

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

THERE was a strong rumour current during the week that the Rev. C. F. Andrews had arrived at Capetown from London. On enquiries, however, we find that there is no truth in it. Mr. Andrews was to have arrived during this month but he had postponed his departure in order to receive Mahatma Gandhi in London. Although we have no further news from him there is every likelihood of his arriving in the Union some time next month.

MR. A. A. Gandhi of Tongaat who is a vice-president of the Natal Indian Congress and has rendered very useful service to the Congress at all times and especially during the visits of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in the local work in Tongaat where he commands the respect of all in that district, is sailing with Mrs. Gandhi for India by the *s.s. Karagola* which leaves on Monday next. The Gokhale Hall and the Hindu Temple in Tongaat stand as a monument to Mr. A. A. Gandhi's good services to the poorer section of the Indian community. Mr. Gandhi is one of the donors to the Sastri College and he has donated the sum of £400 to an Indian school at Tongaat to impart education from interest derived from it to the children of the poor. Mr. A. A. Gandhi will be accompanied by Mr. Raghavjee Devjee Parekh one of the prominent Indian merchants in Verulam. We wish them a very happy voyage and a safe return.

In the course of his brief speech on the prorogation of Parliament His Majesty the King referred to the Indian Round Table Conference. He had been following its resumed deliberations with interest and sympathy, His Majesty said, and added: "I trust that joint endeavour may produce agreement on a plan which will commend itself to the judgment of wise statesmanship."

THE question of Asiatic competition with Europeans in Durban and other Natal towns was raised at the Natal National Party Congress held last week at Greytown. Mr. E. G. Jansen, Minister of Native Affairs, is reported to have pointed out that a conference with the Indian authorities would be held in January on the subject of the continuation of the present agreement. That being so he did not think it desirable at the present juncture to say much. He would bear in mind the feeling of the Congress, but he could not, of course, say what the effect of the conference to be held in January would be.

ACCORDING to Reuter's messages from London with regard to the Round Table Conference it would appear that the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi to settle the claims of the minorities have not been successful and the minorities Committee of the Round Table Conference has been adjourned indefinitely after a speech by Mr. Macdonald appealing to the delegates to cease standing in the way of a settlement. The Prime Minister said the British Government would take its action if the conference could not go to the end. "The British Government

is determined to make such improvements in the government of India as will make the latter consistent with our own ideals," said Mr. Macdonald in conclusion.

NOW IS THE TIME

THE unemployment question is the most important question before the country at the present time and with the Indian community too it is at present about the most important. About two thousand unemployed Indians have been registered and the number is daily increasing. For we learn that the Durban Corporation, in spite of its resolution not to dismiss any of its Indian employees is still doing so and that there is retrenchment going on even in other private concerns such as the Natal Estates and the like. Thus the situation is causing great anxiety as to the future.

We are indeed very grateful to Sir Kurma Reddi, the Agent of the Government of India, for the personal interest he is taking in this question. Last Saturday Sir Kurma invited many leading members of the community to his residence to discuss ways and means to do something in the matter of self-help in relieving the distress among our unemployed brethren and the discussion resulted in the election of a committee for the raising of a fund to be known as Sir Kurma Reddi's Relief Fund for the purpose of giving relief in actual cases of distress in Durban and environs.

Now is the time for those of our brethren who are blessed with wealth to act. We have always been crying against the Government's repatriation scheme. Our distressed brethren when they find themselves utterly helpless and neglected not only by the Government and the European public but by their own well-to-do brethren—their own kith and kin—they will immediately take to that scheme as a drowning man catches hold of anything that comes his way

to save himself. Surely we would not like to see our brethren selling their birthright and leaving this country merely by force of circumstances. That they may go of their own will is another matter but it would certainly not be right on our part as a civilised community to carelessly watch them leaving these shores when we have amongst us men who can do something for them. Let us not forget that our avowed enemies are only too anxious to get rid of us by any means. It is up to us to show that we are patriotic enough to look after the interests of our poorer brethren and that we are prepared to sink or swim with them.

Now is the time to show our well-wishers that we are able to help ourselves. And when an honest attempt is made and when we can prove that we are in earnest we feel sure that help will come to us from unexpected quarters and we will rise in the estimation alike of our friends and our enemies.

Sir Kurma is nearing the end of his office as Agent of the Government of India and the work for the unemployed Indians will perhaps be one of his last acts on behalf of us in this country and it is our sincerest desire to see it crowned with success. It is in the hands of our wealthy brethren to make it a success. If they will generously respond to the call of Sir Kurma on behalf of their suffering brethren their action will give a good name to the whole community and we as a community will have the satisfaction to feel that we have aided the authorities in solving the problem of unemployment by no means in any mean measure.

