

# Indian Opinion

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## INSIDIOUS PROPAGANDA ABOUT INDIA

WE reproduce below a letter from Simla written by M. D. in *Young India*. We refer to it in our Notes:—

Never before has Gandhiji had to speak to the English press correspondents with such stern frankness as he did on the day of his arrival in Simla. Criticism, however severe, of him and his politics or of the Congress does not irritate him in the least. Newspapers' stunts' and 'scoops' often amuse him. What does annoy him, however, is the insidious propaganda that is at present going on deliberately calculated to misrepresent Congressmen and things and to blast the prospects of peace. One such item was the story that he was coming to Simla to press a few more names to be added to the Congress delegation and ask the Viceroy to let the Congress be represented by them and not by himself alone. There was nothing derogatory to Gandhiji in the story *per se*, but the setting in which it was presented made it necessary for Gandhiji to protest most emphatically against the way in which such stories were being circulated. "I would say" said he, "that courtesy demands that whenever any such thing is attributed to a man, it should first be referred to the man himself. I can flourish on your lying propaganda, but it very much diminishes the estimation in which I should like to hold journalism." That the story emanated from one of my 'immediate entourage' means nothing. It is enough for me that the story is wholly false. If it was my intention to make any such proposal I should have declared it from the house-top. I would like the English journalists here to do as some of them did in South Africa. I can gratefully recall some who verified everything before they published anything about the movement. It would be different if I did not give them straight answers."

The friend was deeply hurt and he said so. "I am glad," said Gandhiji, "that you are hurt. I have spoken frankly because I regard you as a friend and I should be untrue to myself and you if I concealed my innermost feelings. I would like you to copy the example of the late Mr Saunders on the *Englishman*. He was so scrupulous that he would not publish even his leading article about conditions in South Africa without first showing it to me. He said, 'since I want to write to help you, I do not want to write anything that may injure your cause.'"

### Vilification Of Congress

But have those English journalists who see Gandhiji identified themselves with the cause? It is one thing to pay lip-homage to Gandhiji's efforts for peace and another to blackguard his nearest

followers, which some of these correspondents, backed I dare say by some of the officials, have made it their business. I am putting this so bluntly because I suspect that some of the officials are responsible for this vicious propaganda. When an Associated Press correspondent comes and pesters Gandhiji with questions: 'Have you come to Simla for such and such a thing?' 'Are the officials implementing the Truce,' and so on, he simply turns and says, "go to the Secretariat." "I do so solely in the interests of peace, solely in the interests of Government," said he. "But look at the propaganda against the Congress. The English papers insinuate that the Sardar and Pandit Jawaharlal have been disloyal to me, and that they have been pulled up more than once by me. But I say that no two men have more scrupulously carried out my suggestions without demur." Pandit Jawaharlal has carried out to the letter some of the suggestions that perhaps did not appeal to him. He is coming here, as you know. But do you think I would have to prime him as to what he should say and should not say? He would resent it, he would think I was interfering with his liberty. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's allegiance to me has become a common joke. Jawaharlal would claim independence and assert it. Vallabhbhai would not claim it, he believes in effacing himself. Not that he has no views of his own, but he believes that when there is complete agreement on the essentials, it is no use questioning the details. I may tell you that there never has been a clash of principle between me and either of the two. If there had been one, we should have separated long ago. And yet false statements appear in the English Press.'

### An Explanation

But the pity of it is that the very friend to whom Gandhiji spoke strongly has in reporting the conversation made grave mis-statements. Here is one:

"It is quite true that a full Congress delegation has been discussed, as also that I should have advisers. I do not mind saying that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dr. M. A. Ansari were particularly suggested, but I do not want them and their place is in India where they will be needed. For every expert adviser, your people could get a dozen and I shall rely upon presenting a simple case, simply using my native wit with God as my adviser."

