

Indian Opinion

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Indian Opinion

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST, 1908.

A Pressing Need

THE events of the last few weeks demonstrate very forcibly a great weakness in the community. In a well-ordered society, there could never have been the loss of self-control and the panic, of which examples were offered recently in Johannesburg and Durban. Action such as this does more to discredit a community than any number of errors well-meant. The three months that are to ensue before the amending and repealing legislation is finally carried should be three months of trial and persistent self-sacrifice for all Indians in South Africa, and it is difficult indeed to retrieve a false step rashly taken.

We feel that, at bottom, the good sense of the community abhors, its finer feeling revolts at, the recent excesses, and only regards them with patience and toleration in so far as they seem to be evil cast out of the communal system in one of the critical periods of the community's growth towards a higher end. The fundamental character of the community is sterling enough, else would it have been impossible to carry through the recent campaign with any degree of success. There is grit, there is determination, there is a growing measure of self-reliance, a strong perception of self-respect. Courage is not lacking nor intelligent foresight. Yet somehow all these things do not suffice. That which connects all and co-ordinates them into a useful, workable, and experienced whole is almost non-existent. We refer to the crying need

there is for secular education, education that will develop a sense of proportion and restraint that can result only from that culture without which so many well-meant efforts fail, so much unnecessary friction arises. And by culture we do not refer merely to a veneer of courtesy or western habits and customs, but to that deep knowledge of things and men, that orderly appreciation of the right nature of facts and their relation to each other, which goes to realise more fully the statesmanship and potency for good of a community.

It is useless to look for help along these lines to Government. Steps must be taken by the community itself in the right direction. In Natal, a miserable sum is set aside annually for Indian education. In the Transvaal, not a penny is so spent. At the Cape, comparatively little is being done. Yet, after all, our children, who come after us, will, unless we arrange it otherwise, be and remain outcasts in the land of their birth, checked by the use of a foreign language, helpless in the midst of the stranger, whose habits of thought and manner of action will be unknown to them, whilst they themselves will be unable to do more than mutter a few incantations in a language to them unintelligible. We do not exaggerate when we declare that scarcely a colonial-born Indian is in any way acquainted with the true beauties of his mother-tongue, the wonderful and inspiring history of his mother-land. All this is a matter of disgrace to the community, which is placing an unfair handicap upon the coming generation which, when it realises the enormity of its progenitors' wrong, will hold them deeply blameworthy.

Yet the horizon is not too dark to make hope difficult. On the contrary, we see many signs that tend to show that the community is awakening to the peril that is menacing it to-day. New societies, religious and secular, are springing up everywhere. New associations are forming and reforming. Truly what is needed more than anything else is reformation, and the history of the last few years, and especially of the last eighteen months, has brought this floating sense of imperfection to a head, and done much to consolidate all that is best in the community for united and adequate action. As when a crystal, dropped into a supersaturated solution of a salt, crystallises the whole mass, so has the Transvaal struggle crystallised the yearning hope, the struggling aspiration of the community, with perhaps something of the amount of heat generated in the physical experiment. The real work to be done is not the organisation of opposition to the Government. It

is the development of that inner spirit of chivalry and self-knowledge upon which depends the success of all individual and communal action.

Let the people, then, strive earnestly to educate themselves. Ignorance is the greatest enemy. It binds, it disfigures, it distorts. And in a body of people fighting for rights, it is a positive weakness to their fighting capacity. It is the enemy in the camp, the drug that lulls to sleep the sense of watchfulness, not only of impending danger from without, but the terrible temptations from within which, if not immediately rejected, will cause schism, disruption, disunity, communal paralysis. If the community will realise this, there will be no need to call for funds for private enterprise and public effort. But what is first needed is the awakening of a desire for these instruments of good. Without that, apathy will reign, and true success will be as far as ever from realisation.

THE PAPERS AND PRIVATE LETTERS

that have been received during the past few weeks from India show how India was being awakened to a sense of its duty in connection with the Indian question in the Transvaal. The great Bombay meeting, a full report of which we printed last week from the *Times of India*, shows how keenly the different sections composing the population of Bombay felt the wrong that the Indians in the Transvaal were suffering. It is stated that such a large and unanimous gathering had not been seen before in Bombay. The fact that His Highness the Aga Khan presided, and many prominent Europeans took an active part in the proceedings, shows that Anglo-Indians, Mahomedans, Parsees, and Hindus made common cause, and resented the treatment accorded their countrymen in the Transvaal as a personal insult. His Highness understood what the Law was against which Indians fought so bitterly and so bravely. He says:—"But to our utter astonishment and dismay, there has since been passed another most degrading and offensive law—a law that no self-respecting human being can accept or comply with without outraging his feelings. The old law, obnoxious in itself, could be tolerated, even though it closed the avenues of wealth and position to Indians; but this new Transvaal Registration Act deprives us of our manhood and places us on the footing of an inferior race—a stigma which we do not deserve." It is remarkable how the Aga Khan, in the sentences we have quoted, described the Law as applicable not

merely to the local Indians but to every Indian, and such the Law undoubtedly was. But the Bombay meeting was not the only enthusiastic meeting held in connection with the grievance. Madras and every town of importance, even the little hamlets, held meetings and passed resolutions. It is not possible to publish all the resolutions and reports of all the meetings, but there is no doubt that, had a few months more passed, the world would have witnessed an upheaval in India of an unexampled character. The reason for this brilliant manifestation is not far to seek. The *London Times*, which has followed in this question a uniform, consistent and Imperial policy, foreshadowed twelve months ago what was happening in India, when it decided that this was a question not affecting merely westernised Indians or propertied men, but equally prince and pauper. Hawkers would carry the tale of persecution to India, and in time to come such propaganda could not but produce a deplorable effect on the minds of the people of India. It is, therefore, well for India, well for the Transvaal, well for the Empire, that the compromise came when it did. But these meetings will show to the statesmen of the Empire where wisdom lies, and they will also show the inherent elasticity and freedom of British citizenship. It is because the people in India felt that by voicing their feeling and by showing their sincerity it was possible to obtain justice under the British form of government that so much enthusiasm was shown. It is easy to conceive a kind of Government where feelings account for nothing, and, in that event, meetings of protest and resolutions become quite useless. But history teaches that never has a single movement failed when it has been backed by earnestness, sincerity, and an adequate measure of sacrifice, under British rule. It is true that these attributes are bound to have their effect anywhere and under any circumstances, only, perhaps, under the British Constitution, they have their effect sooner than elsewhere, because the former is more responsive to them.

