

# Indian Opinion

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## DAY OF PRAYER

### REPORTS FROM VARIOUS CENTRES

**I**N accordance with the resolution passed at an Executive Meeting of the South African Indian Congress, Durban observed last Sunday the 19th instant as a Prayer Day. Three days prior, every bus in Durban carried couple of flags, inscribed on which was the announcement of the Prayer Day Meeting. Durban was agog with these flags, and they gave an impetus to the Meeting. The arrangements for the Meeting, as is usual with the Natal Indian Congress, were complete in every detail.

The pavilion at the Indian Recreation grounds was bedecked with flags and bunting. The crowd that gathered to offer prayers was in the neighbourhood of 3000. There were quite a number of ladies, and the Hindu Tamil Institute and the M. K. Gandhi Senthamil School were represented by the children attending the respective schools. A feature of the meeting was that there were about 100 Natives present.

Punctually at 11 a. m. Mr. Amod Bayat, the President of the Natal Indian Congress, after reading a few passages from the Holy Quran, delivered his Presidential Speech. The speech was as follows:—

Ladies and Gentlemen,—We have assembled here to offer prayers to the Almighty that He may bestow His divine blessings upon those participating in the Round Table Conference that is now being held at Capetown. To ensure the success of the Round Table Conference, prayers are as indispensable as they are for our daily lives.

It was at the third session of the South African Indian Congress that the idea of holding a Round Table Conference to settle the South African Indian question was first mooted. The idea was scorned at by many, but we were resolute in our decision, and believed that ultimately our request for the holding of a Round Table Conference would be acceded to.

The President of the South African Indian Congress, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, in all her lectures in South Africa, laid stress on the necessity of holding a Conference. In order to give more effect to the idea, a resolution urging the necessity of a Round Table Conference was passed at the Fourth Session of the South African Indian Congress presided over by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. The resolution was reiterated at the Fifth Session of the Congress held in Capetown, and the terms thereof conveyed to Dr. Malan by our Deputation that waited upon him last year. You will no doubt remember that Dr. Malan refused to accept the principle, and the events that followed are still fresh in your memory.

The Government of India, however, realised that the Indian question in South Africa was indeed a delicate one, and that a free and frank talk over a table, was the only feasible method of arriving at a solution. Its correspondence with the Union Government revealed a keen desire for the convention of the Conference. Those of you who followed the deliberations of the South African Indian Conferences will have noticed, that in the resolution, as parties primarily concerned we asked for representation in the Round Table Conference. And although the terms of our Resolution were not given effect to in their entirety, we are pleased, however, that the

principle underlying our most important resolution had been accepted.

The Government of India Delegation to attend the Conference has arrived. The serious deliberations will commence to-morrow. The Conference is being held under most auspicious circumstances, for it is being held in Christmas week. As true Christians, the Union Government Delegation will participate in the deliberations with that enthusiasm and joy that are so noticeable at the festivities of any nation.

The Indian question has been magnified to such an extent by the Anti-Asiatics of South Africa, that it has been the cause of retarding the progress of the Indian community. We have time and again put forth conclusive proofs, that as a community we were not a menace to South Africa, but that on the contrary we formed an asset. These proofs, however, fell on the deaf ears of those budding politicians, whose sole ambition was to gain notoriety at the expense of the Indian community.

The Indian Question must be settled, if the European and Indian Communities in South Africa are to live peacefully and happily. And to settle this question, once for all, no more feasible a method could be found than a Round Table Conference, and no more appropriate an occasion than Christmas week.

It is indeed pleasing to note that Dr. Malan's appeal for a calm atmosphere pending the convention of the Round Table Conference, received a splendid response by both the European and our Communities in South Africa, though there has been a recent outburst in Maritzburg, the centre of anti-Asiatic activities. This outburst is to be highly deprecated at this moment, and I am glad to learn that this view is shared by the major portion of the European Community.

The Conference is being held in the midst of Christmas festivities, I said, and I am not unmindful of the fact that during these festivities that every Christian's home will be full of prayers. And I know that in his prayers to the Almighty, every Christian will not forget to pray for the successful issue of the Conference.

To-day will be observed as a Prayer Day, not only by the Indian Community in South Africa but throughout India and Europe. Practically all the Churches in South Africa are also associating themselves with this movement. It will be observed therefore that this Prayer Day will be international in character.

For our part, let us pray that the Almighty may bestow upon all those participating in the Conference at Capetown, His blessings, and that He may endow them the spirit of goodwill that is so necessary for the successful issue of the Round Table Conference.

The Speech was then translated into Hindi by Mr. Satya Dev and into Tamil by Mr. G. B. Chetty.

#### Native Sympathy

Mr. Chas. Dube, who was present at the Meeting spoke sympathising with the Indian community and hoped that the Round Table Conference would bring about happiness to the Community.