I was present at the interview. The first part of this mischievous statement was confidential, and Gandhiji said as much to the correspondent. But I must now say what it was. He said: "The idea

of a full delegation was discussed at Karachi and I may say in confidence that those who did not then favour the idea of a sole delegation were Pandit Malaviyaji and Dr. Ansari. But even they perhaps no longer doubt the wisdom of the Congress resolution." Then followed the sentence about who would be wanted in India. It should be intelligible to the meanest understanding that Gandhiji could never say that he did not want Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Dr. Ansari. Their names were mentioned, as I have already said, in connection with the resolution at Karachi. And as for the rest he said to this effect: "For one thing, if I had many advisers I should get confused. For another, I do not want to go to haggle there. I am to be sent there to represent humble folk and I should place their demand in as simple and straight a manner as possible. That is why we do not want many experts either. For I know that if it was a trial of strength in experts between India and England we should easily be floored. So far as I am concerned, God is my only adviser, and my plain mother wit would come to my aid. As for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai there is no doubt that they would be needed here. We do not want an argumentative demonstration there. It is merely a matter of the Britishers feeling what they should yield and our feeling what we are strong enough to demand and receive. But even for that Jawaharlal and Vallabhbhai's place is here. They would be strengthening me much more by remaining here than by accompanying me there." As for Pandit Malaviyaji and Dr. Ansari and Srimati Naidu, he said to another correspondent that "Dr. Ansari's place would be there as a Nationalist Muslim leader, Malaviyaji should be there as an all-India figure and Srimati Naidu because of her international reputation." What then can be the explanation for mis-statements and imputation of motives to nationalists that disfigure the Anglo-Indian Press? The possible explanation is that the wish is father to the thought. And since they have no time for quiet assimilation and as interviewers they go with the deliberate intention of getting what they want, they do not even listen to what is said to them with undivided attention. The result is very often a wholly false impression. It is impossible on any other ground to account for the terrible confusion that the statement quoted above betrays. It cannot be a wilful distortion of facts. In trying to compress a long conversation the interviewer fails to remember the sequence and the two names taken in one connection have been given in a totally different connection. The remedy of course is the honourable one followed by the late Mr. Saunders who not only sent to the interviewed for revision the interviews his reporters took, but in exceptional cases like Gandhiji's sent even his leading articles for revision and addition. Such a procedure results in saving of time in the long run and invariably saving of unconscious misrepresentation.

## Notes and News

**W**E have made it a point to publish now and then authentic reports on vitally important matters pertaining to India. We do so in order that our readers in this country may know the truth about India. The reports that one sees appearing in the daily papers from their correspondents at Calcutta, London and other places, mostly contain anything but the truth. They are misleading and give entirely a wrong impression to the readers. Indeed, such reports are sent out for that very purpose and our contemporaries like the *Natal Mercury* which has never a word of sympathy to utter for India or the Indian people either in India or in South Africa, and would readily pounce upon anything that is said against them, make use of such reports in their leading columns in order to belittle India in the eyes of the public. Well, there is no help for those who will simply refuse to learn the truth and to whom truth is unpalatable. But we would like to assist those who are desirous of knowing the truth about India and, with that view, we give publicity to reports, articles and important discussions on the present struggle for independence in India. In this week's issue we reproduce a letter from Simla appearing in *Young India* written by 'M. D.' The writer, may it be known, is Mr. Mahadev Desai, Mahatma Gandhi's secretary who always travels with Mahatma Gandhi and is possessed with first hand information on all important matters. The letter will give an idea to the readers of the insidious propaganda that is on foot to hide the truth from the world.

THE three Indian applications for general dealer's certificates over which the applicants' counsel had a little hot argument in regard to the unnecessary delay caused by the Spring's Town Council in coming to a decision, the Council having postponed the matter for further consideration, had come up for discussion at a special meeting of the Town Council on August 27, and it was decided to refuse to consider the applications on the ground that the notices had not been posted in accordance with the Ordinance. This was not a matter of vital importance for the purpose for which the notice was to be posted was served, in that all those concerned in the town were fully aware that Indians had applied for general dealer's certificates for the premises in question. But the Council, reluctant as it is to grant the applications, wanted to find some point whereby it could satisfy itself by causing further delay and it has succeeded in doing so on a very minor point of technicality.

MR. E. Mahomed of Riversdale, O.P., has received the following letter from the Town Clerk dated August 19:—

"Sir,—I am directed to notify you that in the opinion of my council you carry too large a stock for the size of your premises, and you are therefore requested to reduce your stock or enlarge your premises.

Further, I am to point out that your present method of allowing vegetables to be stocked on the floor, both in your shop and storeroom is unhealthy, and I am to request you to arrange for proper shelving for these commodities.  
—Yours faithfully, (Sgd.) H. SIMONS, Town Clerk."

