

NOTES AND NEWS

A DDRESSING a meeting at Machadodorp a few days ago Mr. Tielman Roos once again made himself heard on the Asiatic question. He is reported to have said that if no solution on the question is reached at the forthcoming Conference he, for one, held that those Asiatics whom it was possible to repatriate, should be repatriated, after payment of compensation. Others remaining here should be placed in Bazaars where they would be allowed to trade with each other.—In other words, to stew in their own juice. We marvel at Mr. Roos' sense of justice.

Speaking at Lydenburg "The Lion of the North," as Mr. Roos is described by his supporters in the Transvaal, is reported to have said it would be their own fault if they allowed the Indians to remain in the country to the detriment of the white population. The Government would see to it that the Indians in the Transvaal and elsewhere in the Union would be made harmless, and the country would be made safe for the Europeans and their children, so ensuring a white South Africa for the future.

Speaking at Brakpan Mr. R. B. Waterson, M.L.A., is reported to have said there had been a great deal of hypocrisy with regard to the Colour Bar Bill. The hypocrisy had, in many cases, been of an unconscious type, but in other cases it had been deliberate. Some sections of the community had declared themselves against a colour bar, yet the same people, from the public platform had urged the elimination of the Asiatics. Why should they do this, and at the same time oppose a colour bar calculated to assist the workers? "The churches have opposed it on ethical grounds," proceeded Mr. Waterson. "May I ask how long you would tolerate a black minister preaching to a white congregation? And how would you like to see Mr. Mrs Jim Fish sitting there? Is there no colour bar? Those people who talk against it actually advocate it every day in every walk of life." He added that in a country like South Africa there must be a colour bar if they did not want to see the white race submerged. Perhaps Mr. Waterson will prepare a new Bible for his followers for the existing Bible teaches them quite differently!

A fact that is causing much consternation in the minds of the English-speaking loyalists of Durban is the peaceful penetration, not of Asiatics this time, but of the Dutch element. The *Natal Mercury* has given some startling figures from the Parliamentary voters' roll. Under the old roll, which was in force at the time of the advent of the Pact Government, Dutch voters in Durban numbered only 498. Today they number no fewer than 1,029.

The statement below gives the Dutch vote in the various Durban constituencies when the old roll was compiled in Jan. 1923, compared with

the new and supplementary rolls, which were framed in Jan. 1925, and June 1926, respectively:—

	Old roll	New roll
Berea	40	76
Central	45	115
Greyville	145	297
Point	92	162
Stamford Hill	70	107
Umbilo	106	272
	498	1,029

And the seriousness of the recent influx of Dutch-speaking voters to the English-speaking majority is not reflected entirely by the actual figures which we have procured, says the paper, for it is beyond doubt that every male voter who has come to Natal has brought with him his family, which has meant that many additional poor whites have been introduced to add to the heavy burden carried by the charities in the larger towns especially Durban. The general feeling, the paper goes on to say, is that strong action should be taken to stem the tide, not only for economic reasons, but also political reasons, in that the flooding of the larger centres of Natal with persons of anti-British and Republican sympathies simply means ultimately loyalist communities will find their position hopelessly undermined.

In a manifesto which accompanied a notice of a concert held in the Durban Town Hall last Tuesday by the Zulu Union Choir the organisers asserted that Natives were as deeply perturbed as loyal Europeans regarding the proposal to delete the Union Jack from the Flag of South Africa. The manifesto had the following words:—"Under that Flag the Natives have enjoyed justice and sympathy, and they want no other flag. During the War they did all in their power to demonstrate their love of the Empire over which the Union Jack flies, and that love has not waned." How we wish these sentiments were from within their hearts!

According to a message from Pretoria the Indian Government has invited the Union Government to send over a deputation to India to confer on matters connected with the Asiatic question in South Africa, and the Union Government has accepted the invitation. The *Cape Times* states that this means that a deputation from the Union is to go over to India to learn something about Indian conditions. A formal conference between the Union and Indian Governments, it is understood, will take place in Capetown. Mr. Boydell Minister of Labour recently announced that the Conference would be held in Pretoria during December.

