

# Indian Opinion

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## DR. KASSIM MAHOMED SEEDAT

**D**R. Kassim Mahomed Seedat M.B., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S. L.M.S.S.A., has returned from London. Born in

Newcastle in 1897, he received his education at a primary school conducted by the Convent. He then proceeded to India where he furthered his studies at the Mission High School, Surat, and at the Gujarat College, Ahmedabad. He afterwards joined the Medical College where he graduated. After gaining a few years' practical knowledge he proceeded to London where he joined the King's College and then the Charing Cross Hospital. During his stay in London he did special work in Tropical Medicines and was also a student of the Westminster Orphanic Hospital where he did specific work in eye disease.



DR. KASSIM MAHOMED SEEDAT.

opportunity for expressing our sense of appreciation for his services in our cause, and to speak of his many sterling qualities.

Seldom do we find persons engrossed in large businesses, giving a portion of their time to the cause of the Indian community. In the case of Mr. Kapitan, fortunately for us, that has not been the case, for, though he carries on two of the largest Restaurants in Durban, which require his personal attention every minute, we have always found him to be ever ready to respond to the many calls that we make on his valuable time.

As a member of the Committee of the Natal Indian Congress, and lately as one of its Vice-Presidents, Mr. Kapitan has rendered yeoman services to the Indian community of Natal, and incidentally to the Indians throughout the Union. To say that he is one of the staunchest supporters of the Congress is to make a statement that cannot be refuted.

His public spirit and zeal, we have seen more than once, to have been recognised. Not only has he given his time and energy, but he has also been extremely liberal with his purse. It is needless for me to say that rarely we find amongst us the type of public-spirited persons, the like of Mr. Kapitan, who give both their time and money. Mr. Kapitan's liberal contribution to the Sastri College and to the Purse that was created for the Right Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, not to mention his signatures to the many Congress subscription lists, are striking instances of his liberality.

So much for the part he has played in the political field. Nothing less can be said of his services in the cause of his religion and in the cause of the uplift of the poorer section of our community. At the two functions that preceded ours, we had the opportunity of hearing the excellent testimony that was paid to him by members of both the Guzerati and Hindi communities. It was a glowing tribute that was paid to him and Mr. Kapitan amply deserved it. As one who has followed the manifold activities in which he was interested, I cannot but admire his sincerity of purpose and the tenacious spirit that he exhibited. Of a very quiet disposition, our guest this afternoon, believes in deeds and not in words. His actions speak louder than do his words.

Mr. Kapitan is a keen follower of Mahatma Gandhi and as such, he shows very keen interest in the events in India. Of all matters affecting the Nationalist

### Natal Indian Congress

#### Mr. R. K. Kapitan Accorded Farewell Reception

On Sunday last the Natal Indian Congress accorded a Farewell Reception to Mr. R. K. Kapitan, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Congress, who departed for India on Monday last, on a short visit.

The Reception was held at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall and was well attended by every section of the Indian community.

Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, the President of the Natal Indian Congress presided. In referring to the part played by Mr. Kapitan to the public life of Natal, Mr. Rustomjee said:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—Early to-morrow morning, Mr. R. K. Kapitan, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Natal Indian Congress, sails for India on a short visit. In bidding him au revoir on your behalf, I am happy that we have been given this

movement in India, the Congress has always looked upon him for considerable help.

It is indeed regrettable that we shall not have in our midst, even for a few months, the presence of Mr. Kapitan, and more so, when we realise that on this occasion he leaves for India without Mrs. Kapitan, who passed away a few months ago, and who, during her lifetime, graced many of our public functions with her presence. We do hope that his short trip to India will act as a solace to the irreparable loss that he had sustained, and that before the end of the year we shall have him again in our midst.

Once again I bid him and his children, who accompany him, au revoir."

Other speakers who spoke in eulogistic terms included Advocate A. Christopher, Messrs. M. B. Naik, M. M. Lokbat, P. R. Pather and B. M. Patel.

After Mr. Rustomjee had garlanded Mr. Kapitan the latter briefly thanked the Congress for the honour done him and expressed the hope that when he returned he would continue labouring for the Congress.

## THE FIRE TREADING EPIDEMIC

**W**E do not as a rule enter into any religious controversy nor do we open our columns for any correspondence touching on any religious matter, for we fear of wounding the susceptibilities of any section of the Indian community. For that reason, and that reason alone, we refrained from commenting upon the Fire Treading ceremonies which, during the last few years, have been commercialised to such an extent that one questions as to whether there is any religious significance attached to these ceremonies.

For years past the Hindus, both at Maritzburg and Durban, have been conducting these religious ceremonies within the precincts of the Hindu Temples and those taking part in them were devotees, in the strictest sense of the word, who believed, that by treading the fire pit or by subjecting their bodies to other penances, they were paying for any sins they may have committed. Whether they were right or wrong in their belief we need not here consider. But the fact remained that the devotees came out unscathed from their ordeals.

Over ninety-nine per cent. of the people who gather at these ceremonies—we are referring to past experiences—were Hindus who represented the congregation of the Temples. The date of the ceremonies was never circularised beyond the circle of the congregation. They were purely religious affairs and confined to Hindus only. To that no reasonable person would have any objection.