Advocate J. W. Godfrey, the Deputy President of the South African Indian Congress was the next speaker. In the course of his speech, he said, he was convinced that the decision to hold the Round Table Conference was a clear answer to their prayers in February last, when such a conference had been refused by the Government. The name of Great Britain was synonymous with fair-play and justice, and although it was said reference to Great Britain at this time was useless, he refused to believe that was the case.

While sandalwood was being burned in a crucible and incense scattered in the flames Prayers for the success of the Round Table Conference, were offered to the Almighty by Moulvi Fateh Mahomed, Rev. Benben Choonoo, Messrs. Girja Shanker Maharaj, and Shabari Banderia.

The President then moved the following resolution, which was passed unanimously the whole gathering standing. "That this Mass Meeting earnestly prays Almighty God to bless the deliberations of the Round Table Conference between South Africa and India in Capetown to the end that a friendly settlement may be reached and peace and goodwill may be established between the two Nations."

The following messages were read at the Meeting.

From Rev. C. F. Andrews:—

"Let Meeting be strictly devoted to Prayer and Remembrance without one word of Political controversy; Let our hearts be full of charity towards all mankind and fervent trust in the goodness and mercy of God."

From Mr. V. S. Ch. Pather:—

"Heartily join you in your sincere prayer for the success of the Conference. May the Almighty give strength and courage to those who are deliberating upon our destiny in order that their labours may result in everlasting peace and goodwill between the two Communities who are destined to live side by side in this their land of birth and adoption."

From Mr. A. I. Rajee:—

"My spirit joins you in your prayer to God, that justice and righteousness may prevail."

The Durban Prayer Meeting was indeed a huge success. The appeal of the Natal Indian Congress was certainly met with a splendid response. The large crowd that gathered at the Recreation grounds, kept a calm silence throughout the proceedings.

### St. Ninian's Church, Durban

At St. Ninian's Presbyterian Church the following was the prayer offered by Rev. A. Lamont in presence of a deeply interested congregation:—

"We thank Thee O Father Lord of Heaven and Earth that Thou rulest and rulest for evermore. By Thee Kings rule and Princes decree justice. Vouchsafe, in Thy wisdom and mercy, Thy Divine blessing to those who represent South Africa and India who are to meet in Conference to-morrow at Capetown.

May interests that seem to conflict be so reviewed and adjusted as to produce a friendly solution to our race perplexities. May the Spirit of Christ prevail over every form of race prejudice and selfishness that a better understanding may eventuate and may the interests of true patriotism, humanity, equity and peace prevail over every selfish passion to the honour and glory of Thy Holy Name."

### P. M. Burg Meeting

There was a large gathering at the prayer meeting, which was held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, P. M. Burg Branch, at the H. Y. M. A. Hall. Mr. R. B. Maharaj presided. Swami Gopaldas led the meeting in prayer, followed by Moulvi Bashir, of the Church Street Mosque, and Mr. Vincent George.

### Natal Province

In response to the appeal made by the Headquarters, Prayer meetings were held at Isipingo, Tongaat, Stanger,

Estcourt, Ladysmith, Durban and Newcastle. All these meetings were well attended and at every meeting after the offering of prayers, this resolution was passed.

### Transvaal Meeting

Mr. E. I. Asvat, President of the Transvaal British Indian Association, who presided, having expressed the hope that the work of the Conference would result in peace and goodwill between South Africa and India, said that the Conference marked a momentous period in the history of the relations between the two countries, which, he stated, formed important constituencies in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and which should be bound by ties of lasting friendship and peace.

"The outcome of the Conference," he continued, "will decide the relations between East and West, and, let us pray, those may be of the most satisfactory character. We Indians have claimed elementary rights of citizenship only, and all the while we have consistently endeavoured to help our rulers. We have always accepted South Africa as the country of our adoption, for we like to live in and die for it. But we wish for justice only, as our cause is a righteous one. We are the descendants of a nation which has cradled the civilised world, and which still has a message of hope for World Peace."

The president paid a tribute to the statesmanship of Lord Reading, ex-Viceroy of India, and General Hertzog for bringing about the Conference, which he hoped would establish lasting peace between South Africa and India and throughout the British Empire.

The service throughout was of a solemn character, the Christian side, to which precedence was given, being conducted by the Rev. Dean Palmer, who was followed by Hindu, and Mahomedan priests, all of whom offered prayer and invoked blessings upon the deliberations of the delegates at Capetown.

Prior to leading in prayer, Dean Palmer delivered a brief address, which was interpreted in Gujarati by Mr. Joshi.

"This is a very remarkable day," said the Dean, "a very wonderful day, and a day that I don't think any of us some years ago expected to see. I don't believe we ever thought that Christian and the non-Christian people who belong to India would gather together on a day of prayer like this.

"We Christian people are very glad that we have been called on to join with you in prayer," continued the Dean, who went on to refer to this sacred season being an appropriate time in which to launch an effort that would bring peace to all people.

