Congress to accord an official welcome to Mr. Sorabjee.

Representatives from the different Provinces were present and a large number of telegrams from individuals and bodies welcoming Mr. Sorabjee and paying high tributes to his services were read by Mr. A. I. Kaje, hon. Secretary S.A.I.C.

Mr. J. W. Godfrey who was in the chair spoke in glowing terms of the work done by Mr. Sorabjee in connection with the sending of the deputation to India and also as its secretary. The deputation, said the speaker, would never have gone and would never have been able to do the work it had succeeded in doing had it not been for the enthusiastic and energetic work of Mr. Sorabjee.

Mr. Sorabjee was then literally buried in beautiful flower wreaths and bouquets which were presented to him by the following bodies:—

The S.A.I.C., Transvaal British Indian Association, Natal Indian Congress, N.I.C. Klip River District Branch and Durban Hindu Association.

A gold medal was presented by Mr. A. A. Mahomed.

After other speeches echoing the sentiments ex-

pressed by the Deputy President, Mr. Sorabjee on rising to reply was received with vociferous cheers. The speaker thanked the assembly from the bottom of his heart for the kind reception they had given him and said that he had done nothing more than his bare duty. The deputation would not have been able to do what it was able to do had it not been for the enthusiasm shown by those remaining in this country. In this connection Mr. Sorabjee paid a high tribute specially to Mr. E. A. Tyeb and Mr. Shaik Himed who took a leading part in collecting the necessary funds for the deputation. Referring to the proposed Round Table Conference the speaker said, they were not to rest satisfied with that as that Conference was not the same as they had asked for. It was a Conference only between the Union and the Indian Governments and much would depend on the representatives taking part in it. Referring to the Western Standard clause added by the Union Government in the formula Mr. Sorabjee said he could not understand what was meant by it, but one thing he was certain of and that was that those who talked so much about the Western Standard would be able to get a proper idea of the real Eastern Standard when they sat in the proposed Conference.

In conclusion, the speaker urged the people not to be too hopeful about the results and to organise all the forces for the future fight which might be much more strenuous than the past.

The meeting terminated with hearty cheers to the guest of the evening and a vote of thanks to the chair and to Mr. Rawat for generously lending the Hall.

## Maritzburg Notes

[ FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT ]

Mr. T. G. Rogers gave a lecture in the H.Y.M.A. Library on the 15th inst., on the subject "£3 tax and why it was removed." After tracing the history of the £3 tax, and the passive resistance movement headed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the speaker laid stress upon the economic and industrial factors of value connected with Indian labour. He said labour should be organised, and the power of organisation gave rise to benefits which in turn would enhance the status and standard of labour. He gave typical examples on economic phases connected with labour, and concluded by saying that Indians by trying to help themselves, but not to expect others to help them, would with success resist the disabilities that were being daily imposed upon them.

Messrs. R. B. Maharaj and A. H. Peters took part in the discussion, which ensued and contended that any question of strike with a view to achieving one's demands would, at the present juncture, be hurtful to Indians. Mr. L. H. Green laid stress upon the power of labour.

After a vote of thanks, the meeting terminated. Mr. S. R. Naidoo presided.

A queer position has arisen in connection with a laundry licence held by an Indian in upper Church Street. An Indian held a laundry licence and having purchased a property across the street he built, upon plan submitted to and approved by the Town Council, a substantial building for the purpose of removing his laundry business. At the end of last year he applied for a renewal of his licence, and by virtue of the provisions of the Licence Consolidation Act (Union) the Receiver of Revenue exempted the Indian from taking out a licence, because his gross income derived did not exceed the sum of £500 for the previous calendar year. On the strength of this exemption he removed his business to his new building without applying for a transfer of his licence as he was bound to do, were it not for

the Union Licence Act. The Town Council insisted upon the Indian to apply for a transfer, which he refused on the ground that a laundry business which brings an annual gross income of £500 does not require to be licensed. The Council has threatened to interdict him from carrying on his business in the new premises. It is not so much on the point of applying for a transfer, I understand, the Indian is contesting the issue, but because he knows it perfectly well that any application for a transfer would be refused, and he would be then prevented from making use of his new premises, and thus facing with a possibility of a heavy loss.