MR. E. Mahomed who conducts a small fruit and vegetable store in Riversdale, a small town in the Cape Province, informs us that he has been in business for the last eleven years and there has never been any complaint regarding his premises. But since two European stores doing the same business have been opened he is being molested by the Municipality and when it has failed to find any other fault with him it is now trying to find fault with his premises with which there was nothing wrong hitherto. We have, of course, no doubt Mr. E. Mahomed will comply with the reasonable wishes of the Town

Council in the interests of health and sanitation but that the Council should have woken up so late in the day naturally gives Mr. Mahomed just cause to complain that there is something at the back of this movement.

UNION statistics for civil judgments for debt for goods sold, excluding defended cases and civil imprisonment orders arising from these, for June 1931, show that there were 3,035 Europeans' civil judgments in the Union for a total amount of £55,248. Non-Europeans' cases numbered 471, for total debts of £6,986.

EUROPEAN civil imprisonment cases totalled 1,828, for a total amount of debt of £22,129. Non-Europeans' civil imprisonment cases totalled 249 for a total amount of £3,604. These figures are based on Capetown and Wynburg, Port Elizabeth, East London, Kimberley, Maritzburg, Durban, Pretoria, Johannesburg, other Reef towns and Bloemfontein.

By proclamation in the Union Gazette dated August 28, the Union Parliament which was prorogued to September 11, has been further prorogued to 18th December, 1931.

A REUTER'S message last week brought the good news that the Government of India had at the last moment granted the Congress demand for an inquiry into the allegations that coercion was used in 11 villages in the Bardoli district in Gujarat to extort excess revenue, thus making it possible for Mahatma Gandhi to sail for London last Saturday to attend the Round Table Conference.

THE following message was sent to Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on their departure for London by the South African Indian Congress:—

"South African Indian community delighted your departure to attend Round Table Conference. May your mission be crowned with success. May God bless you."

THE Durban Arya Samaj wish to announce that the Krishna-Ashvini will be celebrated on Saturday September 5, at the Cross Street Tamil Institute, at 7 p.m. sharp. Mr. Thomas Higgs has kindly consented to deliver on this occasion a speech on The Life of Krishna. All are cordially invited to attend.

## M. K. Gandhi Library And Parsee Rustomjee Hall

### Tenth Anniversary

The celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the M. K. Gandhi Library and Parsee Rustomjee Hall, and the Tenth Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday, 8th September, at 7-30 p.m., in the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, 140, Queen Street, Durban. A cordial invitation is extended to all.

**B. M. PATEL,**

Hon. Secretary, M. K. Gandhi Library and Parsee Rustomjee Hall Committee.

## INDIAN HOUSING

WE are glad to note that the Durban Town Council has at last decided to do something in earnest with the £50,000 it has received from the Government in the interests of Indians. £25,000 out of the total amount are to be utilised in granting loans to individual Indians for housing purposes in the peri-Durban area. Every applicant for such a loan, it is stated, will have to satisfy the Corporation that he is not the owner of any other dwelling suitable for his occupation, and that he intends to occupy personally the dwelling for which the loan is sought. Mere renovation or repair does not constitute construction within the meaning of the Act. No loan may exceed £800 and plans of houses must be approved by the borough engineer and the Housing Board.

This step on the part of the Town Council has been received with great satisfaction by a large number of Indians who will no longer have to live in hovels. But while the Indian community is satisfied with the scheme there are two parties that are not only dissatisfied but are alarmed. The *Natal Mercury* is alarmed because the original scheme for an Indian village at Mayville has been scrapped and the principle of subdividing the land and selling it to Indians has been substituted. The Durban committee of the South African Trades and Labour Council is annoyed because it expected the £50,000 to be spent in alleviating unemployment among Europeans. The Committee claims that the main object of the Government in granting the money was to provide work for unemployed building trade artisans. Facts, however, would prove it to be otherwise. That Colonel Creswell should have referred to the £50,000 in dealing with the question of unemployment was, if we might suggest, merely to evade the issue, for the grant had nothing whatever to do with that question. The main object of the grant was to provide Indians with housing accommodation. We are happy to feel that Mr. A. O. Jones (the Town Clerk) has explained that, "in view of what was now being spent on the relief of European unemployment, the £25,000 was surely a sum which could go towards the alleviation of Indian and native unemployment which was probably as serious as that of the white section of the

community." Nor are Indians to eat away that money. It is to be repaid ultimately by them and, as the Town Clerk has rightly said, they would be perfectly justified in asking that their money should be spent in relieving unemployment in their own ranks. This explanation should be lucid enough for the Durban Committee of the South African Trades and Labour Council to withdraw its opposition against the Town Council's scheme. As to the *Natal Mercury's* alarm, we are afraid, nothing would satisfy it. Its swollen ideas about "white supremacy" and about "keeping the Native and the Indian in his place," are inborn and will live as long as it lives. Nature will have to take its own course to bring our contemporary and those whose ideas it represents to their senses.