Indians in South Africa will deeply regret to learn from a Renter's message from Nairobi the sad news of the death of Mr. M. A. Desai a prominent Indian leader and a member of the Kenya Legis-

lative Council. Mr. Desai visited England in 1923 as a member of the Kenya Indian Delegation. We deeply sympathise with our countrymen in Kenya who have sustained a great loss by the death of Mr. Desai and also with the bereaved family to whom the loss is irreparable. May the soul of the departed rest in peace.

A Reuter's message from Simla states that the Raj announces that the conference which was mutually agreed upon by the Governments of the Union of South Africa and India for exploring all possible methods of settling the Asiatic question in South Africa will meet in South Africa in December. It is also stated that the actual date and place of the meeting are still the subject of correspondence.

The Right Hon. Earl Winterton (Under-Secretary for India), in moving the India Estimates in the House of Commons last Tuesday is reported by Reuter to have said that a year ago the question of the Indians in South Africa had reached a critical stage, and opinion in India and among Indians in South Africa was excited and alarmed. The whole situation, however, had changed as the result of a deputation sent to South Africa by the Indian Government, and a conference was to be held between the two Governments at the end of the year "to explore all possible methods of arriving at an amicable solution of a most difficult problem." The Government of India, said Lord Winterton, was to be congratulated on the ability and patience with which it had conducted the prolonged negotiations. These qualities, with the conciliatory spirit displayed by the Union Government, had ultimately made possible the meeting of a conference to discuss the whole problem. Whatever the result of the conference, it would at least meet in a far more reasonable atmosphere than until recently seemed possible.

WEATHER-COCK ?

THE Union Government has always acted like the weather-cock with the Indians. As the weather-cock turns according to the direction in which the wind blows so does the Union Government turn as it suits its requirements. When pressure is brought upon it from the Indian side the Ministers will make utterances favourable to the Indian; when taken to task by their respective constituencies or the parties they represent they will speak in favour of their party views and against the Indian. An announcement which can be so described has been made by Mr. Thomas Boydell, Minister of Labour at the National Council of the South African Labour Party which met last Sunday at Durban. Making a statement on the Asiatic question Mr. Boydell is reported to have said that, "it was made plain that the Union Government had no intention of departing from their expressed principles on the question, but is willing to consider any suggestion from the Indian Government which might "ameliorate details in the application of those principles"

We do not know how much importance should be attached to this statement but since it comes from a responsible Minister it must be taken as important. If this be the correct interpretation of the attitude of the Union Government in connection

with the proposed Round Table Conference it is certainly most alarming and neither the Indian Government nor the Indian people would have accepted the holding of such a Conference in such circumstances. The acceptance of the Conference, as we understand it, has been on honourable terms agreed upon by both sides. Neither in the correspondence between the two Governments, which preceded the announcement of the holding of the proposed Conference, nor in the statement made by the Minister of the Interior in the Union Parliament when he moved the acceptance of the Select Committee Report on the Asiatic Bill, nor even in the Report of the Select Committee which recommended the holding of the Conference, nowhere, do we find it laid down by the Union Government that "it had no intention of departing from its expressed principles on the Asiatic question but is willing to consider any suggestion from the Indian Government which might ameliorate details in the application of those principles."

On the contrary, what appears in the terms mutually agreed upon by both the Governments is that, "the Government of India are prepared to assist in exploring all possible methods of settling the Asiatic question" and that, "the Union Government have accepted the offer of the Government of India and, *in order to ensure that the Conference should meet under the best auspices, have decided . . . not to proceed further with the Areas Reservation Bill* (Italics are ours.) This would appear quite in conflict with what Mr. Boydell suggests. If there is any change of attitude now as suggested by the Minister of Labour it would be well for the Union Government to clear the air by an official announcement. The impression in India and England regarding the situation is quite clear from the announcement made by the Government of India and the statement by the Right Hon. Earl Winterton in the House of Commons. The latter in the course of his statement said, "the Government of India was to be congratulated on the ability and patience with which it had conducted the prolonged negotiations. These qualities, with the *conciliatory spirit* (italics are again ours) displayed by the Union Government had ultimately made possible the meeting of a conference. . . . Whatever the result of the conference, it would at least meet in a far more favourable atmosphere than until recently seemed possible."

