

Indian Opinion

No. 9—Vol. XXVIII.

Friday, February 28th, 1930.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.
PRICE FOURPENCE.

NOTES AND NEWS

MR. J. D. TYSON, I.C.S., former secretary to the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H., and also secretary to Sir Kurma Reddi, is arriving in Durban on the 5th of March to act as Agent-General of the Government of India in South Africa until Sir Kurma arrives here from India. Mr. Tyson is accompanied by his mother Mrs. Tyson.

A Reuter's message from Bombay states:—

Sir Kurma Reddi, Indian Agent-General in South Africa, has completely recovered, and will leave for Delhi on March 2 to interview Lord Irwin, the Viceroy. Sir Kurma will reach Bombay on March 10, on which day he sails for South Africa.

At the annual general meeting of the Springs and District Chamber of Commerce held in the municipal supper room recently, the chairman (Mr. R. Moore,) referring to the "Indian menace," is reported to have said:—

"This question has caused your executive much serious thought, and we have followed the varying fortunes of our Town Council's effort to restrict their encroachment with full approval, and what small assistance we could we rendered through our solicitor, Mr. R. E. Pudney. This matter is now being discussed in Parliament, but a few figures such as the following, will perhaps bring the position home to us more forcibly and make us realise how serious this menace is to all of us, both traders and public. "There are at present 18 Indian traders in the municipal area of Springs employing assistants and juveniles, which means that there are a large number of jobs less to be divided between our unemployed sons and daughters, and yet I often get white people who deal with the Indians asking me to find jobs for their children with the white traders, and I feel that nothing but blacklisting by the white traders will ever bring home to these people the wrong they are doing to their country, their white heritage and those who come after them."

General Smuts was welcomed home by a large gathering in the Carnarvon Castle. Mr. Krige, acting leader of the Opposition, Mr. Duncan and many South African Party members of the Assembly were present. In an interview given to Reuter, General Smuts reviewed his experiences in Britain, Canada and the United States, describing some of them as the most interesting and exhilarating of his life. He had been honoured by an invitation to Sandringham, where he had a long conversation with the King, who appeared to be completely restored to health. He had been deeply impressed at what he saw in Canada and thought that that Dominion might yet be the chief country in the British Commonwealth. His reception in the United States had been most gratifying. What he had learnt of the American negro's progress had been "an eye-opener."

"Christ was crucified but the spirit of Christ could not be killed. So the greatest living man of the world can be imprisoned or tortured by the enemies of God and man, but his spirit can never be killed. When his spirit will pervade the world, the world itself will be civilised and barbarism blotted out for ever," said Mayor Masson, an American tourist, unveiling the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi at the fourth annual meeting of Chinsurah Deshbandhu Memorial High School (Calcutta.)

THE TRANSVAAL INDIAN LICENSING QUESTION

WE make no apologies to again refer to this "burning" question. It has no doubt disturbed the atmosphere of goodwill that prevailed after the signing of the Capetown Agreement.

The concluding paragraph of the upliftment clause in the Capetown Agreement reads as follows: "The Union Government.....and accept the view that in the provision of educational and *other facilities* the considerable number of Indians who remain part of the permanent population should not be allowed to lag behind any other sections of the people." Since the signing of the Gentleman's Agreement a considerable number of the floating population of the Union has left these shores under the Assisted Emigration Scheme. We have merely referred to this clause to show how the Union Government is in honour bound to provide such facilities to the permanent population of the Union as would enable them not to lag behind any other section of the people. The attack made against the Transvaal Indians on the licensing question is not in consonance with the spirit and intention of the clause that we have referred to above.

The Transvaal Indian community has stood loyal to the Capetown Agreement notwithstanding the deprivation of the right that it enjoyed prior to the passage of the Immigration Act No. 35 of 1927 which followed the Agreement. The Transvaal Registration

Certificate entitled the holder to stay overseas without any limitation in the period. But under Act 35 of 1927 the holder must return to South Africa within three years of his departure and the entry of the minor children of such holder could only be granted if those children were accompanied by their mother. This was a right that the Transvaal Indians had sacrificed because of the spirit of goodwill that then prevailed.