THE "INDIAN REVIEW." The first article "The Tyranny in the Transvaal" is by the Editor. Mr. B. G. Wadia, M.A., L.L.B., writes on "The Congress Crisis" and there are also letters by Dr. Ghose, Mr. Gokhale and others on the same subject. In the notes on "Current Events" the Transvaal trouble is referred to. The presidential address of Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy, delivered at the All-India Moslem League Conference is given in full. There are also the usual Industrial, Agricultural, Literary, Legal and Scientific Sections, which help to make up a very interesting budget. An excellent full-page portrait of Dr. Rutherford, M.P., is given as a frontispiece.

My Gaol Experiences

By M. K. Gaudhi

II.

(Concluded)

[SPECIAL TO INDIAN OPINION]

Change in the Diet

On the 14th of January came Messrs. Thambi Naidoo and Quinn. That, however, did not affect the situation much, as they were quite willing to rough it, but on the 18th, fourteen more came. With the exception of one, these were hawkers who were sentenced to pay two pounds fine or to suffer fourteen days' imprisonment. It was not possible to expect these men to accommodate themselves all of a sudden to a diet to which they were never used. Consequently it was a matter of grave anxiety. It was duly brought to the notice of the Governor who professed helplessness by regulation. He was quite willing to respect any religious objections but where it was a matter merely of likes and dislikes, he could not help. Prison life was prison life and people's tastes could not be respected. All this would be true, if it were merely a matter of tastes. Unfortunately it was a matter of habit. And the scale having been fixed without due regard for national habits of Asiatics, the system broke down under the stress. Just as it would be foolish for Indians to expect national food adjuncts, such as curries, etc., it was foolish for the authorities to have prescribed a diet—however nutritious it might be medically—that was unsuitable for Indians. Boiled beef or mutton would be just as useless for Indians as mealie pap. They could live on wheaten and rice preparations, no matter how simple they might be. But they could not live on what might be African delicacies. So that the new batch of prisoners faced starvation. They went without breakfast. And rice they received for dinner, i.e. four ounces with one ounce of ghee—insufficient as it was even with the breakfast—was much more so for people who broke their fast on the above quantity of rice.

A Petition in Prison

The following petition was, therefore, forwarded through the Governor to the Director of Prisons:

"The petition of the undersigned being at present prisoners in His Majesty's gaol at Johannesburg
HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That the Petitioners are all Asiatics, in all twenty one. Eighteen of the Petitioners are British Indians and three are Chinese. The eighteen British Indians get mealie meal for breakfast. Of the other fourteen meals seven consist of rice and ghee, three of beans and four of mealie meal. On Saturdays potatoes and on Sundays vegetables are added to the mealie meal. For religious reasons

all the above are vegetarians—some only because they cannot get religiously killed meat or proper meat. The Chinese get whole mealies and fat in place of rice and ghee. All the petitioners have been either in the habit of taking European food or mostly so—their staple consisting either of bread or some preparation of flour. None of your Petitioners has been used to taking mealie meal. They are most of them suffering from constipation, probably due to the eating of mealie meal. Seven of the Petitioners have gone without breakfast ever since their incarceration, except that some Chinese witnesses knowing their plight, once parted with one loaf which was divided among them. This was only brought to the notice of the Governor, who said the witnesses ought not to have done so. In the Petitioners' humble opinion, the diet above referred to is totally unsuitable for them. The Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that the diet according to European scale with the exception of mealie meal may be prescribed for them, or such other diet as may be considered suitable to keep body and soul together and may be consistent with their national habits, or habits formed by prolonged residence in South Africa.

As the matter is one of extreme emergency, the Petitioners crave a telegraphic reply. Since writing above about seventy more men have come in. They have not taken any breakfast at all and have strong objection to taking it."

Owing to the arrival, as stated at the foot of the petition, of about seventy more passive resisters, I requested the Governor either to telegraph or to telephone its contents and to apply for prompt instructions. This he kindly did and orders were given immediately, pending further consideration, to replace mealie pap for breakfast by four ounces of bread and to do the same thing for supper by issuing eight ounces of bread. Whilst the matter was being further considered, the compromise supervened and we were all discharged.

A Contrast

Yet it must be clear to the reader that this question of food for Asiatic prisoners is too important to be given up. It is only because there are ordinarily very few Indian prisoners in the Transvaal gaols that the matter has not attracted attention before now. The change ordered by the Director removed the most pressing grievance. But four ounces of bread even for non-labour prisoners is a mere morsel. And although the medical officer stated that the addition of cocoa or butter or dholi would be considered a relish and therefore not allowable as a prison diet, I venture to think that some such addition is absolutely necessary to make bread eatable. Now let us for a moment glance at the scale for non-labour European prisoners. They get for breakfast one pint of porridge and four ounces of bread;

for dinner eight ounces of bread daily, together with meat or soup or beans, potatoes or vegetables; for supper they get eight ounces of bread and one pint of porridge. I understand that they also get cocoa or some such drink. Now it does not seem clear why the Europeans should get porridge and four ounces of bread whereas Indians should get four ounces of bread in place of porridge. Have the former a greater appetite than Indians? Then again why should Indians get only twelve ounces of beans when Europeans get the same quantity of beans and eight ounces of bread? This is an anomaly which is most difficult to understand. It may be possible to reconcile oneself to the Europeans getting a greater variety or superior or more expensive food; but it is not possible to do so with regard to the quantity of foods. It is obvious, therefore, that the Indian dietary needs a great deal of modification. Then again, the fact that the Colonial Secretary never troubled himself about the food provided for men who could not be classed as ordinary prisoners betrays in my opinion callous contempt for the Indian community. In view of the compromise effected, one does not wish to say much on this painful phase of the question.

