

Indian Opinion

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Indian Opinion

SATURDAY, APRIL 18th, 1908.

A Call to the Coloured People

THE Johannesburg Municipality seems bent on making history and unconsciously doing a service to the coloured races residing within its jurisdiction. As will be noticed from our columns, this municipality has instructed its General Purposes Committee to ask the local Government to grant it the power, in plain words, to segregate all coloured persons, to dispossess them of the right to hire or own land and to prevent natives from using the sidewalks. The rebuke recently administered to it by the Supreme Court has not affected the Municipality in any way whatsoever. All it cares for, is to hunt the coloured people out of Johannesburg unless they would consent to remain in it as servants of the white inhabitants of Johannesburg. For the fair fame and name of the cosmopolitan people of Johannesburg, we know that they as men do not want the Municipality to possess any such powers. But coloured people cannot sit still when nefarious attempts on their liberty are being made by a rich and powerful Municipality. It may believe that to unite in a body

and present an unbroken front to that Corporation even as the Chinese and the Indians did to the Government on the Asiatic Registration Act. Hitherto, Asiatics and other coloured people have worked quietly along their own lines. But the Johannesburg Municipality is evidently manufacturing useful cement to bring the two together and trying almost to compel them to unite in the face of common danger.

AT THE RECENT HET VOLK CONGRESS in Pretoria, in reply to certain delegates who urged that the Government should remove all Asiatics from the towns into locations ("bazaars" is the bizarre term used to designate the Asiatic reserves), General Smuts intimated that it was the Government's intention to introduce a new Municipality Bill into Parliament next session, which, he hoped, would solve the question of coloured people living among whites. Let us hope that there is no connection between this announcement of General Smuts' and the anti-colour clauses of the Draft Gold Law. For if it foreshadow a general segregation policy in the Transvaal Colony, it will be necessary for Indians to beware. As Lord Amthill has remarked, the whole Asiatic question in the Colonies requires careful consideration and revision, if the different parts of the Empire are to be held together without much friction.

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE PAPER will be found the prize essay on the ethics of passive resistance. We confess to a feeling of disappointment, because we consider that the competition, in spite of what was on all hands admitted to be a tempting prize, was not keenly taken up, nor do we consider that the essay we present to our readers reaches the level we should have wished. We have ventured to take out of the essay political references which we thought were out of place in a treatise which was meant to be used by men irrespective of their political bias. We think that passive resistance is not by any means confined to the gain of political rights or to opposition to laws. In this wider sense of the term any essay should be strictly non-political. However, Mr. Maurice has given a readable essay, and collected well-known authors' quotations worthy of reproduction. We trust that it will stimulate the study of a subject which is of paramount importance, especially to our coloured races.

AMONG THE MANY PROBLEMS OF STATE that will engage the attention of the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, none can excel that of inquiring into the true position of the handful of Indians who went to Lobito Bay from Natal on behalf of an English Company and who have now returned with their tale of woe. We consider the question to be of first-rate importance for the very reason that the men are few and that they are such as are never likely themselves to demand justice in the usual manner. The Natal Government has its own duty to perform in the matter. We gratefully recognize the precautions taken by it, when the men were allowed to leave for Lobito Bay. It can do more even now. But its function is limited. It cannot effectively reach the Portuguese authorities or the Company whose domicile is in England. It is essentially work for the Colonial and India Offices. Mr. Morley has translated himself to the serene atmosphere of the House of Lords. He is a philosopher, an Englishman among Englishmen, and chief of the India Office. Here is an opportunity for him and Lord Crewe. If one-tenth of the reports published be true, there has undoubtedly been terrible neglect and inhumanity somewhere. It must not be forgotten that the men were sent only after the Imperial Government gave its sanction.

MR. WALL, THE CHIEF ENGINEER of the Central South African Railways, last week delivered an interesting address in Johannesburg on the subject of the new deviation on the Delagoa Bay portion of the system, in the course of which he pointed out what an admirable market for Transvaal coal might be found in India. It is difficult to foresee the possibilities of that wonderful Colony. But if the Transvaal ever produces sufficient coal for export to India, it may be well to inquire whether the Transvaal in the face of its anti-Indian policy, can with any reason look to India as a profitable market. Our contemporary, the *Rand Daily Mail*, the other day scouted the idea of Indian retaliation and produced figures showing that South Africa could well do without the Indian market. And so it no doubt could for the present. The distinguished Indians and no less distinguished Englishmen who have made India their home or owe, as they say, all they have to India, to whom the *Mail* was referring, have looked further ahead and suggested possibilities of which colonial statesmen have to take note. The

problem in its twofold aspect faces Canada even now. The Canadians want the Japanese trade but do not want the Japanese in their midst. But Canadian statesmen easily distinguish between future immigration and treatment of Asiatics already settled in that country. Will South Africa follow suit? Or will it, because it does not, as some people imagine, receive much present benefit from India, so regulate its relations with her peoples, that it will shut out the future possibilities? That is what Mr. Wall has to consider when he talks of the Indian market.

WE DRAW OUR READERS' ATTENTION to extracts appearing in another column of this issue, referring to the manifesto, recently published, of the South African Forward Party, inaugurated in Johannesburg, of which Messrs. C. F. Tainton, C. F. Stallard, and O. L. McDonald are the bright, particular stars. The sting, as is usual in these documents, lies in the tail. The ideal of the "Forwards" is to disfranchise every coloured person in South Africa, and to secure the repatriation "in course of time" of all coloured persons not born in South Africa. In other words, one Indian, who is born in the sub-continent, shall be entitled to remain here, whereas his father or brother, who had the misfortune to be born outside the pale of South African civilisation, is to be given his *congé* politely but firmly, "in course of time." "In course of time," doubtless, many other Utopian schemes, dear to the heart of the advocates of a white man's country, will be adumbrated. "In course of time," too, a little more common humanity will have penetrated the souls of those who are now crying for the moon. If those good people could only be induced to think with their minds and feel with their hearts simultaneously, the many critical problems awaiting solution would melt away as ice before the rising sun.

Pretoria and the Compromise

Chamber of Commerce Speech

In the course of his annual address to the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce, Mr. E. Chappell, President of the Chamber, said that the Asiatic question, a question which has been exercising public opinion in the Transvaal for the last 30 years, has at last been solved in a manner acceptable to the whole country; and, with due consideration to the important Imperial interests involved, and although perhaps the settlement arrived at did not meet the views of the extremists on either side, still no reasonable man can question the wisdom of a compromise on a matter such as this, so fraught as it was with dangerous possibilities.

Jews and Indians in the Transvaal

An Interesting Incident

Mr. L. W. Ritch, Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee in London, has written the following letter to the *S. A. Jewish Chronicle*:

I observe in a recent issue of your journal that you do me the honour to mention my name in connection with the protestation in this country arising out of the recently-threatened degradation of our Indian fellow-subjects lawfully resident in the Transvaal.

