

Indian Opinion

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THE LATE MR. MAGANLAL GANDHI

A CABLE message was received from Patna last Monday at this office but as it was not clear it gave the impression that Mahatma Gandhi had expired. Renter's and cable offices and the newspaper offices throughout the Union were bombarded to get to know the truth but no one seemed to know anything; and meanwhile Mahatma Gandhi's son Manilal Gandhi was already receiving messages of condolence. The whole day was thus passed in suspense which was practically unbearable not only to members of Mahatma Gandhi's family here but to all those who knew about this message. Late at night, however, a message was received from Renter's Agency at Bombay which stated that it was not Mahatma Gandhi but his nephew Maganlal Gandhi who had passed away that morning at Patna. Though that brought a great deal of relief, nevertheless the sad news of Mr. Maganlal's death came as a shock to those who knew him and anything of his services in South Africa during the Passive Resistance struggle.

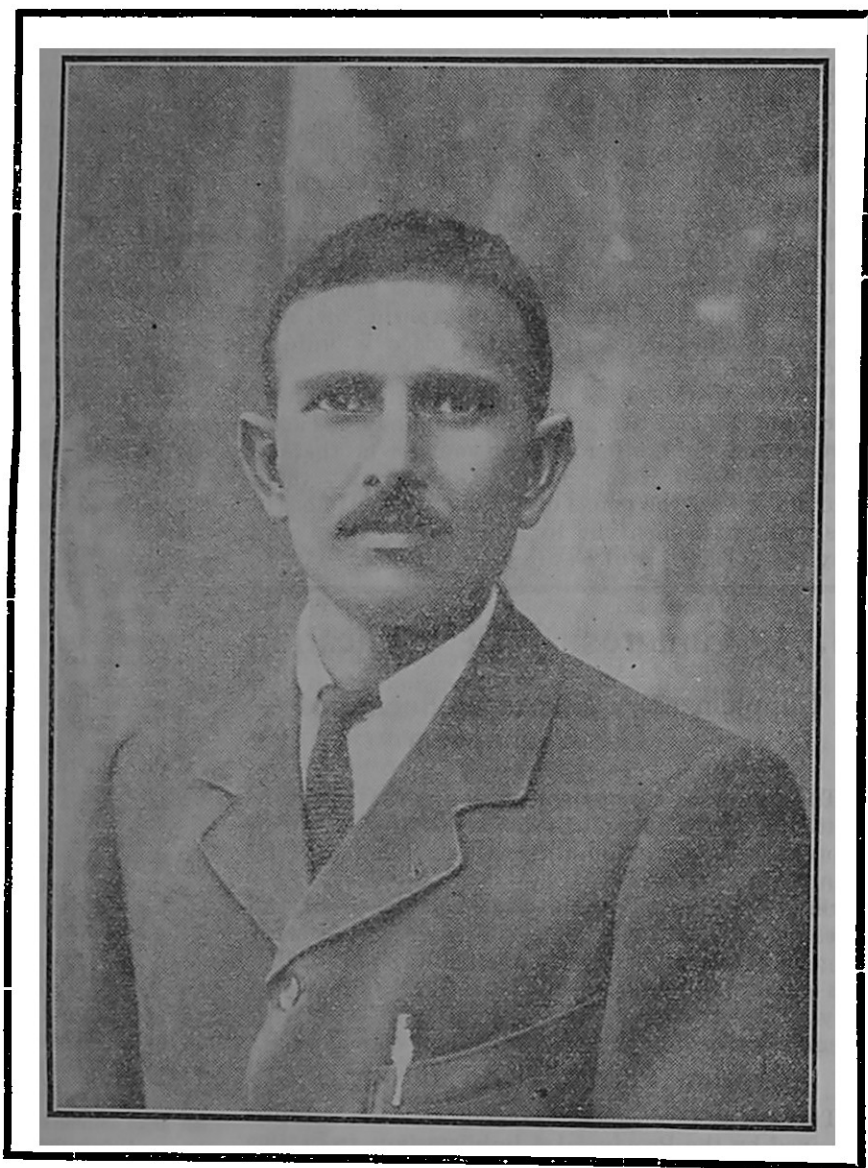
People are instinctively attracted more by outward show than reality. Hence one who can wag his tongue a little on the public platform is able to gain prominence and become the hero of the day quicker, no matter however empty he may be, than one who is drudging away silently in doing practical work is able to gain appreciation for his services.

The late Mr. Maganlal, whose sudden death took place at Patna at the early age of nearly 45 was a man of the latter type. It was ordained for him to remain a silent worker.

