

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

ACCORDING to a Reuter's message from Simla, the Raj has announced that the Conference on the Indian problem in South Africa between the Union and Indian Governments will open in Capetown on Dec. 20.

Mr. C. F. Andrews will arrive in Durban per the *s.s. Karapara* on Wednesday the 20th inst.

The Annual General Meeting of the Natal Indian Congress which was to be held last Sunday has been postponed to the 30th of October.

Thanks to the efforts of the B.E.S.L. (non-European branch) and the Natal Indian Congress, Indians will be represented at the unveiling ceremony at Delville Wood, the memorial which is in commemoration of South Africa's part in the Great War, a part which cost her dear, paid for by the price of those who counted nought that South Africa might have its share in the war of the Empire. What significance has the unveiling for the South African Indian? one may well ask. To the Indians here is an opportunity that they with the rest of the community may lift their hand in salute to the memory of the "glorious dead." An opportunity that they too as an integral portion of the community may join in the reverence of the occasion. The Indian community will be represented by Mr. Albert Christopher, who was an ex-sergeant in the Indian Bearer Corps, and has gained the D.C.M. for bravery on the field. In Mr. Christopher the community has a worthy representative.

Speaking at the Transvaal Municipal Congress held at Ermelo last week, the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyer, the Administrator of the Transvaal, referred to the General Dealers' Control Ordinance and said that it gave municipalities wide powers, which they should exercise for the benefit of the people within their areas. The Ordinance was not intended as a solution of the Asiatic question, but the Provincial Council felt that the people should have something to say about the persons who did business among them. In reference to the terms of the judgment in the Wolmaransstad case, he pointed to the Court's expression of a hope that the powers conferred upon municipalities would be exercised fairly and with discretion.

In connection with the issue of General Dealers' Licences, it was pointed out in the course of the discussion at the above Congress that the Ordinance imposed penalties on any Councillor who voted on an application for a certificate if he held a licence for that particular trade. In the smaller towns the majority or all of the Councillors were often licensed dealers under the Ordinance, and it was therefore held that this section should be amended so as to prohibit any Councillor from voting in respect of applications in which he or his partners were interested. It was decided to ask that the Ordinance be amended accordingly.

Speaking at the Cape Nationalist Congress, Mr. Madeley, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, interpreted the meaning of General Hertzog's recent utterances and said: "General Hertzog means exactly what you and I and all of us mean. And that is, that the people of South Africa are determined to have the right to choose. We are not going to be forced into any alliance or association against our will. No one is going to tell me what I am going to do, and no one is going to tell the people of this country what they are going to do. The position is as clear as crystal. We want to decide for ourselves and not to be told how to decide."

Examining Sir Frederick Lugard's speech on Empire problems at the Authors' Club, in which he expressed the view that relations between the white and coloured races was the outstanding problem of the twentieth century, the *Daily Telegraph* (London) points out that the question of relations between the white and coloured races is receiving attention owing to the rapid growth of the coloured races in parts of Africa, and also to the protective functions assumed by the League of Nations over natives in the mandated territories. As a result, says the paper, world opinion is forming as regards the way in which colonising nations should fulfil their responsibilities overseas. The paper emphasises that the education of the native who "seems to be taught as though at school at Bethnal Green or Glasgow, when he needs not learning but education," should combine the formation of character with interest and skill in industry. The native races, says the *Telegraph*, are certain to produce leaders in the future, when Africa's history will largely depend on the sort of leaders produced, which will depend in turn on the schools and the foresight of white administration.

A message from London states:—

While people here are still wondering what attitude the Union Prime Minister is going to adopt at the Imperial Conference, the Irish Free State is leaving no doubt about its intentions.