Now about the remaining £25,000. The Indian community had asked for and the executive of the Central Housing Board had recommended the erection of houses in certain lands within the borough which could either be sold or let to Indians. The Council could do this, the executive said, "if it was really desirous of doing its duty towards the Indian population." The borough engineer has, however, as on previous occasions, on the present one too, turned down all the sites requested by the Indian community and approved of after inspection by the executive of the Central Housing Board, on the ground that they are unsuitable for building purposes or that if they are suitable they are required for other purposes. "There is no suitable ground for housing purposes on the Eastern Vlei, as practically the whole of this area is swamp land at a level of two feet above high tide," says the borough engineer. The executive of the Central Housing Board, whose chairman was Sir Edward Thornton, inspected this place and suggested that there was land suitable in this area for building purposes. Sir Edward Thornton was a medical man and ought to be an authority on what land is suitable and what not for residential purposes. But the question is whether the Town Council is or is not desirous of doing its duty towards the Indian population. If it is, we would humbly request that some land within the borough should be made suitable, if it is not suitable, for Indian housing as it is being made suitable for other sections of the community.

## MAHATMA GANDHI

MAHATMA GANDHI is at last on his way to London. The clouds were gathering so threateningly but a fortnight ago in India that one could not guess the magnitude of the storm that would have burst out of them and the havoc it would have played. The clouds over the Indian sky have, however, dispersed and the sun has once more shone in its brilliancy to the happiness of millions of people. We are thankful to Providence that better counsel prevailed upon the Government of India even at the eleventh hour and that it was prompted (whether by pressure from the British Government or by its own initiative, we are not concerned) to concede to the very just and reasonable request of the Indian National Congress to hold an impartial inquiry into cases where flagrant breach of the terms of the Delhi pact had come to light. Had the Congress not been able to participate in the Round Table Conference even on this second occasion, the work of the Conference would have amounted to nil like the last Conference, and the great pains taken by Lord Irwin to bring about a truce would have all been in vain. We are not prepared to suggest that the participation of the Congress will bring all that India wants from the Conference. It would perhaps be too much to expect that. A great deal of sacrifice will yet be required of India for her to attain her goal of complete independence. If she attains it without that sacrifice it will be a miracle the world has never yet seen. It will be the greatest triumph of non-violence. But that is yet too far. India is not yet completely out of the encircling gloom. She will have to undergo a great deal more discipline and a great many more sacrifices to be completely out of it before she beholds the light. So long as there are still some among our ranks who are murder-mad our progress towards that light is bound to be slow.

Mahatma Gandhi's presence in London will, however, do one good. It will afford an opportunity to the British people to know the truth about India and the strength and determination of India to fight for her freedom which has hitherto been hidden by propagandists, whose mission it has been to keep the world unenlightened of the true facts. Even if the work of the

Round Table Conference ends in a failure, Mahatma Gandhi's mission will be a gain for India which will stand her in good stead in her hour of trial. Where truth is God is, and truth is with Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, God is with him. Good wishes of the people to one who has the blessings of God are of little importance and yet Mahatma Gandhi carries with him the good wishes of all those who stand for truth, love and justice.

## Housing For Indians

### Council Proposes To Give Personal Loans

Advantage is to be taken almost immediately of £25,000 of the £50,000 offered to the Durban Town Council by the Government for Indian housing. At a meeting of a special committee it was decided to recommend to council that individual loans should be granted to Indians for housing purposes in the peri-Durban area, and applications for loans will be called for within the next few days.

Every applicant will have to satisfy the Corporation that he is not the owner of any other dwelling suitable for his occupation, and that he intends to occupy personally the dwelling for which the loan is sought. Mere renovation or repair does not constitute construction within the meaning of the Act. No loan may exceed £800, and plans of houses must be approved by the borough engineer and the Housing Board.