Mr. Boydell's statement of the Government's attitude certainly does not show a 'conciliatory spirit; on the contrary, it shows a hostile spirit. We only hope that the same conciliatory spirit in which the Government agreed to postpone the Asiatic Bill and to hold a Round Table Conference to find an amicable solution to the whole question will last till the end and thus the favourable atmosphere created by that spirit will be allowed to remain till the end.

Another matter which seems strange is that no official announcement has yet been made by the

Union Government either about the deputation that is supposed to visit India to confer on matters connected with the Asiatic question, or of its personnel or the date of its departure. The only information we have is that the Union Government has accepted the invitation of the Indian Government; and that too is not official. No official announcement has either been made about the proposed Conference as to when or where it will be held. The only official announcement made regarding it is that by the Government of India, that the Conference will meet in December. Mr. Boydell in making the statement which is the subject of this article announced that the Conference between the Union and Indian Governments will be held in Pretoria during December.

If this information is to be taken as official then the rest of Mr. Boydell's statement must also be representing the views of the Government. It is to be hoped that the Government will put some light on the matter and clear this unfortunate confusion.

Validity Of The Boroughs Ordinance

Natal Indian Congress Taking Steps

For a Test Case

The Boroughs Ordinance No. 19, 1924 of Natal, as will be remembered, disqualifies Indian rate-payers who were hitherto entitled to vote at Municipal elections from doing so by section 1 of Chapter four which reads as follows:—

"Every person, male or female who, *inter alia*, being a male, is entitled to be registered as a parliamentary voter, or being a female, would be entitled to be so registered if she were a male, shall be entitled to be enrolled as a burgess and to vote at the election of Councilors etc."

Although the Ordinance came into force in August 1925, for some reason or other it was not applied to Indians who were taken on the burgess roll as ordinarily and hence the Indian community had no occasion to test the legality of the Ordinance.

This year, however, the Ordinance has been applied to Indians and no new names have been admitted on the roll and many old ones also were left out, but thanks to the vigilance of the Secretaries of the Natal Indian Congress they have been added again.

As regards new names the name of Samuel Walter Abraham, 83 Beatrice Street, Durban, occupier of the property has been made a test case by the Natal Indian Congress Mr. Janion having applied for the addition of the name to the burgess roll before the Court of Appeal last Tuesday.

Mr. P. C. Cochran, Senior Magistrate, who presided, was supported by the Mayor (Councillor T. M. Wadly), and the Deputy-Mayor (Councillor J. Hutt.)

Mr. Janion described this as a test application. "I do not think the Court," he said, "has any right to deal with the legal side of what I may term the disqualification clause which makes it necessary for a burgess, as well as being an owner or occupier, to have a Parliamentary vote, so I ask the Court to take the evidence of this man and then give a decision so that the matter may go to the Supreme Court.

The Mayor: Is he entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary voter?

Mr. Janion: No.

Has application been made to the Estates Manager for the inclusion of his name and been refused.—Yes.

Mr. O'Meara, for the Corporation, said it was common cause, and it was admitted by Mr. Janion that the man was not entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary voter, and he suggested that the application form be accepted as evidence that the man had applied to have his name on the roll.

Mr. Janion argued that the Provincial Council had not the right to impose this additional disqualification, and, in reply to the Senior Magistrate's query, admitted that Abraham was an Indian. He wanted the Court to refuse the application because the applicant was not entitled to be a Parliamentary voter.

It was conceded that the applicant's name was not on the roll on July 1, 1924.

Mr. Cochran intimated the Court refused the application on the ground that he was not entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary voter.

The matter will now be taken before the Supreme Court.