The Provincial Council of Natal resumed sitting on the 18th inst., and the debate on the Townships Ordinance will be continued. The Draft Education Ordinance will come up for discussion, and it is likely to be referred to a Select Committee.

## The Education Ordinance

### Its Objects Explained

The Draft Education Ordinance, which has been published for the information of the public, is an interesting document. It repeals all the old laws, which gave power to control, supervise, and direct public education, other than higher education. It is divided into 16 chapters, and contains 108 sections dealing with establishment and classification of schools, framing colleges, secondary schools, intermediate schools, primary schools, Government-aided schools, Government-aided farm schools, special schools, technical schools, the training of teachers, and their appointments, duties, discipline, and leave. And also it deals with the questions of compulsory attendance, free primary education, religious institutions in schools, establishment of schools and other institutions for non-Europeans, bursaries, boarding departments and hostels, medical inspection and registration and inspection of private schools.

The subject matters contained in the Draft Ordinance are divided into four parts, and part II, which is headed "European education" lays down as follows:—

"Part II of this Ordinance applies to the education of children or other pupils of European descent, and all references shall be understood accordingly." Part III is meant to apply to the education of children or other pupils who are not of European descent, and Eurafrian and Eurasian children and children belonging to a race of Asia Minor are defined, for the purposes of the Ordinance, as of non-European descent.

Part III dealing with non-European education lays down "the term non-European education or any similar expression shall be understood to mean the education of Indians, Natives, and coloured children other than Natives or Indians, and their education shall be given "either in Government schools, or in Government-aided schools."

Section 76 claims for the Superintendent of Education the power to appoint officers to inspect and report upon any non-European school, whether such school is in receipt of grant from the Provincial Administration or not.

Section 77 goes still further and says that "No school other than a school maintained or aided by the Department shall be opened for the instruction of non-European children with an attendance of more than ten pupils until the Superintendent has satisfied himself through his officers or otherwise that:—

1. The premises are in a thoroughly satisfactory sanitary condition.

2. Proper provision has been made for lavatory and latrine purposes.
3. The teachers are competent for the duties required of them.
4. It is the intention of the school authorities to follow approved courses of instruction and to supply all statistical detail required by the Department, and shall have given a certificate accordingly.

The intention of this provision, as is clear, is to gain control over private schools, established by private efforts, and not in receipt of any grant from the Provincial Department.

It is not clear whether vernacular schools, which are springing up throughout the country to provide national education will be interfered with. But this much is certain that the management of private schools is intended to be controlled by the Department.

It is clear from the Ordinance that Indian education is not gaining much. Indian children are excluded from receiving the benefits of advantages accruing from Training Colleges, and Technical Schools, and the benefits also of compulsory attendance and free primary education are denied them.

It is no exaggeration to say that on the face of the Ordinance, no special attention and advantages are given, as is the case at present, to the furtherance of European education.

To educationists, the whole of the Ordinance will repay a study, and as the educational position in this country is reviewed by an attempt to consolidate laws relating to education, it is of highest importance to our community to secure for their children as many advantages as they possibly can, so that the youth of the Indian nation may have avenues, which are alas! now closed against them, opened to them to obtain a high standard of education and culture.

## Churches vs. Colour Bar Bill

At the Diocesan Conference held recently in St. Mary's Cathedral, the Dean of Johannesburg, the Very Rev. W. A. Palmer, spoke in strong terms of the attack made on the Churches by the Prime Minister. He declared that the attitude of the Churches on the native question has been habitually misrepresented. The Dean said:

"He has accused us of inciting the natives against the whites. It seems to me that there are times when he does not know the value of the words he uses. The Churches do not incite the native people, but simply face the facts as they exist. The natives do not require any inciting. They are already seething with discontent and apprehension. They are at the mercy of the first agitator who comes along, but they will be much more at the mercy of these agitators if the Churches do not take up the attitude they do." (Loud applause.)

The fact was, the Dean proceeded, that the Churches represented the voice of the native people. For many years past the Churches had faced the liquor question when the Government had left it alone. For years the Churches had been playing the roles of father and mother, and school master to the native people. And now, at the eleventh hour, the Churches were told by the Government to keep their hands off those matters.