The remaining £25,000 was also discussed, and it was decided to do nothing until a report is received from municipal officials on the cutting up and sale of land at Cato Manor.

Full consideration was given to the possibility of using any of the following sites for Indian housing:

Near Alice Street power station; near Sastri College at Cross Street School; on the Eastern Vlei; between Athlone Drive and Umgeni Road; and off Umbilo Road in the vicinity of Horsley Road.

The borough engineer submitted an unfavourable report on all these sites, and the committee agreed that they were unsuitable.

Dealing with these sites (which have frequently been put forward by Indians as suitable for housing) Mr. R. W. Watson says:

"Practically the whole of the Alice Street area must be reclaimed before being built on, and I understand from the electrical department that it will be some considerable time before the existing cooling towers can be removed. The area is most unsuitable for a housing scheme owing to soil conditions and will, in any case, be required for public purposes in the not distant future. The site cannot be recommended for Indian housing.

"The Sastri College site has been marked for municipal purposes and will probably be required for such in the near future. It should be pointed out that the only central area now available for stores and garage extensions and other like purposes is that now suggested for Indian housing. The total area of the two sites situated in this neighbourhood is approximately 7.5 acres and a portion is already occupied by the general stores department.

I am unable to recommend that this area be utilised for Indian housing.

### Swamp Land

"There is no suitable ground for housing purposes on the Eastern Vlei, as practically the whole of this area is swamp land at a level of two feet above high tide. The small triangular area opposite the Greyville running sheds will be required for the rehousing of Indian employees.

"The area between Athlone Drive and Umgeni Road is also low lying and should be reclaimed before the question of building on it is seriously considered. This is the area at present under consideration by the Railway Administration for workshop purposes. If the railway do not eventually require it then it should be set aside for industrial purposes, for which it is eminently suitable and for which it has been zoned.

"The whole of the area below Umbilo Road, opposite Horsley Road, has already been allocated for hospital purposes and the housing of Europeans."

When the executive of the central housing board carried out an inspection and investigation of the housing and sanitary conditions of Indians in and around Durban the Indian community was afforded full opportunity of expressing its views.

It was represented by the council that the available land in the borough was very small, and that apart from low-lying ground, which it was contended was unsuitable for residential sites, there was no land in Durban to-day which could be utilised for housing the poorer class of Indian. It was also stated that the corporation had bought land outside the borough area at Wentworth, Springfield and Cato Manor suitable for the housing of natives and Indians.

### Indian Representations

On the other hand, it was stated by the Indian representatives that the council undertook to provide land for Indians within the borough; that out of 14 municipal land sales, all the land was earmarked for Europeans and none for Indians, which was held to be a breach of the undertaking; particularly as some of the land could, they contended, be regarded as situated in Indianised quarters of the town. It was also alleged that Cato Manor was outside the Durban borough and that the council would accordingly not be able to exercise any rights over it as a local authority. Apart from the opposition to the scheme on the score of segregation, they argued, the village would likely be neglected in the matter of roads and other essential services, which would tend to the creation of slum conditions.

The executive, however, inspected various pieces of land and was of the opinion that some of them could suitably be utilised for housing. "If these were put up for sale as residential sites without the restrictive condition," they said, "it would not alleviate to any great extent the overcrowding problem, but it would tend to remove the sense of injustice caused by previous land sales."

The executive considered that the higher portion of the eastern vlei near the Umgeni River would be suitable for building purposes and that if the council was really desirous of doing its duty towards the Indian population it might fairly consider the question of erecting houses there which would be either sold or let to Indians.

Finally, the executive decided to recommend that of the £50,000, £25,000 should be made available to the Durban Town Council for Indian housing on the eastern vlei, and that the balance should be placed at the disposal of the Durban council and of

the health boards in the areas immediately adjoining Durban for loan purposes to selected Indians who own small plots of ground in freehold and desire to erect small cottages on them for personal occupation.

The Borough Engineer and the committee, however, have turned down the eastern vlei and all other areas proposed within the borough; and if the other £25,000 is to be used, it seems that it will go towards the construction of municipal houses at Cato Manor.

### Strong Protest By Trades Council

Strong exception is taken by the Durban committee of the South African Trades and Labour Council to the recommendation of the housing committee of the Durban Town Council on Indian housing.