Sir Thomas Smartt on Colour Bar Bill

Blot On The Statute Book

In the course of a speech at an enthusiastic meeting held at Alice (Cape) recently under the auspices of the South African Party, Sir Thomas Smartt dealt in vigorous terms with the Colour Bar Bill. We reproduce below the report of his speech which we have no doubt will be read with interest both here and in India especially by those who hold similar views on the question as does the hon. Mr. Raza Ali:—

The speaker described the Colour Bar Bill as a blot on the Statute Book of the country, which he hoped would be removed at the earliest possible moment. The policy of preventing any man, no matter what the colour of his skin might be, to rise in the scale of civilisation was unjust, and they were not going to preserve the dominance of the white race by any such means. The natives had no other country but this, and to put such a ban on their progress was both wrong and unfair, and was neither in the interest of the country nor the European population. Much of the development of South Africa was due to the native people, whose bone and sinew had developed our harbours, railways and irrigation works, and if the security of the European race depended on the policy of repression of the sort favoured by the Government, then all he could say was "God help South Africa." The policy was dead against the interests of the country and was unworthy of a governing race. He regarded the measure as one of the curses of the Pact, and as to the assurance that it would never be extended to the farmers, he could only say that it was on the Statute Book, and the whim of any Minister might make it applicable to either the plough or the reaping machine. If the natives were disturbed, equally so were the white races who saw the spirit and co-operation born at Union being broken down.

Secession Question

Many strange things had taken place lately, and though they had once been told that secession was dead, they now heard that the Republican issue was not only very much alive, but that Mr. Tielman Roos was to be the first President. (Laughter.) All

he could say was that Mr. Roos was playing a dangerous game. He (the speaker) thought however that the country had its eyes open now and saw the direction in which things were drifting, and that a great change was taking place. The South African Party had always stood for racial reconciliation, unity and co-operation, and he was convinced that after the next election General Smuts would be once more at the head of the nation, leading its destinies to a brighter future than they saw to-day.

A vote of confidence in Sir Thomas Smartt was unanimously adopted.—Reuter.

Indians in Australia

Mahatma Gandhi writes in *Young India* :—

"An Indian settler of Australia says in the course of a letter : "We can't get work of any kind here in Australia. We are charged the same rates as British. We can't get a rebate on our rates as the latter, but have to pay our full share no matter how. We try to get work; the answer is : 'No work for black people.' Only Australians or other white races employed. Even our own little block of land we have to put in another man's name to hold for us as trustee.' If he is honest it is alright. If otherwise, well, goodbye to your land as it is all Miners' Rights in this part of the country. They say all people get the same fair treatment. Not we poor Indians. We can starve here before the British will give us a regular job or wages no matter how clever you are in any trade. You may be the best engineer in Australia, but you are no better. No work for coloured people.

"When Mr. Sastri came to Australia he was only shown the show part got up for the occasion. They never told him the hardships we had to put up with. He took with him the impression that everything was all right. The few people he met in Perth city were mostly Beer Bottle collectors and a few cooks among them. He did not see the real hard-working class, camel and donkey teams away out back in a blazing hot country two or three days without water. No, he never came inland. So how was he able to speak for all people? He went away taking a wrong impression of us Indians here in Out-Back district. If we did not grow a few vegetables and hawk them we would die of starvation, as we cannot get any help at all from the Australians." The correspondent sends too the original letter received by him in reply to his mining application from the Registrar, Mines Department, which I copy below :

"With reference to your letter of the 31st ultimo, I would advise you that we are unable to issue Miners' Rights to persons of Indian race." This letter is an eye-opener. It was thought that in Australia there was no racial discrimination against those Asiatics, who had settled there. But the correspondent's letter, fortified as it is with an original letter from the Mines Department, leaves no room for doubt.

Segregation In Kenya

Colonial Secretary's Unjust Decision

(BY "INDIAN COLONIST")

Mombasa, May 19.

It was on the 23rd July 1923, that a preposterous document known as the "Kenya White Paper" which sealed the fate of Indians in Kenya, was made public. It was condemned by the East African Indian National Congress held at Mombasa in the beginning of 1924 under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. A resolution asking the Kenya Indians not to pay the Poll Tax till the contents of the said Kenya White Paper were reversed was passed and it is well known how the Kenya Indians carried out the said resolution. At that time Pandit Benarsi Das Chaturvedi and Shriyut Vaze Editor of the *Servant of India* of Poona were present and could bear testimony to the feeling of resentment of Kenya Indians in carrying out the said resolution. The whole world knew the injustice that was done by that infamous White Paper.