Mr. Armstrong's Views

On the Indian Question

Speaking at Greenwood Park on Wednesday last, Mr. G. S. Armstrong, M.L.A., said that, with respect to the Asiatic question, the Indian storekeepers had been allowed to come to the Colony in great numbers. Those people were not all Britishers; they had, in many instances, come from other parts of Asia, and they had acquired a great holding in the Country. A lesson had been taught the Europeans in the Transvaal, quite recently. Justice should be done to the black man as well as to the white. Whilst he was anxious to see the Indian trader restricted, he was not going to lift his little finger to do any Asiatic injustice. He had been in Natal 47 years, and he wished to do what was right; and he hoped they, in Natal, would take a lesson from the happenings in the Transvaal. In the Transvaal, an attempt was made to do what was unjust, and the result was that Mr. Gandhi had scored a victory over Mr. Smuts. He (the speaker) had asked the Prime Minister if he would communicate with the Indian Government to have the indentures of Indians terminated in India. That was what was wanted. (Applause). The tea and sugar industries could not be carried on without reliable men, and the only way to make native labour reliable was to apprentice or indenture natives of 15 years of age and upwards. *Natal Mercury.*

Mr. Winston Churchill and British East Africa

Commenting upon Mr. Winston Churchill's recent *dicta* upon his return from British East Africa, the *Evening Despatch* (London) says:

Mr. Winston Churchill met with his admirers in the National Liberal Club on Saturday night, and ate, drank, and professed to be merry. What Mr. Churchill said about home affairs is neither here nor there: but it is a serious matter to find that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who seems to have usurped the functions of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has adopted the view that different coloured subjects of the King shall be compelled to live in compounds or special reserved territories. British Indians and Britons from Europe could not live together, and "it might be our duty to reserve suitable parts of the territory for settlers of British origin." He was speaking of East Africa and Uganda, where, in spite of the expenditure of six millions on a railway and other works, colonisation by white men is limited to a score or two of the most unscrupulous monopolists to be found within the British dominions. One of these, a British peer, explains that he is farming there on a large scale. "I have a hundred thousand acres," he says, "with 1200 head of cattle and 15,000 sheep. I am going in principally for sheep, and I am breeding them on the lines of the Australian squatters. The climate is suitable, except that our rainfall is too heavy, and we are troubled a good deal with parasites. Beyond myself, my brother-in-law, and the South African Syndicate, no one else goes in for it." This peer who has got his hundred thousand acres wants to know "what the Government are going to do with the Indians. We do not want them in East Africa. We do not think it possible to mix the Europeans and Asiatics. Wherever it has been tried it has failed, and if the Indians continue to go to the highlands of East Africa there will be trouble. You can take my word for it. We are not acting from selfish motives, and we do not want to do anyone any harm, but Indian immigration into the highlands must be stopped." He appears to have won over Mr. Churchill to his monopolistic view; and if it is allowed to prevail in Africa, and British Indians are denied reasonable freedom to live and trade and settle in British colonies, there will be worse trouble than ever. East Africa was not acquired for the planting of hundred-thousand-acred peers when the teeming millions of Asia are clamouring for settlement in a new land under the British flag.

REGISTRATIONS AT STANDERTON. The *Leader* says the registration of Asiatics commenced on Monday last when over 100 applied.

Indian Sympathy

The following resolution was passed by the public of Ahmednagar, Deccan (Bombay) in a meeting assembled on the 27th of January last, in connection with the treatment of Indians in the Transvaal:—

- (a) That this meeting unanimously regrets that His Majesty's Imperial Government should have given its sanction to a measure so drastic as the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act.
- (b) That it strongly protests against the inhuman and galling treatment accorded to His Majesty's Indian subjects in the enforcement of that Act which is calculated to destroy the common bond and equal rights of British Citizenship.

The following have also come to hand:—

- I. That the citizens of Jullundhur in a public meeting assembled view with the deepest indignation and alarm the barbarous treatment the Transvaal Government is extending to our countrymen in that Colony and enter their most emphatic protest against the inhuman action now being taken by that Government.
- II. That the citizens of Jullundhur City express their heartfelt sympathy with those of our countrymen in Transvaal who are being subjected to various oppressions at the hands of the Transvaal Government.

The citizens of Karachi, at a public meeting, passed the following resolution:—

- I. That this meeting expresses its profound sympathy with the Indians in the Transvaal in the extremely humiliating and degrading persecution to which they have been subjected by the recent legislation of the Transvaal Government.
- II. That this meeting views with apprehension and dismay such legislation as being calculated to impair the confidence of the Indian people in British justice and places on record its indignant protest against the outrageous treatment meted out to their fellow countrymen in the Transvaal.

Lobito Bay Indians

The Secretary of the Indian National Progressive Association (Durban) has written a letter to the Natal Indian Congress calling upon that body to investigate the grievances of the Indian labourers recently returned from Lobito Bay. It appears that the first-named association has made enquiries and obtained a similar story to that told by our reporter last week with some additions.