It was in the year 1902 that Mr. Maganlal came to South Africa with Mahatma Gandhi and in 1904 when the Phoenix Settlement was established he was among the first to sacrifice the ordinary pleasures of life and to wear the badge of service offered to him by Mahatma Gandhi. He agreed to become a settler in the institution and to lead a life of simplicity and spend his time in the service of his fellow-countrymen. There were many other settlers too at the time who had joined Mahatma Gandhi but it is not an exaggeration to say that it was Mr. Maganlal alone who grasped the true spirit underlying Mahatma Gandhi's movement and followed in his footsteps implicitly.

During the Passive Resistance Struggle in 1913

he was put to the test and came out with brilliant success. It was then that practically every inmate of age, including male and female, of the Phoenix Settlement threw themselves into the struggle and suffered imprisonment. But the question was who was to look after the babes and who was to run the INDIAN OPINION. However desirous of suffering imprisonment for the sake of their country's honour some one had to remain at home and that onerous task fell on the shoulders of Mr. Maganlal.



From the responsibility of nursing the babes to that of conducting the INDIAN OPINION during that critical period came on to Mr. Maganlal and in carrying out those responsibilities successfully he proved himself a man of love, patience and perseverance.

In 1914 when Mahatma Gandhi left South Africa Mr. Maganlal was given the charge of taking the children of Mahatma Gandhi's school to India. Mr. Maganlal acted as a father and preceptor to the

children until the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi from England in 1915. Satyagrah Ashram was then established in Ahmedabad by Mahatma Gandhi and one of the objects of this institution was to revive the cottage industry of India of hand weaving and spinning so that the starving millions may be provided with food and clothing. It was again Maganlal who was to do the miracle. Very soon he mastered the art of hand weaving and spinning. It is not an exaggeration to say that he was the father of that industry. Satyagrah Ashram is responsible to day for having established hand spinning and weaving schools in all the important centres of India. The late Mr. Maganlal was until the time of his death the manager of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah Ashram. Though there are many members of the Ashram not all are able to come to the mark that Mahatma Gandhi should desire. They all try to follow his ideals but find themselves lacking in patience and strength of mind. But Mahatma Gandhi was satisfied to see even one reach the height desired by him and in this respect he had great hopes in Mr. Maganlal and it will be as great a shock to him to lose him.

In his "Experiments With Truth" in the chapter dealing with the Phoenix Settlement Mahatma Gandhi writes thus about him :-

"I tried to carry with me and to draw to Phoenix those relations and friends who had come with me from India to try their fortune and who were engaged in some business or other. They had come in search of wealth and it was a difficult job to persuade them, but some agreed. Of these I can single out only Maganlal Gandhi's name here. The others went back to business. Maganlal Gandhi left his for good to cast in his lot with me and by his ability sacrifice and devotion he stands foremost among my original co-workers in my ethical experiments, and as a self taught handicraftsman his place is unique among them."

The late Mr. Maganlal leaves behind him a widow, a brilliant son and two grown up daughters, his aged parents, an elder brother and two younger brothers to mourn his sad loss. May God grant them courage to bear the pangs of sorrow which He has in His wisdom deemed fit to inflict upon them and may the departed soul rest in eternal peace.

N. I. Congress On Education

Supplementary Statement Submitted To The Commission

The following supplementary statement was submitted by the Natal Indian Congress to the Indian Education Enquiry Committee which terminated its inquiry last week :-

Sirs,—In view of certain important aspects of the question of Indian education which were dealt with in general terms in our Statement submitted to you, not having been clearly elucidated during the course of your investigations, we crave leave to deal with them in extenso in this supplementary statement.

Union Government Subsidy

There is an erroneous impression that the subsidy received by the Provincial Administration from the Union Government is not earmarked exclusively for education. While we are not prepared to discuss the subject from a legal standpoint, we beg to submit with all the emphasis at our command that from a moral and equitable standpoint it could be maintained that the grants so received in respect of the children at school of each community are meant to be used for their education, and that in the case of Indians, the Provincial Government has not been spending the full subsidy on their education, but diverted part of it for other purposes.