Segregating The Indians

Now the Secretary of State, looking for a chance when the Kenya Indians are quiet as regards the Kenya White Paper has, it appears, taken the advantage and decided to breed the germs of segregation in the Township areas on the Mombasa Island, the gateway of Kenya, perhaps at the instance of the white clique which controls the Convention of Associations and the Reform Party of which Lord Delamere is the Ring-Leader, who owns about twenty-thousand acres of land in this Colony and who is always anxious to see under the false pretence of Trusteeship of the Natives that the Natives of this Colony are to be kept as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. How the Secretary of State has decided to segregate the Kenya Indians will be clear from the first paragraph of a letter written by the Commissioner of Lands, Nairobi, to the Acting Land Officer, Mombasa, which reads : "The Secretary of State has now agreed that the sale of plots (residential) cannot legally be unrestricted but must be confined to Europeans only." (This refers to certain residential areas on the seaside.)

One is at a loss to understand how the Secretary of State has come to this decision in spite of the definite decision of His Majesty's Government contained in Clause No. 7 of the Kenya White Paper, which runs :—Following upon Professor Simpson's report a policy of segregation was adopted in principle and it was proposed by Lord Milner to retain this policy both on sanitary and social grounds, so far as the commercial area is concerned. It has already been generally agreed that this should be discontinued. But in regard to the residential segregation matters have been in suspense for some time and all sales of Township plots have been held up pending the final decision on the question of principle involved. It is now the view of competent Medical authorities that as a sanitation measure segregation of Europeans and Asiatics is not absolutely essential for the preservation of the health of the community, the rigid enforcement of sanitary, police and building regulations without any racial discrimination by the Colonial and Municipal authorities will suffice. It may well prove that in practice the different races will by a natural affinity keep together in separate quarters, but to effect such segregation by legislative enactment, except on the strongest sanitary grounds would not, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government be justifiable. They have therefore decided that the policy of segregation as between Europeans and Asiatics in the Township areas must be abandoned."

Going Back On His Word

No one would have known this decision of segregating the Indians had Mr. A. B. Patel, Barrister-at-Law, the Indian Member, on the District Committee not put several questions regarding the conditions of sale of the proposed residential plots. The chairman of the District Committee, being questioned by Mr. Patel, amongst other conditions stated that Europeans only shall bid for the said plots and that non-Europeans shall not be allowed to live in the buildings erected thereon.

It should not be forgotten that hitherto the Local Government tried its utmost to harass the Indians. Now it seems the Secretary of State wants to take up that mission. He is now perhaps anxious to see that instead of justice, injustice is done to Kenya Indians. Otherwise how could he have come to such a decision, knowing well that there is no enactment, or law which would compel him to do so? In this connection one must not forget that the non-segregation policy was the only item that was then supposed to have been favourably decided by His Majesty's Government and now the Secretary of State is, it is clear, going back upon the promises and assurances then given to the Indian community and is treating the White Paper with contempt. What a tremendous and unbearable resentment this unjust and inequitable decision has caused amongst Kenya Indians one could only realise after personal experience.

This is the first question of its type where His Majesty's Government have tried to go back upon their former promises. Therefore it is the duty of every Indian, be he a Moderate, a Swarajist or a staunch Non-co-operator to make this question of segregating the Indians by the Secretary of State his own and to fight it out to a finish. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Pandit Benarsi Das and Mr. Vaze, I hope, would spare no efforts on their part to see that the decision of the Secretary of State is reversed and justice is done to Kenya Indians. Would not the loving Mother extend her helping hand to her oppressed children in Kenya Colony?—*Bombay Chronicle*.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

II. Childhood

I must have been about seven when my father left Porbandar for Rajkot to be a member of the Rajasthani Court. There I was put to a primary school, and I can well recollect my days there including the names and other particulars of teachers who taught me. As at Porbandar so here there is hardly anything to note about my studies. I could only have been a mediocre student. From this school I went to the suburban school and thence to the High School, having already reached my twelfth year by now. I do not remember having ever, during this short career, lied either to my teachers or to my school mates. I used to be very shy and avoided all company. My books and my lessons were my sole companions. To be at school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school closed,—that was the daily habit. I would literally run back, as I scarcely liked to talk with anyone. I was even afraid lest any one should poke fun at me.