House of Lords Debate

Further Press Comments

Scathing Criticism

"Pall Mall Gazette"

The pith of the case put forward by Lord Amptill and Lord Curzon is that our obligation to Indians in the Transvaal was assumed at a time when there was no colonial self-government there. It was the Imperial Government that took up the cause of the Indians when the old Boer Government was in power, and it was the Imperial Government also that gave assurances when Indian help was required during the war and at the close thereof. In doing so, obligations of supreme significance were incurred, and the gravamen of the charge against Lord Elgin and his colleagues is that these were evaded. They had it in their power to make the grant of responsible self-government conditional upon specific assurances that the claims of the Indians would be dealt with in strict accordance with the promises which had been given, but they made no reservation. It was a thorny problem, and an effort—a cowardly effort under all the circumstances—was made to evade the task of settling it. The natural function of the Imperial Government is to see that the interests of all who belong to our family of nations are respected. . . . A simple and quite satisfactory agreement has been arrived at within the last few days and the Government is inclined to take a share of the credit. It is entitled to none, for that settlement, by demonstrating the ease with which a dangerous Imperial strain might have been averted, is in itself a condemnation of those who permitted the tension to arise. They took no pains to ascertain what conditions the Indians were prepared to accept, and as Lord Roberts, who speaks with a knowledge of India which is unique in the House of Lords, pointed out, they advised the King to allow an Act which was passed with "almost indecent speed," and which contained provisions that "smacked of criminality" and permitted questions to be asked which every Indian of good caste feels to be insulting and offensive. The Liberal Government was exposed to a test of imperial efficiency, and it failed under circumstances which made success comparatively easy. The explanation lies in that moral cowardice, that shirking of obvious duty, which has been even more clearly manifested in its dealings with Ireland.

Each colony is a part of the common Empire, and its people must be ready to aid in preserving mutual interests, and in guarding against the generation of friction and differences. We have entire confidence in the reasonable moderation of our Indian fellow-subjects, but they must be

dealt with as fellow-subjects and not as strangers who have no place or voice in our counsels. The blunder of the Transvaal was that it forgot this, and a feeble Imperial Government allowed it to do so, because the path of evasion seemed for the moment easier to tread than the path of duty.

"Liverpool Courier"

The question is full of importance altogether disproportionate to that of the common run of topics in either House. It brings into sound and view the rush of the future of the world's riches. It is like a man who walks along a street with his umbrella tapping on the metal covers of the coal holes, till he comes unexpectedly on one hole whose hollow sound shows that not a coal cellar, but a cavern, is beneath it. Broadly speaking, we appear to be reaching a time when Asiatic races will seek an outlet beyond the borders of their native lands, and will bring into competition a degree of commercial fitness and of cheap living with which no white man can hope to match himself. Ultimately the existence of the white races is at stake in this question, and the future of Christendom. How embarrassing, therefore, is the position of a Government who own the allegiance of many more Asiatic than white subjects and are called on to decide between the claims of each.

Those who read the debate which Lord Amptill initiated yesterday will feel perhaps that India had the best of it. . . . He (the Indian) is, in fact, the victim of that disastrous mistake made by Europeans, who do not always realise that a brown skin can cover a scholar and a gentleman with a mind as lofty and a social standard as nice as those of any aristocracy in Europe. Incalculable harm is done by thinking of coloured men as "niggers." The result of such loose discrimination is that Indians have been treated in the Transvaal not as honourable rivals to be fairly opposed, but as vermin to be crushed without consideration.

"The Scotsman"

Lord Elgin raised some objection yesterday to the untimeliness of the discussion introduced by Lord Amptill in the House of Lords on the treatment of British Indian subjects in the Transvaal. As a matter of fact, the Home Government may consider themselves fortunate, not merely in having reached a settlement, even if only a temporary settlement, of the controversy, but in having been let off so easily for their lax and negligent handling of the whole question. By good luck rather than by good guidance they have, for the time, escaped from a position of responsibility, painful alike to the Colonists, to the people of India, and to the Imperial Government. It is by no means to be regretted, in the interests

either of the Empire or of the self-governing Colonies, that their lost opportunities and their lack of courage and foresight should have been so clearly brought before Ministers by Lord Amptill, Lord Roberts, Lord Curzon, and Lord Lansdowne. The Colonial Secretary and Lord Ripon sought to take shelter behind the general principles of Colonial government. These principles are perfectly well understood; nothing is more evident than that, the rights of self-government having once been granted to a Colony, it is a most difficult and critical matter to interfere from the centre of Imperial authority. But the case against Lord Elgin and his colleagues is that they did not speak and act when there was opportunity of doing so with effect.

Canadian Asiatic Restriction Act

New Law Proved "Ultra Vires"

London, March 14.—The Supreme Court of British Columbia has decided that the new Asiatic Immigration Act of that Colony is *ultra vires*, and has ordered the immediate release of the 18 Indians who were recently fined for violating the Act.

The Court declared that the Federal law must prevail.

An appeal will be lodged against the decision, and the case will probably accompany that of the two Japanese, who were recently fined 500 dollars and sentenced to a year's imprisonment, to the Privy Council.

March 15.—The British Columbian Attorney-General has announced that, pending the appeal by the Hindus, the Asiatic Exclusion Act will not be further enforced.—Reuter.

Registration Notes

[BY OUR TRANSVAAL REPRESENTATIVE]

Up to Wednesday, the total number of applications received at the Johannesburg Office amounted to about 5090, including over 1000 Chinese. In Pretoria, the applicants came forward freely enough. Yesterday the Pretoria and Johannesburg Offices closed for the taking of applications. The issue of registration certificates will proceed as usual. On Monday next, the 23rd inst., a registration office will be opened at Germiston, whilst Pietersburg will be visited on the following Monday, the 30th inst.

I am officially informed that the whole of the Chinese trading community has applied for and received trade licences, and am requested to notify that those Indian traders, who have not yet made similar application, will, unless they do so immediately, render themselves liable to prosecution.

The Indian Trader in South Africa

An Economic Necessity

The following is communicated to the *Christian Express* (Lovedale):—

The extraordinary haste with which the newly-created Parliament in the Transvaal rushed its first piece of legislative work through indicated the feeling cherished towards Indian traders by the average South African. The present agitation is one of the outcomes of this hurried legislation. I am not prepared to say that there is not some ground for this feeling; but the fact remains that there are two sides to every question, and it is a good thing to be able to look at a problem all round.

