

Indian Opinion

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THE LATE IMAM SAHIB

THE sad news of the death of Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazir, which took place at Mahatma Gandhi's Ashram at Ahmedabad last Thursday, will be received with the deepest regret by Indians in South Africa. His thought takes us

back to the old days of the Passive Resistance struggle in 1908. There were a few during those days whom Mahatma Gandhi could rely upon to sacrifice their all at one word from his mouth, and Imam Sahib was perhaps the last one, amongst them, who lived so long. Others, alas, have all passed away leaving the Indian community in South Africa leaderless. Unhesitatingly, we would rank Imam Sahib with the late Dawood Mahomed, A. M. Cachalia and Parsee Rustomjee. All the above-named leaders are remembered up to this day not as

sectional leaders, but as national leaders who won the respect alike of Hindus and Mahomedans, Parsees and Christians, and of the rich and the poor. Imam Sahib's sacrifice may be said to have gone even further, for he threw in his lot entirely with Mahatma Gandhi. Notwithstanding that his mode of living was different, he being a Mahomedan, he lived the life

that was prescribed for the Ashramites, and not only did he live it, but imposed it on his whole family. After the Passive Resistance struggle, Imam Sahib and his family lived at Phoenix and helped Mahatma Gandhi in the various activities that were carried on

by him at the time. Shortly after Mahatma Gandhi left South Africa, Imam Sahib followed him and settled down with him at the Ashram where, up to the time of his death, he was on the management staff. During the great struggle in 1930 in India, Mahatma Gandhi had bid him remain in the Ashram, for he was not all fit physically to bear the strain. But when he heard of Mahatma Gandhi being spirited away by the Government, he could not possibly restrain himself and, broken as he was, he marched out, to the amaze



ment of all, and even of Mahatma Gandhi, who sent him his blessings even from his incarceration. The way he exhorted the two thousand soldiers on the eve of the great march on the salt depot at Dharasana, which was the biggest battlefield during that fight and where nearly a thousand of the non-violent army went down under the merciless blows of the lathis of the

Government officials, to trust in God and fear Him alone and no man on earth, was, indeed, a wonderful sight. He spoke not like a broken man, but as a brave general. And, with these words, he marched in front of that huge army and challenged the Government to do its worst. He was, of course, the first to be arrested by that cowardly Government and was thrown into prison for nine months. His sufferings, during those months, have naturally hastened his death. His sufferings for his brethren in this country were also great, and, accustomed as he was to living luxuriously outside, the privations he had to suffer in jail during the several years of the Passive Resistance struggle, had certainly shaken him physically for ever, and we can justifiably say that, that too has been responsible, very largely, in shortening his life. Imam Sahib had, some years ago, lost his noble wife in tragic circumstances. Mrs. Bawazir, having come to South Africa on a short trip, was returning to India in the best of health and, just when she reached Bombay, she died of heart-failure before she could set foot on the Indian soil. Later, Imam Sahib had the misfortune of losing his eldest daughter whom he got married in India and, since then, he was living in the Ashram with his only daughter, Aminabibi, who is married and has several little children who were the only pleasure of their grandfather who has, at the age of fifty-five, left them to mourn their great loss. May his soul rest in peace. We tender our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved.

Notes and News

SIR K. V. Reddi, Agent of the Government of India, will leave Johannesburg on December 30 for Lourenco Marques where he will meet Sir Fazli-Hussain and Mr. G. S. Bajpai. They will all leave for Johannesburg, arriving on January 5, where they will wait for the rest of the delegates who will land at Capetown in the first week of January. Mr. Sastri will be accompanied by Mr. P. Kodanda Rao as his private secretary and Sir Fazli-Hussain will also be accompanied by his private secretary.

UNION preparations for the Indian Conference in Capetown in January are now complete says the Pretoria correspondent of the *Natal Mercury*. The Secretary for the Interior, Mr. P. I. Hoogenhout, and the Commissioner for Asiatic Affairs, Mr. H. N. Venn, will leave for Capetown during the present month on duties in connection with the conference. Among the many matters for the Conference to discuss is the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, particularly in regard to the illegal occupation of land by Indians on the Witwatersrand. Apart from this contemplated legislation, no existing laws affecting the status of Indians in the Union and their rights will be discussed or included in the agenda, with the exception of those laws directly concerned with the Indian Agreement. The full agenda of the conference will not be drawn up until the Indian delegates arrive.

MEANWHILE there is considerable speculation as to the attitude of the Union Government regarding the Indian Agreement. In some quarters the view is held that the Agreement may be terminated, but it can be stated on excellent authority that the

Government is going to the conference with an open mind, and it is generally hoped that the inclusion of two South African Party members in the Union delegation will result in a non-political policy on the Asiatic question. Every effort is being made to avoid the question becoming a Party one.

THE correspondent further states that up to the present 9,000 Indians have been repatriated to India under the Assisted Emigration Scheme. The working of the Agreement has been thoroughly tested in the past five years, and it is now revealed that not more than three per cent. of the Indians leaving the Union under the scheme return to the Union in the time specified.

The Imperial Indian Citizenship Association Emigrants' Home

Mr. S. A. Waiz, Secretary of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay, writes to us:—

Sir,—I have read with interest your leading article under the caption "Repatriation" in the *INDIAN OPINION* of the 9th October, 1931. You have rightly observed that "the Emigrants' Home, recently established under the auspices of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, is not meant only for repatriates from South Africa. It is for all emigrants who may be passing through Bombay on their way to and fro colonies. Very few repatriates from South Africa land in Bombay and so, obviously, it is not primarily meant for them." I enclose herein, for your information, copies of the aims and objects of the Home and the rules that are observed there. You will see that by no stretch of imagination is the Home designed to encourage repatriation of Indians from South Africa.