The Fire Treading ceremony which has

hitherto been treated as a purely religious affair, has of late, been conducted on a commercial basis. Extensive advertisement, both in English and Indian languages, is resorted to and as a result the people that congregate on these ceremonies represent mostly other denominations. The religious significance is lost sight of on these occasions, and the huge crowd assembled treat these religious ceremonies more in the nature of a circus show.

One would have thought that it would have stopped at this point. They have carried it so far as to "stage the Drama" at the Durban Agricultural Show. An actual Fire Treading ceremony was conducted at this year's Show. We have never for a moment believed that the authorities of the Durban Agricultural Show permitted the exhibition of such a product as the Fire Treading ceremony. Under the guise of religion this loathsome practice has been carried too far. We do not believe that any Hindu will tolerate such a practice. In Southern India where Temples abound in great numbers this practice is never resorted to.

We would appeal to all those interested in the welfare of the Indian community in South Africa that any attempt to commercialise any religious function should be thwarted.

## Technical Classes For Indians

### Formation Of Indian Technical Education Committee

#### A Distinct Advance

It will be remembered that in pursuance of the provisions of the Capetown Agreement, Dr. Malan wrote to both the Durban and Maritzburg Technical Colleges to ascertain as to whether facilities could be provided for the Technical education of Indians. The reply from the Head of the Maritzburg Technical College was somewhat assuring but owing to the then state of affairs the Durban Technical College was not able to do anything in the matter.

The first work that the Natal Workers' Congress tackled was the institution of Continuation Classes for those engaged in various trades, industries and other occupations, the idea being that before the Technical College could be approached for the extension of technical education to Indians, an endeavour should be made to acquaint the authorities that there was a genuine desire on the part of the Indians to educate themselves. That they were well rewarded for their endeavours was easily evident by the numbers that attended the Continuation Classes, for the number on the Registers is over 200. The classes were examined by Dr. Loram, who has just been mentioned as the successor to Mr. Hugh Bryan as the Superintendent of Education for Natal, and Mr. B. M. Narbeth, the Principal of the Durban Technical College.

As a result of negotiations with the Natal Technical College authorities, conducted by Mr. A. Christopher, the President of the Natal Workers' Congress, the idea of the College taking over the continuation classes and, in conjunction with them, extending the scheme to include technical classes, such as shorthand, typewriting, salesmanship, commercial correspondence, etc., has been approved. During the next financial year the Union Government will subsidise the scheme. Pending that event an influential Committee to conduct the classes and to institute technical classes, has been formed.

We give below the personnel of the Committee which has been named as the Indian Technical Education Committee:—

Patrons: Sir Kurma Reddi Kt., B.A., B.L., and Dr. C. T. Leram; Chairman: Mr. B. M. Nabeth; Joint Hon. Secretaries: Messrs. P. R. Pather and S. M. Moodley; Joint Hon. Treasurers: Messrs. S. Rustomjee and A. I. Kajee.

Three members each from the Natal Indian Congress, Natal Workers' Congress and the Natal Indian Teachers' Society, constitute the Committee.

Messrs. S. Rustomjee, A. I. Kajee and P. R. Pather represent the N.I. Congress; Messrs. A. Christopher, S. L. Singh and S. J. Joseph represent the N.W. Congress and Messrs. T. M. Naicker, V. Vinden and S. M. Moodley represent the N.I. Teachers' Society.

## Our Letter From India

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

Calcutta, May 28.

### Moderates' Remedy For Unrest

In commenting on the Viceroy's recent statement on the Indian situation, Sir Purnshambdas Thakurdas observes:—

The present agitation is not likely to subside unless His Excellency is in a position to state that at the Round Table Conference the British Cabinet will begin with a determination to make Indians "masters of their homes," bearing questions of military foreign and political affairs.

He urges the Cabinet to brush aside considerations of prestige and to handle the present situation in a bold statesmanlike manner.

A similar opinion is expressed by Sir Cowasji Jehangir (jr.), who says that the country will not be satisfied until a definite announcement is made at the Conference which will lead to Dominion status with the necessary reservations.

Notwithstanding the difficulties the Government are faced with, in Sir Cowasji's opinion, the present situation in India justifies a more comprehensive statement on the Government's future policy than the one made by the Viceroy.

Mr. H. P. Mody, Chairman of the Millowners' Association, says that mere adherence to the policy by the Viceroy last November is not enough. There must be something more definite before the country than a mere declaration that representatives of India will meet His Majesty's Government in a free conference to settle a constitution for India. It has to be recognised that a very powerful section of opinion in the country will have nothing to do with the Conference, and it has become very difficult already for those who have not associated themselves with that policy to keep up their faith and stand by their principles.

It is not a case any more of the fitness or unfitness of India for a particular form of Government. The only question which British statesmen have to ask themselves is: "Can India be denied some form or other of Dominion status without gravely imperilling the peace

of the country and of the Empire?" All sections in the country are united in demanding a constitution akin to Dominion status. What the Government of India ought to do now is to announce, provided that the Hindu-Moslem question is settled, that they will stand by the demand for Dominion status with the necessary safeguards.