It cannot, of course, be a matter for surprise that the Jew should figure prominently in any movement directed against persecution and intolerance, whether of race or religion. We owe that much at least to the memory of our forbears whose lives were lived in one or other of the Ghettos of Europe, and whose own manhood was crushed and distorted beneath the dead weight of calculated repression. What more natural, therefore, than that a people, itself bearing persecution's mark, should regard with aught but horror the imposition upon others of the shackles whose galling touch still burns in the memory.

In this country, Jews of position and influence; in the Transvaal, my friends Polak and others—notably yourself—have, therefore, but responded to those instincts which adversity and oppression of the race have sharpened.

If some there were who from timidity kept astride the fence, or others, who, from even more ignoble motives, shouted with the crowd, let them be thankful that justice has been done in spite of them. What Jew but knows that violation of the law spells retribution to the law-breaker, that the pendulum must perforce swing back to the point at which its equilibrium was first disturbed, that a wrong done by a member of the community reacts, of necessity, upon the whole communal organism. The Jew understands that "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is not a commandment, but a statement of fact illustrative of Nature's law of compensation whereby we shall reap what we have sown. Nor is the danger of implication avoided by any form of tacit assent to an obvious injustice. To play for safety when a sacred principle is under attack in the person of another is equally a betrayal of duty. What Jew dare coquette with the demons of racial prejudice, religious intolerance, or the jealousies engendered by superior business acumen, thrift, sobriety and general self-discipline? Is it forgotten that "the smell of an oil rag" libel was directed against the raw "Peruvian" long before the role of scapegoat was transferred from him to the Asiatic? Has the Jew even now found such

universal favour? And is he so thoroughly secure from attack on the score of his race and idiosyncracies? Even if he were, he would, I submit, be none the more absolved of his duty to fling himself into the breach against oppression wherever he finds it, to cry out against "rishu," no matter what its guise.

We are fond of proclaiming ourselves God's missionaries—His chosen people. Perhaps we are; and, if so, the responsibility resting upon us could hardly be greater. Certain it is that we bear the impress of a tragic career, and are bowed with the mighty burden of the cross of the ages. A people purged in the fires of adversity as this people has been should at least be worthy of a world mission.

The Editor of the *S. A. Jewish Chronicle* comments as follows on the above letter:

We would direct special attention to the letter which appears in our correspondence columns, above the signature of Mr. L. W. Ritch, in which the writer reverts to the Indian question, which, fortunately for this community, was settled some few months ago. It appears that Mr. Ritch has had his attention drawn to our reference to the noble and active part which he took in arousing public indignation in England against the threatened degradation of the Indians lawfully resident in the Transvaal. As he says, it is not a matter of surprise that the Jew should figure prominently in any movement directed against persecution and intolerance, whether of race or religion, and the active part which this journal took when the discussion was at its height, and our refusal to join the rabble in their shout "down with the Indians," secured us the esteem of all those who thought with us, and even the respect of those who, for reasons which we need not here enter into, held contrary opinions. As we have remarked above, the occasion and the consequent discussions, heated though they were, have all passed into the limbo of forgotten possibilities, and nothing would be gained by further discussions in these columns, save that we would remind our readers that it is in their own interests, even if they only view ethical matters from that selfish standpoint, that where a race is likely to be subjected to an obvious injustice, that they (our people) should not be guilty of even tacit acquiescence, since, as in this case, what was the persecution of the Indian then might well have resulted in opposition to the Jew soon after.

INDIAN MISSIONARY FOR NATAL. East London, April 7.—At the Wesleyan Conference to-day, the appointment was recommended of the Rev. T. Subrahmanyam, minister now in India, to the charge of the Indian mission in Natal.—*Natal Mercury*.

The Existing Gold Law of the Transvaal

As it Affects Coloured People

Section 3. The term "coloured person" shall signify any African, Asiatic, native or coloured American person, Coolie or Chinaman.

Section 49. When a Chief with his Council desires that the land which has been pointed out to him by the Government for a dwelling-place with his people (location), which he occupies with his people, should be prospected for precious metals, he may apply to the Government to cause such to be done by white persons. The persons proposed by the Chief and his Council shall in the first place be taken into consideration by the Government. Should the Government consider it desirable to authorise other persons to prospect, this may be done without reason being given, those persons excepted whose farms were expropriated by the Government on behalf of the extension of the location, to whom the preference shall be given. The Government shall cause to be pointed out to the person or the persons authorised by it what portion of the location has been rendered available for prospecting.

Whenever it appears through prospecting that payable precious metals are found within such locations, the State President shall have the right, with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, to declare such land, either wholly or in part, public diggings, under the regulations laid down in this Law for Government land, with this proviso, however:—

- (1) That the grazing rights shall be left to the Chief and his people.
- (2) That their kraals and lands shall be excluded, and shall not be disturbed, except with their consent.
- (3) That sufficient water shall be left for their households and for their cattle.
- (4) That a "mynpacht" under the terms of this Law may be granted to the person or persons authorised by the Government to prospect, when they give sufficient proof of the payableness of the ground, the size to be fixed in consultation with the Superintendent of Natives and with the Head of the Mining Department, but in no case greater than the maximum fixed for private land by Art. 25, paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Law, computed according to the number of morgen to be thrown open.
- (5) That compensation shall be given to the Chiefs and their people who have obtained the locations gratis from the Government, computed at a fourth of the proceeds of the licence and "mynpacht" moneys.
- (6) That compensation, computed at a third of such proceeds, shall be granted to the chiefs and their people who have acquired the location land wholly or in part at their own expense.

(7) The Government shall have the power to make such regulations regarding the portion of licences and "mynpacht" moneys to Moshette, and the kaffir chiefs of equal standing with him, as it may deem fit.

Section 133. No coloured person may be a licence holder, or in any way be connected with the working of the diggings, but shall be allowed only as a workman in the service of whites.

Sections 148-151. Anyone purchasing, bartering or accepting unwrought precious metal from coloured persons, either on a proclaimed public field or elsewhere within the boundaries of the South African Republic shall be punished with a fine of not more than £1,000, or imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a period not exceeding the term of five years.

The unwrought gold which is found in his possession shall by order of the Judge who passes sentence, be given back to the owner, if he is known, and otherwise declared forfeited in favour of the State.

A coloured person selling, bartering, handing over or receiving unwrought precious metal, shall be punished with lashes not exceeding fifty in number, and imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years with or without hard labour.

The unwrought gold which is found in his possession shall by order of the judge who passes the sentence, be given back to the owner if he is known, and otherwise be declared forfeited in favour of the State.

Every coloured person of African origin within the boundaries of a public digging shall be bound to have a monthly pass, which shall be obtainable at the office of the Mining Commissioner or other persons appointed for the purpose, on payment of a sum calculated at 1s. per month, except in cases where Law No. 31 of 1896 is in force.

For every contravention of this Article the offender shall be punished with a fine of five shillings, or, in default of payment, with a number of lashes not exceeding ten.

This Article shall apply also to coloured labourers exclusively employed in mining and digging on private unproclaimed land and on private farms where, according to Article 23, a written permit has been obtained, and on land which is worked under concession or mynpacht, and also on Government land and stand townships.