"You remember," proceeded the Dean, "that when we gathered some time ago for a prayer meeting we looked upon a black sky. The situation then was indeed dark, but to-day the darkness has gone on this and upon other questions in which nation and nation, man and man, are concerned, for the stars of hope are shining. We know there are difficulties still in the way; we know that if the spirit in which this Conference assembles is not the right spirit, then we shall not be able to find a way out; but to-day we have come here to pray and try and generate the spirit of faith and of hope in which God may find us a way out. I am quite sure in all our hearts there ought to be very great thankfulness, because there is to-day a better understanding between the Indian people and the other people in this country. We must be thankful, because it is a hopeful sign that when this day of prayer was proposed it was seized upon by the men of goodwill on both sides as a method by which, perhaps, we could find a way out. And then, too, I think we must be very much impressed lately by the wide view taken by the men of goodwill in this land. We have been reminded that this Commission which is now going to meet is either to bring East and West together, or it is going to widen the hiatus between them. And, therefore, if this is true—and it is true—we must be unceasing in our prayers for God's guidance for that Commission at this time. We must remember that there may come from that Commission a pronouncement wide, convincing,

above party politics, and above even national interests, a pronouncement based on the great principles of justice and righteousness and love.

"We hear to-day very much about Empire groups, but what we have got to realise is this, that Empire groups are not simply a name, that there is no such thing as privilege without responsibility, and if that is true every group has got to act with sense of responsibility one towards the other. And, therefore, we have got to realise that whatever Empire group we belong to, we have a responsibility to the stranger within our gates, especially if he has come, like many, if not most, of you, to make his home in this land. My last word must be this: If we really remember that there may come from this Conference a great pronouncement based on all these principles we have been thinking about to-day, then we must realise something else, that when these principles are set forth we have got to pray that the man in the street, the man in the village, will take it all very seriously into consideration, and that in his judgment he will learn to rise above mere economic issues. This great question is something much more than an economic issue. It goes right down to fundamentals, right down to the foundations of that justice and forbearance which must obtain between nation and nation and man and man before the Kingdom of God can come. And so we will pray that there may come peace, and a world of brothers—a family under the great Fatherhood of God."

The resolution asking for His blessings was moved by the Chair and carried unanimously. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair.

### Report from Capetown

"Successful Prayer Meeting"—Kajee

### All India at Prayers

Meetings praying for the success of the Round Table Conference were held throughout India.—Reuter.

The Bishop of Madras, addressing the prayer meeting, characterised the Conference as one of the most momentous ever held in the British Empire.

The world was entangled in a tremendous race struggle, and any unpleasant question which might arise might set a spark kindling the whole world into conflagration, the consequences of which it was impossible to foresee.

They had to fight, first, the thought that the world was to be divided on the basis of Colour.

Presiding at another meeting, Mr. Shanmugam Chetty, who recently visited Australia as a member of the Empire Delegation said that the matter was an acid test of the Empire. In its solution lay the real test of India's place in the British Commonwealth.—Reuter,

### Cables from India and London

From Mrs. Sarojini Naidu :

"My love and prayer are with my anxious people in this fateful hour."

From Mahatma Gandhi :—

"God grant wisdom African Conference remove un-touchability Africa."

From Mr. Isaac Warder, London :—

"Indian students London joining in prayer with South African brethren for successful Conference."

From the Metropolitan, of India :—

"Have asked all ministers of religion to pray at public worship that wisdom, insight and sympathy might be vouchsafed to the members of the Round-table Conference in Capetown, that thereby they might be enabled to find a just and right solution of the Indian question in South Africa."

### A DISTINCT SUCCESS

FROM the reports of the Prayer Meetings published elsewhere, it will be observed that there has been a spontaneous response to the appeal of the South African Indian Congress. The Bishop of Madras has very rightly observed that the Round Table Conference is the most momentous gathering held in the British Empire. And it was therefore all the more necessary for prayers to be offered for the success of the Round Table Conference. All political differences were forgotten for once in India, and as one man the whole of India observed the Prayer Day.

We are indeed pleased with the result of the Day, and we have no doubt that the prayers offered throughout the major portion of the world, will be answered, and that the Indian question in South Africa will be settled on a basis that will be satisfactory to the parties concerned.

Prayers offered on the 19th December will not suffice, every Indian will have to offer his prayers until the termination of the Round Table Conference.

For the first time in the history of South Africa, Europeans and Indians are sitting in Conference on an equal status and this will certainly be the means of having discussions in the best of spirits.

The Government of India Delegation has been entrusted with a mission of far-reaching importance, and we have every hope that it will not leave the shores of South Africa until the whole Indian question has been fully settled.

### Notes and News

We offer seasonable greetings to our Christian friends, and wish them a Merry Christmas with many happy returns.

We appreciate the services rendered by Rev. C. E. Andrews in connection with the arrangements for the observance of the Prayer Day. Truly the Prayer Day was international in character.