It is this spirit of "give and take" (to use a phrase familiar to the man in the street) that we desire should prevail during the sittings of the Select Committee that is now considering the Indian licensing question. Section 130 of the Gold Law of 1908 provides that no right under that law may be acquired by a coloured person, and that no holder of a right may permit any coloured person other than his bona fide servant "to reside on or occupy ground held under such right." And under Section 131 of the same Law no coloured person is permitted to reside on proclaimed land in the mining districts of Johannesburg, Boksburg and Krugersdorp "except in bazaars, locations, mining compounds and such other places as the Mining Commissioner may appoint." The Indians in the Transvaal have been residing in Gold areas before and since the passing of the Gold Law. Their occupation has never been questioned nor were the above sections of the Gold Law applied against them. But the Braamfontein judgment has resulted in the Johannesburg Municipality withholding the issue of hundreds of General Dealers' Licences. It is maintained by the municipality that Indians have not the right to reside in or occupy properties in the proclaimed areas. The action of the Johannesburg Municipality has brought about a serious state of affairs. It is an attempt to wreck the structure of peace towards which the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri had put in so much labour. Their action is to be deprecated.

The personnel of the Select Committee represents men who have always taken a broader vision of matters and we would therefore suggest that they lift this question above the plane of prejudice for we fear the European witnesses appearing before the Committee would paint a gloomy picture to the detriment of the Indians. We entertain the hope that a settlement acceptable to

both the European and the Indian communities would be reached.

We would repeat that the permanent Indian population of South Africa should not be allowed to lag behind any other sections of the people. For how could the Indian be expected to attain the Western standard of living if equal opportunities are denied him.

How Whites Help Asiatics To Evade The Law

The *Sunday Times* understands that Dr. D. F. Malan, Minister of the Interior, is determined to tighten up the law so that there is no loophole which will enable Asiatics to continue to evade the Acts relating to Asiatic trading, ownership of property and other matters.

Hitherto the Asiatic community has found little difficulty in breaking the law, and in such a way as to incur no penalties.

Asiatics continue to trade to the great detriment of the European community and by forming bogus companies with the names of white directors or shareholders who lend their names for the purpose, they succeed in purchasing and owning property.

Dr. Malan is said to be resolved to put a stop to this, as well as to other evasions of the law. The Asiatic community, greatly alarmed, sought at first to get Mr. V. S. S. Sastri to return and sponsor the Asiatic case; but as Mr. Sastri was not available, they have now appealed to Mr. C. Ramalinga Reddy, one of the organisers of the United Nationalist Party of India, to take up their case in South Africa.

Rand Deputation

During the week a deputation under the chairmanship of Mr. H. J. Crocker, representing the Municipal Association of the Transvaal, went to Capetown from Johannesburg to give evidence before the Select Committee appointed to deal with the Asiatic question.

The deputation complained that the fact that Asiatics could reside and trade in the Transvaal had long been a grievance in the Transvaal. They indicated that the old Republican Law of 1871 clearly provided for the segregation of Asiatics from Europeans by the provision of Asiatic bazaars, where these people might reside and trade.

This law had, however, been superseded by Law No. 3 of 1885, which, nevertheless, enacted that Asiatics must not own property in the Republic, although the Government had the right to point out certain streets, wards, or locations where they might live.

After discussing the various laws controlling the position, the members of the deputation submitted that the laws afforded no real protection to the European community, and while it was clearly their intention to have done so, yet they were no help whatever against Asiatic encroachment. The only result had been the expenditure of vast sums in legal costs, and the entrenchment of the Asiatic more firmly than ever.

Even the General Dealers' Control Ordinance of the Transvaal Provincial Council, passed in 1926 to enable local authorities to control the issue of trading licences within their areas, had been ruled *ultra vires* the Provincial Council.

The deputation then urged that the matter was one for a clear Act of Parliament, either direct, or

one granting enabling powers to Provincial Councils so that they could not be ruled *ultra vires*.

Asiatic Land-Owners

The Act passed in 1919 was an extension of 1885 prohibiting the ownership by coloured persons of fixed property. Yet, it was alleged, the intention of the Legislature was being evaded by the formation of Asiatic companies to acquire fixed property with shares held nominally by Europeans. Some interesting facts were then quoted to the Select Committee regarding Vereeniging, with the proviso, however, that the law was being evaded similarly in other parts of the Transvaal.

In 1919 there were two quasi-Asiatic companies holding land in Vereeniging, the land being worth £2,200 and the buildings £7,550. Now there were eight such companies with land worth £6,365 and buildings rated at £27,320. In other words, notwithstanding the law, the holdings of these people had increased by 400 per cent.

Land in Wives' Names

The deputation went on to state that not only had bogus "whites" land-owning companies been formed, but that Asiatics had caused land to be registered in the names of their Malay wives who had not been definitely excluded under the law.