A coloured person who has entered into a contract, whether verbally or in writing, to serve his master as domestic servant, or as a shop or warehouse servant, or to assist him in working a claim, machinery, or water-furrow on any proclaimed field, and who leaves his master's service without permission, or who is neglectful, or refuses to do any work in discharge of his duty which can be asked and required of him according to law, or who uses threatening and insulting

language towards his master, his master's wife, or any other person placed in lawful authority over him, shall be punished with a fine not exceeding the sum of £2, or with imprisonment with or without hard labour, for a term not exceeding one month, or with lashes not exceeding 25 in number.

A servant as above mentioned, not being a coloured person, found guilty of any of the offences described in this article shall be punished with a fine not exceeding £5, or with imprisonment, with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding three months.

Het Volk Congress

Asiatics and Natives

At last week's Het Volk Congress at Pretoria, various delegates urged the Government to move all Asiatics from the towns into bazaars.

General Smuts (Colonial Secretary) said the Government intended introducing a new Municipality Bill into Parliament next session, which, he hoped, would solve the question of coloured people living among whites.

The matter was then dropped.

On the native question, the following points were on the agenda: (a) Ownership or tenancy of lands; (b) Pass Law; (c) no trading licences; (d) travelling in railway carriages; (e) tariff for native labour.

Mr. Burtendag (Ventersdorp) feared that under the present law the Transvaal would become a black man's country.

Mr. Schalk Burger said it was a burning question. The Government were now busy seeing whether a way could not be found to revert to the old system of only allowing natives to purchase land under certain conditions, but they had to consider such matter very earnestly, as any Bill dealing with natives had to be approved by the Crown.

Mr. Jacob Breytenbach (Lydenburg) thought something should be done to prevent Kaffirs hanging about farms and stealing.

Mr. Du Plessis spoke strongly on natives being allowed to travel in the same compartment with whites.

Mr. Treu (Johannesburg) referred to the Coloured People's Emancipation League, which had been formed at Johannesburg, and of which Mr. William Hosken and others, including a white lady, were members, and he warned the Head Committee to be on their guard, and not allow mischief to be done.

Mr. F. S. Alleman (Crocodile River) dwelt on the necessity for the refusal of more trading licences to natives.

This closed the discussion.

Messrs. Churchill and Taylor Speak

On the Asiatic Question

More Abuse

A meeting of the electors of New Germany was held in the New Germany Hall on Saturday afternoon, when Messrs. Churchill and Taylor, two of the members for Durban County, addressed their constituents.

Mr. Churchill, dealing with the Asiatic question, said that, according to the suggestions and opinions thrown out by the Colonial Secretary, it looked as if the Government had wakened up to the fact that the Indian question must be tackled to a greater extent than it had been in the past. If the Government did that, they would certainly earn the gratitude of this Colony. He did not know what the details of the Government Bill might be. The Colonial Secretary said it was to take the form of reducing the number of Asiatics down to the very lowest minimum that the Colony could do with. There he agreed with them. In the past they had allowed all and sundry to apply for as many Indians as they liked, and not utilising their free Indians and their natives. He thought the success of the £3 licences had been so great that there was a great deal of labour they ought to absorb before they imported any more. With regard to Arab licences, that was a more difficult question. They had been partially successful in preventing these people flooding the country by the Asiatic Immigration Act, and by the Licensing Act. To his mind, those powers had not been used with judgment or with uniformity, and they knew there had been cases—or there had been one case—where it had been used corruptly. They ought, if possible, to give more control to local bodies in dealing with that question. Apart from that, it seemed to him that they ought to go further—they had to lay down that no new licences were to be granted. (Applause.) Dr. Gubbins, he understood, went that far, and he hoped they agreed with their member in supporting that principle. After all, many of those men had been encouraged to come here by the credit given them by merchants and by Europeans buying from them. It was thus obviously unfair to turn round and tell them, they had all got to leave and be ruined. That he was not going to be a party to—they had got to be just. Whether they could adopt a principle similar to the principle adopted by the Liberal Government at Home in connection with beer licences, and say that, after a number of years they would grant no more licences, he was not quite sure. He thought that if they gave these people time they would be able to deal with it in that way. They would probably have to give them compensa-

sation for landed property. Continuing, he pointed out that there would be great opposition in England to such a policy. Their Governor would be instructed to reserve such a Bill, and when it got to England there would be the Indian societies, and members of Parliament who belonged to them, using every endeavour to get the Home Government to refuse sanction to that Bill. They would only get a Bill of that sort through eventually by supporting their members. They should be as unanimous as possible on that point. If they were to pass a Bill which would confiscate vested interests which they themselves had encouraged, they would have no hope of getting it passed by the British Government. They had therefore to be very careful on that side of the question. He, for one, thought it needed a great deal of discussion and thinking over. They might have to proceed in two Bills, and take two bites to their cherry. It was one of those questions he wanted to hear the views of the country on, and the opinions of other members of Parliament, before making up his mind.

Mr. Dan Taylor, touching upon the Indian question, said that the question of licences was of the greatest importance. There should be no new licences; and, to deal with the whole licence question, they could not do better than have local boards, who should deal with these licences. Licences had in the past been issued in an unfair manner. A weak magistrate met by a strong lawyer might give way in cases. He asked who it was the Indians set up as their leader—a man named Gandhi. He was said to fight for their rights because their religions would not allow them to give their finger-prints. And what did it end in? Gandhi said, "You won't take the prints of the educated Indians and those you know, but the prints of the others you will take." After fighting the question, he turned round and accepted one law for the rich and another for the poor, and this on a matter which was one of religion. He in effect said, "These others have no souls to be saved, or, if they have, they are of no importance." He was surprised that there was not a bigger row at the recent Indian meeting in Durban. He, for one, believed that if Gandhi had not been surrounded by his friends he would have lost his life. On the subject of Indian immigration, Mr. Taylor remarked that the law in connection with the Immigration Trust Board was ridiculous. A great many Indians who became free desired to re-indenture, but the masters would not take them on because of the money they had to pay the Immigration Board. The Indian would be willing to work for 12s a month, but the law said that 16s a month must be paid, and, further, the master had to pay £13 a year to the Board during the second indenture. That, by all,

amounted to about 9s a month on each Indian, and if a man employed a large number it ran into a serious item. He knew that some Indians on the Illovo Sugar Estates, desired to re-indenture, but the owner said this was impossible, and advised them to go back to India, have a holiday, and then re-indenture. This they did; had a holiday with expenses paid both ways, and came back and re-indentured at 10s a month. There was sufficient free Indian labour in the Colony to supply the sugar estates, and he looked upon it as ridiculous that the Immigration Board should have jurisdiction over the Indian when he had completed his first indenture; it was ridiculous that this £3 a year should be paid. He had pointed this out to the Colonial Secretary, and he believed this, phase would be dealt with during the session. Mr. Taylor went on to express approval of the Government's proposed legislation in respect to Asiatic trading, but suggested that, if an Indian were convicted of an offence, he should lose his licence. He considered that, if they gave the Indians ten years, at the end of which their licences would be withdrawn, they would have nothing to complain of. The policy would make South Africa a white man's country, and he did not believe the Home Government could say much.—*Natal Mercury*.