The views of this Association on repatriation are well known. In a recent letter addressed to the Secretary, Government of India, the Council of the Association said:—

"It has more than on one previous occasion stated that the assisted repatriation scheme under the Capetown Agreement has failed. It is supported by public opinion in India and by Indians in South Africa. It is also the opinion of Mr. Venn, the Commissioner for Asiatic Affairs in South Africa, if as is rumoured he has reported on his investigations in India, that the country is not in a position to assimilate repatriates from South Africa. His report has not been published and accordingly the Council cannot say how far the rumour is correct. However the fact remains that the present policy of the Government of the Union of South Africa to repatriate the unemployed under the shelter of the Capetown Agreement, is inequitable. The Council of the Association, therefore, emphasises that the representatives of the Government of India at the forthcoming Capetown Round Table Conference should make it clear to the Government of the Union of South Africa that Indians cannot agree to the continuance of further repatriation of Indians as a condition of their treatment as an integral part of the population of the Union....."

I hope you will kindly publish this letter in order to remove any misunderstanding that the message of the Calcutta correspondent of the *Natal Mercury* might have created.

Yours etc.,

S. H. WAIZ,

Secretary.

Rules And Aims Of The 'Home'

The following are the rules and aims of the Emigrants' Home established by the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association at Jer Mahal, Dhobi Talao:

1. The Home is meant for Deck passengers only.
2. Deck passengers are accommodated for not more than a week before embarkation and after disembarkation.
3. Passengers must produce passports to establish their bona fides.
4. Passengers before admission to the Home are medically examined.
5. Consumption of liquor on the premises is strictly prohibited.
6. The Management reserves the right of refusing admission to any emigrant without assigning reasons.
7. The Management does not hold itself responsible for any loss of property not entrusted to its charge.
8. Laws of hygiene and cleanliness are strictly observed.

Aims

Hundreds of Indians travel between British Colonies, particularly Africa and India, every month. The majority of them are deck passengers, who, as a rule, are illiterate and ignorant. On arrival in Bombay they find themselves at sea. They have no friends, and there is no agency to guide and help them. They are consequently at the mercy of unscrupulous people who pose as their friends and offer to assist them in various ways, but who, in fact, are really out to loot and ruin them. The Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, therefore, have instituted an Emigrants' Home, where these poor unfortunate people can go for help, guidance, advice and temporary shelter. They will be assisted in every possible way. The Association will endeavour to hold a helping hand to them in the following ways:—

1. By securing for them the necessary tickets to their destination in Africa or other colonies either through a reliable broker or direct from Messrs. MacKinnon Mackenzie & Co. Ltd.
2. By making their sojourn in Bombay as comfortable and cheap as possible.
3. By running a Hindu and Muslim kitchen in Bombay where they can get cheap and wholesome food.
4. By giving them all the necessary information regarding the country to which they are emigrating, and if required, by giving them introductory letters to Indian leaders in the colonies.
5. By providing a Reading Room for their use, containing important Colonial and Indian newspapers.
6. By supplying indoor games and other amusements, such as gramophone with Indian records.
7. By helping them to visit places and go about sight-seeing.
8. By providing medical aid whenever necessary.
9. By helping indigent cases by providing fares to their homes in India (provided funds permit).
10. By writing letters for the illiterate.
11. By supplying all their other legitimate and immediate needs.

Experience will show us that there are many other ways in which the Association can help the emigrants, which can be gradually introduced, as funds permit.

Natal Indian Congress

The Secretaries' Report

The following is the annual report of the joint honorary Secretaries of the Natal Indian Congress submitted at the annual general meeting held on December 6 at the Fawcett Rustomjee Hall, which speaks for itself:—

We have pleasure in submitting our annual report for your consideration and approval.

The report covers a period of four years, during which period the Congress has done a tremendous amount of work, and if, therefore, the report is somewhat lengthy, we crave your indulgence. A few more pages would have been added if a report were given of the hundreds of interviews that your officials have had with various Government, Municipal and other officials,

RIGHT HONOURABLE MR. SASTRI

Mr. Sastri returned to Natal after a somewhat lengthy sojourn in the Cape and the Transvaal Provinces, towards the beginning of February 1928. During his stay in Durban, he had occasion to visit several of the important centres in Natal with a view to affording the Indians resident there to hear him on the Capetown Agreement and other subjects. All these meetings were arranged by your Congress whose action was fully appreciated. We are indeed indebted to Mr. Sastri for having consented, amidst his multifarious engagements, to visit the various centres and address meetings. These meetings were much helpful to your Congress in that the people throughout the length and breadth of Natal were able not only to understand the Capetown Agreement and its implications but also were able to comprehend the part played by the Congress in the Agreement.