The deputation urged the passing of watertight provisions against Asiatic trading or hawking or residing within the area of local authorities, except in such areas as those authorities might prescribe.

They further urged rigid rulings against the acquirement of property by Asiatics, and recommended that it should be made a punishable offence for Europeans to act as "dummies" or to hold licences for Asiatics.—*Sunday Times*.

Asiatic Trading In Braamfontein

Suburb's Combined Attack On Indians

The problem of the Asiatic trader was discussed at a meeting of the Braamfontein Vigilance Association. The chairman, Mr. A. H. Jones, said the association had decided to lay the case before the Select Committee appointed by the Government, and it was hoped that Councillor W. Wilkinson would act as their representative.

Councillor Wilkinson said many people thought that the attitude of the association and other similar bodies to Asiatic trading constituted a persecution.

Asiatics had, however, continued to trade last year without taking out trading licences, and it had been agreed to ask the Minister of the Interior to receive a deputation from the City Council. This year some 600 licences had been held up, and the Government had appointed a Select Committee to deal with the matter.

It would be a crying shame if a small suburb such as Braamfontein were left to fight the Asiatic question alone. Suburbs vitally interested in the matter could combine and subscribe to an "Asiatic Menace Fund."

The crux of the whole problem was the extended credit given by the Asiatic. If half of his customers failed to pay their debts, the remainder had to make up for them.

Mr. H. A. Wilford, of Norwood, said his own association had considered it necessary to send a representative to give evidence before the Select Committee. He urged other suburbs to do the same.

The Indians and Chinese in Norwood had formed limited liability companies, the original shareholders in some cases being Europeans. The Asiatics themselves were made servants of the companies, and

did the trading. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court had held in one case that this was an infringement of the law. After the judgment, all the Asiatic traders, except one, left the locality, and this man was now being fought in the Supreme Court.

The speaker suggested that the Select Committee be asked to recommend the altering of the law, to provide that no Indian be allowed to occupy a stand in any suburb, either for residential or for trading purposes. It was the actual presence of the Indian that was objected to.

The law should be so framed that the Indian should be called on to prove himself a bona fide menial or domestic servant, and entitled to reside on a certain site. As long as there was a body of Indians able to trade, and another prohibited from doing so, the position was not fair. The great majority of Indians were here illegally.

The meeting was addressed on various subjects by Councillors H. E. Jackson, C. Walters and M. J. Harris.—*Rand Daily Mail*.

Krugersdorp Town Council Takes Action

The *Star* (Johannesburg) writes:—

The General Committee of the Krugersdorp Town Council report that at their last meeting attention was drawn to a report in *The Star* dealing with the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Assembly on the question of the Asiatic holding of land, and to investigate the position created by certain Supreme Court judgments. The committee thought it advisable to send a delegate to give evidence before the Select Committee.

Interest in the matter has also been taken up by the Krugersdorp Chamber of Commerce, which has been asked to furnish any points it may desire to put before the Select Committee. It is proposed that Councillor W. G. Delport should be appointed to give evidence on behalf of the Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce, and that the town solicitor draw up a memorandum with regard to the position of Asiatics in Krugersdorp for submission to the Select Committee.

It was decided to inform the Rev. B. R. Hattingh, M.L.A., the member for Krugersdorp, of the Council's decision and to ask his assistance in the matter.

Cable From Viceroy Of India

From the Viceroy of India the following cable was received last week by the Transvaal Indian Congress which had asked His Excellency to depute Mr. Sastri, ex-Agent-General in the Union, and Mr. Bajpai to attend the South African Parliamentary Select Committee on the question of Indian trading rights in the Transvaal:—

"As Union Government wished to have the question referred to by you examined by committee before the end of the present session of the Legislature, they have been unable to postpone sitting of committee until return to South Africa of Sir Kurma Reddi.

"Government of India have, therefore, deputed Mr. Tyson, formerly secretary to Agent in South Africa, to watch Indian interests before committee, and they have requested Union Government that Mr. Tyson be allowed to do so. Mr. Tyson sailed by the *Karoo* on the 12th inst.

"Mr. Sastri was unable for reasons of health to proceed to South Africa, and it is regretted that Mr. Bajpai could not be spared.

"Government of India are, however, confident that Mr. Tyson would be able to deal adequately with situation until return to South Africa of Sir Kurma Reddi, who hopes to sail about middle of March. They hope that Congress will give Messrs. Tyson and Baring every assistance."