Let us be earnest about it. Let us work with a view to helping and not exploiting the poor owing to their present sad circumstances. Let us not treat the poor as dirt but as human-beings with feelings and ambitions just like ourselves.

We sincerely hope that this appeal of ours will be received in the spirit it is made and that our more fortunate brethren will rise to the occasion and will set by their generous gesture a noble example to be followed by other sections of the population of this country.

Natal Municipal Association

Seeking Powers To Segregate Indians

At the 27th annual conference of the Natal Municipal Association held in the Council Chamber, Durban, on Thursday, Mr. Taylor took a prominent part in the discussion on a resolution of last year asking for powers to enable local authorities to declare areas for the occupation of Europeans only. Mr. Taylor felt that the question of Indian penetration had been approached from a wrong angle. The Glass Areas Bill had proved an unfortunate measure, but he did not think the matter should be allowed to drop. The most satisfactory solution of the problem was for the municipalities to be given powers to prescribe European areas.

No one could say that this ideal was aimed at the Indians, for it was no more aimed at them than at the Cape Malays in the Cape Province.

Mr. Taylor suggested that the matter be referred to the United Municipal Association with the object of getting something done. At present there was nothing to prevent any of them waking up one morning to find that their neighbours were of a different race. It was an unfortunate state of affairs and one which should be remedied.

Mr. Murray, Durban, seconded, saying that Durban was affected more particularly than other centres. They did not wish to be antagonistic, but desired protection, especially in those areas which were known as European areas. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to the United Association.—*Natal Mercury*.

Transvaal Municipal Association

Anti-Asiatic Outbursts

At the annual meeting of the Municipal Association of the Transvaal held at Witbank on Wednesday, October 7, the Administrator the Hon. J. B. Smit in his opening remarks referred with regret to the "recent actions of certain town councils and councillors, and the manner in which their duties are carried out. I was particularly sorry to see the comments made by Mr. Justice Krause recently," said Mr. Smit. After quoting these comments, the Administrator said the delegates would agree that it was greatly to be regretted that a high authority should have expressed such opinions.

Mr. Smit suggested that the position might be improved by refusing to allow fees to be paid to councillors, and by decreasing the number of councillors, or by giving authority to certain head officials to deal with the issue of licences. There were points which he considered would go a long way towards drawing the very best men to serve their respective communities on the town councils.

The President's Speech

Mr. Irving Steyn, Mayor of Standerton, in the course of his presidential address, referring to Asiatics is reported to have observed: The Association at its last annual meeting learnt with pleasure of the intended introduction of an Asiatic Land Tenure Bill. The Association requested the Minister of the Interior to appoint a Commission to inquire into the whole question of trading licences and the residence of Asiatics in local authority areas. This request was not granted, but an assurance was received that the Bill would be proceeded with. This, however, had not been carried out, and the Executive expressed its alarm at the delay, and requested the Minister to proceed with the measure.

Regarding the Asiatic Tenure Bill, the executive reported on lines similar to the reference made in the president's address, and urged that the Bill be proceeded with at the earliest possible date. Mr. J. K. Gawith (Sable) moved a resolution concerning the details of the proposed Bill. Mr. Bunyard (Randfontein) seconded, and said that the municipalities should set their own houses in order by the boycotting of Asiatics. Mr. M. D. Harrison (Springs) thought congress should reaffirm the executive's resolution, thus strengthening the hands of the Government, and showing that the country was behind it. Mr. Gawith withdrew his resolution in favour of the executive's, and this was re-affirmed unanimously.

Indian Education

Midlands District

Inspector Mr. J. H. Lawlor in his report, embodied in the report of the Superintendent of Education in Natal, extracts from which we published in our last week's issue, dealing with Indian education in midlands District, says:—

No separate sub-department has yet been created to deal with the education of Indians in Natal, consequently I had to struggle amid other activities reflected in the previous part of this report to carry on the administrative work necessitated by the new Regulations. Most of my work in this respect had to do with the Indian Aided Schools.

New regulations for the payment of grants to these Aided Schools came into force on the first day of 1930. The immediate aim of these regulations is to ensure better conditions of pay for Indian teachers employed in Aided Schools; the ultimate aim is to bring about a better distribution of qualified teachers among the schools. The ultimate aim will be slow of realisation because

- (1) the rights of teachers in the schools at the date of transition have to be respected,
- (2) mission schools naturally prefer to employ teachers of their own denominations,
- (3) many Indian teachers are averse from moving to new localities,
- (4) up to the present time there is no central bureau for directing attention to vacant posts.