At a meeting of the Trades and Labour Council last week, a resolution was passed strongly protesting against the recommendation, which, it was claimed, would defeat one of the main objects of the Minister in granting the money, namely, to provide work for unemployed building trade artisans. "It is also," the resolution states, "a menace to the maintaining of the standard of wages laid down in the national agreement for the building industry."

Mr. Frank E. Cheek, the secretary, told a representative of the *Natal Advertiser* that unemployed Europeans were obviously not to gain anything from the £50,000. Unless the Town Council was prepared to make provision for the employment of Europeans, his association would have to protest most strongly to the Minister.

### Town Clerk's Explanation

Mr. A. O. Jones (the Town Clerk), interviewed on the subject, said that the £50,000 had been offered to the Corporation two years ago when the unemployment position had not been as acute, and its main object was to provide Indians with housing accommodation. In view, however, of what was now being spent on the relief of European unemployment, he felt that this £25,000 was surely a sum which could go towards the alleviation of Indian and native unemployment which was probably as serious as that of the white section of the community. It was after all to be spent on Indian houses and to be repaid ultimately by Indians, and they would be perfectly justified in asking that their money should be spent in relieving unemployment in their own ranks. The European trades were all well protected, but the same could not be said of Indians and natives, who were largely inarticulate and consequently not infrequently overlooked.

European labour was being used on the first 100 houses to be built at Clairwood for natives, and yet strictly speaking the cost of those houses would be found from native revenue.

### Indians' Thrift At School

#### Clairwood Boys Win Trophy

While doing all in its power to encourage economy in all walks of life, the National Thrift Organisation pays particular attention to the youth of the country through the medium of the school Savings Clubs.

Despite the prevailing adverse economic conditions, these efforts have met with creditable success, and it is to be hoped that the habit of regular saving inculcated in the early years will maintain itself in the lives of the youths of to-day when they attain their full responsibilities as citizens.

Great credit is due to the staff members of the

various schools for the interest they take in this movement. There is no doubt, if the benefits were thoroughly appreciated, no school in Natal of any race or colour would be without its saving club.

In the Indian schools of Natal there are no fewer than 21 school savings clubs, and to stimulate endeavour in these clubs there is an annual competition for a floating trophy presented in 1926 by Mr. B. B. Mahatho. This competition is keenly contested by the various clubs, and the successful school, for the third year in succession, is Clairwood Government Aided Indian Boys' School with 1,281 marks says the *Natal Mercury*. The next nine schools in order of merit are: Port Shepstone Government Indian School, 765 marks; Cato Manor Government Aided Indian School, 755; V.S.S. Government Aided Indian School, Umgeni, 644; Sea View Government Aided Indian School, 608; Stella Hill Government Aided Indian School, 557; Merebank Indian School, 513; Malvern Government Aided Indian School, 502; Isipingo Government Aided Indian School, 440; Carlisle Street Government Indian School, Durban, 344.

The following schools obtained the maximum number of points in respect of the factors indicated:

For highest membership: Clairwood Government Indian Boys' School, 644 members.

For highest percentage of pupils who are members of the club: Clairwood Government Indian Boys' School: 100 per cent.

For the highest average purchase per club member: Sea view Government Aided Indian School, 1.36 certificates.

The largest number of Union Loan Certificates was purchased by the Clairwood Government Indian Boys' School: 514 certificates.

The presentation of the cup to the Clairwood Government Indian Boys' School took place at 11 a.m. on Friday Sept. 4, when Sir Kurma Reddi handed over the trophy to the winners. The gathering was representative of workers in the thrift movement, including members of the Natal Committee, representative of the Education Department, and of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs. Parents and friends of the children were present.

## Congress And India's Communal Problem

### "No Better Solution Could Be Devised"

The *Mussalman* of Calcutta writes:—

We beg to draw the serious attention of our countrymen and co-religionists to the scheme for the solution of the communal problem as formulated by the Working Committee of the Congress. If there should be a settlement of the differences between the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs—and there is absolutely no difference of opinion, we believe, that there should be such a settlement—then it will be found on a close examination of the scheme that no better one can be devised. Of course, minor alterations and additions here and there may be necessary but the scheme as a whole is one that, if accepted by all parties and communities concerned, will solve the communal problem: It says:

#### Guarantee

"(a) The Article in the constitution relating to the fundamental rights should include a guarantee to the communities concerned of the protection of their culture, languages, scripts, education and pro-

cession and practice of religion and religious endowments; (b) the personal laws shall be protected by a specific provision to be embodied in the constitution; (c) the protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various provinces shall be the concern and be within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government."