CONDONATION

We need hardly mention that this question was very much in the fore during 1927 and 1928. Despite the Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri's assurances with regard to the sincerity of the Government there had been much misunderstanding in the community. Undoubtedly there had been forces at work to undermine the work in connection with the Condonation Scheme and this occasioned no less anxiety on the part of your officials. The question was fully discussed by the delegates of the three provinces that attended the Kimberley Conference and the Scheme was accepted. Unfortunately various rumours were current and in consequence the community was much perturbed. This necessitated your Congress to hold mass meetings not only in Durban, but also in the various centres in Natal. The object of these meetings was to explain fully the condonation scheme and to exhort those Indians who had entered the country illegally to accept the scheme. Two mass meetings were held in Durban. At both these meetings the Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri was in attendance and spoke lengthily and explained the scheme. The meetings were well attended and those present left no stone unturned to raise any question that affected the would-be condonees. Meetings were held at Tugue and Stanger where your President Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Christopher and your joint secretaries addressed the meetings and explained the scheme. In response to the request made by those resident in the Northern Districts of Natal meetings were arranged at Ladysmith, Newcastle and Dundee. These meetings were attended by your President, the Deputy-President of the South African Indian Congress, Mr. Albert Christopher and your joint Secretary Mr. A. I. Kaje. As was the case at the Durban meetings, a feature of all these meetings was that many questions were asked of the officials and answered. A result of these meetings was the response made by the illicit entrants in accepting the condonation scheme and obtaining the protection certificates. In order that the Congress may not be blamed for any oversight in regard to the notification to the Indian community to accept the scheme, your Congress even a few days before the date of the expiry of the scheme, printed circulars in English and various Indian dialects requesting the illicit entrants to accept the scheme. During the progress of the scheme many points arose especially those affecting the wives and children. With a view to clearing all doubts in this connection your President and the Executive of the South African Indian Congress have had occasions to proceed to Pretoria for the purpose of meeting Mr. Venn and Mr. Schmidt and ascertain their answers to the various questions put forth. At Durban numerous interviews have had to be arranged with Mr. Venn and Mr. Hartshorne on the matter. In order that applicants applying for condonation may not be subjected to any harsh treatment at the hands of the officials and in order that the application forms may be filled without much delay your Congress opened an office at 140 Queen Street. At this office the services of Mr. Charles were procured and your President as well as Messrs. B. A. Maghrajh, B. M. Patel and Ajam Haffjee were in constant attendance attending the requirements of the condonees. Your president was present at the office of the Principal Immigration Officer, Point, throughout the period that applications for condonation were accepted. The evidence from each applicant was taken in the presence of your president. This resulted in the applicants receiving not only the good treatment at the hands of the officials, but also were not subjected to unnecessary questions. Your Congress arranged with the Maitzberg Branch secretary Mr. S. R. Naidoo, to help the applicants in making their applications.

EDUCATION ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

This Committee sat to enquire into the question of Indian education in Natal. Its terms of reference were:

- (1) The existing facilities as a whole in town and country areas.
- (2) The conditions of service of Indian teachers in Government and Government-aided schools, including salary, promotion, discipline and pension.
- (3) The present system of Provincial Grants-in-aid and changes which may be considered to be necessary.
- (4) The financial basis of Indian education having regard to the services of the Province, the various demands upon them and the adequacy or otherwise of the existing Union Government subsidies in so far as they affect Indian education.

Mr. K. P. Kichlu and Miss Gordon were sent out by the Government of India to assist the Committee. It fell to your Congress to gather all the statistics and data as were necessary for the preparation of the Indian case. With this end in view your Congress assisted the two experts from India in obtaining all requirements and visiting all the centres where Indians resided. Nearly every school in the Province of Natal was visited. With a view to showing the Committee the deplorable state of some of the school buildings where Indian children were being educated, your Congress, with the assistance of Mr. B. A. Meghraj, took snapshots of these buildings. Some of the snaps taken presented a very ugly feature of Indian education. In order that every centre gave evidence before the committee your Congress has had to work strenuously to bring home to the Indians in various centres the absolute necessity of tendering evidence. It is indeed pleasing to report that the several letters written met with ready response and the Education Inquiry Committee was inundated with voluminous evidence. The evidence tendered brought proof more than sufficient for the purpose of shewing that Indian education in the country was grossly neglected. Your president Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Albert Christopher, Mr. V. S. C. Pather and your joint Secretary Mr. A. I. Kujee were present throughout the proceedings of the Committee and assisted the representatives from the various centres in giving their evidence.

Your Congress submitted a lengthy statement covering every aspect of the question. The following were the observations and requirements of the Congress, viz:—

- (1) That all Government-aided schools should be taken over and controlled by the Government.
- (2) That free and compulsory education should be extended to Indians.
- (3) That further schools should be built where necessary to cope with the large number of children who are deemed to be receiving no education.
- (4) That no distinction should be made on the grounds of race or colour in the payment of Teachers' salaries, and that the principle of equal pay for equal work be strictly adhered to.
- (5) That the standard in all primary schools should be raised in order that the children completing their primary course could be admitted into the secondary schools or become eligible for apprenticeship under the Apprenticeship Act.
- (6) That technical, industrial and agricultural schools should be opened for Indian children.
- (7) That Government bursaries be open for Indian children.
- (8) That physical culture and first aid be taught in all schools.
- (9) That the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides movements be extended to Indian children.
- (10) That the principal Indian vernaculars should be introduced as optional subjects in the primary schools or grants-in-aid be given to vernacular schools conducted on approved lines.

Mr. K. P. Kichlu and Miss Gordon submitted a very lengthy memorandum.

As a result of the Enquiry the Provincial Government, which were spending £2 10s. out of the £5 5s. subsidy that it was receiving from the Union Government, is now spending the whole of the subsidy of £5 5s. on Indian education. Many new schools have been opened thereby absorbing about 3,000 children who were not receiving education. There is still much to be done in the fields of education, for there are still about 14,000 Indian children of school-going age, all who are not receiving any education.

The establishment of the Sastri College towards which Mr. Sastri devoted much of his time, opened up a new epoch in the history of this country.

The scale of salaries that the Indian teachers are now receiving is better than they were receiving before the Commission.

Two Government bursaries are open to Indian children with an injunction to take teachers' courses.

LIQUOR BILL

Section 104 of the Liquor Bill introduced by Mr. Tielman Roos, then Minister of Justice, adversely affected our countrymen engaged in the liquor and catering trades. A mass meeting of our community was held at the Rawat's Bioscope Hall on Sunday the 29th January 1928 at which a resolution of protest was passed.

The resolution passed at the meeting was wired to the Minister of Justice. With cuttings of the various leaderettes from the European Press, which together with your chairman's speech were cyclostyled and sent to every member of Parliament.