That there was a great desire on the part of Malays, says a message from Capetown, to become a white race was declared by Mr. de Kock, Chief Probation Officer for Capetown, when he addressed the Capetown Branch of the National Council of Women. "In order to attain this," went on Mr. de Kock, "the Malays will willingly adopt white babies. It is not illegal, of course, but during the years 1919 and 1921, with the assistance of a lady-doctor, I removed 17 European children between the ages of 6 and 12 years from Malay homes in Claremont." Replying to a question, he said that the children had been removed without the knowledge of the foster-parents. He had simply driven through the streets in a motor-car and picked up any European children who were standing in the

vicinity of Malay houses. "If I had not done this," he added, "the children would have been hidden away in fish and vegetable carts."

South African Delegation In India

Peshawar, Oct. 8.—The South African delegation visited the Khyber Pass to-day. They proceeded by motor to Landi Kotal, halting at Jamrud Shangai and Ali Musjid, the well-known battlefields. The delegation were entertained to luncheon at Brigade Headquarters, after which they visited Landi Kana and the Afghan boundary.

Sialkot, Oct. 10.—The Deputation, on their arrival at Lahore, visited the workshop of the North Western Railway, breakfasted at Government House, and after viewing the local Medical and Veterinary Colleges lunched at the Government House.

In the afternoon the members of the deputation divided themselves into five groups and attended five garden parties given in their honour by leading Indians.

After leaving Lahore the Deputation arrived at Mansurwali, near Lahore, where they were received by the Deputy-Commissioner and Superintendent Engineer of the Lower Chenab Canal (West Circle).

The party proceeded by the canal railway to the well-known lead-works of Khanki, which are on a very large scale.

The deputation were very much interested in village life in the Punjab, and an album containing photos of the foot-bridge and superstructure and general view of the weir, etc., was presented to the deputation, the members of which subsequently proceeded to Lyallpur, where they lunched with the Deputy-Commissioner and the European and Indian officers. The party visited a fair in a village close by, where they also witnessed sports by Boy Scouts and others.

The Deputation has left India for South Africa on the 13th October.—Reuter.

Maritzburg Marriage Bayat—Bayat

The dual marriages of the daughter, Ayeshabibi, and niece, Fatimabibi, of Mr. Amod Bayat and Mr. Abdul Kader Ismail Bayat and Mr. Mahomed Par respectively, were the occasion for the largest gathering of Mahomedans together in the city on Sunday the 3rd instant. Practically every store in Natal was represented, and guests were even present from the other Provinces. Other sections of the community were also at the marriage.

In the evening the upper end of Church Street appeared as the scene of a religious celebration. The Easterners' love of colour added to the brightness of the event.

The M.O. School, where the marriage was solemnised, was found too small for the accommodation of the large number of the guests, and the grounds were also utilised for the purpose. Meals were provided for over three thousand visitors.

A special dias was erected on which were seated the priests. The services commenced with a youth reciting an Arabic prayer, the resonance of the Arabic giving greater impressiveness to the occasion. Songs were rendered by the scholars of the M.O. school. After the signing of the marriage register a specially composed song of congratulation by Molvi Fateh Mahomed was sung.

The Mahomedan custom of presenting shawls to

the parents of the bride and bridegroom was observed, and Messrs. Amod and Ismail Bayat were simply inundated with shawls.

Presentation of Address

The officials of the Natal Indian Congress took advantage of the occasion in presenting Mr. Amod Bayat, who is the President of the Natal Indian Congress, with an illuminated address which read:

To Amod Bayat, Esq., President of the Natal Indian Congress.

Respected Sir,—On the occasion of the marriage of your beloved daughter, Miss Ayeshabibi to Mr. Abdul Kader Bayat, we on behalf of the Indian community of Natal, take the opportunity of expressing our gratitude and appreciation for the manifold services unflinchingly rendered by you to the Indian community of Natal.

Your public career dates back to the year 1893, and when we recall to our memory your memorable visit to England in the year 1908 as a member of the deputation that was led by Mahatma (then Mr.) Gandhi, to interview the Prime Minister of Great Britain on the grave injustice that was being perpetrated against the Indian community on matters pertaining to licences, it gives us a source of pride that in that great mission you were associated with no less an illustrious person as Mahatma Gandhi.