### Indian Airmen's Feat

The first Indian member of the Bengal Flying Club to own an aeroplane, Mr. B. K. Das, arrived at Dum Dum aerodrome in his Gipsy Moth.

With him was Mr. B. Lodhia, another member of the Club and the first Marwari pilot in India. Together, they had been to Karachi to "collect" the Moth, which was shipped there from England to be reassembled.

Returning to Calcutta, they flew 1,748 miles at an average speed of 70.4 miles per hour. As the machine has dual control, they took turns in piloting it.

Mr. Das, who is connected with an engineering firm, has purchased the plane so that he may visit by air clients in places like Dacca, Kharagpur and Ranohi.

"I believe that all big firms will have to keep aeroplanes for the purpose of conducting business in other parts of India," he told the *Statesman*. "Disturbances are vast in India and time means money to the business man, so for him at any rate air travel will become inevitable as India becomes an industrial country and the pace of commerce quickens."

Mr. Das took his pilot's licence last December while Mr. Lodhia had only just qualified when he accompanied Mr. Das to Karachi. Both were garlanded by members of their families on arrival. Their first action on alighting was to shake hands with Captain Warner, the instructor of the Bengal Flying Club, who trained them and encouraged them to make the flight.

### Mahatma Gandhi's Terms Of Peace

Mr. George Slocombe, the special correspondent of the *Daily Herald* in India had two historic conversations with Mahatma Gandhi in prison. By his courtesy, the *Indian Daily Mail* of Bombay is privileged to publish exclusively the interview, in course of which Mr. Slocombe asked Mahatma Gandhi if he thought that Canada and South Africa were not in all essential respects independent.

Mahatma Gandhi acknowledged they were, and added, "But we are not offered a status like theirs."

Asked if he had contemplated all the perils involved in his campaign of civil disobedience, Mahatma Gandhi replied:—"I have taken what has been called a mad risk. No great end has been achieved without incurring a danger." Nevertheless, Mahatma Gandhi was gravely alarmed at the violence said to have been committed at Sholapur. He was grieved at the death of the policemen there, but he was convinced the violence had not come from the civil resisters.

Mahatma's message to the British Government and the world is that he is willing to negotiate, and he is prepared to reduce his eleven points to four, leaving the other seven for future discussion; he is clearly prepared to negotiate on a basis of Dominion Status that shall contain the substance of independence.

Mahatma Gandhi admitted that even in the remote event of victory negotiation would still be necessary and he was prepared to do anything to avoid bloodshed and suffering, if the essential cause of Indian nationalism did not lose thereby.

Mr. Slocombe adds:—"From our subsequent conversation I gathered that even at this critical hour a settlement is possible and Mr. Gandhi is prepared to recommend to the Congress the suspension of the civil disobedience movement and co-operation at the Round Table Conference on the following terms:—

(1) The terms of reference of the Round Table Conference to include the framing of a constitution giving India the substance of independence.

(2) Satisfaction to be granted to Mr. Gandhi's demands for the repeal of the salt tax, prohibition of liquor and ban on foreign cloth.

(3) Amnesty for prisoners convicted of political offences to coincide with the end of the disobedience campaign.

(4) The remaining seven points raised in Mr. Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy to be left for future discussion.

It is understood that the text of this important statement was carefully revised by Mr. Gandhi himself and that the original draft bearing Mahatma's signature, is in Mr. Stoccombe's possession.

## The Indian Agent And Politics

*The Star* in its issue of June 19 writes:—

Dr. Karel Potgieter's outburst to his constituents about the misdemeanours of the Indian Agent, Sir Kurma Reddi, is not a very creditable piece of work. He complains that certain references of Sir Kurma's to the new Transvaal Asiatics Bill were a slip in ambassadorial manners. In language of quite unnecessary violence he upbraids Sir Kurma for "flouting the most elementary rule governing his office," and reproaches him with ignorance that "it is a gross breach of etiquette for the representative of one Government to comment in public on the policy of another Government, or to seek to influence the public of a foreign State in regard thereto." Dr. Potgieter does not specify the remarks of Sir Kurma's on which he bases his charge, so that his audience cannot judge how well founded it is. We imagine him to have in mind an interview which Sir Kurma gave to the Press at the close of the Parliamentary session. If so, Sir Kurma's remarks were directed solely to showing that the new Bill contains the means of ruining Asiatic trade in this province. That is a plain statement of demonstrable fact. Curiously enough, the inference that such an effect might be accompanied by injustice seems to have formed itself by some automatic process in Dr. Potgieter's own mind. Clearly, before abusing Sir Kurma for illusory breaches of diplomatic etiquette, he would have done well to recollect that there is a no less excellent rule restraining back-benchers from braying aloud their views on the conduct of accredited ambassadors.