In support of the view that subsidies are given for education, we beg to refer you to Section 2 (2) (d) of the Provincial Subsidies Act 1925 which says that the grants shall be paid in respect of European pupils in private schools, "which are aided by the Province to an extent not less than nine-tenths of the grant herein provided." It will therefore be readily seen that the Statute itself gives an unmistakable and explicit indication for the purpose of the subsidy. Moreover, the Baxter Commission in 1922 recommended that "to supplement the revenues from the sources enumerated, the Union Government should pay a subsidy to the Provinces which should take the form of a grant-in-aid of education, its amount to be determined by the number of pupils in average attendance." (Official Year Book No. 8, page 754). The Year Book continues, "Arising out of the report of the Commission, a further Commission was appointed in August 1923, to investigate the matter of the States liability for the cost of education, and certain other matters in connection with the education of European children. Its conclusion was that the Union Government should assume the whole of the reasonable cost of education up to the age of 15."

In calculating the reasonable expenditure on education, the needs of sanitation, roads, Hospital and other items were not taken into account, but to meet these the Provincial Government has powers of taxation, certain revenues transferred by the Union Government and so on.

In order to throw further light on the subject, we quote the following extracts from the speech of the Hon. Mr. Havenga, Minister of Finance, on the second reading of the Provincial Subsidies and Taxation Powers (Amendment) Bill, on the 11th May 1925 :-

"I accept, on behalf of the Government generally, the obligations of its fair share of the means of carrying on provincial services, and the Government finds itself in accord with the opinion expressed by the Commission over which the Hon. member for Capetown (Central) (Mr. Jagger) presided, and subsequently endorsed by the Baxter Commission, namely, that services partly of a local and partly of a National interest should be paid for, partly by the local and partly by the Central Government. That was the basis laid down by the two previous Commissions and I accepted it as the basis of this Settlement. That view has been kept prominently in mind in recasting the financial relations under the present Bill. We recognise that the greater importance of education, from a national point of view, makes that service pre-eminently one for which the Central Government can assume a definite responsibility. We must remember that if the Central Government did not recognise its obligations the objection could always be aimed at it that it was not fulfilling its national obligations in regard to education. Here we felt that we had a greater responsibility than in regard to other services. We propose, therefore, under this Bill to change from pound to pound principle—or shadow of it, for that is all that is left—and to substitute for it a subsidy based on attendance."

While discussing the amount of subsidy in respect of European and Coloured children he said :-

"The grants are those which were arrived at, in the first instance, by the Baxter Commission, and subsequently endorsed by the Education Administration Commission. These grants were deemed by these two Commissions to cover what was considered to be reasonable cost of education for the whole of the Provinces and what should be the responsibility of the Union Government. The principle adopted was that if any Province wish to embark on any more expensive or generous scheme of education, it might do so and taxpayer will have to pay for it. The Government has fixed the age of seven as the minimum age in respect of which the Union shall assume liability for the cost of education." (Assembly Debates, page 3035-60).

The Hon. Mr. Jagger speaking on behalf of the opposition to Mr. Havenga's proposal said :-

"We, on this side, are in favour of his proposal making the grants to the Provincial Councils for education on the per capita basis."

It is clear, therefore, that the Provincial Administration, in spending more than the subsidy in respect of European and Coloured education, has gone beyond the reasonable standard and adopted a generous standard while in the case of the Indians it has allowed the education to fall below the

reasonable standard. The following figures taken from the Provincial Auditor's Report will be of interest:—

Community of pupils.	Subsidy received.	Expenditure.	Provincial contribution.
1925-1926.			
European ...	342,150.	440,936.	98,786.
Indian ...	37,179.	27,918.	8,261.
1926-1927.			
European ...	350,573.	420,701.	70,128.
Indian ...	38,985.	28,429.	10,556.

It has been ascertained that during the last two years a sum of £168,914 has been drawn from the general revenues of the Provinces to which all classes including Indians contribute, has been spent on European education whereas for the same period a sum of £18,817 from the Union Government subsidy towards Indian education has been diverted for other purposes. How long this state of affairs has been carried on, to what extent Indian education has been starved and how it has escaped the censure of the Provincial Auditor all these years—it is difficult for us to say. But if it were to be computed on a conservative basis, we can safely say that a sum approximating £100,000 has been diverted since Union from the amount that should have been spent from the subsidy alone on Indian education. This amount could be conveniently repaid in building new schools as suggested in our previous statement.

In concluding the subject we beg to submit that in the matter of Capital Expenditure also the Indian children have not been fairly treated. During the past 17 years a sum of £881,125 has been spent on buildings for European education, a sum of £22,654 was spent on buildings for Coloured education while for the same period a paltry sum of £19,158 was spent on buildings of Government Indian Schools.