Although an amendment was made in the Bill, our countrymen are still at the mercy of the Minister, for, they are obliged

to take out exemption certificates if they are to remain in employment.

DEATH OF HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

A day before the mass meeting was held to protest against the Liquor Bill, our community learned with deep regret the death of the late Hakim Ajmal Khan. Opportunity was therefore taken at the mass meeting to pass our vote of condolence. A cable was sent to the Indian National Congress.

DANNHAUSER RELIEF FUND

It would be remembered that the *Natal Witness* inaugurated a public fund with a view to alleviating the distress caused to the families of those who lost their lives in the disaster in the Dannhauser Coal Mines. The *Natal Witness* handed over the amount of £450 9s. 10d. to the Congress to administer the funds. Your Congress sent out Mr. V. Lawrence and subsequently Swami Bhawani Dayal on two occasions with a view to ascertaining the dependents of the deceased and arriving at the amounts to be given to each of them.

The following amounts have already been paid out viz:

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Kulsam Bee | £75 |
| Ramaka | £135 |
| Munsamy Chetty | £40 |
| Chinnamah | £125 |

The sum of £25 was voted to Selasee. This person had gone away to India and it was only lately that his address was ascertained through the courtesy of the Agent of the Government of India, and this amount is being sent through the Agent.

The amount of £50 due to Chengia is still with the Congress to be paid out when the minor becomes of age. These monies have been invested.

NORTHERN DISTRICT INDIANS

Under Act 33 of 1927, Vryheid became part of Transvaal in so far as the Indians were concerned. Indians residing there were asked to register themselves in terms of the Transvaal Registration Act. The Department of the Interior informed the congress that Mr. Dobson would be at Vryheid for the purpose of registering Indians, and, to facilitate his work, your congress was asked to send a representative over. Our people were asked to prove three years' continuous residence to entitle them for registration. Your congress sent out Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi to Vryheid to help Mr. Dobson and our people. With the exception of 13 Indians all the others were registered. The 13 lodged appeals against the decision of Mr. Dobson. Mr. Frank Appanah interviewed the Solicitor at Vryheid to take on the appeals, but the Solicitor wanted £50. Mr. Appanah desired the help of the congress in the matter. Mr. Albert Christopher volunteered to take the appeals free of charge. He went up to Vryheid with Mr. S. R. Naidoo and appeared for the appellants. Of the 13 appeals 11 were successful, one did not turn up and the other was not able to produce evidence of three years domicile. Your congress is extremely grateful to Mr. Christopher and Mr. S. R. Naidoo for their services in the matter.

INDIAN HOUSING

The central housing board on the 23rd day of October, 1928, sat to enquire into the housing conditions of Indians in and around Durban. Your congress arranged with your Clairwood branch and other of our representatives in the Districts to tender evidence before the Board. Your congress also arranged for Mr. A. Christopher to appear before the Board on behalf of the congress to cross-examine European witnesses and lead evidence. Mr. Christopher sat throughout the proceedings of the Board. Your congress submitted a lengthy statement.

Your officials took the opportunity of taking the members of the Board to various districts and also of showing various lands within the Borough which could be used for the building of houses for Indians. It is significant that the Board for the most part agreed with the observations made by the congress and charged the Durban Corporation for its neglect of duty in regard to the housing of Indians.

As an outcome of the recommendations of the Housing Board, the Central Housing Board gave the Durban Corporation the sum of £50,000 under the Housing Act for the purpose of building houses for Indians. This sum the corporation wanted to use for building houses on its Cato Manor land. Your congress objected to it as being a scheme to segregate Indians. As a result of our opposition the scheme was not proceeded with and the amount was lying idle with the corporation. A few months back the Minister of the Health warned the Municipality that it would withdraw the amount if it did not proceed with the housing. The warning led the corporation to grant a deputation from the congress an interview with its housing committee. Your deputation maintained that there were certain lands in Durban suitable for Indian housing. Various sites were pointed out. The Borough Engineer Mr. Watson, who was present throughout the interview, maintained that every site that was pointed out by the deputation was required for public purposes. The sites adjacent to the proposed Morning Market and the Carlisle Street Indian School, were also stated to be set apart for public purposes. The housing committee of the Council however agreed to consider the feasibility of building a number of houses on the Carlisle Street site. This was also turned down later. Your deputation further made a suggestion that a sum of £25,000 should be advanced to Indians owning freehold properties outside the present borough boundaries but within the boundaries of Greater Durban. This

suggestion was agreed to and the Council, it will have been noticed, is inviting applications for loans.

The application form being in the English language it was not possible for our people to be acquainted with same. Your congress has therefore arranged with the Estates Manager to have the application forms printed in all vernacular languages. These are being distributed.

The balance of £25,000 will be utilised by the Durban corporation towards building houses for Indians. It is hoped that our people will take the fullest advantage of the loans and thereby improve their housing conditions.

RECEPTION TO K. P. KICHLU AND MISS GORDON

On the eve of their departure for India after completing their work in Natal, your congress arranged a banquet in their honour. The banquet was arranged in the Town Hall, at which suitable presents were made both to Mr. Kichlu and Miss Gordon.

ADDRESS TO GENERAL HERTZOG

The Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, General Hertzog, visited Pietermaritzburg during July 1928. The opportunity was seized by your congress to present him with an address on vellum and placed in a silver cylinder. Your officials travelled to Maritzburg for this purpose. Mr. Sastri was present and introduced your officials to the General.

JOHANNESBURG INDIAN BOY SCOUTS

The Boy Scouts formed at Johannesburg by the Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney, arrived at Durban on the 5th of July 1928 to camp out for a fortnight. They were the guests of the congress throughout their stay in Durban. Several functions were arranged.