On the main point, we do not think any reasonable observer would deny that Sir Kurma's public utterances have been characterised throughout his whole stay in the Union by a vigilant discretion which really places them beyond the reach of partisan criticism. Dr. Potgieter contrasts his policy in this matter unfavourably with his predecessor's. But, if the comparison must be made, it must be admitted that Mr. Sastri was by far the more venturesome of the two. Mr. Sastri had an individual charm and grace of manner which enabled him to handle almost any topic without offence. But many of the topics to which he was repeatedly recurring in South Africa would have made an orthodox diplomat's hair stand on end. It was the secret of his success. Sir Kurma, on the other hand, has resolved to pursue success by other paths; and his resolution shows every promise of being as effective as it is prudent. This is not to say that every form of public comment on this country's Asiatic policy is forbidden to him. There is no reason why it should be. Dr. Potgieter and others who suppose that there is some such reason seem to misconceive the position of the Indian Agent. The Government of India has an agent in South Africa simply because our laws give to local Indians no means of protecting themselves in the political field—because, in a word, we are not a self-governing country so far as Indians are concerned.

If the South African Indians enjoyed the common rights of citizens, all pretext for intervention in our Indian problem would be cut from under the

Government of India's feet. As it is, the Indian Government reluctantly defers to the South African view that they are merely Indian subjects living abroad, and therefore accepts responsibility for affording what protection it can to this politically orphaned population. The paradox thus arises that the Indian Government is the only voice by which South African Indians can exert any influence on the policy of the Union. The Indian Agent is accordingly much more than a foreign ambassador; he is the organ through which the representations of the local Indian population reach the Government of this country.

## News Of Independence Struggle In India

### Congress President Arrested

Simla, Monday.—The All-India Congress Working Committee has been declared unlawful.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, president of the Congress, has been arrested at Allahabad. Pandit Motilal Nehru has been one of the most influential leaders of the Indian Congress for many years and has played an important part in all the agitation for Swaraj, or Home Rule. The action against the Working Committee will heavily handicap the organisers of the Gandhi movement.

### Police Fire On Madras Crowd

Madras, Thursday.—The police were to-day compelled to fire on a crowd of 3,000 demonstrators after the arrest of seven prominent civil disobedience volunteers at Ellore. One demonstrator was killed and thirteen wounded.

### Four Indian Women Sentenced

Calcutta, Thursday.—Four women, including a sister of the late C. R. Das, were sentenced to-day to six months' imprisonment each for participating in demonstrations in connection with the anniversary of the death of Das (a Bengali Nationalist leader) in defiance of prohibitory orders.

Two secretaries of Congress committees were sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment for a similar offence.

### War On "War Councils"

Lahore, Wednesday.—The Punjab Government has declared war on a number of "war councils," civil resistance committees, the Workers' Training College and other Punjab organisations, on the ground that they are interfering with the maintenance of law and order and endangering public peace.

The Congress Party has decided to ignore the order.

### Plan To Boycott British Banks

Bombay, Thursday.—At an extraordinary general meeting of the Bombay Cotton Brokers' Association a resolution was passed calling on Indian merchants to withdraw their deposits from British banks before July 1, and urging all Indians to stop dealing with these banks.—Renter.

### Moslem And Liberal Opposition To Simon Report

Bombay, Tuesday.—Liberals are competing with Nationalists in denouncing the recommendations of the Simon Commission.

Sir Phiroze Sethna (president of the Liberal Federation) declares that, unless an advance of Central Government in India was obtained, there would be no peace in India. He added that the proposed new powers of provincial autonomy were a farce.

Jinnah (president of the All-India Moslem League) says that the recommendations are unacceptable both to Moslems and Hindus.—Reuter.

**Burma Gaol Battle**

Calcutta, Wednesday.—In the mutiny at the Rangoon Central Gaol yesterday afternoon two warders, two military policemen, one lorry driver, and 40 convicts were killed. Eight warders and 60 convicts were injured.

The outbreak, which was well organised began with an attack by several hundred Burmese and Indian convicts in the workshop on warders, of whom two were killed.

Joined by others the convicts raided the armoury, seized rifles and ammunition and manned the prison walls. Military policemen who were summoned were met by a storm of rifle fire. They returned the convicts fire, and gradually drove them from the walls into the building, where a fierce two-hours' battle followed.

Police reinforcements were called in and the situation was controlled.

**Mr. Tyson's Statement To The Select Committee**

(Continued from page 215)

19. The Asiatic Inquiry Commission were at pains to count the Indian shops in certain townships. I would remind members that this Commission went round and counted the shops because of the inflated figures put up by local authorities. The Commission's report on this matter, which I hope all members will read, said: "The figures supplied by the Chamber of Commerce are inflated and unreliable." Corresponding figures for 1930 have been obtained through the Revenue authorities. The figures for Krugersdorp, Luipardsvlei and Burghershoop were obtained by personal inspection by Mr. Baring.