The administration of the new regulations involved School Managers in procedure largely new to them. I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to them for the patience they have shown when their requests were not promptly dealt with. I attended to correspondence as well as I could, but had to be absent from headquarters on inspectorial duties on several occasions. On the other hand, delay was sometimes caused by the necessity of elucidating the purport of certain regulations for the benefit of the financial officers of the Province. The year closed with essential points settled for all concerned, though I sincerely hope my long-promised clerical assistance will materialise early in the coming year.

The main advance in Indian Education made during the year was on the side of administration. New regulations make central supervision of staffing more effective than it has ever been in Aided Schools. The difference between the administration of Government Schools and that of Aided Schools has been considerably diminished. A difference still remains between the salary scales applicable to the two types, and this difference is rather resented by the teachers of the Aided Schools who say that with equal qualifications, equal work, and worse

school buildings they are paid less. There is justice in their contention, but so long as present financial conditions continue, any levelling of scale must be rather down than up. We cannot get away from the fact that the Government Indian School pupil is costing us far more than the Union subsidy paid for him, and this fact is enough to show the unwisdom of hoping for a large extension of the Government School system as it exists at present. The indications are that the Government of the Province will have to content itself largely with the payment of salaries and salary grants, and that the Indian communities will have to find the money for erecting school buildings. It would be premature here to detail a scheme of this sort, but it is only fair to point out that the overwhelming logic of finance will force us to move in this direction.

The new scales were applied to Government School teachers with effect from April 1, 1929, whereas those applicable to Aided Schools came into force on Jan. 1, 1930. The Indian Teachers' Society represented to the Department that this difference in dates of application inflicted a measure of injustice upon the Aided School teachers. Ultimately the Government of the Province decided to rectify the inequality by distributing a compensatory bonus of about £2,000 among qualified Indian teachers in Aided Schools.

(To be Continued)

Unemployment Problem

"Sir Kurma Reddi Relief Fund"

A meeting was held at the residence of Sir Kurma Reddi, Agent of the Government of India, on Saturday October 10, to discuss the problem of Indian unemployment. It was resolved to elect a committee for the purpose of collecting funds to relieve actual distress among the unemployed in Durban and environs.

The fund is to be known as the "Sir Kurma Reddi Relief Fund."

Sir Kurma was elected chairman and Mr. R. K. Khan vice-chairman of the committee and the following were elected as members of the committee with powers to add to their number:—

Messrs. A. Christopher, P. R. Pather, A. I. Kajeo, Sorabjee Rustomjee, Jalbhoy Rustomjee, R. B. Chetty, B. Naidoo, B. M. Singh, S. L. Singh, K. A. Meghraj, M. A. Motala, H. N. Duphella, Manilal Gandhi, O. H. A. Jhavery, E. M. Paruk, M. S. Randeree, A. M. Lookhat, I. M. Bhoat, Mahomed Ebrahim, Ismail Moosa, Mahomed Moosa, Ebrahim Tyeb, M. B. Naik, B. M. Patel, M. H. Desai, D. P. Desai, R. K. Naidoo, V. S. O. Pather, J. W. Godfrey, V. Lawrence.

The Committee again met on Wednesday October 14 at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall. In the unavoidable absence of Sir Kurma, Mr. R. K. Khan took the chair. The Hon. E. Baring, the Agent's Secretary, had come from Maritzburg to be present at the meeting and said that the Agent would be free to come from Maritzburg early next week. It was decided to wait till the arrival of Sir Kurma and then to start the collection in consultation with the leading Indian merchants.

As instances of the increasing distress among the people it was brought to the notice of the Committee that over 30 Indians working for many years in the Borough engineer's department of the Corporation had been given notice to leave in spite of the fact that the latter had only recently resolved not to displace non-Europeans and that about the same number was dismissed from the Natal Estates at Mount Edgecombe.

Non-Europeans And Unemployment

ABOVE the signature Joseph A. Davis a writer in the *Rand Daily Mail* expresses a sensible view on the unemployment question. He writes as follows:

Quite a few politicians and others are advocating employment for white workers at the expense of the coloured workers. But can such a policy in the long run result in solving the problem of unemployment? Would such a policy be considered economically sound to the student of political economy?

The remedy will not only fail to cure the disease of unemployment, but will increase unemployment. To destroy the purchasing power of millions of black workers can only result in displacing thousands of white workers from those trades and industries which depend on the native for their revenue.

The only satisfactory solution for unemployment is to create industrial undertakings which can absorb the energies of both black and white workers. Other methods will intensify existing conditions and cause further chaos in the economic structure of this country.