Correspondence

Modern Cannibalism

To the Editor, INDIAN OPINION

Sir,—May I ask you to consider the probable effect of the article which you reproduce from the *Weekly Times and Echo*? It is doubtless intended as an attack upon certain practices connected with vivisection which most right-thinking men condemn. But it takes the form of an attack upon doctors and nurses in general; it accuses them of the murder of infants for purposes of gain; the only evidence brought forward is an *imaginary* description in a work of *fiction*.

May I ask you to make it clear that INDIAN OPINION honours the professions of doctor and nurse, to which India and Europe have given so many of their noblest sons and daughters, to show clearly that the practices alluded to, if they exist at all, are not the practices of the medical profession as a whole.

I am, etc.,

A. B. BROWNE.

St. Aidan's College, Sydenham,
April, 14th, 1908.

[We need hardly state that we entirely endorse the concluding remarks of our correspondent. We can hardly imagine any publicist not considering the profession of medicine or nursing among the most honourable. Ed., I.S.]

The Ethics of Passive Resistance

Prize Essay

(Winner of the Prize—Mr. M. S. Maurice)

All truth is safe and nothing else is safe; and he who keeps back the truth, or withholds it from men, from motives of expediency, is either a coward or a criminal, or both.—*Max Muller.*

I.

Nineteen centuries ago one of the greatest moralists of the world laid down his life in passive resistance to constituted authority in what was then a great centre of spiritual activity. The ground for the resistance was unquestionably valid, as it has continued down to this day a memorable and living example of loyal submission to human law, where such submission was not in direct conflict with the higher law of conscience. The resistance had reference to an injunction that a living faith in a superhuman or divine power was to be abjured, and a claim to spiritual kingship over a certain race of people was to be renounced in favour of the temporal power then existing. "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King." To Pilate's question, after asking him whether he put the question of himself, Jesus said: "My Kingdom is not of this world: if my Kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight." His death on the cross has ever been a unique episode in the world's history—a magnificent example of what disobedience to the law really meant. There was no question as to the doubtful character of the authority which sought to enforce the decree of death by crucifixion. The illegal nature of the punishment was not in itself a matter of dispute. It was harsh; it was unjust; it was rigorous in the extreme; it was wholly unmerited. But he who found himself placed in subjection to the law as it then operated, and to the authority which asserted itself in carrying out that law, deemed it within his right, in obedience to his conscience, to resist both, but in a passive manner: there was no idea of resisting it by force. A combination of his servants and followers against the law would have been a direct condemnation of his faith. A concerted action to enforce his claim by physical means would have been derogatory to his moral character and to his high mission. And so the man who had the most powerful force behind him, by virtue of his transcendent moral sway—a force irresistible in its inherent strength, and overwhelming in its ultimate result, if put into effect—preferred to resist the law by submitting to the dread decree pronounced against him for breaking the laws' (to him) unlawful demand.

During the same epoch of Christian history, and but a few months after

the consummation of Christ, a holy man met martyrdom at the hands of his adversaries. His offence was "speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God." He, however, proved a passive resister. His detractors proceeded to open violence. He was dragged out of the city and stoned to death. Upon the removal of Stephen a general persecution was raised against the Church people at Jerusalem. Men and women were haled and committed to prison. Thus passive resistance obtained Divine sanction, and men had recourse to it as the only effective weapon against tyranny and injustice and oppression. As martyrdom was a penalty of self-consciousness, born of the deepest convictions, in religious life, so in civil life those whose minds and whose consciences revolt against oppressive laws, against laws which seek to take away the best of manhood and to degrade humanity, adopt passive resistance as the most effectual salve to their outraged consciences.

II.

"What kind of Society is it which, at this period, has for its base, inequality and injustice? The hell of the poor makes the paradise of the rich. Not only has happiness not come, but honour has fled." We should be sorry to think with Victor Hugo that this is so. And yet Tolstoy and Hugo shine as two of the greatest minds which have probed into the depths of humanity in our time. Thoreau, one of the greatest of American moralists, the author of "The Duty of Civil Disobedience," was a martyr to his principles—principles dictated by the highest sense of duty to the State, as well as obedience to conscience. Human convictions may be right or wrong, but there is always a limit to human endurance in the fulfilment of human law. No man to-day will pretend to deny to a modern Japanese the highest form of personal courage and the severest form of moral rectitude. They have been apparent to us of late years in many ways. To us his "Bushido" may seem a blind fetish, but its true meaning, its deep significance, is understood and appreciated by the deepest thinkers of our day. They know it touches the deep chords of humanity. When we have grasped the true moral side of Japanese ethics, and realize to ourselves what a changed being a cultured Japanese has become under the law of evolution, it will be easy for us to understand why at moments of great trial—when the spirit of patriotism and family relationship is in the ascendant—he passively resists the admonitions of the inner monitor, refuses to save his life, and creates for himself a moral injunction as it were for physical extinction so as to reach up to a spiritual life of national redemption and regeneration.

Passive resistance as a political weapon and a moral action has, therefore, the fullest possible justification behind it. To offer physical force against recognised authority which

seeks to enforce any law, good or bad, would be morally wrong. When you however resist the law, not actively but passively, you thereby imply that what is good and just law to some may be bad to others. While human institutions continue imperfect men of strong conscience and rational ideas will adopt this mode of expressing their protest against iniquitous ordinances.

Under any form of government power is relegated to a group of men to judge in righteousness and to rule with equity and justice. It does not follow that because men are called to power, and are invested with authority to enact laws, they must be considered immaculate or infallible. Too often the best men—the most humane, the most just, the most practical, the most considerate—remain subjects, and do not become rulers or framers of laws for their fellow-men. Similarly, too often those who attain to power are inconsiderate, tyrannical, unjust. If proof were needed it will be found ready to hand from almost every country and from every age. To take a recent case in point from a nation in the front rank, I would cite the passive resistance offered by a large section of highly educated people in England against the last Education Act. Here we have a form of government which has undergone a purifying process during centuries of civilisation—a government which, by common admission, has reached almost the highest limit of advanced democracy, in which power is attained by a just and equitable process—by sheer force of intellect and reason—a government which bears on the face of it every element of moral right and expediency. Yet we see a law promulgated apparently in the best interests of the whole community, but which proves in its operation, directly antagonistic to, and unacceptable by a large, intelligent and otherwise obedient section of that community. Numerous laws are in operation to which it gives willing and unquestioned obedience, but, owing to reasons which have swayed humanity in all ages, it finds that its conscience revolts against the new measure. The new enactment caused a serious conflict in their minds: it warred against their sense of right. It therefore simply declined to do the law's bidding and accepted the consequent penalties.