Your response to the call of the community to become President of the Natal Indian Congress in 1921—at an age when every person looks forward to a quiet life—your action in continuing to act as the president since that year, and in identifying yourself with every movement of the Congress bears eloquent testimony to your devotion to the community.

Your action in accepting against your failing health nomination and proceeding to India as a member of the South African Indian Congress deputation that recently returned after a strenuous but successful campaign against Dr. Malan's Asiatic Bill was but one instance of the sacrifice you have made for the amelioration of the Indian community of South Africa.

It is the fervent wish of the Indian community of Natal that you will long be spared and that they will always benefit by your sound advice and ripe experience."

The signatories to the address were the officials of the Natal Indian Congress. A gold watch and chain was also presented to Mr. Amod Bayat by the Congress, on behalf of the community.

Mr. V. S. O. Pather, joint secretary of the Natal Indian Congress, after extolling Mr. Bayat's services in the interests of the community, made the presentation.

Other addresses from the local Mosque, the M.O. School, etc., were presented to Messrs. Amod and Ismail Bayat.—*Natal Witness*.

At a banquet given in the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg, in honour of His Excellency the Governor-General the Earl of Athlone, Vice-Admiral Sir Maurice Fitz-Maurice, and Colonel F. H. P. Creswell (Minister of Defence) by the Navy League of South Africa, Col. Creswell in the course of a speech described the British Commonwealth of Nations as an unprecedented experiment in history, as something new in the government of mankind. One of the conditions of its success, he said, was undoubtedly the security which the command of the sea gave to our commerce and communications. "It is not a matter which need divide us in South Africa in politics; it is not a matter for us of British blood to brag about; it is our common property. The whole of our future must be viewed from the standpoint that as South Africans we are partners."

How Asia Is Developing

Its Significance to Africa

(By THE REV. C. F. ANDREWS)

II

I tried to explain in my first article two facts. On the one hand, Nature herself has endowed South Africa with a coast-line on the east that has excellent harbours and a good rainfall; Nature has also endowed the hinterland of the east coast with minerals and coal in abundance. On the other hand, it is obvious that as soon as the markets of Europe are exhausted the markets of the east will become more and more important for South African trade. This eastern trade route fortunately faces the South African east coast, and therefore South Africa starts in a favourable position with regard to such trade expansion when once it is opened up.

I hope to show what a difference the Great War in Europe has made in the commercial and political map of the world, impoverishing Europe and giving a new commercial start to the countries of Asia; also how Nature, by richly endowing the east coast and hinterland of South Africa, has provided an outlet for that trade and commerce, which must soon develop from within South Africa to such a point that overseas markets will be imperatively needed. Nature has not only provided the supply on the east coast of South Africa, but also the demand in these very countries of Asia whose development since the Great War has been accelerated at a rate which is one of the most striking phenomena of world traffic to-day.

The centre of gravity in the world's population is to-day not in Europe, but in South-Eastern Asia, which includes India, China, Japan, Malaya and the Dutch East Indian islands. While the whole population of the world consists of 1,800 million people, nearly 1,000 millions live in this one corner of the globe. If I could have the direction of the programme of the South African deputation to India in my own hands and there were time enough for the tour, I would take them to these parts of the world and show them the amazing development which has been taking place, especially since the Great War.

I have sailed over these seas many times and have visited these countries, both before and after the Great War. As a writer on public affairs, it has been also my own duty to study their progress very closely indeed, and to follow each development, keeping in touch with the latest statistics. I have been astonished at what I have seen in recent years of the progress of the Far East. I feel certain that I could easily convince every member of the deputation concerning the supreme advantage, to a new and rising country like South Africa, if only peaceable and amicable terms could be made and kept with such a vastly important area of the world surface. Nature herself tells us that just as Capetown in the west has had its own obvious attraction towards Europe, so in a similar manner Durban must have its continually increasing attraction towards Colombo and Bombay, Calcutta and Singapore. These four ports are increasing rapidly as international centres. The cargoes from the further east are transhipped at these eastern clearing houses of the world's commerce. It is true that an enormous amount of this far eastern trade goes direct to Europe by the shorter route of the Suez Canal. But it is by no means yet an altogether lost possibility that a portion of this canal traffic might be diverted to the Cape route in order to save the ever-increasing dues of the Suez Canal which tend to swallow up all the profits. If intermediate cargoes were offered, both going and coming, even to-day such a line of steamer traffic by way of Durban and the Cape might be made profitable as a business proposition.