Indo-European Council

Mr. P. R. Pather On The Indian Question

At a meeting of the Indo-European Council which took place last week at the Durban Tamil Institute under the presidency of Mr. Maurice Webb, Mr. P. R. Pather, secretary of the Council, spoke on the Indian question. He said:—

"The Indian is denied everything that a decent citizen of the British Empire is entitled to. Special laws are made to curb his activities. Little does the European realise that over 150,000 Indians are here, and that as time goes on they will form an integral part and a permanent population of South Africa."

Referring to the forthcoming Round Table Conference the speaker said it was felt in Indian circles that the Conference would decide the future of the Indian in this country and pleaded for representation at the Conference of the South African Indian Congress. He praised the Indian Government for its championship of the cause of the Union Indians. Criticising the Capetown Agreement, Mr. Pather dwelt on the hardships under the assisted emigration scheme and referred to the upliftment clause which had been neglected.

With regard to the right of re-entry given to repatriates Mr. Pather said it was an eye-wash. "Having regard to the state of the Indians who avail themselves of this scheme, it is hardly likely that any number of emigrants will avail themselves of this right."

"The Indian question in the Union has caused considerable irritation to both the European and Indian peoples, and agitation has all along been the cause of this irritation. Most of this agitation is led by irresponsible people who lack the spirit of justice and fairplay. Much of the agitation is due to trade jealousies."

"Both the Central Legislature and the Transvaal and Natal Provincial Councils have passed Acts the effect of which has been to preclude the Indians from developing."

Mr. Pather quoted speeches by the late Hon. G. K. Gokhale, General Smuts, Mr. Henry Burton and Mr. Harry Escombe, as illustrations showing that what the Indian wanted was a fair deal.

Mr. Pather read extracts from the Asiatic Inquiry Commission Report of 1921 as an argument against segregation and repatriation. "Such measures," said the report, dealing with repression and indiscriminate segregation, "apart from their injustice and inhumanity would degrade the Asiatic and react upon the European."

Mr. Pather referred to the injustice of the White labour policy and said that the Union Government had not kept its word with the Indians.

Paying a tribute to the clergy the speaker said: "The Indian community of this country owe a great deal to the clergy of South Africa, who have shown a true Christian spirit throughout our struggles with the Government. We are fully confident that with the help of the South African papers, the clergy of South Africa and the European members of the Indo-European Councils the coming conference will satisfactorily settle the Indian question."

Personal And Income Tax Ordinance Amendments

Council To Meet This Month

The Administrator of Natal has issued a proclamation altering the date of the next sitting of the Provincial Council from November 18 to October 20 at 10.30 a.m.

This special session is for the object of amending the Personal, Income and Company Taxes Ordinance, 1928, in the following particulars:

Section 3 of the Ordinance shall be amended by the deletion of the words "seven and a half per cent." and the substitution of the words "ten per cent."

Section 7 shall be amended: (1) by the addition of the following words at the end of paragraph (b): "and further provided that the revenue officer may, with the approval of the Administrator, grant exemption in other cases where he is satisfied that such exemption is warranted on the grounds of poverty; (2) by the deletion of paragraph (e) and the substitution of the following paragraph: (e) any person who was of the age of 60 years or over during the year of assessment, and who is not unable for Union income tax.

Section 23 of the Ordinance shall be amended by the addition of the following new sub-section, the section as originally enacted to become sub-section (1); the new sub-section being:

(2) "In the event of any person being an employee failing to pay the tax or taxes due by him on or before the prescribed date it shall be competent for the revenue officer to advise the employer of the default of such person and the amount of tax or taxes payable by him, and thereupon such tax or taxes and penalty shall be a debt due by such employer for the purpose of Section 16; provided that the employer shall have the right to deduct the amount paid by him from any amount which may be due or which subsequently may become due by him to the employee; provided further that the employer shall not be liable beyond that amount which may be due or become due by him to such employee."

Additional Tax

Any additional tax imposed shall be first charged in respect of the year of assessment ended June 30,

1931, and thereafter in respect of each year of assessment.

Notwithstanding anything contained in the principal Ordinance, any person who was exempted from the payment of the personal tax under Section J(e), shall be liable to pay in respect of the year ended June 30, 1931, unless he is specially exempted by the amending Ordinance, and any person who fails to pay the tax on or before the prescribed date will be liable to the penalty prescribed.

If income tax has already been paid, the taxpayer shall pay the difference between the tax paid and the new taxation imposed, by the prescribed date or be subject the penalty prescribed.

The Ordinance is cited as "The Personal, Income and Company Taxes Amendment Ordinance, 1931."