Dutch Church And Asiatics

Trading Boycott Urged

War on Asiatic traders has been opened by the council of the Dutch Reformed Church at Bethal, which at its ordinary meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution in regard to Asiatics in the town and district:—

"That no member of the Church Council shall trade in any manner with any Asiatic; that each member shall amicably but determinedly direct his household in this regard; that Church members and their households be urgently requested to give their hearty support to this resolution in the interests of our nation and of the European community; that members of the Church Council should go from house to house in their respective wards and carefully use their influence to ensure the desired co-operation in giving effect to this resolution; that a copy of this resolution be sent to Dr. D. F. Malan, the Minister of the Interior, and to Mr. J. P. Jooste, the M.L.A., for the constituency; that the Town Council and the two sister Churches be asked to pass a similar resolution and to give effect thereto and that, should they desire it, a member of the Church Council be deputed to enlighten them on the resolution and to make it clear to them."

There are a large number of Asiatic traders in the town and district. In the town one big Indian store in particular has been drawing a large proportion of the local trade recently.—*The Star*.

Dr. Malan On Slum Problem

£500,000 To Clear Away Slums

Speaking at a conference on the housing question in the Capetown City Hall of the four provincial administrations and municipalities, Dr. Malan, Minister of the Interior, is reported to have said that legal machinery existed for the clearance of slums, but it was impossible to make use of it because if overcrowding were prohibited and slums and dilapidated dwellings removed, the present tenants had no where to go except the street, or, in Capetown, the mountain-side.

The solution lay in the provision of dwellings for this class of the population, and the Government were prepared, as their share of the responsibility, to provide £500,000 at 3 per cent. to assist local authorities to build houses solely for letting purposes. All such building schemes would be subject to the approval of the Administrator and the Central Housing Board. The provincial authorities would not be called upon to shoulder any of the burden, but municipalities would be expected to bear the cost of administration and supervision, and any remission of rates which might be granted. In short, the Government expected that the expenditure and loss borne by the municipalities would amount to the same as the contribution the Government gave. This should work out, it was anticipated, as something approximating to the pound for pound principle.

Dr. Malan made it clear that if the schemes outlined were adopted, and the Government made a more substantial contribution for the assistance of municipalities to deal effectively with slums and slum conditions, the Government and the country would have a right to expect that the municipalities would do their duty.

He reminded the conference that ample power to

prevent overcrowding, and to compel the renovation or abolition of dilapidated buildings already existed, and if once alternative dwellings were provided for the poorest classes, and nevertheless the municipalities did not use the powers already in their hands, the provincial authority had the right to step in and compel them.

The Union Government's powers had been a dead letter so far, simply because to enforce them would be to turn the people out into the street, but if the Government were willing to do their duty they had a right to expect municipalities to do theirs.

To The Indian Critics

Mahatma Gandhi writes in his *Young India* dated Jan. 23:—

I know that you are angry with me for my having been the supposed breaker of the negotiations with the Viceroy. You think I have made a hash of it. If I have done so, I was driven to do it. I was disinclined to join the party. But I was wanted if only for my supposed influence over the masses. I went and spoke in accordance with the dictates of the Inner Voice. This ability to hear and obey that Voice gives me whatever power I may have and has enabled me to render some little service to the country. You will not have me at this time of my life to change my course and listen to any other voice but the Inner.

And what is the offence that I have committed in common with Pandit Motilalji? Not to depart from the Congress instructions, not to depart from the terms of the now famous Delhi manifesto? It is well known that the terms mentioned therein, no matter by what name they are called, were binding on all Congressmen. We broke on the very central point of Dominion Status. I make bold to say that the country has gained by the correct attitude Pandit Nehru and I adopted.

Surely nothing will be lost by the Congress abstaining from participation in the Conference if the British cabinet mean well. Let those that have faith attend, and if they bring anything worth looking at from the Independence standpoint, the Congress will capitulate. The days of being satisfied with costly toys are over. It is the substance that India wants.

British domination must cease.

British exploitation must cease.

British administration, that is costing the country far beyond its means, must end now, not in the remote future.

The vast majority of Congressmen believe that this cannot be had through any round table conference unless a proper atmosphere for it is created. Diplomatic language that may mean one thing for the British voter and another for the Indian peasant will never make India free. The British people must realise that the Empire is to come to an end. This they will not realise unless we in India have generated power within to enforce our will. The English have paid dearly for their freedom such as it is. They, therefore, only respect those who are prepared to pay an adequate price for their own liberty. The real conference, therefore, has to be among ourselves.