The whole matter is well worth exploring and the result in the long run for South Africa might be nothing less than epoch-making.

During the war I had to travel to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. On my return journey I went by way of North Australia, along the coast of Queensland and then through the Dutch East Indies. We spent one day in harbour at the mouth of the river, at Macassar, which was the chief city in this comparatively insignificant island of Celebes. Even here, in this out of the way harbour of the world, I found the harbour crowded with steamers. I counted as many as 18 large vessels, and there were certainly many more besides. This inland sea, between the islands of the Dutch Indies, has evidently, an immense traffic of its own, in addition to the passing calls of ocean-going steamers. A short time later I visited several more ports in this quarter of the globe, whose names are not even known to most people. Everywhere I was surprised at the tonnage of the shipping and the volume of trade.

Recently I have returned from South Africa, and during my visit there I have often thought of that crowded sea traffic of the East and the comparative paucity of ships in South African waters. Yet, while I could not help but notice this, after my experience in the Far East, it was also obvious to me that South Africa was the Land of the Future—a land of expansion, of enterprise, of adventure, of a new life. But, for such enterprise and adventure to be profitable and effective, the commerce of the East, which once used to flow steadily through the South African harbours on its way to Europe, must be brought there again. South Africa should not own defeat at the hands of the great engineering constructors of the Suez Canal, but attempt once more to bring their waters and harbours back into the main highway of ocean traffic from East to West and from West to East.

Kadalie In Court

Interesting Case Adjourned.

A remarkable demonstration was made by over one thousand Natives last Tuesday afternoon, when Clements Kadalie, the national secretary of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, appeared before Mr. H. B. Wallace in the First Criminal Court on a charge of entering the Province of Natal without being in possession of an inward pass, as required by the law.

The Court building was besieged by Natives, and many were unable to squeeze their way into the inner Court. Four or five hundred Native men and women were packed like sardines in the well of the Court, and many sat straddle-legged on the floor. Many stood on the concrete balustrade outside and peered through the windows. Others blocked the doorway, but the heat was so intense that the magistrate ordered them to leave and caused all windows to be opened.

When the case was remanded to enable Mr. Wallace to consider an important legal point, and Kadalie left the Court, he was surrounded by scores of Natives, who literally pushed him into a waiting car. Several Native clergymen were in the crowd.

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At the first formal hearing of the case Mr. Cecil Cowley, who appeared on behalf of Kadalie, stated that he would take exception to the summons on the ground that the Act under which Kadalie was charged had not been proclaimed in Natal.

When the case was resumed last Tuesday, Mr.

Trollope, the Prosecutor, produced a proclamation published in the old Natal Government Gazette in 1865.

Mr. Cowley then took further exception on the grounds that the proclamation did not state the time in which the law should operate. Mr. Cowley quoted section 7 of the Act, which states: "The law shall be in force and extend only to such divisions or provinces as the Governor by and with the advice of his Executive Council shall proclaim to be under the operation of the law for such period only as from time to time may be declared expedient and necessary."

Mr. Trollope, in reply, submitted that the expressed intention of the law should be regarded.

Mr. Cowley countered by saying that this should not be done in the case of a law which interfered with the liberty and freedom of movement of the subject.