The Forthcoming Diwali Festival

An Appeal To Hindu Community

Mr. A. B. Naidoo, chairman of the Diwali Celebration Committee, addresses the following appeal to the Hindu community:—

We request each and every member of the Hindu community to refrain from spending money in unnecessary things such as demonstrations, decorations, firing, of crackers etc., during the Diwali Festival, which falls on the 9th November next.

In making this appeal, we need hardly remind our brethren of the appalling misery and distress that exists among our community, as a result of unemployment and general depression, let alone the unsettled state of affairs in our Mother-country. It therefore behoves one and all to use the strictest economy in the celebration of this time-honoured festival.

Imperial Indian Citizenship Association

Emigrants' Home

The following Press note has been issued by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay:—

Under the auspices of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay, an "Emigrants' Home" has been started in Jer Mahal, Dhobi Talao, for the amelioration of the conditions of emigrants passing through Bombay. Deck passengers will, as far as possible, be accommodated in the Home for a few days free of charge. The Association would endeavour to assist them in every possible way. Separate restaurants for Hindus and Muslims are run, where cheap wholesome food at fixed rates is available. Arrangements have also been made for free medical advice.

For further particulars please write to the Hon. Secretary, The I.I.C.A., Sohrab House, 235 Hornby Road, Fort Bombay. The telegraphic address of the Association is "Equality," Bombay.

[NOTE:—We referred to the above in a recent number of this journal when the news was transmitted by the *Natal Mercury's* Calcutta correspondent. We hardly think there will be any deck passengers either going to Bombay from South Africa or *vice versa* who will require to take advantage of this philanthropic institution established by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association. The Home might be a boon to passengers hailing from

other parts such as East Africa, Rangoon, Malaya, etc. and to the repatriates, but very few of the repatriates from the Union land at Bombay. A more useful step on the part of the Association, we think, would have been to take some action to ameliorate the conditions of those who have already been repatriated from this country and find themselves helpless and destitute in India.—Ed. I.O.]

Ladysmith Indians Celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

On Thursday, October 8, a most successful and pleasing function was held at Ladysmith under the auspices of the Gujerat Hindu community. About 150 persons assembled the occasion being to celebrate the 63rd birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The assembly consisted of Hindus, Moslems, Christians and Europeans. Mr. D. Fakir Yusuf presided and read a copy of the cable that was forwarded to Mr. Gandhi on behalf of the Gujerat Hindu community which ran as follows:—

"Gujrat Hindu community, Ladysmith, heartily congratulates you on your 63rd birthday. Prays for success your deliberations at Conference. Wish you long life and prosperity."

Many eloquent speeches were made. Notable among them was a speech by the Mayor Mr. W. Cochrane and the Resident Magistrate Major O. L. Harris. Both of these speakers dwelt at length on the great sacrifice the Mahatma is making in order to obtain constitutional reforms for his countrymen in India. Major Harris recalled how he had on several occasions seen Mr. Gandhi in Johannesburg Courts pleading his clients' cases, and of the subsequent actions which led to the Passive Resistance movement in Natal and the abolition of the £3 Tax of ex-indentured men and women and their descendants. He also dwelt at length on his brilliant intellect and the great influence the Mahatma holds amongst the masses of Indians in India. Remarkably he is to-day representing the most powerful organization in India, the Indian National Congress, at the Round Table Conference in London.

It is a well known fact how both the Indian and British Governments were anxious to have Mr. Gandhi to attend the conference. There were many obstacles in the way, and many doubts were expressed if he would ever attend, but nevertheless he decided to sail, although late for the first meeting of the conference. The Viceroy of India who is the King's representative was so pleased and felt relieved when Mr. Gandhi decided to sail that he sent him a telegram which *inter alia* said:— "Remember I am behind you."

The speakers were very glad that the Indian community was celebrating Mr. Gandhi's birthday and thanked the Gujerat Hindu Society for extending them an invitation.