There is an incident which occurred at examination time in my first year at the High School which is worth recording. Mr. Giles, the then Educational Inspector, had come on a visit of inspection. He

had set us five words to write, as a spelling-exercise. One of the words was 'kettle'. I had mis-spelt it. The teacher tried to prompt me with the point of his boot but I would not be prompted. It was beyond me to see that the teacher wanted me to copy the spelling from the neighbour's slate. For I had thought the teacher was there to supervise us against copying. The result was that all the boys, except myself, were found to have spelt all the words correctly. Only I had been stupid. The teacher tried later to bring the stupidity home to me, but without effect. I never could learn the art of 'copying.'

And yet the incident did not in the least diminish my respect for the teacher. For I was by nature blind to the faults of elders. I later came to know of many another failing of this teacher's, but my regard for him remained the same. For I had learnt to carry out the elder's orders, not to scan their actions.

Two other incidents of the same period have always clung to my memory. As a rule I disliked to do any reading beyond my school books. The daily lessons had to be done, because I disliked alike being taken to task by the teacher as deceiving him. I, therefore, would do the lessons but often without my mind in them. Thus when even the lessons could not be done properly there was, of course, no question of any extra reading. But somehow my eyes fell on a book purchased by my father. It was "Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka" (a play about Shravana's devotion to his parents.) I read it with intense interest. There came to our place about the same time itinerant show-men. One of the pictures I was shown was of Shravana carrying by means of a yoke, his blind parents on a pilgrimage. The book and the picture left an indelible impression on my mind. 'Here is an example for you to copy' I said to myself. The agonised lament of the parents over Shravana's death is still fresh in my memory. The melting tune moved me deeply and I played it on a concertina my father had purchased me.

There was similar incident connected with another play. I had, about this very time, secured my father's permission to see a play performed by a certain dramatic company. This play—"Harischandra"—captured my heart. I would not be tired of seeing it. But how often would I be permitted to go? It haunted me and I must have acted "Harischandra" to myself times without number. 'Why should not all be truthful like Harischandra?' was the question I asked myself day and night. To follow truth and to go through all the ordeals Harischandra went through was the thing I learnt. I literally believed in the story of Harischandra. The thought of it all has often made me weep. My commonsense tells me to-day that Harischandra could not have been a historical character. But for me both Harischandra and Shravana are living realities and I am sure I would be touched as before if I were to re-read these plays to-day.

III. Child Marriage

Much as I wish not to have to write this chapter, I know that I will have to swallow many such bitter draughts in the course of this narrative. And I cannot do otherwise, if I claim to be a worshipper of Truth. It is my painful duty to have to record here my marriage at the age of thirteen. As I see the youngsters of the same age about me and under my care and think of my marriage, I am inclined to pity myself and to congratulate the youngsters for their having escaped my lot. I can see no moral argument in support of such an unconsciously early marriage.

Let the reader make no mistake. I was married, not betrothed. For in Kathiawad, there are two distinct rites—betrothal and marriage. Betrothal is a mutual promise on the part of the parents of the

boy and the girl to marry them, and is not in-
violable. The death of the boy entails no widow-
hood on the girl. It is an agreement purely be-
tween parents and the children have no concern
with it. I was betrothed thrice in turn though I do
not know when. I was told that two girls chosen
for me died in turn, and I infer therefrom that I
was betrothed thrice. I have a faint recollection,
however, that the third betrothal took place in my
seventh year. But I do not recollect having been
informed of it. In the present chapter I am talking
about my marriage of which I have the dearest re-
collection.

It will be remembered that we were three brothers.
The eldest was already married. The elders decided
to marry my second brother who was two or three
years my senior, a cousin possibly a year senior, and
me, all at the same time. In this there was no
thought of our welfare, much less our wishes. It
was purely a question of their convenience and
economy.