Instead, therefore, of looking at the Independence movement with hostility, the critics should bless it even when they cannot identify themselves with it.

But perhaps they do not mind the Independence propaganda so much as they mind the idea of civil disobedience. Will they have an armed rebellion instead? The Congress cannot stay its hands after having passed the Independence resolution. It was no bluff, no showy nothing. It was a deliberate definite change in the Congress mentality. It is

then as much up to the critics as to me to devise ways and means of achieving independence.

There is undoubtedly a party of violence in the country. It is growing in strength. It is as patriotic as the best among us. What is more, it has much sacrifice to its credit. In daring it is not to be surpassed by any of us. It is easy enough to fling unkind adjectives at its members, but it will not carry conviction with them. I am not now referring to the frothy eloquence that passes muster for patriotism. I have in mind that secret, silent persevering band of young men and even women who want to see their country free at any cost. But whilst I admire and adore their patriotism, I have no faith whatsoever in their method. They and I are as poles asunder. India's salvation does not lie through violence. I am convinced that their methods have cost the country much more than they know or will care to admit. Let them study the reforms which they claim were a result of their activity. Assuming that their claim is just, let them remember that the reforms have cost more than the country could at all pay. But they will listen to no argument however reasonable it may be, unless they are convinced that there is a programme before the country which requires at least as much sacrifice as the tallest among them is prepared to make. They will not be allured by our speeches, resolutions or even conferences. Action alone has any appeal for them. This appeal can only come from non-violent action which is no other than civil resistance. In my opinion it and it alone can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime. That even civil resistance may fail and may also hasten the lawlessness is no doubt a possibility. But if it fails in its purpose, it will not be civil resistance that will have failed. It will fail, if it does, for want of faith and consequent incapacity in the civil resisters. This argument may not appeal to the critic. I shall be sorry, if it does not. Even so, he will perhaps admit the purity of my motive.

We must cease to dread violence, if we will have the country to be free. Can we not see that we are tightly pressed in the coil of violence? The peace we seem to prize is a mere makeshift, and is bought with the blood of the starving millions. If the critics could only realise the torture of their slow and lingering death brought about by forced starvation, they would risk anarchy and worse in order to end that agony. The agony will not end till the existing rule of spoliation has ended. I would have waited if I could have been convinced that the condition of the masses has undergone progressive amelioration under British rule. Alas, he who runs may see that it has progressively deteriorated under that rule. It is a sin, with that knowledge, to sit supine, and for fear of imaginary anarchy or worse, to stop action that may prevent anarchy, and is bound, if successful, to end the heartless spoliation of a people who have deserved a better fate.

To English Friends

To the many known and still more unknown English friends, I owe perhaps a word on the eve of what may end in being a life and death struggle. In spite of myself I tried to believe in the possibility of self-respecting Congressmen attending the proposed Round Table Conference. I had my doubts because I knew that the Congress, though it is admittedly the most representative organisation in the country, had no adequate power behind it for vindicating its position. It could therefore be represented at the Conference, only if it knew that the British Government and people had, either through a

generous impulse or through the pressure of world opinion, decided to grant immediate Dominion Status, and that the Conference was to meet in order to discuss not anything the different groups liked but to discover the contents of a Dominion Status constitution. The Viceroy made it clear in no uncertain terms that he could give no such assurance. Such being the case, consistently with its past declarations and with the national interest of which the Congress claims to be the principal trustee, clearly it could not allow itself to be represented at the Conference. But it may be asked: Granting that the Congress could not in the circumstances be expected to send its representatives, where was the necessity for going from Dominion Status to Independence? The answer is plain. Organisations, like men, if they are to command respect and grow, must have a sense of honour and must fulfil their promises. Well, the Congress promised at Calcutta to change the creed to Independence if Dominion Status was not forthcoming by the 31st December 1929. It did not come nor was there any prospect of its coming for certain in the immediate future. The Congress therefore had no other course left open, if it was not 'to commit suicide,' but to declare its immediate objective to be Complete Independence instead of Dominion Status.

But what is there intrinsically wrong in wanting Independence? It is not possible for me to understand this opposition from sober Englishmen to the enunciation of an inalienable right of every nation to be independent except on the supposition that even they, the sober Englishmen, do not want India to be free.