Mr. Wallace announced that he would give judgment on this point to-day.—*Natal Mercury*.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDEI]

XX. Acquaintance With Religions

Towards the end of my second year in England I came across two Theosophists,—brothers, and both unmarried. They talked to me about the "Gita." They were reading Sir Edwin Arnold's translation—"The Song Celestial"—and they invited me to read the original with them. I felt ashamed as I had read the Divine Poem neither in Sanskrit nor in the vernacular. I was constrained to tell them that I had not read the Gita but that I would gladly read it with them, and that though my knowledge of Sanskrit was meagre, still I hoped to be able to understand the original to the extent of telling where the translation failed to bring out the meaning. I had heard of Sir Edwin Arnold only in connection with his rendering of the "Bhagwad Gita." I began reading it with them. The verse in the second chapter

If one

Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness; then the memory—all betrayed—
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind and man are all undone.

made a deep impression on my mind, and it still rings in my ears. The book struck me as one of priceless worth. The impression has ever since been growing on me that I regard it to-day as the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth. It has afforded me invaluable help in my moments of gloom. I have read almost all English translations of it, and I regard Sir Edwin Arnold's as the best. He has adhered to the strict meaning of the text and yet it does not read like a translation. Though I read the Gita with these friends, I cannot pretend to have studied it then. It was only after some years that it became a book of daily reading.

INTRODUCED TO MRS. BESANT

The brothers also recommended Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia" which I read with even greater interest than I did the "Bhagwad Gita." Once I had begun it I could not leave off. They also took me on one occasion to the Blavatsky Lodge and introduced me to Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant. The latter had just then joined the Theosophical Society and I was following with greatest interest the controversy about her conversions. The friends advised me to join the Society but I politely declined saying, "With my meagre acquaintance of my own religion I do not want to belong to any re-

ligious body.' I recall having read at the brothers' instance, Madame Blavatsky's "Key to Theosophy." This book stimulated in me the desire to read books on Hinduism, and disabused me of the notion fostered by the Missionaries that Hinduism was rife with superstition.

About the same time I met a good Christian from Manchester in a vegetarian boarding house. He talked to me about Christianity. I narrated to him my Rajkot recollections. He was pained to hear them. He said, 'I am a vegetarian, I do not drink. Many Christians are meat-eaters and drink, no doubt; but neither meat-eating nor drinking is enjoined by Scripture. Do please read the Bible.' I accepted his advice and he got me a copy. I have a faint recollection that he himself used to sell copies of the Bible and I purchased from him an edition containing maps, concordance, and other helps. I began reading it but I could not possibly read through the Old Testament. I read the book of Genesis and the chapters that followed invariably sent me to sleep. But just for the sake of being able to say that I had read it I plodded through the other books with much difficulty and without the least interest or understanding. I disliked reading the book of Numbers.

INFLUENCE ON NEW TESTAMENT

But the new Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart. I compared it with the Gita. The verses, 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have the cloak too' delighted me beyond measure and put me in mind of Shamal Bhatt's 'For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal' etc. My young mind tried to unify the teaching of the Gita, the Light of Asia and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly.

This reading whetted my appetite for studying the lives of other religious teachers. A friend recommended Carlyle's Heroes and Hero Worship. I read the chapter on the Hero as a prophet and learnt of the Prophet's greatness and bravery and austere living.

Beyond this acquaintance with religion, I could not go at the moment, for reading for the examination left me scarcely any time for outside subjects. But I took mental note of the fact that I should read more religious books and acquaint myself with all the principal religions.

PREJUDICE AGAINST ATHEISM

And how would I help knowing something of Atheism too? Every Indian knew Bradlaugh's name and his so-called Atheism. I read some book about it, the name of which I forget. It had no effect, for I had already crossed the Sahara of Atheism. Mrs. Besant who was then very much in the limelight had turned to Theism from Atheism and that fact also strengthened my aversion to Atheism. I had read her book "How I became a Theosophist."

It was about this time that Bradlaugh died. He was buried in the Working Cemetery. I attended the funeral, as I believe every Indian residing in London did. A few clergymen also were present to do him the last honours. On our way back from the funeral we had to wait at the station for our train. A champion Atheist from the crowd heckled one of these clergymen. 'Well, Sir, you believe in the existence of God?'