In accordance with the resolution passed at the Emergency Conference held at Durban, recently, Messrs. A. I. Kajee and V. S. O. Pather, the Hon. General Secretary and Hon. Joint Treasurer respectively, of, and representing the South African Indian Congress, Mr. S. R. Naidoo representing the Natal Indian Congress, Messrs. N. A. Camay, D. M. Nurusoo and Dawood Pate representing the Transvaal British Indian Association, are at Capetown with Cape Delegates to assist the Government of India Delegation. We hope the Delegation will take full advantage of their presence in Capetown, as the facts and figures in their possession will be of great assistance to the Delegation in its deliberations.

Rev. C. F. Andrews is also in Capetown. The Paddison Deputation very much appreciated the services of Mr. Andrews, whose presence in Capetown at the time was the cause of relieving its burden to a certain extent. We hope that his presence on this occasion will be of great assistance to the Habibullah Delegation. Mr. Andrews possesses to a remarkable degree, a knowledge of the South African Indian question, and this knowledge, we hope, will be much sought for by the present Delegation.

As hoped the Anti-Asiatic meeting at the Maritzburg Town Hall was a dismal failure. We regret for the very sad predicament in which the Speaker of the Assembly, Mr. E. J. Jansen, was placed, for we have every reason to believe, that had he been approached personally, he would never have consented to address the meeting. We appreciate the very bold stand put up by our Maritzburg contemporary, the *Natal Witness*.

Practically all the Ministers, including those engaged in the Round Table Conference are moving towards the North. It is evident that most of the Ministers will be spending their holidays on their respective Farms. It seems as if the Round Table Conference will adjourn on the 24th December and will not sit again until after the New Year Holidays.

We regret to hear of the serious illness of Mr. S. Emmamally. Since his serious illness last year, he appeared to have regained his normal health, but recently he took to bed of the same complaint. We sincerely hope that he will get over his illness and regain his health.

The M. C. C. Team which is now touring India, appeared to have been presented with a stiff task by All India. The M. C. C. scored 862 and 97 for five against All India's total of 482. The hero of the day was Doedhar, who scored a century. At the conclusion of the game, which was drawn, Doedhar was not only garlanded, but was presented with Silver Cups and a gold wristlet watch.

The following cable has been received by Rev. C. F. Andrews from Mr. H. S. L. Polak:—

"Lovingly reciprocate your Sastri's greetings. Glad all going well. Sure God will help your wonderful work. Greetings all."

## The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[ BY M. K. GANDHI ]

PART II.

### Chapter VIII

#### ON THE WAY TO PRETORIA

I soon came in contact with the Christian Indians living in Durban. The Court Interpreter Mr. Paul was a Roman Catholic. I made his acquaintance as also that of the late Mr. Subhan Godfrey, then a teacher under the Protestant Mission, and father of Mr. James Godfrey who since has been a member of the South African Deputation which visited India last year. I likewise met the late Parsi Rustomji and the late Adamji Miankhan about the same time. All these friends who upto then had never met one another except on business came ultimately into close contact as we shall see later.

Whilst I was thus widening the circle of my acquaintance, the firm received a letter from their lawyer saying that preparations should be made for the case, and that Abdulla Seth should go to Pretoria himself or send a representative.

Abdulla Seth gave me this letter to read, and asked me if I would go to Pretoria. 'I can only say after I have understood the case from you,' said I. 'At present, I am at a loss to know what I have to do there.' He thereupon asked his clerks to explain the case to me.

As I began to study the case, I felt as though I ought to begin from the A. B. C. of the subject. During few days I had at Zanzibar, I had been to the Court to see the work there. A Parsi lawyer was examining a witness and asking him questions regarding credit and debit entries in account books. It was all Greek to me. Book-keeping I had learnt neither at school, nor during my stay in England.

And the case for which I had come to South Africa was mainly about accounts. Only he who knew accounts could understand and explain it. The clerk went on talking about something debited and something credited, and I felt more and more confused. I did not know what a P/Note meant. I failed to find the word in the dictionary. I revealed my ignorance to the clerk and learnt from him a P/Note meant a promissory note. I purchased a book on book-keeping and studied it. That gave me some confidence. I understood the case. I saw that Abdulla Seth who did not know how to keep accounts had so much practical knowledge that he could quickly solve intricacies of book-keeping. I told him that I was prepared to go to Pretoria.

'Where will you put up?' asked the Seth.

'Wherever you want me to' said I.

'Then I shall write to our lawyer. He will arrange for your stay. I shall also write to my Memon friends there, but I would not advise you to stay with them. The party has great influence in Pretoria. Should any one of them manage to read our private correspondence, it might do us a lot of harm. The more you avoid familiarity with them the better for us.'

'I shall stay where your lawyer puts me up or I shall find out independent lodgings. Pray don't worry. Not a soul shall know anything that is confidential between us. But I do intend cultivating the acquaintance of the other party. I should like to be friends with them, I would try, if possible, to settle the case out of court. After all Tyeb Seth is a relative of yours.'

Seth Tyeb Haji Khan Mahomed was a near relative of Abdulla Seth.