'But you are not fit for Independence,' say some. Surely it is for us to judge whether we are fit or not. And granting that we are not, there is nothing wrong or immoral in our aspiring after Independence and in the attempt rendering ourselves fitter day by day. We shall never be fit by being taught to feel helpless and to rely upon the British bayonet to keep us from fighting among ourselves or from being devoured by our neighbours. If we have to go through the agonies of a civil war or of a foreign invasion, it won't be a new thing in the history of nations that have struggled for freedom. England has gone through both the experiences. After all freedom is not a hot-house growth.

It is open to those English friends who are sincerely anxious for India's welfare to assist India in her fight for freedom and on her terms. She knows best what she needs. Complete Independence does not mean arrogant isolation or a superior disdain for help. But it does mean complete severance of the British bondage, be it ever so light or well concealed. The opposition therefore to the demand for immediate Independence raises the strongest suspicions about the good intentions of those who have conceived the idea of the Conference. It must be clearly understood that the largest nationalist party in India will no longer submit to the position of a dependent nation or to the process of helpless exploitation. It will run any risk to be free from the double curse.

Is it not now intelligible why, notwithstanding its undoubted risks, I am planning some sort of civil disobedience so as to get together all the non-violent forces and see if it stems the tide of onrushing violence? Hatred and ill-will there undoubtedly are in the air. They are bound sooner or later to burst into acts of fury if they are not anticipated in time. The conviction has deepened in me that civil disobedience alone can stop the bursting of that fury.

The nation wants to feel its power more even than to have independence. Possession of such power is independence.

That civil disobedience may resolve itself into violent disobedience is, I am sorry to have to confess, not an unlikely event. But I know that it will not be the cause of it. Violence is there already corroding the whole body politic. Civil disobedience will be but a purifying process and may bring to the surface what is burrowing under and into the whole body. And British officials, if they choose, may regulate civil disobedience so as to sterilise the forces of violence. But whether they do so, or whether as many of us fear, they will, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, provoke violence, my course is clear. With the evidence I have of the condition of the country and with the unquenchable faith I have in the method of civil resistance, I must not be deterred from the course the Inward Voice seems to be leading me to.

But whatever I do and whatever happens, my English friends will accept my word, that whilst I am impatient to break the British bondage, I am no enemy of Britain.

Indian Tailors' Complaints

Case For Exemption From Agreement

The following are the reasons advanced by the Transvaal Indian Tailors' Association for exemption from the wage agreement which operates in respect of the bespoke tailoring industry in the Witwatersrand and in Pretoria:—

"Shops situated in areas in which there is no likelihood of doing first-class trade; the ban of Indians occupying shops in European commercial areas precludes profitable business being established; the bulk of the trade comes from natives and comparatively little from even the poorer Europeans; Indian tailoring, if examined by a European expert, would be scheduled as fourth grade; the industry is kept going by catering specially for the poorer classes, the majority being natives.

"If we are compelled to comply with the scale of wages laid down by the Industrial Council," says the association, "then the only thing we will have to do is close up and return to the mother-country, as the profits of the employers are very small. The council is aware that the Indian tailors cannot get more from the natives, and if we insist on their paying more we are reminded that cheaper suits can be had from the clothing factories."—*Star*.

The League Of Nations

A recent number of the *World Unity Magazine* contains an article on "the Quest of World Peace" by Prof. Dexter Perkins. The writer reviews the work done by the League of Nations for the last ten years towards outlawry of war:—

"The fears of many persons in 1919 and 1920 that a dangerous sort of super-state would come into existence at Geneva, have also been refuted by the actual course of events. The constitution of the League, the famous Covenant, provided explicitly at the outset that decisions on all important questions, barring matters of procedure, should be taken by unanimity. This important principle

effectually prevents any very marked tendency towards centralization. While, no doubt, in many instances, minorities may yield to majorities in order to bring about the necessary accord, it is possible for any state, should it deem its vital interests concerned, to prevent an agreement from being reached. The notion that an instrument of tyranny or domination might be forged from the Covenant has been proved to be fantastically untrue. The League does not impose its decisions, after the manner of a political state; it attains its results through co-operation, through moral pressure, and through the appeal to public opinion. The bringing about of common accord, not the enforcement of the decisions of a group of influential members, has been the method of its political action."

The 44th Indian National Congress

Pandit Jawaharlal's Address

(Concluded from last week)

Fullest Freedom Of India

We stand, therefore, to-day for the fullest freedom of India. This Congress has not acknowledged and will not acknowledge the right of the British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal. But we do appeal to the Parliament and conscience of the world and to them we shall demonstrate, I hope, that India submits no longer to any foreign domination. To-day or tomorrow we may not be strong enough to assert our will.