Self-Help On The Part Of Indians

There is also a misconception that Indians have not shown any desire to help themselves in the matter of education of their children without relying on outside aid. There are two Education Trusts created by the late Mr. Parsee Rustumjee of Durban involving an amount of about £45,000, which bring in an income of £2,000 per annum. Almost all of this income is used from time to time for Indian education. Other instances of self-help on the part of the Indians by subscribing to or actually building schools and in the case of the 50 Private Schools, not only the building but paying for the upkeep of the Schools, we estimate to be at least 50,000.

We again sincerely thank you for the courtesy shown to us and trust that you will be pleased to give sympathetic consideration to our representations.

The Beach Control Ordinance

In connection with the above draft ordinance which is at present before the Natal Provincial Council and was referred to a Select Committee the Natal Indian Congress represented by Messrs. Jas. W. Godfrey, V. S. C. Pather, Sorabjee Rustumjee and A. I. Kajeer made representations last Tuesday as a result of which the Draft Ordinance has in some respects been amended. The principle of segregation, however, still exists and as such the Congress still opposes it.

The Transvaal Young Khoja Society, Pretoria, sent a message of condolence to H.E. the Governor-General in his recent sad bereavement to which the following reply was received from His Excellency's secretary:—

"I am desired by His Excellency to express his deep appreciation of your telegram, and to ask you to convey his sincere thanks to all members of your Society."

South African Indian Federation

Misleading Indian Evidence

The following leading article appears in the *Natal Witness* dated April 20:—

It would be a pity if the evidence given yesterday before the Indian Education Inquiry Committee by the South African Indian Federation were allowed to prejudice either the members of the Committee or the public mind against Indian claims to more liberal treatment in the matter of education. The demands put forward by the Federation are obviously at the moment quite outside the sphere of practical politics, and the truculent tone in which they were made, as well as the suggestion that the Province has at its disposal some enormous accumulated surplus filched from Indians, was well calculated to revive that anti-Asiatic feeling which, thanks principally to Mr. Sastri, has recently been dying down in the Province. Unfortunately, high-sounding titles such as "The South African Federation" carry weight by their mere pretentiousness. The bucket-shop keeper, and the peddler of shares in non-existent oilfields, know the value of the good note-paper and an imposing address and it is not the company with the most impressive prospectus which pays the biggest dividends. That the tactics of those who prey on human credulity are based on a sound working knowledge of psychology may be seen every week from the columns of *Truth*. We do not wish to suggest that the South African Indian Federation has anything in common with such persons or that it is not a bona fide body of South African Indians working for the betterment of their people according to their lights. But when the man-in-the-street reads such evidence as it gave yesterday he is very naturally inclined (since he knows little of Indian organisations and cares less), to assume at once that such views must really be representative of the bulk of Indian opinion. And that they emphatically are not. The South African Indian Federation, so far as we have been able to discover, represents its officials and a small body of disgruntled Indians outside, and it represents no one else. It was formed only last Christmas and its leaders are men who have consistently opposed the Indian Agreement from the beginning, without waiting to see whether or how it was going to work. So far as they could embarrass Mr. Sastri and render his task more difficult, they have done so. Apparently they want everything or nothing and they would rather have no bread than half-a-loaf. Whether they have deliberately put forward demands which they know cannot be conceded in the hope of making political capital out of the refusal of them, we cannot say, but their tactics would hardly have been different had they been designed to that end. European opinion will, of course, have no patience with them, but what European opinion must recognise is that there is a vast majority of Indian opinion, headed we make bold to say, by Mr. Sastri, which has no patience with them either. And European opinion need not be too critical of occasional Indian stupidities when it remembers that only a few weeks ago a presumably sane collection of East Griqualand farmers passed a resolution demanding that the penalty for stock theft should in future be identical with the penalty for murder. Actually the case for increased facilities for Indian education has been put forward sanely, soberly, constructively, and with a due regard to Provincial finances, by the Natal Indian Congress—a really representative body. Europeans who study its statement will find little to alarm them and a good deal of evidence to show that there are Indians who are well-qualified to assist the Provincial Council and the Government in solving amicably a problem which has for long cried for solution.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

Part IV. Chapter IX.

A TUSSELE WITH POWER

To turn to the Asiatic Department.

Johannesburg was the stronghold of the Asiatic officers. I had been observing that far from protecting the Indians, Chinese and others, these officers were grinding them down. Everyday I had complaints like these: 'The rightful ones are not admitted, whilst those who have no right are smuggled in on payment of £100. If you will not remedy this state of things, who will?' I shared the feeling. If I did not succeed in stamping out this evil, I should be living in the Transvaal in vain.