INDIAN TRADE MISSION

The Indian Trade mission comprising Dr. Meek, Mr. Dutta, Mr. Maloney and the Secretary Mr. Bose arrived at Durban on the 2nd May 1928. Your officials welcomed and garlanded them at the Wharf.

INDIAN TRADE UNION CONGRESS

The formation of Trade Unions amongst Indians taxed the officials of your congress to its utmost. Indians were not admitted to European unions. The Labour Department made a suggestion that Indians should form parallel unions. The suggestion was of far-reaching importance and on it rested the future of Indian labour movement. Your congress discussed the matter at some considerable length and it desired to convene a trade union congress at the Durban Town Hall. Prior to convening the congress, your officials assisted in the formation and registration of all unions in respect of all trades and industries in which Indian labour was predominant. As a result the following unions were registered, viz:

Laundry Men's Union, Tinsmith's Union, Tobacco Workers' Union, Bread and Biscuit Workers' Union.

Your congress convened a trade union congress in the Durban Town Hall. The congress was opened by the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri. Mr. A. Christopher was appointed the President of the congress. The function was an unqualified success.

As a result the Natal Workers' Congress was formed of which Mr. Christopher is the President and your Secretaries are the joint Secretaries.

PUBLIC FAREWELL RECEPTION TO THE RT. HON. V. S. S. SASTRI AND WELCOME RECEPTION TO SIR K. V. REDDI

The Durban Town Hall was the venue of a public reception to the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri and a welcome reception to Sir K. V. Reddi who had arrived to take Mr. Sastri's office. The function was a brilliant success and the Town Hall was overcrowded. Mr. Sastri, Sir K. V. Reddi and Mr. P. K. Rao were garlanded and presented with silver salvers, all of which were inscribed.

BANQUET TO RT. HON. V. S. S. SASTRI

On the 29th January your congress gave a farewell banquet at the Town Hall in honour of Mr. Sastri. There was a representative gathering of Indians and Europeans.

MR. J. D. TYSON'S DEPARTURE

Your congress arranged a public reception at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall on the 7th July 1929, at which a silver salver was presented to Mr. Tyson. Mr. Tyson came out to South Africa with Mr. Sastri. During his stay in South Africa he always co-operated with the congress and he was ever ready to render any assistance that the congress required of him. In particular his assistance during the sittings of the Education Enquiry Commission and the Central Housing Board was invaluable.

SIR KURMA REDDI

Towards the end of November 1929 Sir K. V. Reddi, Agent of the Government of India, left for India to recuperate after his serious illness. Owing to his delicate state of health, your congress was not able to arrange a public reception. But opportunity was taken to present him at the wharveside with a silver salver suitably

inscribed. There were many hundreds of our countrymen present and our President, on behalf of the congress, wished him bon voyage.

RECEPTION TO SIR THOMAS HOLLAND

Opportunity was taken of the visit of Sir Thomas Holland, the President of the British Association, to this country, to accord him a reception. The reception was held at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall.

HAWKERS AND PEDLARS

The Durban Town Council framed certain By-Laws which prohibited Indian hawkers and pedlars from trading in certain portions of certain streets in Durban. Your congress protested against the By-Laws as they tended to deprive the livelihood of a number of the poorer classes of our community. Subsequently a deputation consisting of Messrs. A. Christopher, P. R. Pather, M. A. H. Moosa, B. M. Patel and B. A. Meghraj, with Mr. Christopher as the spokesman, waited on the Council-in-Chamber. Notwithstanding our efforts the By-Laws were passed. Subsequently letters of protest were sent to the Administrator and the Agent of the Government of India.

EXTENSION OF BOROUGH BOUNDARIES

Your congress tendered evidence before and submitted a statement to the commission that sat at Durban to enquire into the extension of the borough boundaries. Your congress supported incorporation subject to certain provisos in regard to the imposition of rates on a graduation scale and the development of Indian areas.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON DRAFT ORDINANCE TO EXTEND BOROUGH BOUNDARIES

Your Congress submitted a statement before this Select Committee at the Provincial Council at Pietermaritzburg. In this statement the congress claimed, in view of the large Indian population that Greater Durban would absorb, the extension of Municipal Franchise for Indians based on property and education qualification.

SASTRI COLLEGE LECTURERS

On the 16th April 1930 Messrs. T. R. Nair, P. K. Koru, A. Shakoor, F. Khan, B. T. Trivedi and G. L. Sinha arrived from India to take up duties at the Sastri College. Your officials welcomed and garlanded them at the quay and in the evening a public reception was accorded to them at the Royal Picture Palace.

INDIAN TEACHERS PENSION FUND

A Draft Ordinance, having as its objects the discrimination of European and Indian Teachers in regard to the Teacher's Pension Fund, was brought forward by the Natal Provincial Council. Your congress in conjunction with the Indian Teachers' Society tendered evidence before the Select Committee. The Ordinance aimed to create a non-European Fund based on gratuity basis. Objection was lodged against this discrimination.

DURBAN BEACH FORESHORE ORDINANCE

A Draft Ordinance promoted by the Durban Corporation prohibiting Indian and Coloured races from bathing on the Beach Foreshore was gazetted. Your Congress objected to the ordinance on the grounds that it discriminated racially. As a result of our objections Mr. Mackeurtan who appeared for the Durban Corporation, amended the ordinance, the amendment reading that the Durban Corporation may build booths for Indians and Coloureds.

ADDINGTON HOSPITAL

The conditions at the Indian Ward at the Addington Hospital were not congenial to the health of the Indian patients. Your officials took the matter with the Superintendent of the Hospital and, as a result, conditions have slightly improved. The Superintendent was very pleased to receive a deputation from the Congress and expressed the desire that your Congress should co-operate with him on all matters pertaining to the Indian patients. He admitted that the Hospital was unpopular with the Indians and hoped that the co-operation of the Congress would be the means of popularising the Hospital.