Three Major Problems

We have three major problems—the minorities, the Indian states, and labour and peasantry. I have dealt already with the question of minorities. I shall only repeat that we must give the fullest assurance by our words and our deeds that their culture and traditions will be safe.

The Indian States

The Indian states, even for India, are the most curious relics of a bygone age. Many of their rulers apparently still believe in the divine right of kings—puppet kings though they be—and consider the state and all it contains to be their personal property, which they can squander at will. A few of them have a sense of responsibility and have endeavoured to serve their people, but many of them have hardly any redeeming feature.

The Economic Programme

Our economic programme must therefore be based on a human outlook and must not sacrifice man to money. If an industry cannot be run without starving its workers then the industry must close down. If the workers on the land have not enough to eat then the intermediaries who deprive them of their full share must go. The least that every worker in field or factory is entitled to is a minimum wage which will enable him to live in moderate comfort, and minimum hours of labour which do not break his strength and spirit. The All-Parties Committee accepted the principle and included it in their recommendations. I hope the Congress will also do and will in addition be prepared to

accept its natural consequences. Further that it will adopt the well-known demands of labour for a better life, and will give every assistance to it to organise itself and prepare itself for the day when it can control industry on a co-operative basis.

The Cry Of The Peasantry

But industrial labour is only a small part of India although it is rapidly becoming a force that cannot be ignored. It is the peasantry that cry loudly, piteously, for relief, and our programme must deal with their present condition. Real relief can only come by a great change in the land laws and the basis of the present system of land tenure. We have among us many big landowners and we welcome them. But they must realise that the ownership of large estates by individuals which is the outcome of a state resembling the old feudalism of Europe, is a rapidly disappearing phenomenon all over the world. Even in countries which are the strongholds of capitalism the large estates are being split up and given to the peasantry who work on them. In India also we have large areas where the system of peasant proprietorship prevails and we shall have to extend this all over the country. I hope that in doing so we may have the co-operation of some at least of the big landowners.

Peaceful Mass Movement

Any great movement for liberation to-day must necessarily be a mass movement and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, except in times of organised revolt. Whether we have the non-co-operation of a decade ago or modern industrial weapon of the general strike, the basis is peaceful organisation and peaceful action. And if the principal movement is a peaceful one contemporaneous attempts at sporadic violence can only distract attention and weaken it. It is not possible to carry on at one and the same time the two movements side by side. We have to choose and strictly to abide by our choice. What the choice of this Congress is likely to be I have no doubt. It can only choose a peaceful mass movement.

Should we repeat the programme and tactics of the non-co-operation movement? Not necessarily, but the basic idea must remain. Programmes and tactics must be made to fit in with circumstances and it is neither easy nor desirable for this Congress at this stage to determine them in detail. That should be the work of its executive, the All-India Congress Committee. But the principles have to be fixed.

Boycott Of Courts And Schools

The old programme was one of the three boycotts—Councils, law courts and schools—leading up to refusal of service in the army and non-payment of taxes. When the national struggle is at its height I fail to see how it will be possible for any person engaged in it to continue in the courts or the schools.

Boycott Of Legislatures

The boycott of the legislative councils has led to much heated debate in the past and this Congress itself has been rent in twain over it. We need not revive that controversy for the circumstances to-day are entirely different. I feel that the step the Congress took some years ago to permit Congressmen to enter the councils was an inevitable step and I am not prepared to say that some good has not resulted from it. But we have exhausted that good and there is no middle course left to-day between boycott and full co-operation. All of us know the demoralisation that these sham legislatures have

brought in our ranks and how many of our good men, their committees and commissions lure away. Our workers are limited in number and we can have no mass movement unless they concentrate on it and turn their backs to the palatial council chambers of our legislatures. And if we declare for independence how can we enter the councils and carry on humdrum and profitless activities there?

Non-payment Of Taxes

This boycott will only be a means to an end. It will release energy and divert attention to the real struggle which must take the shape of non-payment of taxes and where possible with the co-operation of the labour movement, general strikes. But non-payment of taxes must be well organised in specific areas, and for this purpose the Congress should authorise the All-India Congress Committee to take the necessary action wherever and whenever it considers desirable.

Political And Economic Boycott

Our programme must therefore be one of political and economic boycott. It is not possible for us, so long as we are not actually independent, and not even then completely, to boycott another country wholly or to sever all connection with it. But our endeavour must be to reduce all points of contact with the British Government and to rely on ourselves.