The mention of a probable settlement somewhat startled the latter, I could see. But I had already been six or seven days in Durban, and we now knew and understood each other. I was no longer a white 'elephant.' So he said:

'Yes, I see. There would be nothing better than a settlement out of court. But we are all relatives and know one another very well indeed. Tyeb Seth is not a man to consent to a settlement easily. With the slightest unweariness on our part, he would screw all sorts of things out of us and do us down in the end. So please think twice before you do anything.'

'Don't be anxious about that,' said I.

'I need not talk to Tyeb Seth, or for that matter to any one else, about the case. I would only suggest to him to come to an understanding and so save a lot of unnecessary litigation.'

On the seventh or eighth day after my arrival, I left Durban. A first class seat was booked for me. It was usual there to pay five shillings extra, if one needed beddings. Abdulla Seth insisted that I should book one bedding, but out of obstinacy and pride, and with a view to save five shillings, I declined. Abdulla Seth warned me. 'Look, now,' said he. 'This is a different country to India.'

Thank God, we have enough and to spare. Please do not stint yourself in anything that you may need.'

#### DRAGGED OUT OF THE TRAIN

The train reached Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 p.m. Beddings used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked me if I wanted one. 'No,' said I. 'I have one with me. He went away. But a passenger came next, and looked me up and down. He saw that I was a 'coloured' man. This disturbed him. Out he went and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to me and said, 'Come along, you must go to the van compartment.'

'But I have a first class ticket,' said I.

'That doesn't matter,' rejoined the other. 'I tell you, you must go to the van compartment.'

'I tell you I was permitted to travel in this compartment at Durban and I insist on going on in it.'

'No, you won't' said the official. 'You must leave this compartment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out.'

'Well, then, let him do so. I refuse to get out voluntarily.'

The constable came. He took me by the hand and pushed me out. My luggage was also taken out. I refused to go to the other compartment and the train steamed away. I went and sat in the waiting room, keeping my hand-bag with me, and leaving the other luggage where it was. The railway authorities had taken charge of it.

It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa is severely cold. Maritzburg being at a high altitude the cold was extremely bitter. My overcoat was in my luggage, but I did not dare to ask for it (lest I might be insulted again) so I sat and shivered. There was no light in the room. A passenger came in at about midnight and possibly wanted to talk to me. But I was in no mood to talk.

I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The suffering I should have to go through would be superficial—only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of colour prejudice.

So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria.

The following morning I sent a long telegram to the General Manager of the Railway, and also informed Abdulla Seth. He immediately met the General Manager who justified the conduct of the Railway authorities, but informed him that he had already instructed the Station Master to see that I reached my destination safely. Abdulla Seth wired to the Indian merchants in Maritzburg and to friends in other places to meet me and look after me. They came to me at the station and tried to comfort me by narrating their own hardships and explaining that what had happened to me was nothing unusual. They also said that Indians travelling first or second class had to expect trouble from Railway officials and white passengers. The day was thus spent in listening to these tales of woe. The evening train arrived. There was a reserved berth for me. I now purchased at Maritzburg the bed ticket I had refused to book at Durban.

The train took me to (Charlottesville)

## Report of Congress Deputation To India

The following report was submitted to the Emergency Conference by the S. A. I. Congress Deputation members who visited India last year:—  
To the Deputy President and Members of the South African Indian Congress, Durban:

Gentlemen,—In accordance with the Resolution passed at the Fifth Session of the South African Indian Congress held at Capetown in November, 1925, your Deputation, comprising of Dr. A. Abdurahman, representing the Cape; Messrs. Amod Bayat, Jas. W. Godfrey, Pandit Bhawani Dayal, V. S. C. Pather and Sorabjee Rustomjee, representing Natal; and A. A. Mirza, representing the Transvaal, left Durban for Bombay on the 23rd November, 1925, for the purpose of interviewing His Excellency the Viceroy and the Governor-General of India and placing before him and the Government of India, the precarious position in which the Indians of South Africa would be placed in the event of the Asiatic Bill going through; of requesting for the intervention of the Government of India with a view to the Union Government withdrawing the said Bill and agreeing to a Round Table Conference—as passed by the South African Indian Conference held in Capetown—in which to discuss and settle once and for all the whole of the Indian question in South Africa; and for laying our case before the Indian National Congress and the people of India and thus seek their assistance and co-operation in achieving the above.

Your Deputation on arrival at Bombay on the 12th December 1925, received a warm and enthusiastic reception from your President Srimati Sarojini Naidu, the Congress and Khilafat Committees, representatives of the local Press and other prominent leaders of Bombay. To secure unanimity of expression, Dr. Abdurahman was asked to give all the interviews to the Press on landing and a statement was supplied to it by him setting forth the Deputation's mission to India and the grievances of the Indian community more particularly regarding the impending legislation. The commodious bungalow in Pedder Road occupied by Mr. M. A. H. Moola of Durban, our Colonial born friend and a public spirited gentleman, was placed by him at the disposal of your Deputation and Congress officials and workers were in attendance to look after its comforts.