There is much to be done if our people are to receive good treatment at the Addington Hospital. The recent change in the Indian diet at the Hospital was made after consultation with the Congress.

INDIAN IMMIGRATION LAWS

These Laws, with the introduction of Indian labour stopped, were obsolete. Your officials, with Mr. Christopher had several interviews with Mr. Venn the Commissioner of Asiatic Affairs, and sought his assistance. Your Delegates at the South African Indian Congress persistently brought the question forward. As a result of our agitation much of these laws have been repealed. Your Congress, despite strenuous efforts, was not successful in securing the abolition of the 9d. tax.

CHILD WELFARE SOCIETY

This Society, which was formed under the auspices of the Congress, is doing splendid work. Your President is the President of the Society and officials of the Congress are on the Committee. Sister Standing is in charge of the Centre in Brook Street.

INDIAN BOY SCOUTS

The formation of the detachments of Indian Boy Scouts has been agitating the minds of your officials. Correspondence ensued between your Congress and the local Scouts Association. This was followed by a meeting between a deputation headed by Mr. Christopher, from your Congress, and the officials of the local Association. The late Mr. Nicolson presided at the meeting which was attended by the chief Scoutmaster Mr. E. H. Clemmens and the Commissioner Mr. Rowell. These three gentlemen were very sympathetic and desired to help the Indian movement as much as possible. The meeting resulted in the following decision, viz:—

- (1) That Indian children be accepted as full Boy Scouts without any limitation.
- (2) The Indian Troops will have their own Association which will have one representative from the European Association. The latter will have one representative from the Indian Association.
- (3) The Indian Association to have direct representation on the Natal Council.
- (4) That the Association and/or Troops must be non-political. The Troops shall have to belong to religious bodies and schools. Troops not attached to these two Institutions must be recommended by the Congress. The Indian Association shall adopt the same constitution as the European Association, and subject to the same Scout laws. For the time being there were to be no combined rallies. Scout Masters in Indian Troops should be Indians only, and they were not to reach a higher rank than that of Scout Masters.

The South African Council held at Port Elizabeth at a later date was not disposed to agree to the terms agreed to by the Natal Council.

Matters are, in consequence, at a standstill, but we feel sure that in course of time wiser counsels will prevail in the South African Council. Sir Arthur Pickford's presence in Durban was taken advantage of and a deputation from your Congress consisting of Mr. A. Christopher, Mr. J. W. Godfrey and Mr. P. R. Pather waited upon him. At the interview Messrs. E. H. Clemmens and Commissioner Rowell were present. Discussion took place for some time, but no finality was reached. Sir Arthur was very sympathetic but he said that owing to the peculiar South African conditions no movement by the Indians would be recognised by the South African Council. It was suggested by Sir Arthur that a difference should be made in the headgear as a distinguishing mark. Nothing definite was arrived at.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

In accordance with a Resolution of your Committee your Congress has in every election taken part in the Municipal Elections. Candidates soliciting Indian votes are sent for by your Committee who, after hearing their views, advise the voters to vote for such of the candidates that your Committee are satisfied with. Candidates supported by your Congress have always succeeded in their election.

INDO-EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The Indo-European Council was started by Mr. Sastri. The Congress while approving of the principle of working in co-operation with the Europeans where possible, stood for the Indian representatives on it being appointed by the Congress. The Indo-European Council in Durban has not as yet agreed to this principle, while the Indo-European Council in Maritzburg has been established on that principle.

INDIAN TECHNICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

This Committee was formed in 1930 and comprises

- (a) Three members from the Natal Indian Congress.
- (b) Three members from the Natal Workers' Congress.
- (c) Three members from amongst the Teachers engaged in the continuation classes.

Mr. B. M. Narbeth, Principal of the Natal Technical College, is the Chairman of the Committee.

In 1929 the Natal Workers' Congress, with the co-operation of Mr. S. M. Moodley, Mr. T. M. Naiker and Mr. V. Wenden, opened up evening classes for the benefit of Indian workers. These classes were carried on for about a year when the assistance of Mr. Narbeth was enlisted. The result was the formation of the above Committee. The Committee immediately instituted Commercial Classes at the Sastri College where European teachers are engaged for tuition. Classes are held in Shorthand, Bookkeeping, Typewriting, Business

Methods, Commercial Arithmetic, Commercial Correspondence and English. The European teachers receive 7/6d per hour, but the sacrifice of the Indian teachers has been enormous. For four evenings in the week for over two years they have been toiling at the classes with a pittance just sufficient to cover their travelling expenses, for most of them live outside the Borough boundaries. They have been serving unflinchingly and Mr. S. M. Moodley who is the supervisor of these classes, receives nothing. Our community is greatly indebted to them.

The Committee is now receiving a subsidy of £300 from the Union Government. This subsidy is in respect of commercial classes. The Committee hopes to receive a subsidy in respect of the continuation classes early next year.

The Committee is doing splendid work and education is now reaching the homes of those who were not able to receive education in their younger days.

PERSONAL TAX

During the last few years your Congress endeavoured to get exemptions for our people who were unable to pay the Personal Tax.

The Receivers of Revenue were not disposed to grant any exemptions. We were however able to obtain extensions of time for many people.

An amendment to the Provincial Ordinance this year brought about a change by which every Indian, irrespective of earning capacity, is obliged to pay Personal Tax. Having regard to the prevailing depression and unemployment as a result of which many thousands of our people are out of employment, your Congress sought an interview with the Provincial Secretary with a view to claiming exemptions for those who are unemployed. A deputation headed by Mr. A. Christopher waited upon the Provincial Secretary, Mr. A. E. Charter and appealed for exemptions for those of our people who are unemployed and those who earn a meagre wage. Europeans earning a wage of £8 are exempt from the payment of Personal Tax.