5. These are sufficient safeguards for the protection of the rights and the personal laws of the minorities and we do not think that any better safeguards can be provided for them in a self-governing India.

The Working Committee is committed to adult franchise and cannot entertain any alteration in the franchise. The Committee, however, wishes to make it clear that in any event the franchise shall be uniform and so extensive as to reflect in electoral roll the proportion in population of every community. No section of the Mussalmans want anything other than this.

### Electorates

As for electorate the scheme says:

"(3) (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future Constitution of India; (b) for the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, and for the Hindus and Muslims in any province where they are less than 25 per cent of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population with the right to contest additional seats.

Here the question of joint or separate electorates arises and we have dwelt on the question so many times that we do not consider it necessary to deal with it again here. We think that no better suggestion can be made for the solution of the problem of electorate and representation of different communities that may be acceptable and fair to all the communities concerned. Any other sort of electorate and representation is sure to reduce the Muslim majority in Bengal to a minority in the Council.

### In The Service

As for appointments the Working Committee makes the following proposal:—

"(4) Appointments shall be made by a non-party Public Service Commission which shall prescribe the minimum qualifications and which shall have due regard to the efficiency of the public service as well as to the principle of equal opportunity for all communities for a fair share in the public service of the country."

If this is not fair to all then what is? We do not think that there can be any reasonable objection to this formula in any quarter.

The other proposals or suggestions are as follows:

### Sind Separation

"(5) In the formation of the Federal and Provincial Cabinets, the interests of the minority communities should be recognised on the convention.

"(6) The North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan shall have the same form of Government and administration as the other provinces.

"(7) Sind shall be constituted into a separate province provided the people of Sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of a separate province and

"(8) The future Constitution of the country shall be Federal, the residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless on further examination it is found to be against the best interests of India."

The above four proposals are what the Mussalmans of all sections have been demanding all along.

So far as separation of Sind is concerned it is, of course, conditional, but we think that the condition is not unfair. While the provinces are all going to be autonomous it will not, we think, be at all reasonable if any province—in this case, Sind—is to depend on subvention from the Central Government for a part of the necessary expenses for its administration.

Moreover, the residuary powers will vest in the federating units unless on further examination it is found to be against the best interests of India. There is absolutely nothing unreasonable in this condition.

### No Better Terms Possible

We do not think that better terms can be obtained for the solution of the communal question than what are embodied in the Congress Working Committee's scheme; and we believe that it will be acceptable to all sections of the Mussalmans except those who would play into the hands of the British imperialists who do not at all like that there should be any settlement of the communal differences and who would have sway over India by following the policy of divide and rule to the detriment of the interests of the Indian people as a whole and to the benefit of the few who would be content with living the lives of glorified slaves in their own motherland.

If the scheme be not acceptable to any party or any section of the people, they are at liberty to produce another that may be acceptable to all, and the Congress Working Committee, as it has already said, would readily accept it. So far there has been too much destructive criticism in connection with proposals for communal settlement. The Congress Working Committee has placed before the country a constructive proposal—a proposal which, in our opinion, is on the whole fair to all—and we therefore hope that all reasonable-minded people will see their way to accepting it, with modifications here and there, if necessary.

## Financial Obligation Between Britain And India

### Bahadurji Committee's Report

(BY M. K. GANDHI IN "YOUNG INDIA")

(Continued from last week)

The authors have also carefully examined the so-called productive debt of India and the following summary of their observations will be both instructive and interesting:

"(a) That of the five or six items of productive character only two, viz. Railways and Irrigation work can, strictly speaking, be classed as such;

"(b) That the Productivity of the Railways and their contribution to the economic development of India is wholly different from that of the Irrigation Works;

"(c) That the aggregate capital at charge on account of the Railways must admit a counter-claim of eighty-three crores at least as detailed above, before liability on that account can be accepted by the Indian people; though in strict commercial accounting and rigorous justice the counter-claim would be at least doubled;

"(d) That the debt on account of the Irrigation Works and other Commercial Departments may be

admitted as covered by sufficient earning assets transferred automatically to the new Government of India;

"(e) That the "productive" character of the debts from the Provincial Governments, Local Self-governing bodies or Indian States is extremely doubtful, the only support for the maintenance of this burden being found in the Taxable capacity of the people within the respective jurisdiction;

"(f) That even if full liability is assumed in regard to these an exception must be made in respect of the Bombay Development Debt, (fifteen crores), which was incurred in the teeth of the protests of the people concerned, and against which therefore very little of valuable assets of a productive or earning character are available."