So I began to collect evidence, and as soon as I had gathered a fair amount I approached the Police Commissioner. He appeared to be a just man. Far from giving me the cold shoulder, he listened to me patiently and asked me to show him all the evidence in my possession. He examined the witnesses himself and was satisfied, but he knew as well as I that it was difficult in South Africa to get a white jury to convict a white offender against coloured men. 'But,' said he, 'let us try at any rate. It is not proper either to let such criminals go scot-free, for fear of the jury acquitting them. I must get them arrested. I assure you I shall leave no stone unturned.'

I did not need the assurance. I was suspecting quite a number of officers, but as I had no unchallengeable evidence against them, warrants of arrest were issued against the two about whose guilt I had not the slightest doubt.

My movements could never be kept secret. Many knew that I was going to the Police Commissioner practically daily. These two officers, against whom warrants had been issued, had spies more or less efficient. They used to patrol my office and report my movements to the officers. I must admit, however, that these officers were so bad that they could not have had many spies. Had the Indians and the Chinese not helped me, they would never have been arrested.

One of these absconded. The Police Commissioner obtained an extradition warrant against him and got him arrested and brought to the Transvaal. They were tried, and although there was strong evidence against them, and in spite of the fact that the jury had evidence of one of them having absconded, both were declared to be not guilty and acquitted.

I was sorely disappointed. The Police Commissioner also was very sorry. I got disgusted with the legal profession. The very intellect became an abomination to me inasmuch as it could be prostituted for screening crime.

However, the guilt of both of the officers was so patent that in spite of their acquittal the Government could not harbour them. Both were cashiered and the Asiatic Department became comparatively clean, and the Indian community was somewhat reassured.

The event enhanced my prestige and brought me more business. The bulk, though not all, of the hundreds of pounds that the community was monthly squandering in speculation, was saved. All could not be saved, for the dishonest still plied their trade. But it was now possible for the honest man to preserve his honesty.

I can say that though these officers were so bad I had nothing against them personally. They were aware of this themselves, and when in their straits they approached me I helped them too. They had a chance of getting employed by the Johannesburg Municipality in case I did not oppose the proposal. A friend of theirs saw me in this connection and I agreed not to thwart them, and they succeeded.

This attitude of mine put the officials with whom I came in contact perfectly at ease, and though I had often to fight with their department and use strong language, they remained quite friendly with me. I was not then quite conscious that such behaviour was part of my nature. I learnt later that it was an essential part of Satyagraha, and an attribute of Ahimsa.

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect which though easy enough to understand is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This Ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth. I am realising everyday that the search is vain unless it is founded on ahimsa as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist its author is tantamount to resisting oneself. For, we are all tarred with the same brush and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only him but with him the whole world.

Farewell To Messrs E. M. Ally And Ahmed Mahomed

An At Home At Mr. Rustomjee's

Mr. E. M. Ally Vice President of the Natal Indian Congress and Mr. Ahmed Mahomed of Kimberley who have sailed for India per the *s. s. Karagola*, were the guests of honour at an At Home given under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress last Sunday afternoon at the 'Castle', Mayville, residence of Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee (president).

The residence was adorned with flags and bunting and there were present about two hundred prominent members of the Indian community including ladies. Mr. Kodanda Rao, private secretary to Mr. Sastri and Mr. K. P. Kichlu the Indian Educational Expert accompanied by Mr. Bramdeo were also present from Maritzburg.

After refreshments Mr. Rustomjee thanked those present for having responded to the invitation of the Congress and called upon Mr. A. Christopher as his senior, being the president of the South African Indian Congress, to speak.

Mr. Christopher paid a glowing tribute to Mr. E. M. Ally for the invaluable services rendered by him to the Congress and also to Mr. Ahmed Mahomed recalling his generous hospitality in Kimberley during Congress sittings in January last, and wished them both a happy voyage and a speedy return.

Mr. Rustomjee then garlanded the honoured guests and presented Mr. Mookrey of Kimberley, who was also proceeding to India, and Mr. Rao and Mr. Kichlu with bouquets.

Mr. E. M. Ally in replying stated that what little he was able to do for the Congress was due to his association with the late Majnun Ahab Club now known as the Orient Club, under the guidance of his friend Mr. R. K. Khan who was the president

of the Club. He thanked the Congress for the honour done him.

Mr. Ahmed Mahomed also suitably replied through his daughter who spoke on his behalf.

Mr. R. K. Khan congratulated Mr. Rustomjee for possessing a beautiful residence which enabled them to hold such a gathering and moved a vote of thanks for the trouble he had taken in organising the function.