The deputation asked that the same principle be applied to our people, but it was informed that it was not possible to do so.

In so far as Indians are concerned exemptions will only be given to those who are indigent and those over the age of 60 years.

The deputation was however able to arrange for an extension of three months for those who are unemployed. In the event of their finding work within three months the tax must be paid. In the event of their being still unemployed at the end of three months their cases will be re-considered.

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

During the period under review there were held three Conferences namely, the first at Durban, on the 27th, 28th and 29th January 1929, the second at Johannesburg on the 5th and 6th days of October 1930, and the third at Capetown on the 30th and 31st days of December 1930 and 1st day of January 1931. Delegates attended all three conferences.

WAGE BOARD

Your officials on various occasions appeared before the Wage Board and presented the case of Indian employees and Indian employers.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Realising the extreme distress in which our unemployed people are placed, your Congress convened a meeting of the unemployed Indians at the Victoria Picture Palace on Sunday the 21st day of September 1931. Up to that date the Europeans of this town were under the erroneous impression that the number of unemployed Indians in our midst was negligible. The meeting exceeded all our expectations and was the means of

proving that the distress amongst our people due to unemployment was just as much acute as it was with the Europeans. The Mayor as well as the local Superintendent of labour were present throughout the proceedings. As a result of the meeting, and the presence of the Mayor thereat, the Durban Corporation's policy of dismissing Indian employees and replacing Europeans instead, was stayed.

A Committee has been appointed with Sir Kurma Reddi as its Chairman. A Fund called the Sir Kurma Reddi Unemployment Relief Fund has been opened. A sum of £525 has been collected of which \$125 has been received. It is proposed to collect funds for the purpose of purchasing foodstuffs for those in distress.

In this connection the Congress is deeply indebted to the Agent of the Government of India, Sir Kurma Reddi, for his service on behalf of our unemployed. He has spared no efforts to bring relief to the unemployed.

PROTEST MEETINGS

Your Congress held protest meetings at the Royal Picture Palace on the

- (1) Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill, and
- (2) Immigration Amendment Bill.

THE LATE MOULANA MAHOMED ALI

On hearing of the death of the late Moulana Mahomed Ali your Congress convened a meeting of the Indian community at the Royal Picture Palace at which a vote of condolence was passed.

A resolution with a request for the closing of all shops was passed at the meeting. In accordance therewith the following day all the shops in Durban were closed as a mark of sympathy.

THE LATE PUNDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

On hearing the news of the death of the late Pundit Motilal Nehru your Congress convened a meeting of the Indian community at the Royal Picture Palace. A resolution sympathising with the Indian Nation was passed.

The following day, as a mark of respect, practically every Indian shop was closed.

PROPAGANDA

Your Congress felt that our people in the districts of Natal should be acquainted from time to time with the work of the Congress. With this end in view meetings were arranged at Clairwood, Sydenham, Mayville, Hagenj, Tongaat, Stanger, Darnall and Maritzburg. These meetings were attended by your President Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, Messrs. Albert Christopher, P. B. Pather, A. I. Kajee, Satya Dev, S. L. Singh and B. A. Maghrajh.

It came to the notice of your officials that insidious rumours were being circulated amongst our people in the districts with the idea of prevailing upon them to take advantage of the Repatriation Scheme. In order that our people may be acquainted with the true position, your officials took advantage of these meetings and explained the position in all the Indian languages.

Amongst other subjects discussed were the question of Health Boards, Indian Housing Scheme and Personal Tax.

MASS MEETING AT TOWN HALL

The meetings above referred to were the prelude to a monster mass meeting that was held in the Durban Town Hall on Saturday the 21st day of November 1931 at 7-30 p.m. The Town Hall was filled to its fullest capacity. It is reckoned that there were 5,000 present. Your President Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, despite his illness, presided. In his lengthy speech Mr. Rustomjee traversed on all the subjects that would be discussed at the forthcoming Round Table Conference. On the question of Repatriation your President stated that the Congress was determined to condemn it and that

it was not going to be a party to any scheme which had as its object the sending away of our people.

A resolution giving a mandate to the Congress to represent the community at the Conference and asking for representation was passed.

The meeting was a huge success and once more showed that the Congress fully represented the Indian community of Natal.

FAREWELL RECEPTIONS

The following farewell receptions were accorded to the following gentlemen by your Congress:—

Messrs. E. M. Ally and Amod Mahomed, the latter of Kimberley. This reception took the nature of tea-party on the grounds of the residence of your President, Mr. S. Rustomjee; Mr. M. M. Lockhat, Mr. B. M. Patel, Mr. I. M. Haffejee, Messrs. A. H. Kazi and the late D. E. Mall, Swami Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi and Mr. R. K. Kapitan.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S BIRTHDAY

Your Congress yearly, in conjunction with the Kathiawar Arya Mandal, celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's birthday.

PUBLIC WELCOME RECEPTIONS

The following public receptions were accorded:—

- (1) To Sir Kurma V. Reddi at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, Queen Street, on the 12th day of June 1930, the occasion being his first visit to Durban since his return from India.
- (2) Mr. J. D. Tyson, after his return from Capetown where he deputed for the Agent before the Select Committee on the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill.
- (3) Professor Karve, Founder of the Indian Women's University at Poona.

SULTAN OF ZANZIBAR

(4) The Sultan of Zanzibar landed at Durban for a brief stay on his way to Zanzibar. For the first time in our history, the Durban Town Council co-operated with your Congress in arranging a civic reception in honour of the Sultan. The reception was accorded to him at the Durban Town Hall where a large audience attended.