**INDIAN SHOPS IN CERTAIN MUNICIPAL AREAS**

	1920.			1930.		
	General Dealers	Other Shops.	Total.	General Dealers	Other Shops.	Total.
Middelburg	23	6	29	25	4	29
Pietersburg	—	—	33	35	2	37
Potchefstroom	36	9	45	25	2	27
Volksrust	—	—	14	13	2	15
Zeerust	7	4	11	15	—	15
Krugersdorp & Luipardsvlei	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burghershoop & District	—	11	—	—	—	—
	—	13	—	—	—	—
			24			23

The Chief Sanitary Inspector of Roodepoort has also supplied figures for the municipal area of Roodepoort from which it appears that there were 26 Indian shops there in 1920 and that there are only 22 now. The figures, including those of Roodepoort, show that the 182 Indian shops in these municipal areas in 1920 had been reduced to 168 by the year 1930. The table given above also illustrates the point already made that it is as a general dealer that the Indian trader mostly earns his livelihood in the Transvaal.

20. It has been the object of the foregoing paragraphs to show that the Indian, whose presence in the Province as a trader was recognized by the imposition of a registration fee as long ago as Law 3 of 1885, supplies a public need by catering for

the poorer classes and races, who profit by the very element of competition in respect of which the Indian is sometimes taken to task. An attempt has been made also, to show that, apart from "personal service" and similar occupations which are generally deemed unsuitable for Europeans in the Transvaal, trading is practically the only sphere of Indian activity, and that, even in this sphere—or rather, in the limited part of it that he has invaded—he is, to put it at the lowest, not shown to be encroaching on his European rivals. Apart from the aspect of mere numbers and of commercial rivalry, however, there has of late been a disposition to talk of the Indian in the Transvaal as a social menace. Politically dangerous he cannot be; he has neither the Parliamentary nor the municipal franchise in the Transvaal.

21. The outcry against the Indian socially derives little support from the available statistics either of population or of crime. (Refer to Annexure 1.) Comparative figures for 20 urban areas containing 2,000 Europeans and over, at the census of 1921 (Annexure No. 1.) show how trifling, compared with the number of Europeans, is the number of Indians in each. The total also of 12,167 Indians of all ages is insignificant when compared with the figure of 306,512 Europeans in the urban areas named: it amounts to one Indian for every 25 Europeans. The disparity for the rest of the Province is even more marked: 3,824 Indians to 136,973 Europeans, or one Indian to nearly 36 Europeans. If 170,000 Europeans in India can maintain their own standards of civilization amid a population of nearly 320,000,000, it seems grotesque to suggest that the existence of 13,000 voteless Indians can be a menace to the civilization and standards of living of 600,000 Europeans in the Transvaal.

22. The figures of "serious crime" in the Union do not suggest that the South African Indians are a peculiarly undesirable element in the population. Convictions of "serious crimes" (per 10,000 of the population) in the years 1923-1925, the latest years for which these figures are available, were as follows:

**CONVICTIONS OF SERIOUS CRIMES**

	1923.	1924.	1925.
Europeans ...	16.57	15.35	14.94
"Asiatics" ...	16.01	20.07	22.54
Bantus ...	27.24	33.47	31.88
Other Coloured ...	57.01	68.19	66.68

To enable the Committee to understand precisely what is covered by these figures, details of the convictions for 1923 are given in Annexure No. 3 to this Statement. Out of 7,865 convictions for "serious crime" in the Union that year, only 271 were in respect of "Asiatic" offenders: in this connection it should not be overlooked that these figures refer to the whole Union including the large Asiatic labouring population in Natal.

23. On this subject of the "social menace" of the Indian trader the Asiatic Inquiry Commission Report, (paragraph 114), said: "As regards the influence of Asiatic traders upon the natives, and their familiarity with European women, the evidence was conflicting and inconclusive. General statements or suggestions were made by several witnesses, but when asked for specific instances of undue familiarity which have come under their observation, they could not supply any. A few cases were mentioned, by Ministers of Religion and others, of white women who were found married to, or co-habiting with, Asiatics. They were women belonging to the very poor, uneducated and backward class of Europeans.

But such occurrences are admittedly rare, and would probably be found as frequently amongst the coloured population of the country as amongst Asiatics. The evidence certainly did not disclose any serious grounds for the fear of miscegenation in the future which was expressed by some of the witnesses. Apart from other considerations, differences of religion would go a long way towards averting such a danger. Several reliable witnesses who have lived for years in districts largely occupied by natives, and frequented by Indian traders, testified that they have never observed any evil influence exercised by those traders either over Europeans or natives."

24. Objection is sometimes raised to the employment in Indian stores of European female assistants. The number of such stores is small. The desirability of such employment may be a matter of argument but from the fact that no specific charges of undue familiarity have been brought to notice it is a fair inference that in the new businesses staffed in this manner grounds for complaint have not arisen. It is inconceivable that, had there been grounds for complaint, race feeling in the Transvaal would have let the matter pass unnoticed.

25. In the paragraph quoted above (23), the Commission were concerned with the social effects resulting from the presence of Indians as traders among the white and native communities. It seems, however, to be very generally admitted that the Transvaal Indian does not seek—as the phrase is—"to penetrate into European quarters" except with a view to trading there. If he seeks to live in Norwood it is in order the better to watch the goods in his shop there and not with a view to entering into the social life of the Europeans in that township. In the course of a stay of over two years in South Africa no case ever came to my notice of a Transvaal Indian thrusting his society upon his European neighbours. The Johannesburg Indians are not found in Yeoville or Parktown. My own experience is that from the social point of view the Transvaal Indian is content with the society of his own community. On the rare occasions when he has social relations with Europeans—as for example at meetings of the Johannesburg Indo-European Council—nothing but good has resulted.