The object of this paper is to try to show up the other side,—the benefit to be derived from the Indian trader.

And, first of all, I must premise that the aim of the Government in a free country should be to promote the greatest good of the greatest numbers.

Now, the main outcry against the Indian trader comes from the white trader, storekeeper or shopkeeper. He is hit the hardest by banyan competition and he naturally cries out the loudest. The trading community being fairly numerous and not unduly given to bashfulness or self-effacement, their united outcry makes a good deal of noise. But, after all, they are only a section of the community, and what hurts their pockets by moderating their profits is not necessarily injurious to the community at large. Mrs. Fawcett in her book on political economy tritely illustrates this by imagining that all the candlemakers in Paris petitioned the King of France to pass a law compelling every citizen to exclude daylight from his house. In support of their case they represented that the benefit to their trade would be enormous, because of the increased demand for artificial light, and consequent run on candles.

One has a lurking suspicion that the outcry of the white trader community in South Africa savours somewhat of the hypothetical candlemaker spirit and is more concerned with the lining of private traders' pockets than with the commonwealth.

Residents in South Africa who have had experience of running a *ménage* in other Colonies wonder why it is so costly to live here as compared with say New Zealand, Australia, or Canada, colonies in which there is practically no cheap labour. There appears to be some essential element lacking in the structure of our South

African social system. If we are to believe two men, both authorities in their own line, the Indian immigrant seems well fitted to fill the unoccupied niche. Mr. Wilcocks, the irrigation expert, whom Lord Milner brought from Egypt to report upon the possibilities of irrigation development in South Africa, said in his report: "The Kafir is not a worker and developer of anything. He will never learn from the European, for the European in South Africa does not work with his hands, but he will learn from the Indian." And Benjamin Kidd, the sociologist, in his study of social problems in South Africa, points out that what is required here to bring the cost of living down to a normal figure is a large class of people to bridge the gap between the highly paid white trader or mechanic and the unskilled native. In his measure the Indian immigrant appears to fill this gap. He settles in a South African dorp in which the storekeepers are among the leading men of the community both civically and socially. They are well-to-do, and, in consequence, independent. Competition has never been wide or keen enough to call into existence, for the public benefit, the thousand and one conveniences so ingeniously and assiduously catered by tradesmen in other civilized lands. Those who have known no other home than South Africa are not conscious of the conveniences of civilized life withheld from them; far otherwise is it with Europeans crossing the sea to make their homes in this country. To them the Indian trader is, in his modest way, a godsend. He brings from day to day a regular supply of fresh fish, fruit, vegetables, to one's very door; he is civil, dependable, and moderate in his charges. Is it cause for wonder that the average householder, who is not a tradesman, appreciates the increased variety set before him at his board, or that the much-to-be-sympathised-with lady of the *ménage* blesses the Indian for simplifying her difficult problem of housekeeping?

From these points of view it does not appear to be for the good of the commonwealth that the Indian trader be driven from our midst. Rather let those in authority see to it that both his trading and living are carried on on hygienic lines, so that he may be no menace to the health of the community. One hears of overcrowding in insanitary dwellings, and of articles intended for human consumption being kept in such dwellings. By all means let us make an end of such undesirable conditions with prompt thoroughness; but let us not be hustled into the short-sighted policy of driving a humble, useful, industrious class out of the country at the self-interested outcry of one single section of the community. Better reasons must warrant a policy so drastic.

Convocation of Canterbury And Transvaal Indians

At the meeting of the Convocation of Canterbury in London on the 6th ulto., says *The Times*,

THE BISHOP OF SOUTHAMPTON moved:—"That this House has learned with much satisfaction that the more invidious conditions of residence demanded of British Indians in the Transvaal have been cancelled by the Government of that colony. It desires to put on record its conviction that such conditions would be contrary to the principles of the Christian religion, injurious to the self-respect and moral development of the Indian people, and likely to hinder the progress of Christian missions in India. For this reason it respectfully requests his Grace the President of the Upper House to convey to the Transvaal Government the sense of relief on the part of the Convocation of Canterbury that the conditions have not been insisted upon." The Bishop said he had no intention whatever of reflecting upon the Government of this country or the Government of the Transvaal. The Government of this country had been placed in a difficult position, and as far as it could had endeavoured to obtain the best possible conditions for the Indians. He thought the relaxation of the conditions had averted what would have been a terrible situation.

CANNON DURST seconded the resolution.

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY said that, while he sympathised strongly with much that had been said by the mover and seconder of the resolution, he had very grave doubts as to the wisdom of that House's interfering publicly in that way in what, after all, was a political matter, and one which concerned a self-governing British colony, in whose affairs they had no right, as far as he could see, to interfere.

ARCHDEACON DUCAT moved an amendment substituting the following words for the resolution:—"That this House desires to express its satisfaction that the complicated question of the position of the Indians in the Transvaal has been settled in a manner honourable to both parties." This was seconded by Archdeacon Dundas.

After some further discussion the Dean of Westminster said he thought they ought not to yield to their sentiments in that matter and create the precedent of passing judgment upon political matters. He moved the previous question.

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY seconded the previous question, but before it was put up to the vote the Bishop of Southampton asked leave to withdraw his motion. This was granted, and the matter dropped.

Indian Musalmans and the Asiatic Act

Mr. Mushir H. Kidwai, who was at one time Secretary of the Pan-Islamic Society in London sends the following, addressed to the *Indian Daily Telegraph*, for publication:—

Sir,—There can be no man in India possessing the slightest idea of self-respect and fellow-feeling whose heart has not shown signs of breaking at the successive telegrams from the Transvaal conveying the news of the ill-treatment of his countrymen by a puny State of farmers. The Musalmans have the more reason to feel the pain because, together with their national honour, their religion has also been insulted, in as much as the Ordinance treats only Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire as criminals and Asiatics, even though they be residents of European Turkey, while the Jews and Armenians coming from Asiatic Turkey are reckoned by it as Europeans. They feel the pain more because, to them, even the excuse that the Transvaal has to be kept a white man's country and therefore the coloured people have to be kicked out of the place, tastes bitter and caustic when they find that the white man has been unscrupulously intruding, for the last sixty years and more, in the affairs of coloured people and Muslim States, and is still penetrating into Morocco and fitching other kingdoms belonging to coloured people and Musalmans.