Your President arranged an "At Home" at the Taj Mahal Hotel the next day where prominent and influential members of the commercial, political, legal and other interests were present, and much was discussed, and many a doubt cleared in regard to the situation. Many were interested in the South African Indian question and promised to do everything to further our cause. The Committee of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association met the following day and the draft Statement prepared for submission to the Viceroy was presented to and approved of by them. By this time, through the influence of Mrs. Naidu, your President, a certain amount of stir was created by the Press throughout India of our arrival and of the difficulties of the Indians in South Africa and the whole country was therefore looking forward to our interview with the Viceroy. On the advice of your President, Mahatmaji and other leaders, your Deputation refrained from holding any public meeting before interviewing the Viceroy in Calcutta and conferring with the leaders at the Congress sessions in Cawnpore.

Your Deputation, therefore, left for Calcutta and en route Mahatmaji was kind enough to meet your Deputation at a very early hour in the morning at

Verdha Station. Your Deputation conveyed the greetings of the Indians of South Africa to him and received his advice and blessings.

Your Deputation, by virtue of powers granted to it, co-opted the following gentlemen on arrival in Bombay to join the Deputation, viz., Messrs. A. M. Paruk, Fidahusen Mahomedally, Rooknoodeen, M. O. Basse, A. D. Motala and M. S. Randeree, for Natal; N. A. Camay, Cassim Adam, B. K. Patel, M. V. Desai, Sheik Amied and M. P. Fancy for the Transvaal.

On arrival at Calcutta, your Deputation was met at the station by Mrs. Sen Gupta, Mayoress of Calcutta, Mr. Goswami, M.L.A., Dr. Dutta, M.L.A., Bishop and Mrs. Fisher, and other prominent citizens who extended a cordial welcome to it. On the 19th of December, your Deputation met the Viceroy at Belvedere. Dr. Abdurahman, as leader of the Deputation, after an able introductory speech, submitted a statement of our case. The Viceroy in his reply was sympathetic but weak and disappointing. He pointed out that the Indian question was a South African question and therefore, he was helpless, but was prepared to assist as far as possible. Dr. Abdurahman in reply thanked the Viceroy for the interview and stated that your Deputation would have to go to the country and obtain all the backing the Government required to strengthen its hands in dealing with the Union Government. In deference to the wishes of the Viceroy, your Deputation met Sir Mahomed Habibullah, the Minister in charge of Overseas matters, the following day, and discussed the position in detail with him.

Your Deputation, with the assistance of Dr. Dutta, had the pleasure of meeting Lord Sinha and Bishop and Mrs. Fisher, and discussing the South African Indian question. It also visited the famous institute of science belonging to Professor Sir J. C. Bose and had a very pleasant afternoon with him when he demonstrated certain wonderful inventions and researches made by him during his lifelong study. The Deputy Mayor and members of the Corporation also entertained your Deputation at the City Hall where exchanges of thought and of opinion were freely indulged in. The Metropolitan of Calcutta was also present. Thereafter, your Deputation proceeded to Cawnpore to attend the fortieth Session of the Indian National Congress and there met Mahatmaji again and discussed the result of the interview with the Viceroy and the whole position created by such interview. Your President helped greatly in joining your Deputation in this discussion. Eventually Mahatmaji agreed to move the first resolution in open Congress on the question of Indians in South Africa and after the same having been duly discussed and adopted in the Subjects Committee, he moved the following resolution, which was preceded by a lengthy and lucid speech.

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

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the proposed legislation known as the Areas Reservation and Registration (Further Provision) Bill is in breach of the Simla Gandhi Agreement of 1914, in that it is racial in character and is calculated not only to make the position of the settlers much worse than it was in 1914, but is designed to make residence in that country of any self-respecting Indian impossible. In the opinion of the Congress, if the interpretation of the said Agreement as put upon it on behalf of the settlers is not accepted by the Union Government, it should be decided by reference to arbitration as was done in 1893

in connection with matters affecting the Indian settlers of the Transvaal, and in matters from the administration of Law No. 8 of 1895.

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

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

Dr. Abdurahman on behalf of your Deputation suitably replied and thanked the assembly for their kind and unanimous support. Your Deputation thereafter met the leaders who attended from all parts of India and enlightened them of the true position and enlisted their warm support. Leaflets in thousands as part of the propaganda were distributed to the delegates and the people and the Press were supplied with all the information they desired so as to keep the question of the Indians in South Africa to the fore and fresh in the minds of that extremely large assembly. The Khilafat Conference which met the following day also passed similar resolutions and offered unbounded support to your cause. The Muslim League at its Conference in Aligarh a few days after—at which some of your delegates were present—discussed the South African Indian question fully and passed a resolution condemning the Asiatic Bill and offering assistance to the South African Indians in their struggle for freedom.