(To be Continued)

## East Africa's Future

### Conclusions On Closer Union

The conclusions of His Majesty's Government in regard to the closer union of East Africa have been issued in the form of a White Paper; says a Renter's message from London. The Government has based its decisions on the principle enounced in the memorandum entitled "Indians in Kenya," published in 1923, in which it was stated that Kenya was primarily African; and that the interests of the African Natives there should accordingly transcend those of immigrants, whether European, Indian, or Arab, but that there would be no drastic action, or reversal of measures already introduced, which would destroy or impair the existing interests of the settlers in Kenya.

As regards closer union, the Government proposes that a High Commissioner shall be appointed to supervise Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda. The White Paper states that the Government would have preferred that the Council to assist him should be advisory, but this would be difficult to arrange

under the existing Statutes. For that reason, as far as Kenya is concerned, it is impossible, without alteration of the Statutes, to confer upon the High Commissioner powers of Government, even if he be assisted by an Advisory Council, as distinguished from a Legislative Council.

The High Commissioner's duties, stated the White Paper, shall be twofold, as besides those of High Commissioner he shall undertake the duties of Chief Adviser on Native and other policy to the Secretary of State. He shall receive drafts of all Bills before their introduction in the Legislatures, including Budgets, and also annual and other reports of the Chief Native Commissioner and the Education and Health Departments. He shall offer criticisms, suggestions and proposals to the Governors of the Territories, and shall be the permanent Chairman of the Conference of Governors. He may order inquiries on the receipt of complaints, and may suspend proposed measures if of the opinion that they will adversely affect the social, or economic problems of the Natives, or any racial minority. Thereupon he shall immediately report the matter to the Secretary of State.

### Initiate Legislation

The High Commissioner will be empowered to require any Governor to initiate legislation with the approval of the Secretary of State. The High Commissioner shall under order of his Majesty-in-Council administer and legislate in respect of certain (transferred) Services, namely, Railways, Air and Motor Services, Ports, Harbours, Customs, etc. He will be assisted in these duties by a Council, of which he shall be the Chairman, consisting of three members of his staff and 21 others, namely, seven each from Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. The High Commissioner to nominate all members, four of whom shall be official and three unofficial from each of the three Territories named for a term of one year.

The High Commissioner may submit any decision of the Council to the Secretary of State on his own volition, or by request of three members of the Council, and his Majesty may quash, or alter, such a measure.

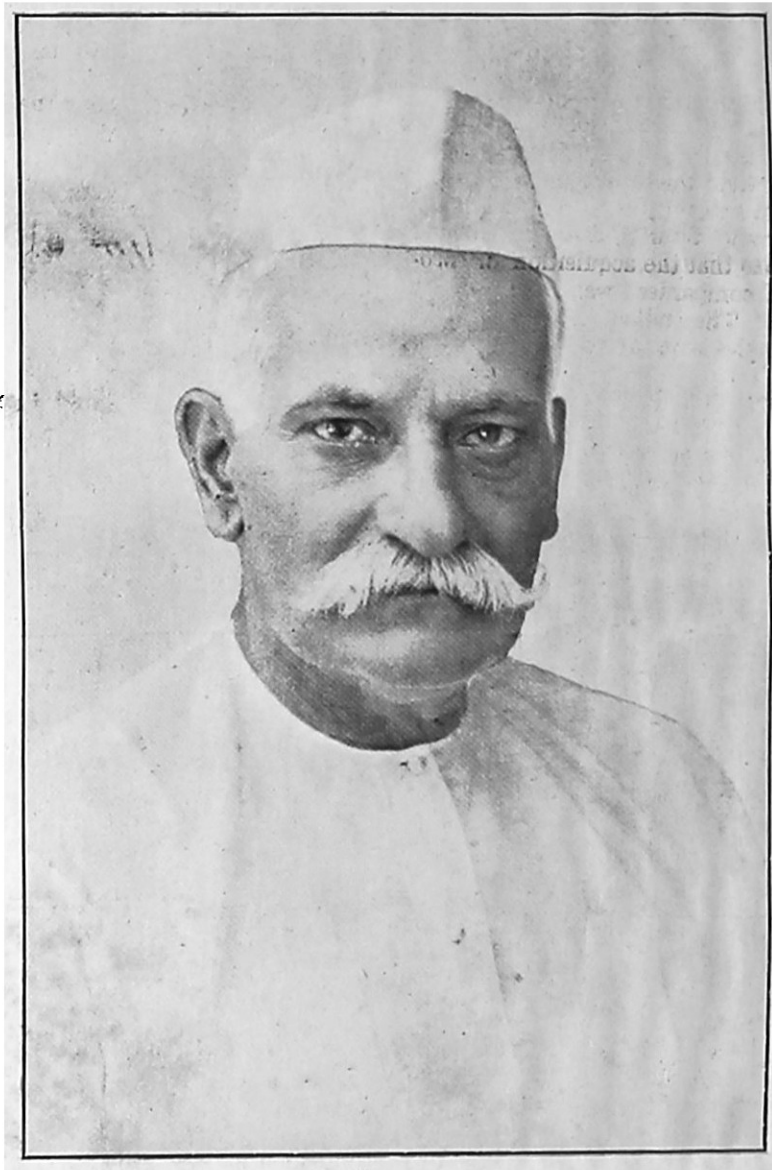
The constitution of the Kenya Legislative Council will at this juncture remain substantially unchanged. The official majority will be retained, but in future there shall be two (instead of one) members nominated by the Governor to defend the interests of Africans and others not represented.