The number of Musalmans in the Transvaal is not small, and the venerable President of the Islamic Society is in gaol, with his friend and colleague Mr. Gandhi. I know both these gentlemen personally and intimately, and am confident that they can give points to many a white man in gentlemanliness, and also in the refinement of manners and intellect. Had there been no other Indian gentlemen in the Transvaal besides these two, even then it would have behoved all India to raise, on their behalf, its voice of protest and to show its indignation at the policy adopted by the Transvaalers. I feel so strongly against this policy, that my criticism of it would be very severe if I were to discuss all the political issues involved in it, so I purposely refrain from doing that. But I fervently appeal to every Indian, and specially to Musalmans of India, to protest with one voice and with firmness and courage, against the policy of the Transvaal and of the powerless "Supreme" and un-imperial "Imperial" Government. It is the turn of Indians to remind high personages like Mr. Morley and Mr. Hobhouse, that they have failed to do their duty towards a people given by Providence under their care and protection and that they have yet to learn to act according to their principles.

The policy adopted by the Transvaal deserves whole-hearted denunciation from the Musalmans, because their religion is democratic and socialistic in spirit and does not recognize any distinction of race or colour. Besides this, the policy should be disfavoured by Musalmans because it might result in increasing the number of not only Hindu Extremists in India but also Muslim Extremists. If the Transvaalers are allowed to have their way and all the Indians now there are sent back to India, Lord Minto will have a hard time of it because everyone of them will be an Extremist of the worst type. Every one of them will be a hater of the white race, and none of them will be inclined to respect the Flag that failed to protect them from dishonour and humiliation, as well as from the loss of their hard-earned property. The ex-soldier among them will be found telling his pathetic and spirit-stirring tales to his brother soldier and thus "tampering" with the latter's loyalty and the ex-loyalist Muslim will be found winning over the sympathies of his brethren for the Extremists. There are also other important side-issues in the matter, as for instance, whether India is prepared to receive back, in such a large number, the people who have been ruined and have become destitute and discontented. And whether the Muslim community, not renowned for its wealth, can afford to have the number of its poor increased and such a large number of Musalmans thrown out of the work and trade to which they had given the best part of their lives? Musalmans in India are, as a rule, very diffident in taking to commerce or enterprises. What will be the general effect of the collapse of the enterprise of their Transvaal brothers upon them?

I pray Aligarh and Dacca politicians to give a thought to these problems and others of vital and general importance, instead of keeping themselves and their energies confined to fighting with Hindus for petty services under the Government. Has the Muslim League taken any interest in the matter, and what have our so-called leaders done for their countrymen in the Transvaal?

The *Indian Daily Telegraph* deserves the thanks of all the Indians for the broad-minded policy it has adopted on the problem, and the liberal sympathy shown all along to the people who have been undeservingly oppressed, down-trodden and almost ruined.

The sympathy of the Government of India is practically assured now that a man of such tact, sympathy and strength of character as Mr. S. H. Butler, is the Foreign Secretary, and I am sure he will find out some means to make effective the representations of the Government of India to the Empire-breakers of the Transvaal.

MUSHIR H. KIDWAI.
Lucknow, January 30th.

The *Indian Daily Telegraph* comments as follows on the letter:—

We would call attention to a very able letter on the subject of Musalmans and the Transvaal which appears elsewhere in our columns. The writer is one who can speak with authority, having been for sometime the guiding spirit of the Pan-Islamic Society in London, and in such capacity having come into contact with Musalmans from all parts of the Empire, hence his views are broad and worthy of respect. We agree with him thoroughly, in his advice to Musalmans to sink their differences with Hindus in a question such as that of the unfair treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal and to unite with them in demanding speedy redress for their long-suffering kinsmen.

Swami Shanckranand

Mr. Mookamchand forwards the following appeal to the Hindu Public of South Africa for publication:

Brethren,—I have pleasure in announcing to you that I have received intimation from India that the well-wishers of the South African Hindus have arranged to send out to South Africa, "Swami Shanckranand—the Guru of our esteemed friend Professor Parmanand—on my persistent and continued application for such a religious leader.

Swami Shanckranand has also written me as to his willingness to come to South Africa to follow his noble mission for the betterment of the Hindu nation and to Indians in general, following up the work started here by Professor Parmanand.

The teaching of our doctrines in this Sub-continent where we are without a religious guide and religious teaching must be of great benefit and advantage to all.

To achieve and obtain this—that is to procure the services of such an exalted Sanyasee we have to sacrifice a little in the way of subscribing to a fund—which is required for his passage expenses to South Africa and for other initial expenses here.

It is desired that the Swami should come here as early as possible and the Sanyasee has agreed to leave for South Africa in March when it is expected that Professor Parmanand will have arrived in India from England.

I appeal to all our Hindu brethren and those interested in the elevation of the Hindus here to heartily and promptly contribute to this fund such sum as is within your power.

Trusting in the generosity of all, and in the Supreme God for success in our endeavour,

I remain, your most humble brother,

MOHKAMCHAND.

145 Queen Street,

Durban, Natal,

March 11th, 1908.

The Madras Meeting

On the Transvaal Situation

Strong Resolutions.

We condense the following from the columns of the *Indian Patriot* of January 27th :

A public meeting was held under the auspices of the Madras Mahajana Sabha on Saturday at 5.30 p.m., in the Victoria Hall, to protest against the inhuman treatment of Indians in South Africa by the Transvaal Government and the bad treatment accorded to Indians generally in self-governing British Colonies and to request the Government of India to take steps by way of retaliation and to call upon all Indians to boycott all Colonials and Colonial goods. Rai Bahadur P. Anantha Charlu, C.I.E., was in the chair. There was a large gathering present.