Their examination of Unproductive Debts includes external wars such as the Abyssinian War, Perak Expedition, War 'gifts', etc. Comparing India's contribution to the contribution by the Dominions they observe:

"India's contribution, as compared with that of the other Dominions of Britain, and her gains in the result of War, show a very disproportionate balance. While on the outbreak of the War the other Dominions only offered to their own frontiers, or protect the Overseas Commerce within their regions, India alone, in addition to protecting her own territory, made large contributions to the Empire's fighting forces in the European War. The defence of the local frontier meant a considerable obligation only in the case of South Africa where there were German interests which might conceivably involve that territory in danger. But the contribution of Australia in Gallipoli and in policing the seas does not at all compare favourably with that of India. India received no particular advantage as a result of the success in the great struggle. The Dominions shared along with Great Britain, in the Reparations, such as they are, that have been received from Germany so far; but even this share, comparatively speaking, does not advantage India at all proportionately to her contributions and sufferings. India has hardly any say in the mutations of these Reparation payments."

Part II of the first volume is headed "India under the East India Company's Rule." But I must resist the temptation to quote from this survey. I have given, I hope, enough to whet the appetite of the reader. I have seen some adverse comments on the report. No uninformed criticism however hostile can diminish the value of a document which fortifies every statement with facts and figures. If these critics mean business and are sincere in their criticism, let them offer constructive criticism, and let them support it with facts and figures. A discussion of this character cannot fail to be helpful. I have no doubt that the authors do not claim infallibility for their conclusions. If therefore any flaw is shown to them, they will be the first to acknowledge their error, and so far as the members of the Working Committee and those members of the general public who would care to study this authoritative report are concerned, they would be able to put such enlightened criticism side by side with the report and formulate their judgment.

Let me say in conclusion that when the Congress at Gaya and then at Lahore passed a resolution about financial obligations it was seriously meant. The appointment of the Committee and its report were the natural corollary. The Congress will seriously

follow the matter to the end. If the Congress can help, India will not take a leap in the dark. She cannot afford to be generous at the expense of the dumb millions who after all have to make the largest contribution towards the payment of any liabilities that may be undertaken.

## American Tribute To Mahatma Gandhi

The following poem referring to Mahatma Gandhi has been sent to us by an esteemed correspondent from the *Christian Century*, a leading American religious magazine:—

While other men pronounce His name,  
And call Him "Christ the King,"  
You share with Him the blame and shame,  
And feel the whip-lash sting!

While other men on altars lift  
The Blessed Sacrament,  
You give your life, a priceless gift,  
For human betterment.

While other men in pious phrase  
Proclaim His endless reign,  
With weary smile you hear their praise—  
Then take your cross again.

While others with an unctuous show  
Of fasting, keep their Lent,  
On India's road with Christ you go—  
A man whom God has sent!

DWIGHT BRADLEY

## Sporting News

A correspondent from Pietersburg states:—  
The marriage of Ismail Goolam Rasool, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Munshi Goolam Rasool of Pietersburg, Transvaal, to Hawa Bibi, second daughter of the late Mr. Shaik Fareed and Mrs. Fareed of Clairwood, Natal, took place on Sunday the 9th August at Clairwood, the Nikah ceremony being at Mrs. Shaik Fareed's residence.

On the return of the bride and bridegroom and Mr. and Mrs. M. G. Rasool to Pietersburg, the Valima Festival was held at the latter's residence, 20 Joubert Street, Pietersburg on Sunday the 16th August.

On Wednesday, the 26th August, the Star Sporting Club of Pietersburg entertained Mr. Munshi Goolam Rasool and his son, Mr. Ismail Goolam Rasool, and addresses eulogising the selfless services rendered by Mr. Goolam Rasool in various respects were given by the Chairman of the Club Mr. M. Aswat, the Secretary Mr. Cachalia, Messrs. M. H. Mahomed, Ami Bava, A. Tilly and Mahomed Gani, to which Mr. Munshi Goolam Rasool suitably replied.

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