'I do, said the good man in a low tone.'

'You also agree that the circumference of the Earth is 28,000 miles, don't you?' said Atheist with a smile of self-assurance.

'Indeed.'

'Pray tell me the size of your God and where he may be?'

'Well if we but knew, He resides in the hearts of us both.'

'Now, now, don't take me to be a child,' said the champion with a triumphant look at us.

The clergyman assumed a humble silence.

This talk still further increased my prejudice against Atheism.

XXI. God's Power to Save Man

Though I had acquired a nodding acquaintance with Hinduism and other religions of the world, I should have known that it would not be enough to save me in my trials. Of the thing that sustains him through trials man has no inkling, much less, knowledge, at the time. If an unbeliever, he will attribute his safety to chance. If a believer he will say God saved him. He will conclude, as well he may, that his religious study or spiritual discipline was at the back of the state of grace within him. But in the hour of his deliverance he does not know whether his spiritual discipline or what else saves him. Who that has prided himself on his spiritual strength has not seen it humbled to the dust? A knowledge of religion (as distinguished from experience) seems but chaff in such moments of trials.

It was in England that I first discovered the futility of mere religious knowledge. How I was saved on previous occasions is more than I can say, for I was very young then; but now I was twenty and had gained some experience as husband and father.

During the last year, as far as I can remember of my staying in England, that is in 1890, there was a Vegetarian Conference at Portsmouth to which an Indian friend and I were invited. Portsmouth is a seaport with a large naval population. It has many houses with women of ill fame, women not actually prostitutes, but at the same time not very scrupulous about their morals. We were put up in one of these houses. Not that the Reception Committee purposely fixed up such a house for us. It is difficult in a town like Portsmouth to find out which are good lodgings and which are bad, for occasional travellers like ourselves.

We returned from the Conference in the evening. After dinner we sat down to play a rubber of bridge, in which our land-lady joined as is customary in England even in respectable households. Every player indulged in innocent jokes as a matter of course but here my companion and our hostess began to make indecent ones as well. I did not know that my friend was an adept in the art. It captured me and I also joined. Just when I was about to go beyond the limit, leaving the cards and the game to themselves God in the good companion uttered the blessed warning: "Whence this devil in you, my boy! Be off, quick!"

I was ashamed. I took the warning. I expressed within myself gratefulness to the friend. I remembered the vow I had taken before my mother and fled from the scene. To my room I went quaking, trembling, and with beating heart, like a quarry escaped from its pursuer.

I recall this as this first occasion on which a woman, other than my wife, moved me to lust. I passed that night sleeplessly, all kinds of thoughts assailing me. Should I leave this house? Should I run away from the place? Where was I? What would happen to me if I had not my wits about me? I decided to act thenceforth with great caution not only to leave the house, but somehow to leave Portsmouth. The Conference was not to go on for more than two days and I remember I left Portsmouth the next evening my companion staying there some time longer.

I did not then know the essence of religion, or of God, and how He works in us. Only vaguely I

understood that God had saved me on that occasion. On all occasions of trial, He has saved me. I know that the phrase "God saved me" has a deeper meaning for me to-day, and still I feel that I have not yet grasped its entire meaning. Only richer experience can help me to a further meaning. But in all my trials—of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics,—I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, when helpers fail and comforts flee, I experience that help arrives somehow, from I know not where. Supplication, worship, and prayer are no superstition; they are acts more real than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting or walking. It is no exaggeration to say that they alone are real, all else is unreal.

Such worship or prayer is no flight of eloquence; it is no lip-homage. It springs from the heart. If, therefore, we achieve that purity of the heart when it is 'emptied of all but love,' if we keep all the chords in proper trim they 'trembling pass in music out of sight.' Prayer needs no speech. It is in itself independent of any sensuous effort. I have not the slightest doubt that prayer is an unfailing means of cleansing the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility.

ઓ. આર. પટેલ

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