CONDOLENCE

The Committee placed on record its profound sense of sympathy in the deaths of:—

Mrs. E. M. Ally, wife one of our Vice-Presidents Mr. E. M. Ally, Mr. Rajgopaul Naidoo, Mr. R. J. Moodaly, Mr. T. O. Moodley, Mr. Panday, son of Mr. Lutchman Panday, Moulvi Fateh Mahomed, Mr. M. O. Coovadia, Mrs. A. J. Choonoo, Mr. V. D. Mehta, Mr. P. V. Henry, Mr. M. S. Timol, Mr. D. E. Mall and Mr. Amboo Royeppen.

THANKS

Our sincere thanks are due to the many who helped us to carry on the work of the Congress satisfactorily. In particular we desire to thank and express our gratitude to Mr. A. Christopher, who has been of considerable assistance to us. Every deputation was led by him. No matter at what time of the day or night he always answered to the call of the Congress. No words can express our thanks to him. Suffice it to say that he has, throughout the period under review, shouldered the work of the Congress more than we have done.

For our President, Mr. Rustomjee, we have the highest regard. His presence at the Durban Town Hall on the 21st November, is an instance of his sacrifice. He was ill in bed for three weeks, but illness or no illness, the community's work is his foremost consideration.

To Messrs. B. A. Maghrajh, A. Sookdeo, S. L. Singh, Satya Dev, B. M. Patel, Shaik Hamed, E. M. Ally and other officials of the Congress who assisted us, our thanks are due.

Our thanks are due to the Parsee Rustomjee Hall Committee and the African Theatres Trust Ltd, for allowing your Congress to make use of the Hall whenever necessary.

Lastly we thank the Editors of the *Indian Opinion*, *Indian Views*, *Natal Advertiser* and the *Natal Witness*, who gave reports of our meetings, receptions etc., from time to time.

A. I. KAJEE } Joint Hon.
 P. R. PATHEE } Secretaries.
 Natal Indian Congress.

London Letter

(Continued from last week)

The following is the concluding portion of the London Letter written by "M. D." in Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India* part of which appeared in our last week's issue:—

"That Camouflage"

The "Friends" or the Quakers who were the first to extend to Gandhiji the nation's welcome in their own House, have been trying to help as best they can. They have met Gandhiji more than once. Once they mooted the question of sending a deputation to India and discussed every detail of personnel and terms of reference and *modus operandi*. I propose to give an account of that interview some day. Last week they met Gandhiji with a series of absorbing questions on the Indian situation. I shall not cover all the questions and answers. But I cannot resist the temptation of recording the burning language in which Gandhiji exposed the hypocrisy and camouflage of placing the minorities' questions: as an obstacle to the solution of the constitutional question: "I have described the Conference as packed and that deliberately. I could, if you want, demonstrate to you how wicked some of the things have been, how much wire pulling has taken place before this packed Conference came into being. Supposing we had been asked to elect representatives of the Mahasabha or the Mussulmans or the untouchables, we should easily have had Congress representatives. Would Congress ever have allowed the rights of the Indian States' subjects to be sold away? It is a untenable claim for the Princes to make that they represent their subjects also. It was a most fatal flaw in the Conference that the Princes should have been invited to come in a double capacity. There is a States' Princes' Conference in India and it could raise a terrific row over this question, but I persuaded them to leave their hands.

"I have told you what is agitating my mind. You may take the Congress to be incapable of bartering away the minorities' rights. The untouchables I know as no one can claim to know. It would be equal to killing them if separate electorates were given them. They are at present in the hands of superior classes. They can suppress them completely and wreak vengeance on the untouchables who are at their mercy and it is because I want to prevent that thing happening that I could fight the demand for separate electorates for them. Whilst I am saying this I know I am opening out my shame to you. But in the existing state of things how could I invite destruction for them? I would not be guilty of that crime. Dr. Ambedkar, able as he, has

unhappily lost his head over this question. I repudiate his claim to represent them.

"Take now the other end—the Europeans. I should stoutly resist separate representation for them on other grounds. They are the ruling race and they are exercising an influence which is perhaps unique in the country. You know how they were able to make the life of the first Indian Governor hell for him? His very secretariat shadowed him and his very servants were acting as his spies. One of the bravest of men he died of a broken heart. I said to Sir Hubert Carr representing the European community on the R.T.O., 'Why not come to us for votes? You may be sure that a man like Mr. Andrews would always be returned by an Indian electorate.' He said: 'Mr. Andrews would not be a fit representative of Englishmen. He no more represents the English mind than an Indian does.' Well, I say that if the Englishman must stay in India he must represent the Indian mind. What did Dadabhai Naoroji, Lord Salisbury's 'black man' do? He went to Parliament on the vote of Central Finsbury. As for the Anglo-Indians, I know perhaps the poor among them much better than Col. Gidney does. I know their condition through and through. They have wept before me. They have said, 'We try to ape the Englishman, but he will not adopt us. And we have cut ourselves away from Indians by taking to strange manners and customs.' I say to them, 'Come back to us and we will adopt you.' Well if they went in for separate electorates they would become untouchables. Col. Gidney's position may be quite safe, but all will not be knighted like him. But they will all be safe if they approach our people by the right of service and claim their vote."

South African Indian Congress

EMERGENCY CONFERENCE

An Emergency Conference of the South African Indian Congress will be held at the Trade Hall, Johannesburg, on the 31st day of December, 1931, and the 1st day of January, 1932.

—Agenda—

"ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE"

DRABJEE I OMJEE,
 President.
 KAJEE Joint Hon.
 PATHEE Secretaries.

Indian Child
 BROOK

Public
 Centre
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