The next speaker was Mr. Thomas, Headmaster of the Indian School, who thanked the Gujerat Hindu community for the invitation and said it gave him great pleasure to be present at the unique function of India's National Hero. Quite apart from the festive aspect they had assembled there in admiration of one whose name was a household word throughout the world to-day. He said Mr. Gandhi first saw light on October 2, 1869. Little did his parents think that the same babe was going to win the admiration of all the world. When he grew up he practised Law in Bombay. The cry of

South African Indians reached his ears, and he felt that there was a great field for him to work for the betterment of his countrymen and he came out to South Africa. In 1893 he organised an opposition to the anti-Asiatic legislation by passive resistance which resulted in the Indians Relief Act. In 1919 he launched a crusade against the British Raj by means of non-co-operation and boycott of foreign cloth, but advocated peaceful methods. In 1922 he was arrested on a charge of sedition and was sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment. In 1924 he was released. In 1930 he began another campaign leading to serious disorder. Time and again he was agitating, and still doing so to gain complete independence. He is leading the life of truthfulness, perseverance and self-sacrifice. He has discarded his clothing going about in loin cloth, given up luxurious meals and travels about from place to place in third class coaches instead of first class saloons and waited upon like a Prince. Proclaiming his greatness alone is not sufficient on our part. His life is one which is worthy of emulation. It is an example to us and also for us to show and teach this example to our children—'A life of truthfulness, perseverance and self-sacrifice.' Each and every one of us should be faithful members of the community to which we belong, to live and lead a life that is noble and at the same time be an instrument in working in the interest of the community and be of some help for its upliftment.

Though Mahatma Gandhi was not present in their midst the speaker wished him many happy returns of the day and hoped that God will give him the required strength and mind to carry out his great work for very many more years, and may the goal for which he is aspiring be achieved.

Other speakers were Messrs. Syed Amod, V. Lalla, T. Riga, J. G. Sutton (Assist. Magistrate), R. Singh, M. K. Reddy and E. M. Aswat. Sacred songs were sung by the children of the Gujerati School, after which a portrait of the Mahatma was garlanded. The proceedings terminated with the singing of the National Anthem.

Saurashtra Hindu Association

THE following message was sent to Mahatma Gandhi on the celebration of his sixty-third birthday by the Saurashtra Hindu Association, Durban:—

"Saurashtra Hindu Association congratulates you on your sixty-third birthday. Prays Almighty bless you with health and long life and achieve full freedom for Mother India."

Transvaal Indian Congress

MASS MEETING

A mass meeting of the Transvaal Indians will be held under the auspices of the Transvaal Indian Congress on Sunday, October 25, at the Patidar Hall, corner Bree Street and Terrace Road at 2-30 p.m.

All local as well as up-country Indians are requested to attend.

Agenda: (1) Finance.

(2) Coming Round Table Conference.

S. B. MEDH,

Hon. Secretary T.I. Congress.

Tel. Add. : "Ishwar"
P.O. Box 4538.

Mahatma Gandhi In England

Message To 'Daily Herald'

The latest papers from London have brought a little more news about Mahatma Gandhi and the Round Table Conference than the tit-bits supplied us by Reuter's Agency.

We reproduce from the *Daily Herald* the following vivid description by its special correspondent of the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi at Marseilles and the interview he had with him:—

"I am pessimistic. But I am also optimistic," said Mr. Gandhi to me, speaking very earnestly.

"The facts, as I saw them when I left India, made me pessimistic. Nor do I know of anything that has happened since to change my judgment. But, in spite of appearances, my faith makes me optimistic, as I have always been an optimist!"

We were talking, just the two of us, in his little second-class cabin in the *Rajputana* soon after she docked.

Her coming was dramatic. The dawn was breaking when we gathered—Indians, journalists, police—on the quayside to meet her.

And it was just after sun up, with the tugs panting and straining at the hawsers, that the great stern of her swung into view round the quay head.

Among the group of passengers whom we could see standing right astern on the second-class deck was a single white-robed figure.

It was too far for faces to be visible. But the Indians had no doubt.

With The Rainbow

"It is he," and then a cry of "Gandhi ki jai," as the ship slowly moved alongside.

Behind him there shone clear a bright rainbow. Miss Slade, in a white sari, and Mrs. Naidu, in purple had now joined him. There were recognitions and greetings, and then, as soon as the gangway, was opened, rush and turmoil and clicking of cameras.

"Gandhi is now going to his cabin," he said with a smile after parrying discreetly the shower of questions. And Gandhi went to his cabin.

It was a little later that Miss Slade took me down for a talk with him on behalf of the *Daily Herald*.

"Yes. My faith makes me an optimist, though I know that my task is a difficult one," he said.

"How far," I asked him, "have you a free hand to negotiate?"

"I am bound—absolutely—by the Karachi Congress resolution. But within that boundary I am free."

The Karachi resolution demands control by India of finance, the army and foreign relations, subject to safeguards "demonstrably in the interests of India," but also gave the delegation rather loose power to make adjustments necessary in the interests of India.

"If I am satisfied in principle, if we are agreed in principle—that is the bedrock—then adjustments can be made.

Making Position Plain

"I shall at first opportunity make my position—the conditions of my mandate—plain to the conference.