We Play For High Stakes

The Congress represents no small minority in the country and though many may be too weak to join it or to work for it, they look to it with hope and longing to bring them deliverance. Ever since the Calcutta resolution the country has waited with anxious expectation for this great day when this Congress meets. None of us can say what and when we can achieve. We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

An Open Conspiracy To Free Country

We have conspiracy cases going on in various parts of the country. They are ever with us. But the time has gone for secret conspiracy. We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule, and you, comrades, and all our countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison,—it may be death. But you shall also have the satisfaction that you have done your little bit for India, the ancient, but ever young, and have helped a little in the liberation of humanity from its present bondage."

Resolutions

Mr. Gandhi next moved the main resolution of this session of the Congress regarding independence and boycott. The resolution reads:—

"This Congress whilst endorsing the action of the Working Committee in connection with the manifesto signed by the party leaders including Congressmen in connection with the Viceregal pronouncement of October 31, relating to Dominion Status and appreciating the efforts of H. E. the Viceroy towards a peaceful settlement of the national movement for Swaraj, and having considered the result

of the meeting between the Viceroy and Pundit Motilal Nehru and other leaders, is of opinion:—

"That nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference;

"And in pursuance of the resolution passed at the Calcutta Congress last year this Congress now declares that Swaraj in the Congress creed shall mean complete independence, and, therefore, further declares the Nehru scheme of Dominion Status to have lapsed, and hopes that all parties in the Congress will devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete independence, and hopes also that those whom the tentative solution of the communal problem suggested in the Nehru constitution has prevented from joining the Congress or actuated them to abstain from it, will now join or rejoin the Congress and zealously prosecute the common goal;

"And as a preliminary step towards organising a campaign for independence, and in order to make Congress policy consistent with the change of the creed, declares a complete boycott of the Central and Provincial Legislatures and calls upon Congressmen to abstain from participating, directly or indirectly, in future elections, and the present members of the legislatures to tender their resignations, and calls upon the nation to concentrate its attention upon the constructive programme of the Congress, and authorises the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deems fit, to launch upon a programme of civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

Snail-borne Diseases Of Man And Animals

(By F. G. CAWSTON, M.D.)

In August 1923 INDIAN OPINION published a warning to Natal Indian children on the dangers to which those are exposed who stand fishing in pools containing fresh-water snails. As Medical Inspector of Natal schools, Doctor Kay Sharpe made some extensive enquiries as to the number of Indian children who are affected with Bilharzia disease in Natal; but the efforts that were made to deal with the question were very small. Since that time several lectures have been given to the school-children and, as a result of the warnings they have received, the disease in Natal is nothing like as widespread as it was formerly. The methods that are being adopted to deal with the mosquito-trouble have also lessened the number of semi-stagnant collections of water, so that the breeding of fresh-water snails which carry the Bilharzia parasites has been largely controlled. There still remain, however, a large number of pools containing the blue water lily and the broad rush, and fresh-water snails are very fond of these common water plants.

On a recent visit to the Umgeni Indian school where I gave them a lecture on Disease-prevention with special reference to parasitic worms and insect-borne disease, I was impressed with the fact that this school was situated close to a large native compound, that a long narrow drain containing refuse and vegetation passed through the school grounds and that a number of sheep and oxen were grazing and being watered from this very drain. As Bilharzia disease is common in this district and the

cattle are also sometimes attacked by Bilharzia parasites, it will be very difficult to control the disease unless due consideration is paid to the surroundings of our schools. Any person found to be infected should be treated until cured, drains should be entirely cleared of weeds and refuse and a concrete drain erected in their place, and immediate steps should be taken to see that none of the cattle or sheep in the neighbourhood are carrying the disease. An infected animal does not put on flesh readily and its eyelids are anaemic. When killed the little worms may be seen lying in the veins that supply the gut. Where the sheep or cattle are not thriving, they should not be allowed access to snail-infested drains and should be supplied with fresh water from bore-holes or in troughs. On some farms these precautionary measures have rendered it possible for farmers to rear their sheep and oxen where previously they had been almost ruined by the fact that their stock was being attacked by the Bilharzia worms.

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In the event of the required permission being granted, the time allowed for such use of the Hall would be restricted to 2 hours only on any one day.

By Order,

M. K. Gandhi Library and
Parsee Rustomjee Hall Committee.

B. M. PATEL,

Hon. Secretary.