### Will Not Be Silenced

"We have been attacked again and again," went on the Dean, speaking with great vehemence. "Some of us have been threatened with deportation, and some of us have been threatened with imprisonment. I can assure you that it has not caused us the loss of a single wink of sleep. (Laughter.) We are not going to be silenced. We are going to con-

tinue to speak out fearlessly. It has surely come to a fine pass when we cannot as a body of people come to the Government and say that this measure (the Colour Bar Bill) is against our principles."

The Right Rev. the Bishop of Johannesburg, Dr. Karney, who presided, said that he very much regretted the remarks of the Prime Minister, especially as those remarks came from one who was obviously such a sincere and honest man. His own opinion was that the Prime Minister would feel very sorry for himself when he read his speech in the newspapers. (Laughter.) He had endeavoured to keep quiet on the native question, but if Christianity meant the breaking down of barriers, then, in the name of the Lord, he would not cease to speak as he did.

Prof. R. F. A. Hoernle, of the Witwatersrand University, opened the proceedings with an address on "The Church and Race Problems," dealing principally with the native problem in South Africa. He said that a certain Minister of the Government had characterised any attempt to express a view on the question different from that of his own as being audacious and insolent. It would be a bad day for the country in which the people who differed from the Government in power for the time being on an important matter of public policy allowed themselves to be silenced by such adjectives. If it was audacious and insolent to take a view on the native question that happened to be different from that of the present Government, then he for one was proud to be guilty of insolence. (Applause). — *The Star*.

### Native Protest

A mass meeting of Natives was held under the auspices of Natal African Congress and I.C.U., on the Market Square, Maritzburg on Sunday last, when the following resolutions were passed:—

(1) That this mass meeting of natives, composed of all classes and all stages of civilisation, assembled on the Market Square, Maritzburg, on Sunday afternoon under the auspices of the Natal African Congress and the Industrial Commercial Workers' Union (I.C.U.), herewith beg to proclaim its protest against the action of the Government in forcing through the Colour Bar Bill to our very greatest regret and entire disappointment.

(2) That this meeting feels that the present Government is not conducive to the welfare of this country so far as we have been following it up in their individual speeches and also in Parliament, but be that as it may, the natives have an equal claim for consideration.

(3) That this meeting expresses its heart-felt thanks and congratulates the Leader of the Opposition (General Smuts) and the missionaries for the life and death fight they manifested, which showed that they and they only are the true servants of God and the fathers of the natives and guardians of South Africa.

(4) That it is not true that the missionaries and others who fought for us in this particular Bill are misleading us. We are quite aware of the consequences of the Colour Bar Bill and the intentions of the legislators of the same from their own lips.

(5) That had the Prime Minister agreed to a deputation composed of natives only being heard at the Bar of the House, he and his supporters would have heard the views and the true views of the natives themselves, and the idea that they have been misled by the missionaries and others would have been cleared to the present Government.

(6) That this meeting therefore humbly prays and earnestly appeals to our only true father, our beloved King, through the Governor-General of South Africa and supreme chief over the native population not to give his assent to this fearful Bill.

(7) That these resolutions be forwarded to the

Secretary to the Governor-General, the Prime Minister, the Chief Native Commissioner, Natal, General Smuts and the Bishop of Capetown and others who fought for us.

## General Dealers Control Ordinance (Transvaal)

### Supreme Court Judgment

A considered judgment was delivered recently in the Supreme Court, Pretoria, in the matter of Dounack Said versus the Receiver of Revenue, Pietersburg.

This appeal came on for hearing before the Judge President, Mr. Justice Tindall, and Mr. Justice Gey van Pittus and in it the validity of Ordinance No. 11 of 1925 was called in question. Mr. S. S. Taylor, K.C., and Mr. A. C. Malan, instructed by Mr. Fred Kleyn, appeared for the appellant; Mr. John Murray, instructed by the Government attorney, for respondent.

The appeal was one from a decision of Mr. Justice de Waal in Chambers and the facts were as follows. The appellant in October, 1925, purchased and acquired from Gerald Jacobson his general dealer's business at Munnik Station, District Pietersburg. In November the appellants applied to the respondent for a transfer to them of the general dealer's licence of the business.

The respondent refused to transfer the licence unless the appellant first produced a certificate in accordance with Ordinance 11 of 1925. Appellant contended that the section only referred to a fresh or new licence or a renewal thereof, and not the case where one was transferred from one person to another. The learned judge came to the conclusion that there was no distinction between the granting of a licence for a new business and that of a licence for an existing business transfer, and therefore held that the respondent was right in refusing to issue a licence until the certificate required by the Ordinance was produced.