"Then it will become clear whether on that basis we can hopefully discuss details. If it seems that we can—good. If not, I shall have failed in my mission and I must return to India."

"And then?" I asked.

The fact grew grave. The calm eyes looked into the distance.

"Then probably civil disobedience must come again. But that is not a threat that if I fail in London civil disobedience will at once be proclaimed in India.

"We Want To Help"

"I do not want to embarrass the Government. People in England do not believe that. That is because they do not understand.

"It is not we that embarrass the Government. It is the situation that has been created, the wrong that has been done in the past that causes the embarrassment. It is inevitable.

"It is always so when a wrong that has been done has to be righted.

"But we want to reduce that embarrassment to a minimum. We want to help. The wrong must be righted. That is the bedrock of principle.

"But I wish to make the righting of it as easy as possible both for England and for India.

"For I am—let me say again what I have said so often—a friend of the English people as well as of my own people."

From the *Royputana* later in the morning he drove to the Grand Hotel where a room had been taken for him. There was a little hitch over this. When he heard the name of the hotel he jibbed. He shirked going to a hotel with such a name. But when it was explained that in French (which he does not speak at all) "grand" means just "big" with no indication of grandeur, he laughed and agreed.

From the Grand Hotel he went to the reception at the Students' Union. And here we had a taste of the power of the man over an audience. There was no fire in his speech, no brilliance, no artifice, no oratory.

"He Just Talked"

He just talked. He just explained very quietly, very patiently. But there is in the slow level voice the note of calm authority that is amazingly impressive.

I thought of that old saying that "He speaks as one having authority." I can give no better idea of his methods.

Mahatma Gandhi's Broadcast To America

Two different reports of Mahatma Gandhi's broadcast to America on the day of his arrival in London are published in the *Daily Herald* and the *London Times*. We present both to our readers in this country. The *Daily Herald* reports thus:—

For nearly half an hour Mr. Gandhi broadcast to the United States.

"In my opinion," he said, "the Indian struggle affects not merely India, but the whole world.

"The reason for the struggle having drawn the attention of the world, I know, does not lie in the fact that we Indians are fighting for our liberty, but in the fact that the means adopted by us for attaining that liberty are unique.

"The means adopted are not violence, not bloodshed, not diplomacy as one understands it nowadays, but they are purely and simply the truth and non-violence.

"The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient races of India to show that way out to the hungering world."

He concluded with an appeal to the conscience of the world to come to the rescue of a people dying in trying to regain their liberty.

The following report appears in the *Times*:—

Mr. Gandhi broadcast a message from Kingsley Hall, Bow, to New York and other stations on the North American Continent, in the course of which he said that in his opinion the Indian struggle in its consequences affected not merely India, but the whole world. If India was to revive the glory of her ancient past she could only do so when she attained her freedom.

"We Indians," he said, "feel that the law that governs the brute creation is not the law that should guide the human race. That law is inconsistent with human dignity. I personally should wait, if need be, for ages, rather than seek to obtain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon 35 years, that the world is sick unto death of blood spilling. I have therefore no hesitation whatsoever in inviting all the great nations of the earth to give their hearty co-operation to India in her mighty struggle.

"I am painfully conscious of our own weaknesses. We represent in India all the principal religions of the earth and it is a matter of deep humiliation to confess that we are a house divided against itself, that we Hindus and Muslims are flying at one another's throats. It is a matter of still deeper humiliation to me that we Hindus regard several millions of our own kith and kin as too degraded for our touch. I refer to the so-called untouchables."

Mahatma Gandhi's First Speech

Congress Claims

The following is a fuller report of the first speech delivered by Mahatma Gandhi at the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference than was received from Reuter's agency:—

Opening his speech, Mr. Gandhi said: "I have come to London absolutely in the spirit of co-operation and to strive my utmost to find points of agreement."

Mr. Gandhi gave an assurance that at no stage would he desire to embarrass the Government or his colleagues.

If at any time he found that he could not be of any useful service to the Conference, he would not hesitate to withdraw from it.

Vital Differences

He was obliged to make these remarks because he knew there were fundamental differences of opinion between the Government and the Congress, and it was possible that there were vital differences between his colleagues and himself. There were also the limitation under which he would be working.

"I am but a poor, humble agent," continued Mr. Gandhi, "acting on behalf of the Indian National Congress, and it may be as well to remind yourselves of what the Congress stands for, and what it is.

"You will then extend your sympathy to me, because the burden that rests upon my shoulders is really very great."

Giving details of the history of the Congress, he said that since its foundation nearly 50 years ago, it had more or less fully represented upon it Muslims, Christians, Anglo-Indians and all the religious classes and creeds.