The Chairman said :

We are met to-day under a stern sense of duty. . . . We have come together to assert our rights and to express our deep abhorrence of the grievous wrong perpetrated on our brethren,—be it noted—not without but within the limits of the Empire which counts us among its subjects and asks for our unalloyed allegiance and our unfeigned loyalty. We claim those rights as British subjects, in reality and not in name only. We claim consideration and recognition as a necessary column supporting the Imperial edifice and not merely as an ornamental appendage. We point, besides, to royal pledges and statesmanly pronouncements that, within the Empire, no distinction will be made, no favour shown and no drawbacks will be laid on us, on the score of colour, of creed or of race. We insist that the *Pax Britannica*, which has extinguished all our power and all our possible means to extort our rights is under the sacred correlative obligation to secure those rights for us.

Mr. C. Karunakara Menon moved the following resolution :—

“That this meeting views with indignation and alarm the situation in the Transvaal and most strongly protests against the barbarous treatment of our countrymen in that Colony and their ill-treatment in the British Colonies generally, and while cordially commending their manful struggle against oppression and persecution, apprehends, serious complications in consequence of this policy of the Colonies in the relation of India with the other members of the Empire.”

The Hon'ble Mr. K. R. Gurusami Iyer, in seconding the resolution, said :—

At the very outset I cannot help feeling deep sorrow and indignation at the treatment accorded to thousands of our countrymen especially in the new Colony of the Transvaal, and generally in Natal and other older

colonies. If I have had no opportunity of witnessing the horrors of which General Botha's Government are the enlightened authors I saw at the informal Conference held at Surat after the wreck of the Congress those Transvaal Indian delegates, about eight or nine in number, who had come thousands of miles across the seas to make their appeal to the Indian nation, assembled through their representatives in Congress. They were exhibited by Mr. Ali Mahomed Bhimji on the platform as specimens of the undesirables that the Transvaal Government wanted to eject from the colony. In their countenance I saw depicted helpless suffering and when they stood before an informal Conference instead of the duly constituted Congress I saw writ in their large eyes the blankest disappointment and despair. Just then a telegram was placed before the President announcing that Mr. Gandhi and some of his co-workers had been arrested and were on the eve of being placed before the Magistrate. Since then we have been seeing news day after day of further arrests, and the latest is a cablegram announcing the arrest of some prominent Mahomedans under a law insulting to their religion. Gentlemen, you are aware that our Mahomedan fellow-citizens of this city are so shocked that even they cannot retain their confidence in British Justice.

The time has come to show ourselves manly citizens of the British Empire, and in all that we do to vindicate our rights, we can no longer allow ourselves to be separated by any difference either in religion or race or politics. To Britain we willingly owe allegiance, but it rests with Britain, in the judgment that awaits it to vindicate its name for fairness and justice.

Mr. Lodd Govindadoss supported the resolution in a short speech.

The proposition was carried unanimously.

The next resolution which was moved by Mr. G. Subramania Iyer, ran as follows :—

“That in view to the inability expressed by His Majesty's Government to afford protection to the Indian people against ill-treatment in the Colonies and to uphold their status and liberty, this meeting is of opinion that the only means now available to bring home to the colonist a due sense of the cruelty of their conduct is for the Government of India to take immediate steps by way of retaliation against the Colonies to prohibit the importation of colonial goods into British India; the admission of the Colonists into the Indian services, and their settlement in British India for the purposes of trade and business, and call upon all Indians to boycott Colonists and colonial goods.”

The Honourable Mr. B. N. Sarana seconded the resolution and in doing so said that a feeling of profound sadness, sullen and gloomy despair,

and burning indignation took possession of the minds and hearts of the most thoughtful of their countrymen when they contemplated with folded hands and in a helpless mood the wrongs inflicted upon their brethren in South Africa. The thought rushed uppermost to one's mind : “Is this the fate which has been in store for a people who, proud of their race, civilisations, and religion, have treated all foreigners as Mlechas or barbarians and zealously excluded all intercourse with the outside world lest their morals should be contaminated, their civilisation marred and their high religious ideas obscured and forgotten? Is this the fate which has overtaken the descendants of the hardy Mahomedans, invaders from the North, who proud of their religion and strength of arm have held victorious reign over half the civilised world not very long ago; is this the boasted love of liberty of the Englishman, the European, the love of liberty to make all others slaves? Is this what Christianity and science have done for the people, teaching hypocrisy and the forging of weapons for western Europe?”

Indians looked upon themselves as citizens of the mighty British Empire and hoped to teach the West the philosophy and humanity of the East and slowly emancipate themselves from the pernicious customs which had burdened their growth, and together work for the civilisation, happiness and advancement of the human race. But what did they find now? The elements of disruption and decay were already visible: there could be no equality now or ever within the Empire; the white races—forgetting that other races were as white but became dark or brown by exposure to the tropical sun—seemed to hold the doctrine that the world was too small for all. Their countrymen in South Africa were undergoing indignities. The Government was helplessly weak; statesmanship seemed to have at any rate temporarily left the blessed shore of freedom, and the people of England were afraid of losing their colour. The example of their countrymen in South Africa was ennobling and it raised hope for the future of the Indian race. If only a small fraction of their countrymen in India were as united, as self-sacrificing, remembering as they did that they were Indians first and then Hindus, Mahomedans, and Parsis, the problem would be easily solved.

Mr. Laljee Waljee and Mr. A. C. Parthasarathy Naidu supported the resolution, the latter in a vehement speech in Telugu.

Mr. Chakkarai Chetty moved an amendment to the resolution and said that the portion of the resolution relating to the asking of the Government of India to retaliate upon the Colonies should be omitted. It was not the result of a correct study of human nature to expect the Government to boycott their own brothers and sisters

As self respecting men, they should delete from the resolution the portion asking the Government to take retaliatory steps.