Laws are said to be made for the safety, the security and the protection of the interests of the people: they are not made to chastise and oppress. They must be guided by reason, necessity, expediency—in the interests of all. They must injure none: they must not remorselessly override the domain of reason and conscience. They must act with justice and circumspection. "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" does not mean that men should resign themselves body and soul to the law, at the law's bidding. Three times within

my knowledge has a high-minded, law-abiding and intelligent citizen met the laws' injunctions by paying the required fine instead of complying with the law which demanded that he should have his child vaccinated. On moral grounds he was right not to set aside his conscientious scruples. To save his conscience he became a passive resister. In the words of Thoreau, this man was a man first and a subject afterwards. He obeyed the law of conscience before blindly complying with the alternative of man-made law. "It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right."

III.

Passive resistance is indeed an extreme course with an honest man; he is generally driven to that course by the stress of physical power, and hence his action is not unjustifiable on moral grounds. If passive resistance on the part of a minority in a state becomes an imperative necessity, then the majority cannot continue strong for long; it is bound to weaken and become effete as to its action in the matter of enforcing its power or its authority against that minority. And passive resistance of subjects, who are not even legal units of a lawful or legally constituted Government, has all the more reason for its action, in a given case, since such a Government cannot justly impose burdens or restrictions on units which had no voice in its creation. Such imposition of burdens on one particular section of a community would be tyrannical, and must ultimately tend to endanger the political fabric of that community. The very *raison-d'être* of the Government would, in these circumstances, become open to question.

There is so much force in what Thoreau has written on the ethics of passive resistance that I make no apology for introducing here some of the relevant passages bearing on the subject of civil disobedience. "Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally under such a government as this, (United States) think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and do better than it would have them?"

"Action from principle, the perception and performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families: ay, it divides the individual, separating the diabolical in him from the divine."

Speaking of the inconsistent side of the aggregate intelligence placed in authority and power, he says: "After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a Government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it."

Again: "I think that it is enough if they have God on their side without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbours constitutes a majority of one already. . . . Under a government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also prison."

Modern conditions have altered the whole face of State administration. The voting system under a party government often, however, places an illiberal group of men in place and power. To meet conditions of this kind Thoreau exhorts all honest men in this wise: "Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight."

IV.

Upwards of four centuries before the advent of Christ, Socrates, of Greece, was reputed to be the wisest moralist of his age. His unflinching integrity made him many enemies. The State, or rather those in power in the State, accused him of corrupting the Athenian youth and of despising the national gods. He was indicted in a regular manner. His chief offence consisted in his heeding the divine voice or inward monitor, which people in those times did not comprehend as clearly as he did. He declared that his *dæmon* rebuked him for misconduct, and commended him for every good word and work. He was in advance of his times. And for his originality, integrity and wisdom he was condemned to death. When one of his disciples exclaimed "How shameful to condemn a man so innocent," Socrates asked if his friends would think it less shameful if he were guilty. Here was a man who, abandoning all speculations as regards the material world, fearlessly taught "that the proper study of mankind was man," was derided, reviled and then condemned to under-

go the extreme penalty of the law. The law of conscience was accounted nothing in those days as it is still considered of little account in reference to human laws and administrative enactments, under our present forms of civilised government. The Delphic Oracle pronounced Socrates the wisest of men. To this he made a characteristic declaration: "Whereas other men thought they knew something, he alone had attained to this element of true knowledge, he knew that he knew nothing."

Passive resistance is emphatically submission to physical force under protest. "Resist not evil" said Jesus of Nazareth, and Socrates, by drinking the poison, refrained from resisting what he had adjudged in his own mind as evil. How far this consorts with the philosophy of Plato, another brilliant heathen sage, will be apparent from the following prophetic picture of the Man of Sorrows whom the Western world has deified:

"A man perfectly good, virtuous and just; not one who wishes to appear so before his fellows, but one who is really and sincerely so. We strip him of his good name . . . deprive him of everything except his intrinsic goodness. Without doing wrong, we will suppose him to be accounted an evil doer, that his virtue may be tried so as by fire. . . .

Neither infamy nor ill usage, neither poverty nor distress, neither the malignity of persecution nor the pain of cruel torture, can make him swerve from the path of duty. Death stares him in the face, but he remains unshaken; branded as a sinner, he is still a saint. . . . To complete the picture, we will suppose this godly man to be beaten with bats, scourged with whips, put to the torture, laden with chains, nailed to a cross, numbered with transgressors, and yet without sin."

Plato wrote thus, three centuries before the advent of Christ. His further definition of a modern passive resister is almost inspired: "A bad man is wretched amidst every earthly advantage; a good man—troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

Most men of our day account Count Tolstoy a paradox. By common admission, however, he is a great thinker, if not quite a seer. He has certainly probed into the deeps of humanity. He has laid bare many of the human follies and foibles. Upon war as upon capital punishment he looks with the deepest horror. An extremist he may be, yet he is a realist—a rationalist. Passive resistance is almost a fetish with him. "We can suffer, we might not break the law. Men do far more harm and inflict far more injury on one another by attempting to prevent evil by violence than if they endured evil patiently. Besides, have you ever considered that it is only by suffering pain, tor-

ture, misery and death that you are able to convert men? Do you think Christianity made its way in the world by preaching? Bah! No such thing. No one was ever converted by preaching. What converts men is not preaching but martyrdom. It is only when men see other men—weak, sensitive, comfort-loving men like themselves—taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, rejoicing in persecution, and going gladly to death for their faith, that they begin to believe there is something in it. No one ever believes in the truth of anything till he sees that someone is willing to die for it. The prison, the stake, the gallows—these are the great arguments which convince men. And if you refuse to submit to these punishments, you destroy your only chance of converting men to your faith."

Count Tolstoy explicitly lays it down that all punishments are in their nature persecution. "If you say a man is a trouble and a nuisance to his neighbours, remember that the best of men have been so regarded. Do you think that Christ was not considered as a great nuisance and a trouble by his brothers? The household went on quietly until he began to make a stir."

Tolstoy and Thoreau appear to agree in the matter of civil disobedience: they seem to beat one in regard to the claim of conscience on the individual soul. Yet far be it from me to claim human perfection for either of them; they are merely men of advanced thought in the domain of reason; their intellectual preëminence claim respect from us for their ideas. Tolstoy holds peculiar views with regard to Christianity. There is much in them which we may discard as inconsistent with his own writings. Still we must admit that there is wisdom in most things he has said. Christianity to him is a broad humanitarianism: Christ a supreme Rationalist; he subordinated everything to the inner light—"the light that is in you"—that is, the light of reason. This is the deduction upon which all philosophers and moralists base their passive resistance to constituted authority—the conflict of reason with the surrender of conscience.

I think I have now made it clear that passive resistance, as an honourable weapon *in extremis* to those who are subject to physical force, has high, if not divine, sanction for its exercise. Its ethics in governments and communities of men are plain and unmistakable. I have referred to Socrates and Plato, to Christ and to modern morality. Going further back to antiquity we find Confucius indicating in his moral code the dividing line between active disobedience and passive resistance in simple and homely words: "At first my way with men was to hear their words and give them credit for their conduct. Now my way is to hear their words and look at their conduct.

To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage."