A HINDU MARRIAGE

Marriage among Hindus is no joke. The parents
of the bride and the bridegrooms often bring them-
selves to ruin over it. They waste their time:
Months are taken up in preparing for it—in making
clothes and ornaments and preparing budgets for
dinners. Each tries to beat the other in the number
and variety of courses to be prepared. Women,
whether they have a voice or no, sing themselves
hoarse, even get ill, and disturb the peace of their
neighbours. These in their turn quietly put up
with all the turmoil and bustle, all the dirt and
filth representing the remains of those dinners, be-
cause they know that a time would come when they
also would be behaving no better.

Better, thought my elders, have all this bother at
one and the same time rather than thrice over. Less
expense and greater eclat. For money could be
freely spent as it has to be spent once instead of
thrice. My father and my uncle were both old, and
we were the last children they had to marry, and it
is likely that they wanted to have the last best time
of their lives. In view of all these considerations
a triple wedding was decided upon, and as I have
said before, months were taken up in preparation
for it.

Only the preparations gave us scent of the coming
event. I do not think the event meant to me any
more than a prospect of good clothes to wear, of
drums beating, of marriage procession, rich dinners,
and of getting a strange girl to play with. The
carnal desire came in later. I could, if I wished,
describe here the process of its growth. But the
reader should forego all curiosity on that behalf.
I propose to draw the curtain over my shame, ex-
cepting a few details which are worth recording
and which I am coming to later. But even these
details have little to do with the central idea I have
kept before me in writing this story.

So my brother and I were both taken to Porbandar
from Rajkot. There are some amusing details of
the preliminaries to the final drama—*s. g.* smearing
on with turmeric pastel all over the body—but I
must omit them.

A Mishap

My father was a Diwan, but nevertheless a ser-
vant and all the more so because he was in the good
books of the Thakore Sahib. The latter would not
let him go until the last moment. And when he
did so he ordered special stage coaches for him, re-
ducing the journey by two days. But—? The fates
had willed otherwise. Porbandar is 120 miles from
Rajkot,—a cart journey of five days. My father
did the distance in three but the coach toppled over
in the third stage, and he sustained severe injuries.
He came bandaged all over. Half his and our
interest in the business was gone, but the ceremony

had to be gone through. For how could the marriage
dates be changed. I forgot my grief over father's
injuries in the childish revels of the wedding.

I was devoted to my parents. But no less was I
devoted to the passions that flesh is heir to. I had
yet to learn that all happiness and pleasures should
be sacrificed in devoted service of the parents. And
yet as though by way of punishment for my desire
for pleasures an incident (of which later) happened
which has ever since rankled in my heart. Nish-
kulanand sings 'Renunciation of objects, with the
renunciation of desires is shortlived, try however
you may.' And whenever I sing this song or hear
it sung, this bitter untoward incident rushes to my
memory and makes me ashamed.

THE CEREMONIALS

Father put on a brave front in spite of the injuries
and took full part in the wedding. As I think of
it, I can even to-day call up to my mind's eye the
places where he sat as he went through the different
details of the ceremony. Little did I dream then
that one day I would be subjecting my father's
having married me as a child to severe strictures.
Everything that day seemed to me right, proper and
pleasing. There was also the eagerness to get
married. And as everything that father did then
struck me to be beyond reproach, the recollection of
these things is fresh in the memory. I can picture
to myself even to-day how we sat on our wedding
dais, how we performed the *Saplupadi* how the
newly wedded husband and wife put the sweet
Kansar into the mouths of each other, and how we
began to live together. And oh, that first sight! Two
innocent children all unwittingly hurled themselves
into the ocean of life. My brother's wife had
thoroughly coached me about my behaviour on the
first night. I do not know who had coached my
wife. I have never asked her about it, nor am I
inclined to do so now. The reader may be sure that
we must have been too nervous to face each other.
We were certainly too shy. How was I to talk to
her, and what? The coaching would not carry me
far. But no coaching is really necessary in such
matters. The impressions of the former birth are
potent enough to make all coaching superfluous. We
gradually began to know each other, and speak
freely to each other. We were both of the same
age. But I took no time in assuming the authority
of a husband.

But of that in the next.

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