### Goal Of Evolution

The White Paper declares that the goal of constitutional evolution in Kenya is responsible government by a Ministry representing every section of the electorate, but that goal cannot be reached at an early date in a community where hitherto it has been impracticable to enfranchise more than 1 per cent. of the population. It expresses the view that the most promising line of development for the near future is not direct participation in the Legislature, but in increasing the importance to be given to Native Councils by the continuous widening of their functions.

As regards the franchise for the Legislative Council of Kenya, the White Paper expresses the opinion that a Common Roll should be attained with equal franchise of a civilisation, or educational character open to all races, but it states that there is insufficient evidence, either from a political or a geographical standpoint, to say how a Common Roll shall be attained. For that reason the High Commissioner, when appointed, shall inquire what is

**PUNDIT MOTILAL NEHRU**



Who has been acting as the President of the National Indian Congress since the imprisonment of his son, Pundit Jawaralal Nehru, and who has now been sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

the most practical action to be taken in the immediate future:

An annexure to the White Paper explains that both Houses of Parliament will be asked to approve the appointment of a Joint Committee to inquire what immediate changes in the Constitutions of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika are desirable. The Government's proposals will be submitted to this Committee.—(Reuter.)

### A Challenge From White Settlers

Nairobi, June 23.—The basis on which the European community of East Africa stands, and the reasons why it expects it will be supported by the White races in other parts of Africa, who are charged with the responsibilities of the government of mixed races and the preservation of the European predominance in the affairs of the Continent, is disclosed in a cable sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the unofficial Conference which sat for three days at Nairobi. The proposals issued last week so definitely threaten the future of the White settlement in East Africa, and so clearly make a way for the Eastern peoples to share with the whites the responsibilities of Government, that they have been unanimously rejected.

### Unacceptable Conclusions

The cable reads:—

"A conference of representatives Europeans from Tanganyika and Kenya, including members of the Legislative Councils of both Territories, presided over by Lord Delamere, unanimously passed the following resolution:—

"That in the opinion of the Conference the statement of the conclusions of His Majesty's Government as regards closer union in East Africa, and the memorandum on Native policy in East Africa, are unacceptable.

"The attitude of the Imperial Government, as now expressed, involves a breach of previous pledges. The East African colonists stand on the principle that the White race is the only people which has proved its capacity to govern mixed races. We must challenge the doctrine of the political and economic paramountcy of the Natives as interpreted in these documents, and claim the closer association in the trusteeship foreshadowed in the 1927 White Paper. White settlers permanently domiciled in East Africa cannot accept the designation 'immigrant community' as applied to themselves, or the right of Indian immigrants to participate on the same basis as the Europeans in the Government of East Africa, and regards Indian representation on the local Legislatures desirable only as a convenient method of enabling Indian sectional views to be voiced. We also consider it to be imperative that closer union should be accompanied by an unofficial majority in at least one Territory. The principles of a Common Electoral Roll and a racially mixed Federal Council cannot be accepted. Although closer union, involving Constitutional changes, is still desirable, the Conference regrets that the retrogressive spirit of the new proposals has definitely antagonised European opinion."—Reuter.

### Conservative Party And The White Paper

Speaking at the annual East African dinner, in London Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the new chairman of the Conservative Party, is reported to have strongly criticised the Government's proposals in regard to the future development of East Africa. He suggested that the date of publication of the White Paper, after the delay between the two Simon Reports, was

chosen because public attention would be engrossed with India.

He complained of the tone of the White Paper, which he said almost regarded the settlers as intruders on sufferance. He regretted that the Government had not taken the opportunity of restating the case regarding the paramountcy of native interests in a manner commending itself to common sense, justice and fairplay.

He took strong exception to the statement that the goal of constitutional evolution, as laid down in the Code, could not be achieved by the present generation. He also objected to the statement that the common electoral roll would commend itself as the ultimate aim. Here called the advocacy by Mr. J. H. Thomas in 1924 of a communal system and laid stress on the fact that they could not force constitutional changes on a British Colony unless they commanded the confidence and goodwill of the population:

A subsequent message from London states:—

The East African Indian Congress has communicated with His Majesty's Government, welcoming the latter's reaffirmation of the policy of paramountcy of native interests in East Africa and acceptance of the trusteeship.

The congress requests an early repeal of legislation regarding the prohibition of economic crops and unduly heavy taxation, and also the immediate introduction of a common franchise.