It claimed to represent all Indian interests, and had always stood, and still stood to-day, for the removal of the curse of untouchability.

Congress was national in every sense of the term. It represented in its essence the dumb semi-starved millions concentrated over the length and breadth

of the land in its 700,000 villages, no matter whether they came from what was called British India or Indian India.

It was, essentially, a peasant organisation. Even the Indian members of the Committee would be astonished to find that the Congress, through its All-India Spinners' Association, was finding work for nearly 50,000 women in 2,000 villages, and those women were possibly 50 per cent. Mussulman, and thousands of them belonged to the "untouchable" class.

"I want to put forward the claim of Congress in the gentlest manner possible, and yet firmly," continued Mr. Gandhi.

"If you can show me that the Congress claim is inimical to the interests of the dumb millions I will personally revise it.

"I am open to conviction, but even so I have to ask my principals to consent to that revision before I can usefully act as agent of the Congress."

He then read the Karachi resolution as follows:—

"This Congress, having considered the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India (the Delhi Pact) endorses it, and desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of complete independence remains intact.

"In the event of a way remaining otherwise open to the Congress at the Conference with the representatives of the British Government, the Congress Delegation will work for this goal, and in particular so as to give the nation control of the Army, external affairs, finances, fiscal and economic policy, and to have a scrutiny by an impartial tribunal of the financial transactions of the British Government in India, and to examine and assess the obligations to be undertaken by India or England, and the right of either party to end the partnership at will, provided, however, that the Congress Delegation will be free to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India."

"No Arrogance"

So far as he had been able to understand, the Prime Minister's statement giving the considered policy of His Majesty's Government fell far short of what was aimed at and claimed by the Congress.

In the settlement arrived at at Delhi, Congress had accepted the principles of federation, responsibility at the centre, and safeguards in so far as they might be necessary in the interests of India.

Congress could not be—and he himself would never be—satisfied with a political constitution which in reality would give India nothing.

If they were intent on complete independence, it was not from any sense of arrogance, not that they wanted to parade before the universe that they had severed all connection with the British people.

On the contrary, they would find in the Karachi mandate itself that the Congress contemplated a partnership with the British people, but that connection was to be such as should exist between two absolute peoples.

"Hence you find," continued Mr. Gandhi, "that the Congress claims that either party should have the right to sever the connection to dissolve the partnership. It has got to be necessarily, therefore, of mutual benefit.

"I do not for a moment minimise the ability of Britain to hold India in subjection under the sword.

"But what would conduce to the prosperity of Great Britain and the economic freedom of Great Britain—an enslaved but rebellious India, or an India an esteemed partner with Britain to share her sorrows and take part side by side with her in her

misfortunes, an India that, if need be, of her own will, can fight side by side with Britain, not for the exploitation of a single race or a single human being, but it might be for the good of the whole world?

Stocktaking

"I said to myself, while nearing the shores of the beautiful island of England, 'Perchance it may be possible for you to convince the British Ministers that India is a valuable partner, not held by force, but by the silken cord of love.'

"An India of that character may conceivably be of real assistance to you in balancing your Budget.

"What could not two nations do—one a handful, but brave, a nation noted for having fought slavery, and that has claimed times without number to protect the weak; and the other, a very ancient nation, counted in millions, with a glorious past, representing at the present moment two great cultures, Islam and Hindu, and also containing a large number of Christian population and absorbing the whole of the splendid Zoroastrian stock—in numbers almost beneath contempt, but in philanthropy and enterprise almost unpared?

If there was a stocktaking between incoming and outgoing partners, these transactions were subject to audit and adjustment.

Congress was not guilty of any dishonourable transaction in saying that the nation should understand what it was taking over and what it should take over. Congress would never think of repudiating a single claim or burden that it should justly discharge.

If they were to live as an honourable nation, they would pay every farthing of legitimate debt with their blood.

As the committee's deliberations proceeded, he would be able to explain the implications of the Karachi mandate.

"I would love to go away," concluded Mr. Gandhi, "with the conviction that there is to be an honourable and equal partnership between Great Britain and India.

"I cannot do anything more than say it will be my fervent prayer during all the days I live in your midst that that consummation may be reached."

LECTURE ON "ANCIENT INDIAN CULTURE"

Under the auspices of the Society for the Advancement of Indian Culture a Lecture on Ancient Indian Culture will be given by Sir Kurma V. Reddi, B.A.B.L., (Agent of the Government of India, in South Africa) at the City Hall, Church Street, Pietermaritzburg, on Saturday the 17th October 1931, at 7.30 p.m.

The public is cordially invited.