The very pleasant gathering terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

The Lawrence Trio entertained the gathering with music which was much appreciated.

News From India

If The English Left India

Thus the *Leader* (Allahabad) :—

If the English left India, it would break up instantly and all Nehrus would disappear in impotent obscurity,' writes the *New Statesman*. Let not our contemporary be anxious on the score of India and its people, but let it make sure that no harm would come to England 'if the English left India.' Lord Birkenhead once expressed his opinion on the question as to what would happen if the English abandoned the 'great heritage of the past' and his views will bear repetition. He wrote to a newspaper that 'India is an incalculable asset to the mother country,' that 'the commercial prosperity of Great Britain is bound up with that of India,' that 'the severance of the tie that binds India to the Empire would be a crushing and irreparable disaster to England,' that 'in the fabric of our great Empire India is a vital part,' that 'unless we are content to sink into political and commercial insignificance, the surrender of India would be an act not only of folly but of degenerate poltroonery' and that 'to make such a surrender would be to remove the keystone of the arch. 'The loss of India,' he further wrote, 'would be the first step in the disintegration of the Empire, for strategically our Eastern Empire pivots on India, and surrender or withdrawal would involve other of our possessions in ruin or in isolation.' A contented India, enjoying the same status as other dominions, will be a source of strength to the Empire. And this is the status which Great Britain should confer on this country. But when irresponsible publicists hold out the threat of the English leaving this country let them first think of the consequences to their own country.

Political Prisoners In India

In the House of Commons, Mr. Sandemon asked how many were executed in India during the last thirty years for their political views and how many political cases were still awaiting trial, especially in Bengal. Earl Winterton replied to the first question "None"; to the second he said, apart from the difficulty of defining a political case, Lord Birkenhead doubted whether he would be justified in initiating an enquiry in every district of British India which would be necessary in order to give an accurate answer to the question.

How Anti-Indian Propaganda is Worked

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* publishes a confidential letter addressed by the secretary to the Government of India to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal which says *inter alia* that Miss Alice Schalek, an Austrian writer, will be visiting India shortly and intends to publish an account of her experiences, and the Government of India desires that she should receive such facilities for carrying the object of the visit and request the district authorities to help her in every way. The letter concludes with a request to the Bengal Government to convey

the warning to Miss Schalek that in view of the publication of Miss Mayo's work she may be regarded with suspicion by the Indians and that she should be cautious in her enquiries and activities. Generally it is understood, says the *Patrika*, similar letters are in circulation among officials in other provinces.

British Motive

"We did not conquer India for the benefit of the Indians. I know it is said in missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise the level of the Indians. That is cant. We conquered India as the outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we should hold it.....I am not such a hypocrite as to say, we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general and for the Lancashire cotton goods in particular."—SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS.

In the Magistrate's Court Of the District of Durban Held at Durban.

No. 5110/1928.

Between : The Executors of Estate late B. H. Wood, (Plaintiff), and Kistnasamie Pillay, Colonial Born Indian, lately of Sea View (Defendant).

To

KISTNASAMIE PILLAY.

TAKE NOTICE that a Summons has been issued against you in this Court by the Executors of Estate late B. H. Wood, c/o A. D. Millar & Kimber, 10 Leslie Street, Durban, for an Order :—

1. Cancelling the Agreement of Sale signed on the 7th October 1926 for the sale and purchase of certain piece of freehold land being Lot 334 of Y of Clairmont Estate, in the County of Durban, Natal.

2. Forfeiture of the sum of £10. paid by you.

and that an Order has been made that the publication of notice of such Summons shall be deemed to be good and sufficient service of the Summons on you. You are required to enter an appearance to the Summons on or before the 9th day of May, 1928: and, if you do not do so, Judgment may be given against you in your absence.

Dated at Durban this 24th day of April, 1928.

L. ANDREWS

Asst. Clerk of the Court.

A. D. Millar & Kimber

Plaintiff's Attorneys.

10, Leslie Street. Durban.

To Let

Shop and Flat opposite Indian and Native Markets in Victoria Street, Durban.

Apply to :

A. Christopher,
77 Fountain Lane, Durban.

ભાડે આપવાની છે

ડુકાન અને ફ્લેટ વીક્ટોરીયા સ્ટ્રીટ, ડરબનમાં
હીંદી અને નેટીવ મારકેટની સામે.

વધુ વિગત માટે મળો :—

એ. ક્રીસ્ટોફર,

૭૭ ફાઉન્ટેન લેન, ડરબન.

Printed and Published by Mahilal M. Chaudhri at Ghanshi
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ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન.