I will conclude in the words of Macaulay, so eloquent and so pregnant with meaning: "The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws. . . . But let not us, mistaking her character and her interests, fight the battle of truth with the weapons of error, and endeavour to support by oppression that religion which first taught the human race the great lesson of universal charity."

[Note.—We deal with this in our leading columns. Ed. I. O.]

A Graceful Act

The Hamidia Islamic Society, which played so important a part during the recent passive resistance struggle, has forwarded to the sympathisers of the movement a letter of thanks of which we give the copy below. The letter is printed tastefully in colours on thick ivory cards.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Hamidia Islamic Society, we beg to tender you our best thanks for the very warm interest you have taken in the British Indian cause in the Transvaal, and for the prompt response you have always made to our Society's appeal for help. We have no doubt that your advocacy contributed materially to the happy issue of the struggle which taxed the utmost resources of the community. The Asiatic Act specially affected the Mohomedan community in that it deliberately insulted Islam by distinguishing against Turkish Mahomedans and in favour of other Turkish Subjects. It was, therefore, natural that this Society should have made a special effort to secure the repeal of the Act, and it has been to our Society a matter of very great satisfaction that our appeal made to Mahomedans and others has been so favourably received.

We beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

IMAM A. K. BAWAZER,

Chairman,

M. P. FANCY,

Secretary,

EBRAHIM COOVADIA,

Treasurer.

Box 6031, Johannesburg.

INDIAN MAIL. For Delagoa Bay, Beira, Goa and Bombay, per S.S. *President*, until 3 p.m., Tuesday, April 21st.

Asiatic Passive Resistance

Under the above title Mr. H. S. L. POLAK has commenced to write a book on the recent Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal.

The Book will aim at giving a complete and authentic summary of the (to the Asiatics at any rate) stirring events of the past sixteen months.

The Book will contain a bird's eye view of the whole position in South Africa with copious statistics.

The Book will contain copies of important laws and memorials.

The Book will contain photographs of the principal Passive Resisters, Sympathisers, principal Members of the South Africa British Indian Committee and others.

The Book will contain a reproduction of the historical cartoons from the pens of Mr. Holland and Mr. Lloyd as published in the Rand papers.

The Book will therefore be one of reference to all Indian publicists and Indian workers both in South Africa and India.

To every lover of the Empire it will be a record of events showing how the weaker members of the Empire can command justice.

To every ethically-minded man, the Book will be a demonstration of the Efficacy and Supremacy of Ethics in the political world.

To every Indian who can afford a small sum, it will be a memento or a suitable present to send to friends and sympathisers of Indians.

It is not possible for us to publish the Book, as we have not the means, unless a portion of the cost is paid in advance. We therefore ask our readers and workers in the Indian cause to send us subscriptions with the names and addresses of Subscribers on or before the 15th day of May next.

The price of the Book will be five shillings (5/-) nett.

We propose to publish the Book within six months of the date of this Notice. And should we for any reason whatsoever fail to publish the book within that time, we undertake to refund the subscription paid to us without any deduction whatsoever.

Subscriptions may be sent to the Managers, INDIAN OPINION, either at Phoenix, Natal, or P.O. Box 6522, Johannesburg.

Note.—Collectors and subscribers are requested to send money orders or stamps only, or else cheques covering commission. In the event of stamps being sent *one penny* should be added when the stamps are not the Transvaal or the Natal Stamps.

BE THOROUGH! "Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest."—Charles Dickens in "David Copperfield."

A New Political Party

In the Transvaal

The Fate of the Coloured Races

Below we give an extract from the manifesto of the South African Forward Party:

The fundamental need of South Africa is a dominating efficient white civilisation, and the primary object of the South African Forward Party is to secure a permanent settlement in the country of a large and prosperous population drawn from the higher races of Europe, and accustomed to high standards of living.

- (a) In order to act effectively in social and political spheres of natural life, the union of the States of South Africa must be speedily accomplished.
- (b) The proper education of white children requires the allocation of a high percentage of the State revenue. Equality of opportunity, the recognition of the value of character, and the provision of practical industrial training are necessary features in a satisfactory system.
- (c) The existence of aboriginal coloured races occupying a low plane of progress differentiates South African problems, social, political and economic, from those of other countries, and necessitates special treatment.
- (d) The evils arising from the present intimate contact of the white and coloured races should be lessened by encouraging the separate and independent development of the coloured races socially, politically, and territorially.
- (e) The government must be vested in the hands of the white inhabitants, to whom the exercise of the legislative franchise must be confined.
- (f) The strict control of immigration in order to prevent the entry of coloured persons and of undesirable whites, and the repatriation in course of time of all coloured persons not born in South Africa.

The programme (of the South African Forward Party) lays special emphasis upon the white man's ideal, and its natural corollary the throwing open of the Transvaal to white people. In order to achieve its "primary object" of securing a permanent settlement of a large and prosperous population "drawn from the higher races of Europe," it declares itself in favour of "the separate and independent development of the coloured races socially, politically, and territorially." This is the first time, we believe, that the principle of racial segregation has appeared in a political manifesto, and that the idea of "zones" has been definitely adopted by a political party. Having gone so far, it is only logical that the Forward Party should condemn the colour franchise system.—*Sunday Times*.

Transvaal Municipal Association

And Coloured Persons

At the Conference of the Transvaal Municipal Association, last week, a recommendation that the municipal franchise be withheld from natives and coloured persons resident in South Africa, was carried. It was also agreed that the definition of coloured persons, i.e., persons who spring from other than a European race, be left to the Law Courts in each case to interpret. An amendment to this recommendation, that Parliament should define the term coloured person, was lost.

Text of Address to Mr. Polak

The following is the text of the address given to Mr. H. S. L. Polak, Editor of *INDIAN OPINION*, by the Natal Indian community, during his recent visit:

We the undersigned, representing the Indian community in Natal, desire to take this opportunity of extending to you a hearty welcome.

Words cannot adequately convey our deep sense of appreciation of the yeoman services you have rendered to our countrymen in the Transvaal during their recent struggle for Truth, Justice, and fair and reasonable treatment.

You have, from the very earliest stages, devoted yourself most indefatigably and with unremitting energy to the cause of our Indian brethren. Your advocacy of the "Passive Resistance" movement, either in the columns of that well-known and excellently-written paper *INDIAN OPINION*, and in independent articles, or by numerous speeches, have all been appreciated and placed us under your obligation.

We realise also, how difficult it must have been for you, not being an Indian, to have persevered in the position you have elected to adopt and espouse the cause of the despised Indian. This one fact alone would be sufficient in endearing you to us. This voluntary election of yours, decides at once that you are moved by that broad spirit of humanity which ever seeks to initiate and preserve that golden principle of Legality, Equality and Freedom, to all classes of men, irrespective of race, colour or creed.

We here desire to say how very much we appreciate all that Mrs. Polak has done in assisting you in taking up the cause of the weak and oppressed.

We pray the Almighty that you may have a very pleasant time here, and a richly deserved healthful rest, and that you may long be spared to continue to work for the cause you have so much at heart.