After the Congress Sessions were over your Deputation left for Bombay with the exception of Pandit Bhawanji Dayal who was indisposed and proceeded to Saaram. The future plan of action was fully discussed with your President, Mahatmaji and other leaders, and they thought it advisable that your Deputation should now tour the country and apprise the people of the true position of the Indians in South Africa. It was therefore decided to divide the Deputation into two, one to tour the South of India, and the other to tour the North and North-East with a view to holding meetings at important centres and explaining the situation of the Indians of South Africa and enlisting the people's moral and financial support and further requesting them to urge upon the Government of India to take strong action for the withdrawal of the Bill and to arrange for a Round Table Conference failing which, to make representation to His Majesty the King Emperor to exercise his prerogative of vetoing the Bill under Section 65 of the South Africa Act. A public meeting in Bombay and another in Madras were arranged for the 15th of January 1926. The Bombay meeting was presided over by His Highness the Aga Khan, and the Madras meeting by Mr. Shrinivasa Iyengar, ex-Advocate General of Madras and now President-elect of the next Indian National Congress. Both meetings were largely attended and eloquent and encouraging speeches were made by both the chairmen and other speakers respectively.

Dr. Abdurahman and Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee proceeded to Delhi to meet the members of the Legislative Assembly and from there toured the North of India holding large and successful meetings at Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi and returned to Delhi to confer again with the members of the Legislature. Subsequently, Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee toured with the President, to Muttra, Brindaban and Meerut districts.

Messrs. J. W. Godfrey, V. S. C. Pather and A. A. Mirza undertook the tour in the South. Their programme was arranged by Mr. Shrinivasa Iyengar

who cut the same so fine that your members were all the time on the move and meetings were fixed nearly for every day. Soon after the meeting in Madras, they proceeded to Mayavaram, Kumbakonam, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Coimbatore, Salem, and Banzalore, in the Tamil Nadu, and Bozwada, Rajamundri, Masulipatam, and Vizagapatam, in the Andra Desh, where huge and successful meetings were held. The resolutions passed at every one of the meetings were immediately telegraphed to the Viceroy. It was a very trying and strenuous work for the members of your Deputation, having to put in every hour of the day in addressing meetings, and travelling long distances by train in the night without a wink of sleep. Your members on their return to Madras after the completion of their tour were complimented by Mr. Iyengar and his friends of the Congress party for keeping accurately to the programme and for creating a tremendous amount of interest and indignation throughout the Presidency on the South African Indian question. The desire for literature on the subject was so great that within a few days of the tour, all that the members of your Deputation had were quickly taken up. Literary societies and students at colleges were also addressed at most of the above centres and those leaders who were unable to attend the meetings were called upon at their residences and the position fully explained. Wherever the members of your Deputation went, they were keenly listened to and much sympathy was shown and promise of support, both moral and financial was made to be fulfilled whenever the call was made. On their return to Madras, the members of your Deputation were called to Delhi by the President to confer with the other members of your Deputation in regard to certain developments that were taking place in South Africa as a result of further negotiations by the Government of India with the Union Government. In the meantime, Dr. Abdurahman and Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee were in daily touch with the members of the sub-Committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly, and, with your President, assisted them in every way possible in pressing our case forward. Your Deputation was eventually informed that the Union Government had agreed to appoint a Select Committee before the second reading of the Bill which course was agreed to by the Government of India. In consequence of this decision, your Deputation felt that further propaganda was not necessary and that some of its members should return to South Africa and assist the South African Indian Congress and the Paddison Deputation in regard to their evidence before the Select Committee while others remain in Delhi and assist the leaders in the Assembly in the event of the matter being brought up for discussion there. In accordance with this arrangement, Messrs. Amud Bayat, J. W. Godfrey, V. S. C. Pather and A. A. Mirza left Bombay on the 17th of February and arrived at Durban on the 10th of March 1926. Before leaving Delhi, your Deputation learned with regret that the Union Government was rushing the Colour Bar Bill and the Liquor Bill through Parliament and in consequence thereof a Petition was presented by your Deputation to the Viceroy urging him to make representations to the Union Government to withdraw the Bills.

Your Deputation begs to report that as a result of representations made to the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association by your President for funds to cover expenses of your Deputation in India and for work already done in South Africa a sum of Rs. 50,000 was voted by it and out of this sum, an amount of Rs. 39,500 was paid to her. She allocated this amount as to a sum of Rs. 13,275 to the Natal Indian Congress for work already done in Natal, and as to the balance of Rs. 26,225, for the expenses of your Deputation in India. Your Deputation therefore offers its grateful and sincere thanks to the Imperial Indian

Citizenship Association and all those who are connected with it for the timely assistance rendered by it. For had it not been for this monetary help, the activities of your Deputation would have been greatly restricted and handicapped.

Your Deputation will be failing in its duty if it did not record the magnificent work of your worthy President, Srimati Sarojini Naidu. From the very inception, she took matters in hand, offered sound advice and not only guided your Deputations movements but looked after the personal comforts of the members of your Deputation. Her action was full of forethought and she displayed an intimate knowledge of men and matters and without her guidance and help, your Deputation would undoubtedly have only been able to make feeble efforts to gain the ear of the public and the Press of India. Her personal influence displayed such full effects on the Press that newspapers representing all shades of opinion joined in the chorus of severely commenting on the breach of faith and the general attitude of the Union Government towards the Indians of South Africa. Her staying in Delhi while the Assembly was sitting for over two and half months watching the trend of events on our behalf speaks of her great sacrifice and love for the Indian community of South Africa.