પુસ્તક રૂ. ૨૬ અં.

ફ્રીપ્રેસ, શુક્રવાર, તારીખ ૨૭ એપ્રિલ ૧૯૨૮

અંક ૧૬

“ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન”

શુક્રવાર, તા. ૨૭ એપ્રિલ સન ૧૯૨૮

ગયા સોમવારે આ ઓપીસે પટનાથી એક કેબલ આવ્યો હતો પરંતુ તેમાં જણાવેલો સંદેશો મરહુમ મગનલાલ યોજ્જો નહિ હોવાથી તેનો અર્થ ગાંધી મહાત્મા માધીજી સ્વર્ગવાસી થયા જેવો થતો હતો. આથી ધણીજ વિંતા ઉપસ્થિત થઈ અને તાર ઓપીસે રૂટની ઓપીસ અને આખા યુનીયનના વર્તમાનપત્રોની ઓપીસે ઉપર ખરી હકીકત જણાવતે દરેકો પડ્યો હતો. પરંતુ તેમાંના કોઈને કંઈ ખબર મળી નહોતી અને દરમિયાનમાં મહાત્મા ગાંધીજીના પુત્ર મણીલાલ ગાંધીને વિલાસના સંદેશાઓ મળતા થઈ ગયા હતા. આ પ્રમાણે સોમવારેના આખો દિવસ મહાત્મા માધીજીના કુટુંબીઓને જ નહિ પણ હોદ્દા કામને અનિશ્ચિનતાની અસર વેદનામાં પસાર થયો અને છેક મોડી રાતે મુગધથી રૂટને સંદેશો આવ્યો કે મહાત્મા ગાંધી નહિ પણ તેમના બંચીજી ભાઈ મગનલાલ ગાંધી એ દિવસે મવારે પટનામાં સ્વર્ગવાસી થયા હતા. આ સંદેશો મળવાથી ધણીજ રાહત મળી છતાં જેઓ ભાઈ મગનલાલને જણાવતા હતા અને સલામતીની લડત વખતે તેમની સેવાઓનું કંઈ પણ જાણતા હતા તેઓને આ શોકજનક ખબરથી ધણીજ આઘાત થયો હતો.

મનુષ્ય જાતની કુદરતી ખાસીયત હોય છે કે તેઓ ખરી વસ્તુના કરતાં ખદારના દમામથી વધારે જલદી આકર્ષાય છે. એથી જે માણસ જાહેર મામલો પર ચઢી પોતાની જીભ ચલાવવાની કક્ષિત ધરાવતો હોય તેને ખીજે માણસ જે ખડે બ્યવહાર કામ જાતપણે મહેનતથી કરી રહેલો હોય તેના કરતાં તે મહેનતથી પોકળ હોવા છતાં જાહેરાત મળે છે અને તે વખતનો તે નાયક બની જાય છે.

મરહુમ ભાઈ મગનલાલ જેનું પટનામાં આજે ૪૫ વર્ષની વયે અણચિંતબંધ અવસાન થયું છે તે ઉપર જણાવેલા ખીજ વર્ણના માણસ હતા. કોમને માટે શાંત સેવા બજાવવાનું જ લખાયેલું હતું.

ભાઈ મગનલાલ ૧૯૦૨ ની સાલમાં મહાત્મા માધીજીની સાથે આ દેશમાં આવ્યા હતા. અને ૧૯૦૪ ની સાલમાં જે વખતે શીનીક્સ સંસ્થા સ્થપાઈ તે વખતે કુન્યવી ભોગ વિલાસોનો ભાગ કરી મહાત્મા માધીજીએ આપેલા સેવામંત્ર સ્વિકારી લેવામાં ભાઈ મગનલાલ પહેલામાંના એક હતા. તેમણે શીનીક્સ સંસ્થામાં સ્થાયી થઈ સાદું જીવન ગાળી પોતાના દેશભાઈઓની સેવાના કામમાં પોતાનો સમય મગાવતું સ્વિકાર્યું. ખીજ પણ ધણી આ સંસ્થામાં જોડાયા હતા પરંતુ મહાત્મા માધીજીના આદર્શોનો ખરો ભાવ ગ્રહણ કરીને તેને અનુસરવામાં ભાઈ મગનલાલને કોઈ પણ પડોંચી શક્યું નહોતું.