Natal and the Asiatic Trader

The London sympathisers, with the Asiatic have not been deterred by the "Hands-off" which Dr. O'Grady Gubbins addressed to them when he announced the Natal Government's proposed legislation for suppressing the Arab trader, says the *Natal Mercury*. Mr. Ritch, the energetic secretary of the Home Committee which championed the cause of the Transvaal Indians, has already set to work with the view of raising prejudice in advance against Natal's efforts to deal with Asiatic encroachments. The fact that this Committee has begun "strenuously opposing" the new Natal legislation, before it has even been introduced, is a forewarning of the hostility that our endeavours to solve the Asiatic difficulty will encounter. We have to reckon with an unsympathetic attitude from the Imperial Government, if the Government still in power when the new Acts are passed should be the present Liberal Administration. Nevertheless, we hope that the Government of Natal will persevere in the path which they have marked out. We believe that the Home public can be educated to appreciate the Colonial point of view in regard to such questions. At all events, Natal will not be fighting a single-handed battle, for the Colony will have upon its side the full strength of South African European opinion. Canada is showing an instructive example in pushing forward legislation designed to prevent the growth in the Dominion of such evils as have been supinely allowed to flourish in Natal. The Imperial Government will not dare to veto the anti-Asiatic legislation of the Canadian Dominion, nor would it thwart the proposed legislation in Natal when backed up by the rest of South Africa. In saying so, we assume that the Natal Legislature would only pass such measures as are consistent with British justice, which implies that legally-acquired rights shall not be extinguished by confiscation, but by means of such compensation as may be equitably due.

THE GOVERNOR OF NATAL AND INDIANS. At the annual Conference of the Natal Agricultural Union on Tuesday, H. E. the Governor said: The Asiatic question (Resolutions 51 and 56), is ground on which I fear to tread, but it will, I hope, not be unconstitutional if I express my personal convictions, that it would be far better for the Colony if it would depend more on indigenous Bantu, and less on imported Hindu labour, and I feel also that the longer the importation from India goes on the less will be the power of the Colony to deal with Asiatic aliens, who are already in the country with that fairness of treatment which it is the nature of the white man to extend to men of other and weaker races.

Natal Agricultural Union

Discussion on Indentured Labour

At the Conference of the Natal Agricultural Union, on Wednesday last, Mr. J. King (Nottingham Road Farmers' Association) moved:—"That this Union, representing 70 per cent. of the total indentured Indian labour employers of the Colony, would impress upon the Government the danger of stopping the supply of indentured Indian labour until the native question is dealt with, and a supply of native labour is available." He said that, in order that the industries of the Colony should proceed satisfactorily, it was necessary to have a continuous and reliable supply of labour. He had recently taken part in an inquiry on the subject, the result of which had been to show that the agricultural and planting industry employed nearly 70 per cent. of the Indians, while the other 30 per cent. were absorbed by the railways and corporations, in domestic service, and in small settling as farmers on the coast. Were they to arrest the industries of the Colony on a mere sentiment? (Hear, hear.) And this was a mere sentiment.

Mr. Angus Wood declared that, if this motion were passed, the Conference would be signing the death warrant of the Colony. What was going to be the inheritance of the whites? Whites were decreasing rapidly and coolies were taking their place.

Mr. Henwood supported the motion.

Mr. Van Rooyen said that native labour could not be relied upon under the present circumstances. They had to do the best they could for local industries, and he supported the motion.

Mr. G. D. Alexander, past president of the Union, quoted figures showing that 9,568 Indians left the Colony in 1907 and 1908, and the number of indentured Indians brought into Natal in 1907 was 6,486. The number of indentured Indians brought into the Colony during 1908 was 1,938, and the number of Indians returned from Lobito Bay and able to claim domicile was 400, a total of 8,824, to which had to be added 884 births, bringing the total to 9,708, showing that the actual increase of Indians in Natal had been 140.

Mr. G. Leuchars supported the motion, declaring that the industries required a reliable labour supply, and native labour could only be obtained spasmodically. He asked the up-country farmers not to play into the hands of the Durban carpet-baggers. (Prolonged applause.)

Mr. G. H. Hulett said that the time had come when the Government should take the native question in hand, and when Colonial industries could be assured that the natives had become a reliable labour supply, the

Coast farmers would be as ready as anyone to do away with the alien population. An agitation had arisen from Durban, because Durban had not distinguished between the Arab trader and the indentured labourer. Gentlemen had come here from Australia, and had started the movement in order to get political power. (A loud uproar drowned the remainder of the speech.)

Mr. D. A. Campbell said that, until the planters could be assured of a reliable supply of labour, the withdrawal of Indian labour would be absolute ruin to the sugar and tea industries on the Coast.

An amendment was moved by Mr. E. W. Evans, to the effect that the Union, recognising the danger from the increasing Indian population, urged the Government to stop Indian immigration within the next five years.

Eventually the amendment was lost, and the original motion carried by 46 votes to 29.—*Natal Mercury*.

Transvaal Coal for India !

In the course of an address recently given in Johannesburg by Mr. B. P. Wall, Chief Engineer of the C.S.A.R., on the subject of the new deviation on the Delagoa Bay line, he said:

"May I digress and give a few figures which I have not seen published before, and which may help the case. The total output of coal from Indian collieries in 1906 was 10½ million tons (colonial), of which nine millions was produced in the Bengal collieries within 200 miles of Calcutta, half a million in the Hyderabad state, a quarter of a million in Assam, and the rest in small quantities elsewhere. There is no colliery of any importance within 400 miles of the west coast of India from Karachi to Cape Comorin. There are 30,000 miles of railway in India and the administrations which have independent access to ports on the west coast measure 14,700 miles. The coal consumed for railway purposes during 1906 was 3½ million tons. It may, therefore, be assumed that the market which may be said to fall within the sphere of influence of the South African coalfields consumes 1½ million tons on its railways alone. Its shipping, its mills and factories and its other industries must consume more than twice as much more. Total, say, 4½ millions. It is conceivable that a satisfactory proportion of this demand will in the near future be met from this country. Grain and coal are at present the most important items for export, but tin, lead, iron ore and other minerals are all beginning to be worked, and will add very considerably to the tonnage exported in a few years. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the eastern line will be taxed to the utmost to carry this traffic coastward,

though I expect to hear that the quantity estimated is visionary, or, in the language of this country, optimistic.

Suffocating Stowaways

Race prejudice of another kind seems to lead to curious methods in Australia. Most South Africans will support the All White policy of the Commonwealth; but when it leads to suffocating Asiatics for fear they may contaminate Australian soil, one must admit that enthusiasm for an excellent ideal is being carried rather far.