Your Deputation is greatly indebted to Mahatma Gandhi for his inspiring and encouraging message on its arrival in Bombay and his fatherly advice given in connection with its interview with the Viceroy. His courageous and considerate speech at the Congress made a deep impression on the whole of India and was the turning point in the affairs of the Government of India in dealing with the Union Government. His love for his countrymen in South Africa is so great that, notwithstanding the very limited time at his disposal, the doings of each and everyone of his friends were being keenly enquired into by him.

The Community's grateful thanks are due to Dr. Abdurahman, and, in stating this fact, your Deputation cannot overlook the great sacrifice made by him in joining it as its leader; his outstanding personality, his great ability, his dogged perseverance, and his vast knowledge of South African politics and conditions helped to a great extent towards the signal and unqualified success of your Deputation's mission to India.

The sincere thanks of your Deputation are due to the Associated Press and the entire Press of India for the publicity intense and sensational in character—given daily to your Deputation and the South African Indian question. Your Deputation is also grateful to the leaders and the public men of India among whom may be mentioned the names of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hon. M. A. Jinnah, Sir Parahotamdas Thakurdas, Sir Dinshaw Petit, Dr. Dutta, Lala Lajpat Rai, Messrs. Jehangir B. Petit, S. Shrinivasa Iyengar, K. Natarajan, G. A. Natesan, Girdarlal, Desai and Jalboy Rustomjee, who greatly assisted in the work of your Deputation and who took a very keen interest in making the tour of your Deputation and the meetings held by it a thorough success.

We beg to remain, Gentlemen,

Yours very truly,

JAS. W. GODFREY

AMOD BAYAT.

V. S. C. PATHER.

SORABJEE RUSTOMJEE

A. A. MIRZA.

(Members of the S. A. I. Congress  
Deputation to India.)

Durban.

3rd December 1926.

# South African Indian Congress Deputation

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### Receipts

21st November 1925.

By Cash per Mr. E. M. Ally, Treasurer—		
Special Collection—Deputation Fund	740	0 0
„ Cash per Mr. E. M. Ally, being Transvaal British Indian Association's contribution re Dr. Abdurahman.	150	0 0
„ Cash from Dr. Abdurahman—refund account Boat fare	50	0 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£940</b>	<b>0 0</b>

By Balance on hand from above viz.,	£20 11s. 5d.	Rs. 272 10 0
„ Amount received from Imperial Indian Citizenship Association through Mrs. Sarojini Naidu	89,500	0 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Rs. 89,772</b>	<b>10 0</b>

### Expenditure

21st November 1925.

To Dr. Abdurahman—Cash	450	0 0
„ Five second-class tickets to Bombay @ £54	270	0 0
„ One interclass @ £20	20	0 0
„ Expenses on embarking	2	15 0
„ „ at Lourenco Marques as per details in cash book, including cables, wireless etc.	10	4 4
„ „ at Mozambique including cables	10	18 11
„ „ at Zanzibar	11	5 0
„ „ at Mombassa	21	6 0
„ „ at Seychelles	11	18 9
„ „ at Marmagoa	0	17 8
„ „ at Bomboy on board ship before landing	110	3 4
„ Balance c/d	20	11 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>£940</b>	<b>0 0</b>

To Expenses in Bombay for motor hire cables, printing, provisions, train-fares etc.—details as per cash book	Rs. 3,116	9 0
„ Expenses at Calcutta as per cash book	2,106	6 0
„ „ „ Cawnpore as per cash book	2,696	14 0
„ „ „ Bombay (on return) cash book	5,938	12 0
„ Paid Secretaries—Natal Indian Congress	13,275	0 0
„ Messrs. Godfrey and Pather—South Indian tour, including trainfares, hotel expenses, motor hire, printing propaganda, literature etc. as per details in cash book	4,000	0 0
„ Expenses in Delhi, trainfares, motor hire, printing, hotel expenses etc. for delegates for 2½ months stay there as her details in Cash book	4,766	1 0
„ Dr. Abdurahman and Mr. S. Rustomjee—tour of Northern districts propaganda meetings—as per details in cash book	1,375	0 0
„ Expenses at Agra, Cawnpore and Calcutta not included in above—as per cash book	56	14 0
„ Cables and telegrams—January to April 1926 as per cash book	900	0 0
„ Delegates expenses—return journey from Bombay to Durban as per cash book	800	0 0
„ Petty expenses such as alms to poor, gratuities and such incidentals	651	2 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Rs. 89,772</b>	<b>10 0</b>

I hereby Certify that I have this day examined the Cash Book with the available vouchers reflecting the above items in detail and find them to be true and correct.

SHAPURJI JIVANJI,  
Auditor, S.A.I. Congress.