The Congress protests against the continuance of racial discrimination in the acquisition and transfer of agricultural land in the Kenya highlands, and opposes the contemplated federation of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika.

## Simon Report Anxiety

The special correspondent of *The Times* (London) in Simla says it is already clear that much political capital will be made of the omission from the Simon Report of any reference to Dominion status. "Every Indian I have spoken to," adds the correspondent, "expressed disappointment in the report." Many doubtless expected too much, but even the most moderate claim that the recommendations are reactionary.

The commonest charge is that the report "lacks imagination," and this phrase already shows signs of becoming a political catchword. The proposal to grant provincial autonomy is approved, though rather grudgingly, and both British and Indians welcome the recommendation for the separation of Burma.

The military authorities seem well satisfied with the passage dealing with the Army, but there is nervousness about the suggested transfer of the police to provincial control.

It is generally admitted that the report will provide the extremists with a new rallying point for their campaign of violence. Bombay and the Punjab are the points to watch most closely, and the next few days must inevitably be regarded with anxiety. The constructive nature of the report, however, gives a basis to the controversy, even if much of the opinion is hostile, and this is more profitable than the Congress parrot cries which are already beginning to grow stale.

Mr. O. Y. Chintamani, former Minister of the United Provinces Government and a Liberal leader, is bitter about the report, which he describes as utterly objectionable, grossly insulting and a cruel



rebuke to the weak kneed Indians who thought to do good by co-operating with the Commission." He thinks that the crisis has been aggravated by the report, which should be totally repudiated by the British Government. Two members of the Central Committee of the Liberal Party—Sir Hari Singh Gour, Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, and Dr. A. Suhrawardy—who co-operated with the Commission, are among the critics. Sir Hari Singh Gour suggests that the proposals are unlikely to satisfy even the most moderate opinion in any part of the country.

### A Moslem View

A Reuter's cable from Simla states that the Punjab Moslem attitude to the report, according to a leader named Zafarullah Khan, is that they approve of certain matters, such as the proposed provincial autonomy, although in their opinion the operation of it would be thwarted by the reservations. Moslems generally welcome the scheme for the direct election of the Federal Assembly, but the permanent reservation of the control of the Army and of foreign relations would be a disappointment, while the proposal to enfranchise women on the strength of their husbands' qualifications is regraded as "fantastic."—*The Star*.

## Asiatic Property In The Transvaal

The following, by "Fair Play," appears in *The Star* (Johannesburg):—

Sir.—It has been argued in the columns of *The Star* that Indians have held their property illegally. If the European critics will only refer to the many decisions of the Supreme Courts after the Act of 1919 they would realise that the acquisition of property by the Indian companies was justified by the judicial decisions. The Indian properties were duly registered under the laws of the country and were declared as valid.

In the case of Dadoo, Ltd., and others v. Krugersdorp Municipality (1920) it was decided that ownership by a company consisting of Asiatics was not in substance ownership by its shareholders. Further, it was held that a company is a distinct persona in law from the shareholders who compose it.

This decision was of far-reaching importance as regards the question of ownership by Asiatics of stands in townships on land within public diggings and proclaimed fields.

In the case of Gathoo v. estate Ritch (1925) it was reaffirmed in principle that an agreement by an Asiatic with a European to buy a stand in a township was valid and that the stand could legally be registered in the name of the European.

In a later case of Mahomed v. Surtee Mahomedan Estate Company (1926) it was shown that there is nothing unlawful in a European trustee holding a stand for an Asiatic.

These decisions clearly show that if a few negligible properties have been acquired by the Asiatics they were done through the endorsement of the Courts and obeying the letter of Union legislation. If there are defects in the administrative machinery they are not due to the law-abiding Indian subjects in the Transvaal. The machinery may be mended without encroaching upon the rights established by law. The Transvaal Asiatics Tenure Amendment Bill hardly does credit to the statesmanship of the

Government. And further to provide in it for the confiscation of the properties acquired after 1st May, 1919 (which have been declared valid and lawful by the Courts) if no transfer is made within a year after the enactment of the measure is a slap in the face of the Courts and a grave injustice to the Asiatic subjects of the Union. It will be hoped that wiser counsels will prevail.

## White Man's Prestige

Speaking recently before a meeting of European farmers in connection with the Native population of the Union, Mr. Pirow, the Minister of Justice, is reported to have said that the Department had to see that good relations were maintained between the Europeans and the Natives. It was its first duty to see that the minds of the Natives were not poisoned by unscrupulous agitators, who were deliberately undermining the White man's prestige in South Africa. Proceeding, the Minister said:—

The White man's prestige is the basis of civilisation in this country, and one of the best safeguards was the power of the chiefs. Parliament in its wisdom passed, with a considerable amount of support from Natal, the Riotous Assemblies Act, by which we hope to be able to cope with the mischief which threatens to exceed all bounds. I am aware that it is being said by certain people that the provisions of the Act will not be obeyed. I may as well say now that this Act was framed with the intention that it should be obeyed, and we will deal with the offending parties to the utmost rigour of the law. There may be one attempt to disobey the law, but there will not be a similar one.



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