It appears that the Department of External Affairs has been worried by the idea that Chinese stowaways have been landing in Australia. Mr. Deakin suspected that the unspeakable Celestials have been creeping ashore by ones or twos from steamers which have come from the East. He therefore ordered the most elaborate searchings to be carried out. But the Department failed to find any unwelcome visitors. The most vigorous proddings behind bulk heads and floors did not prod out a solitary Chinaman. So a vigilant and businesslike department devised other ways. To do justice to its policy it is better to quote an Australian journal. Having noted the preliminary failure to find stowaways, the *Australasian* says:—

"Chagrined at this, the department reports that it last week resorted to the expedient of thoroughly fumigating in Sydney a vessel suspected to be carrying a number of stowaways. It seems that the effectiveness of this measure is relied upon because when it was employed at Fremantle some years ago the bodies of two Chinese were afterwards found suffocated in their hiding-place like rats in a hole. No qualms seem to be felt about the inhumanity of such measures against men who, at the worst, are only offending against an immigration law. No; the department merely concludes that, as no asphyxiated corpses were discovered in Sydney, the suspicion of smuggling was unfounded. This view is questioned by others, who say that the bodies, if any, would have been secretly disposed of. It is an amazing discussion, because there seems no idea that the public conscience can possibly need soothing on the subject. Mr. Atlee Hunt simply explains that fumigation with sulphur will not be often resorted to, because it is costly to the Government and has a deleterious effect on cargo."

The *Australasian* adds:—"We are certainly acquiring a finely frigid philosophy."—*Rand Daily Mail*.

THE LICENSING QUESTION. At the monthly meeting of the Durban County Council, letters were read from various associations in reply to the Council's circular as to the manner in which they considered the matter of granting trading licences should be dealt with. The majority of the associations expressed the opinion, though they differed in the detail, that licences should be granted by an elected licensing Board.—*Natal Mercury*.

Johannesburg Municipality

And its Colour Policy

At the meeting of the Town Council of Johannesburg on the 1st inst., the following resolution was carried:

"That the Council instruct the General Purposes Committee to approach the Government with a view to the introduction of such measures as may secure the enforcement of regulations having the object of preventing natives and coloured persons from occupying premises in localities other than those approved by the Council; of prohibiting the acquisition by lease, purchase or otherwise by natives and coloured persons of property in localities other than such as may be approved by the Council, and the regulating of the use of streets and side walks by natives."

Canada and Indian Immigration

The "Natal" Act and Deportation

The special correspondent of *The Times* at Vancouver under date March 8th sends the following message:

In what even some opponents of Asiatic immigration admit to be an arbitrary and indefensible manner the Dominion Government has ordered the deportation of the Indians who were allowed to land from the Montegle. No opposition to their landing came from the provincial officials in view of the decision against the "Natal Act." Four students and a Parsee, bound for the United States, have been allowed to land; the others will be sent back unless the *habeas corpus* proceedings, which will probably be instituted, are successful. It appears that 78 of the Indians on arriving at Hong-Kong from Calcutta were unable to obtain accommodation in the first steamer as it was full, and they had to stay at Hong-Kong for a month. The Dominion Government rules that these immigrants are not to be admitted as they did not come direct from the land of their birth. One hundred and five Indians came by continuous passage from Calcutta, but the Ottawa authorities demand proof that they are the men who purchased the tickets, and, of course, this proof it is impossible to furnish.

I saw the Indians examined by the Federal immigration officer on Sunday. Many wore medals won in the Sudan and other campaigns, medals which a certain member of the British Columbian Legislature recently termed "tinpot adornments." A few of the Indians had trachoma, and some

others did not possess \$25 (£5) apiece but all the rest complied with the regulations. The immigration officer actually declared that they had been admitted, when Ottawa ordered their deportation.

There is now in Vancouver a well-known Indian official who sails by the Empress of Japan to-morrow. He assumes that there will be grave danger of disaffection, even mutiny, among the native troops if these men are deported. I can vouch for the fact that there is intense indignation among the Indians. The order spells tragedy for them. "We are subjects of the King," they say. "This is part of the King's dominions. Why do they keep us out?" There is little doubt that the action of Ottawa is due to telegrams sent by the local Exclusion League to Sir Wilfrid Laurier demanding that these Indians should be excluded.

The province this afternoon gives great prominence to a story that 5,000 Indians are now in Fiji preparing to come to British Columbia. The story appears to be sent to the Courts to induce them not to upset the Order in Council.

Telegrams from Juneau, Alaska, say that 20 Indians on board a steamer bound for that port tried to land at Wrangell, but a mob prevented them. The city council of Juneau is to hold a special meeting in order to discuss plans to prevent Indians from landing there. The citizens of Juneau declare that Asiatics will not be allowed in the city, and several Indians now there have been ordered to depart by the next boat.

The Indians who arrived last week from Fiji, and whose deportation was ordered under the Order in Council, have decided to test the legality of the order. Five Russians who came here from the Orient, and who were not allowed to land, are communicating with the Russian officials at Ottawa and Washington.

London, April 16.—*The Times* correspondent at Vancouver telegraphs that the Asiatics Exclusion League has demanded that Canada shall exclude Asiatics by the same method as is adopted in Australia.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has replied, disagreeing with the suggestion, and pointing out that the Government were endeavouring to check Hindu immigration. They had already restricted Chinese and Japanese immigration, and further radical legislation would only prove troublesome to themselves.

The Exclusionists are dissatisfied with this reply, and are holding a public meeting to discuss it.

Lord Amthill in a letter to *The Times* urges the holding of an Imperial Conference to discuss the question of Oriental immigration. He says that the spontaneous action of the Transvaal Government in reference to the Asiatic Registration Act proves that the Colonies are not blind to the

danger to Imperial unity, and that only the Imperial Government shuns and fears the discussion of the problem. He affirms that the Colonies would welcome the opportunity for full discussion, but obviously are right in leaving the Imperial Government to take the initiative.—Reuter.

The Cape Immigration Act

The Age of Indian Boys

Where Doctors Differ!

The following wire appeared in the daily Press on the 15th instant.

Capetown, April 14.—The Supreme Court to-day held that four young Indians, the sons of persons permitted to immigrate, did not come under the provisions of the Act in regard to prohibited immigrants.

Not being satisfied with the information given and believing that the case could not turn upon the question of the right of minor sons of Asiatics domiciled at the Cape, we wired for further particulars and the following was the Press message received by us from Reuters' Capetown Agency:

The case was one wherein four young Indians claimed admission into the colony under that section of the Immigration Act which permits children under sixteen years of parents domiciled in the Cape Colony to enter the Colony as a matter of right. The Crown Prosecutor admitted that the boys in question were sons of domiciled Indians but denied that the boys were minors, *i.e.*, under sixteen years of age. The Immigration Officer had allowed the boys to land under temporary permits in order to enable their parents to test the validity of that officer's contention. Four medical men, who gave evidence for the Crown, stated that the boys' physique showed older age than sixteen years. Seven doctors gave evidence on behalf of the boys. Among them was Dr. Curry, who said that he had a large Indian experience, that he had lived in the part of India to which the boys belonged, that the boys were Mahomedans and that the Mahomedans belonging to that part were well developed and sturdy. The Court accepted Dr. Curry's evidence and made an order admitting the claim advanced on behalf of the boys.

Answer to Correspondent

A SON OF THE SOIL. Your letter should be addressed to the *Swadesmitran*, if you wish to offer a reply in the matter to which you refer.—Ed. I.O.