એમ કહેવામાં આવે જરાએ અતિશયોક્તિ કરતા નથી. ૧૯૧૩ ની સલામતી લડત વેળા ભાઈ મગનલાલની ખરી કસોટી થઈ હતી અને તેમાંથી તે સંપૂર્ણ સફળતાથી પસાર થયા હતા. એ વેળાએ શીનીક્સ સંસ્થાના દરેક દરેક ઉપર લાયક સી તેમજ પ્રશ્નને લક્ષ્યમાં અંતર્યામી હઈ અને કેદખાનાના દરવાજા ઠોકવાના હતા. પરંતુ પાછળ રહેલા ન્હાના બાળકોની સંભાળ કોણ લે અને ‘ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન’ કોણ ચલાવે એ સવાલ હતો. લડતમાં અંતર્યામી મન તો બધાને થાય પરંતુ આ જવાબદારી પણ કંઈ ન્હાની સ્ત્રી નહોતી અને કોઈને તો તે લીધે જ છુટકો. એ મુશ્કેલ જવાબદારી ભાઈ મગનલાલને શિરે નાખવામાં આવી એટલે જે વેળાએ સધળા માતાઓ પેદાખાનામાં હતી તે વેળાએ તેમના બાળકોની સંભાળ લેવાથી તે એવા કઠોકડીનાં સમયે ‘ઈન્ડિઅન ઓપિનિઅન’ ચલાવવાનું કામ ભાઈ મગનલાલને માથે આવી પડ્યું અને તે ધણીજ સુંદર રીતે બજાવી પોતે કેટલા પ્રેમાળ, કેટલા ધીરજવાન અને કેટલા દ્વાંધમહી હતા તે પુરવાર કરી આપ્યું.

૧૯૧૪ માં જ્યારે મહાત્મા માધીજીએ દક્ષિણ આફ્રિકા છોડ્યું ત્યારે મહાત્મા માધીજીની નિશાળના વિદ્યાર્થીઓને લઈને હિંદુસ્તાન જવાનું ભાઈ મગનલાલને દરમ્યાન મળ્યું. મહાત્મા માધીજી ઇંગ્લંડથી ૧૯૧૫ ની સાલમાં હિંદુસ્તાન આવ્યા ત્યાં સુધી ભાઈ મગનલાલે એ બાળકોના પિતા અને ગુરૂ તરીકેની દરજ્જા બજાવી. તે પછી અમદાવાદમાં સત્યાગ્રહ આશ્રમ સ્થપાયું અને તેના હેતુઓમાંનો એક ધણી વર્ષોથી નંદ મએલો હાથ વજાડેનો ઉલોમ સજીવન કરી હિંદુસ્તાનની જુએમરતી અને વસ્ત્રહીન પ્રજાને અજ વસ્ત્ર પુરા પાડવાનો હતો. આ અમતકાર કરવાનું પણ ભાઈ મગનલાલને માથે આવ્યું. કુદ મુશ્કેલીઓ એ કંધામાં પોતે પ્રવીણ થઈ ગયા. અને આજે એ ઉલોમના તે પિતા હતા એમ કહેવામાં જરાએ અતિશયોક્તિ નથી.

આજે હિંદુસ્તાનના સધળા મુખ્ય મથકોમાં હાથ વજાડે જાળાઓ સ્થપાઈ છે તે સત્યાગ્રહ આશ્રમને જ આભારી છે. પોતાનાં મરણ પર્વત ભાઈ મગનલાલ સત્યાગ્રહ આશ્રમના બ્યવસ્થાપક હતા. જોકે આશ્રમવાસીઓ ખીજ ધણી છે છતાં મહાત્મા માધીજી જે રાત્રે તેઓને પહેલાંવાવા કુચે છે એ રાત્રે પહેલાંવાની શક્તિ બધામાં નથી. તેઓ સધળા મહાત્મા માધીજીના આદર્શોને અનુસરવા પ્રયત્ન કરે છે પરંતુ ધીરજ અને માનસીક બળ જોઈએ તેટલા પ્રમાણમાં ધરાવતા નહિ હોવાથી સફળ થઈ શકતા નથી. તેની માધીજીને વિંતા નથી. પ્રયત્ન કરે એથી જ તેમને સંતાપ છે અને આખા આશ્રમ માંથી પારંગત થએલો માણસ બદે એક જ નીકળે તો તેમની મહાત્મા માધીજીને પુરતો સંતોષ છે. અને આ બાબતમાં કોઈ કોઈને વિશે મહાત્મા માધીજીને મોટી નાકા હતી તો તે ભાઈ મગનલાલને વિશે જ હતી અને તેમની ખોટ માધીજીને જખરામાં જખરા આઘાત પડેલાંનારી થઈ પડે.