On appeal, Mr. Taylor did not raise the contention raised in the court below, but based his case on the grounds that the Ordinance in so far as it required a certificate was *ultra vires* of the Provincial Council. Section 2 provided that every application for a licence shall state the class and nature of the business proposed and the place and the premises where it is intended that the business shall be carried on. Section 1 provided that no general dealer's licence or a renewal thereof shall be issued by the Receiver of Revenue unless the applicant produced with his application a certificate under the order.

In the judgment of the Court, which was prepared by Mr. Justice Gey van Pittus and concurred in by the Judge President and Mr. Justice Tindall, it was held that Ordinance 11 of 1925 was *ultra vires* of the Provincial Council in so far as it dealt with the control or issue of a general dealer's licence in areas outside the jurisdiction of the local authority. There was no necessity for the applicant to produce a certificate in terms of the section. The appeal was therefore allowed with costs, and an order granted directing the respondent to transfer to appellant the general dealer's licence at Munnik, at present in the name of Jacobson, and to issue to him the necessary licence in respect thereof.—*The Star*.

VIOLINS REPAIRED by an Expert. Bows repaired for 3/6 each. PERCY W. BROOK, 91, Field Street, Globe Buildings, Upstairs next to "Natal Advertiser."

## Jews and Indians in South Africa

The following correspondence appears in *The Jewish Chronicle* (London) in regard to the anti-Asiatic agitation in South Africa:—

From Mr. PERCY COWEN (*Secretary of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies*)

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE.

SIR.—My Board's attention has been drawn to a letter from Mr. H. S. L. Polak and an editorial note, headed "Jews and Indians," in your issue of January 15th 1926, both of which contain charges against the South African Jewish community which, I am instructed to state, are entirely unfounded.

The Jewish community represented by my Board is taking no part whatsoever in the anti-Indian agitation, nor is it supporting in any way the legislation against Asiatics.

There may be a certain number of individual Jews sharing the views of one or other party in the present controversy over the Asiatic question, and they are surely entitled to their individual political opinions as well as anyone else, but to say that South African Jews, or a section of them, are taking sides as a body in this matter is absolutely untrue.

With regard to Mr. Polak's letter, the facts that, as he himself acknowledges, he has been away from South Africa for ten years and that he bases his charge against South African Jewry on a letter from an anonymous non-Jewish friend in this country, are sufficient to discount the worth of what he alleges against us to such an extent as not to warrant any serious notice being taken of it.

Your editorial note above mentioned is, however, an entirely different matter; and my Board takes the strongest exception to the remarks contained therein, and regrets exceedingly that so responsible a Jewish journal as yours should have seen fit to give expression to them before taking steps to find out whether the allegations contained in Mr. Polak's letter are true or otherwise.

In your editorial note you charge us with "joining in a campaign of racial hate," ignoring "higher considerations," being actuated by "interests of the most material kind," etc., etc.

These are very serious charges to make against the Jewish people in this country, and for a responsible Jewish newspaper to indulge in them in an editorial article against a section of the Jewish people is to our mind most non-Jewish, and tends to create that misunderstanding between community and community, which it should be the object of a Jewish newspaper to remove, not to increase, quite apart from the fact that such insults are entirely undeserved by South African Jewry.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Morris Alexander, K.C., M.L.A., who is the Chairman of my Board's Capetown Committee, and who for years has been in that capacity the mouthpiece of Jewish sentiment in the Union House of Assembly, took the unusual step of dividing the House on the first reading of the Asiatic Bill. In the resultant division of 81 votes to 10 in favour of the first reading, out of six Jews in the House, three did not vote at all, whilst three voted in the minority against the Bill. Mr. Alexander has always been indefatigable in his opposition to such measures. Such facts as these, Sir, could easily have been ascertained by you before jumping to conclusions on so flimsy a foundation as Mr. Polak's letter.