Mr. C. S. Bharati seconded the amendment.

The Chairman put the amendment to the vote, and there was a great deal of confusion and noise and it could not be ascertained whether the majority were in favour of the amendment or the original resolution. Then the chairman called upon all those who were in favour of the amendment to hold up their hands. There was a show of more hands in favour of the amendment than in favour of the original resolution. The amendment was then declared carried.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

The Spread of Pasteurism in India

The following memorial has been addressed by the Humanitarian League to the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., Secretary of State for India:—

"We beg to draw your attention to the strong feeling which exists against the further introduction into India of what is known as preventive inoculation, by the multiplication of Pasteur Institutes under the patronage of the Indian Government.

"The vivisection of animals which is carried on in these institutes is extremely repugnant to the humaner instincts of mankind, and peculiarly odious to the sentiment of the Indian people, as expressed by them in petitions to the Government, while the alleged utility of the experiments and inoculations is a matter of mere conjecture or assertion.

"At a time, therefore, when public opinion in this country is sharply divided on the question of vivisection, as is shown by the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the practice in its moral and medical aspects, we would point out not only the injustice of forcing on India the acceptance of these detested places of torture, but also the grave danger, when so much disaffection exists, of thus outraging the feelings and wishes of Indian citizens in a matter where, in the opinion of many Englishmen, they have right and reason on their side.

"We most earnestly hope that you will see your way to putting some check on the establishment of these institutes, and so of lessening both the large sum of animal suffering and the increasing apprehension felt by many humane persons at the claims of the dominant school of physiologists to pursue their experimental fancies at the expense of every consideration of humanity or discretion."

Humanitarian League,

53, Chancery Lane,

Mr. Gandhi and Durban Indians

The following appears in the local press:

We, the undersigned representatives of the Natal Indian Patriotic Union, as representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby place on record our hearty approval of the work done by Mr. Gandhi with reference to the Indian passive resistance movement in the Transvaal; and we further avail ourselves of the opportunity to express that we have every confidence in him, as a gentleman of high character, noble thoughts, and fervent patriotic spirit.

(Signed) P. Subramania Aiyar (president), Bernard Gabriel and S. E. Dahnookdharie (joint hon. secretaries), V. Lawrence, L. Gabriel, A. D. Pillay, H. J. Joshi, R. Lugunberthy, Surendrai B. Medh, J. M. Francis, T. C. Moodley, M. Bethasee Maharaj, Roopnarainsingh, Lutchman Panday, K. R. Nayanah, U. M. Shelat, R. Bughwan, N. T. Chetty, Bryan Gabriel, A. Christopher, D. Stephens, Kaisavaloo, M. K. Patel, Makanji Bros., John L. Roberts, G. M. Desai, Seunaik Pundith, S. N. Richards, S. Gareeb Panday.

BERN. GABRIEL,

S. E. DAHNOOKDHARIE,

Joint Hon. Secs.

The Compromise

Hamidia Society's Resolution

The following resolution was passed at a meeting of the Johannesburg Hamidia Islamic Society:—

"This meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society approves of the compromise arrived at between the Government and the leaders of the Indian community, and expresses heart-felt sorrow regarding the attack made by some misguided people, at a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress, upon our acknowledged leader, Mr. Gandhi, and authorises the Chairman and Secretary of this Society to send copies of this resolution to the Natal Indian Congress, the Anjuman Islam (Durban), INDIAN OPINION (for publication), and Mr. M. K. Gandhi."

Dated at Johannesburg, the 15th day of March, 1908.

IMAM ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER,
Chairman, Hamidia Islamic Society.

M. P. FANCY, Honorary Secretary Hamidia Islamic Society.

INDIAN MAILS. For Ceylon, India and Far East, to be forwarded by *Umlazi*, will be closed at the Post Office on Tuesday, the 24th of March, at 11 a.m.

"Might is Right"

We take the following from the leading columns of the *Indian People* (Allahabad):

Probably at no time in the history of the world has the gospel of Might is Right loomed so largely before the world as in the first decade of the enlightened twentieth century. The hunger of land is at its hungriest, the passion of possession and exclusion at its worst. The dogmatic poet of Force, who has declared that the East and West shall never meet is only partly correct, for the twain have met in strife, if not in peace, and the struggle is becoming bitterer with every day that passes. The antipathy of the West to the East has become more marked since the epoch making victory of Japan over Russia, when in the memorable words of an English newspaper, Europe went down before Asia for the first time in history. Except in the parent European countries there is now a general movement noticeable in all colonies and new Kingdoms of the white race to exclude the Asiatic races rigorously. It is even forgotten that all Asiatics are no longer alike, and Japanese can no longer be treated as the Indians and the Chinese. But for the firmness of President Roosevelt and the American Government a catastrophe with Japan would have been precipitated, so hostile was the attitude of certain parts of the States to Japanese immigrants and settlers. All the British colonies are up in arms against Asiatic immigration, unless Asiatics can be indentured as labourers without any civic rights. On one hand, there is the unparalleled national awakening throughout the East, Japan stands in the forefront of the fighting nations. Who can fail to be struck by the words of the Japanese statesman in Paris, who declared that so long as Japan had confined herself to the fine arts and to her gentle ways she was only half a barbarian, but as soon as the Japanese had taken to murdering thousands of their fellow-creatures, Japan became a great, civilised, and powerful country? On the other hand, there is the systematic and continuous persecution of Asiatics in every white settlement and colony, and the fact is known to all the Asiatic races. The experience of America and Australia is not likely to be repeated in Asia, that is, Asiatic races will not become so easily extinct as the Red Indians of America, or the Maoris of Australia, because they have greater vitality, even if of a passive kind, and an ancient civilisation behind them. The lesson, if any, of this struggle is that the decadence of Europe, or at least its outlying offshoots, has commenced and will proceed steadily.