Trusting you will give this the same prominence as was given to the letter and editorial article mentioned.—Yours faithfully,

PERCY COWEN

806.7, New Stock-Exchange,  
Johannesburg

[The observations contained in this letter are, so far as we are concerned, entirely uncalled for and utterly groundless. In the editorial note to which the letter refers, we made it quite clear to any reasonable reader that we based our observations completely upon the statement made in the letter addressed to us by Mr. H. S. L. Polak. We used the words "assuming our correspondent is not placing blame undeservedly" to qualify what we wrote, and nowhere in the note did we suggest that the charges were made against "the South African Jewish Community," as the letter Mr. Cowen was instructed to send us, falsely states. On the contrary, we said that "the best Jewish opinion in South Africa is opposed to Indian persecution, and it is to be hoped it will find itself able to influence and direct those Jews who siding with the oppressors of the Indians are surely bringing disgrace and trouble upon the whole of the community." Why Mr. Cowen's Board should deliberately place itself, as it does, outside "the best Jewish opinion in South Africa" we will not venture to suggest. In fact, however, we alleged no more than what Mr. Cowen's letter concedes—that there are "a certain number of individual Jews" who hold the anti-Indian views denounced only a few days ago by the Bishop of Pretoria. Thus "the strongest exception" which the Board takes to our note is as ridiculous as the suggestion that before printing Mr. Polak's letter we should have sent out a Commission to South Africa to examine into the truth of what he said. Since, then, the statement ventured by Mr. Cowen that we made the charges he details "against the Jewish people" of South Africa is devoid of truth, the statements he ventures upon that gratuitous supposition, are merely impertinent. Our good friends in South Africa could not possibly have read what we said in the editorial alluded to before instructing Mr. Cowen to send us the letter we print above, otherwise we can only account for their woeful misunderstanding by the unfortunate circumstance, which we on reference notice, that the impugned note was contained in the issue of *The Jewish Chronicle*, in which the type we then had in use, as we subsequently explained, failed to print clearly. In the circumstances we feel sure the Board will be gratified to learn of its erroneous conclusions in regard to this paper, and will appreciate the indignation we feel that so responsible a body should have indulged in such entirely "undeserved insults" at our expense.—Ed. J.C.]

From MR. HENRY S. L. POLAK

To the Editor of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE.

Sir,—Like yourself, I must protest against the suggestion by Mr. Percy Cowen that charges were made by me or by my correspondent against "the South African Jewish Community." I am not so stupid or ill-informed as not to remember with Burke the impossibility of framing an indictment against a nation or a community. But Mr. Cowen's rather easy "get away" does not settle the matter in question at all. My correspondent, who had ample means of information at his disposal, is not the less worthy of credence because he is non-Jewish. He is, to my certain knowledge, not anti-Jewish, and merely sought, in the most disinterested manner, to serve the Jewish community by drawing attention to the danger of partisanship, from the basest motives, by a section of the Jewish traders that have associated themselves with the anti-Indian agitation. Notwithstanding my ten years' absence from South Africa, I have been throughout in the closest touch with the South African Indian question, and, from my own experience, I am not disposed to set aside as baseless such a warning as I received and communicated to you.

It is gratifying to note that three of ten minority votes against the first reading of the Asiatic Bill

were those of Jewish M.L.A.'s, whilst the remaining three Jewish M.L.A.'s refrained from voting for the Bill. But it is surely too much to suggest, as Mr. Cowen does, that, in dividing the House, Mr. Alexander, to whose persistent advocacy of the Indian cause I paid a very special tribute in my letter, in any way acted as the "mouthpiece" of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies or of "Jewish sentiment in the Union." That he may have, unofficially, represented that "best Jewish opinion in South Africa," to which you referred in your admirable editorial note, I do not doubt; but in moving the rejection of the Bill, I am confident that he acted solely in his private and personal capacity.

May I, in conclusion, urge upon Mr. Cowen that it would, perhaps, not be altogether out of place if, remembering the history of our people, the Jewish leaders in South Africa, religious as well as secular, backed up Mr. Alexander with all their energy on this question, which, in principle, affects the Jewish community so closely, and did not leave all the work of educating public opinion to him and to a group of Anglican Bishops in South Africa, who have valiantly come forward and challenged the Christian basis of the anti-Indian legislation now before the country? It is just as much a matter of Jewish as of Christian ethics; and neutrality does not pay in the long run.—Yours truly,

HY. S. L. POLAK.

265, Strand, W.C. 2.

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