

# Indian Opinion

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## Contents

EDITORIAL COLUMNS:—	Page
What "The Statist" says ...	263
A Ray of Light ...	263
Coming Events? ...	263
OTHER ARTICLES:—	
A Richmond Licence ...	264
Transvaal Municipal Consolidation Bill ...	264
Asiatic Immigration ...	265
Common Sense on the Asiatic Question ...	266
Transvaal Railway Regulations ...	267
The Assault Case ...	267
Transvaal Gold Law ...	268
Transvaal Parliament ...	268
The Labour Party and the Indian Question ...	269
Indian Affairs in the Natal Parliament ...	269
British Guiana and its Development ...	270
Ladysmith Legislators Discuss Asiatics ...	271
The Cape Indian Conference ...	271
Transvaal Registration Act ...	271
Swami Shankaranand ...	272
Imperial Parliament ...	272
Two Laws? ...	272
Late News ...	272

## Indian Opinion

SATURDAY, JUNE 20TH, 1908.

### What "The Statist" Says

"THE STATIST" has, for a very long time, been in the forefront of the British journals of authority, that have all along regarded the facts underlying Asiatic immigration into British Colonies from a rational standpoint, a standpoint other than that of a shabby Imperialism. This week we reproduce a weighty article from that organ which we hope our readers will peruse with the attention and interest that it deserves.

This article is devoted to an *expose* of the ethics of might and the policy of immediate expediency. We are reminded how easy it is for the white races to talk loudly of a boasted superiority, so long as the yellow and brown races are not organised to reject the assumption. But it is quite another thing when the white races are obliged to contemplate a Japan with undiverted attention directed towards a scientific investigation of these marvellous claims to superiority; a China emerged from the stage of awakening and arrived at that of decided and well-calculated action; an India that has outgrown the state of tutelage, unified its peoples under a national and patriotic impulse, and organised its forces to a philosophical inquiry into the foundations of the white man's belief.

Boastfulness is a characteristic of a weak or fearful man, and a nation, which is the aggregate of its men, must be greatly sceptical of its own powers when it endeavours to promote respect for them by vain boastfulness and bluff. It is perfectly true that, in the ultimate, a nation's worth is enforced against other nations by the machinery of physical force, but the mistake is made of ignoring the calibre and training of the mind that directs that force, and the spiritual influences that are brought to bear upon that mind. These are factors to be taken into account in every estimate of racial character, and we believe that it will come to be recognised by the world's directors of policy that, given opportunity, the probability of the existence of directing genius is greater where the opportunity of development is most general and numerical superiority is a fact. That being granted, the real struggle must be that of the mental and spiritual powers of the contending races, so that those which are, in truth, the higher will prevail, for the ultimate betterment of the world.

The contemplation of such a contingency should do much to moderate the transports of those ardent spirits whose belief is emphatic that the only arbitrament is that of war. They do not appear to realise the awful horror of such a moral cataclysm. They act and talk as if the accumulated ethical development of two thousand years were a mere trifle, as compared with the magnificence and intrinsic merits of their petty racial prejudices. They do not appear to realise the enormity of the crime against humanity that would be committed, were they to be allowed to precipitate so devastating a conflict. A barren ideal indeed!

Sir Robert Hart has recently shown the true nature of the future struggle, at least so far as the Chinese are concerned. It is to be economic. Does the West hope for victory without preparation? Mr. Kipling, some years ago, spoke with fine scorn of "Killing Kruger with your mouth." The result was an inglorious succession of overwhelming defeats, disaster following disaster, thousands of homes destroyed, horrible wastage from dysentery and enteric, and millions upon millions of money vanished in smoke. True, something like success was eventually attained, but at what cost, against what odds, with what real result? And even that small measure of victory will not be secured against the potent forces of economic and sociological law. What is needed is not the pride that goeth before a fall, but the pride that refuses to allow him who possesses it to do other than

his best, to strive for any lower goal than the highest that is in him, to fight for the right, to secure the greatest opportunities of development for all. Pride of this kind is indeed a virtue. But do the Western nations possess it in the same degree that the old-young peoples of the East are endeavouring to? *Qui vivra verra!*

TWO OF OUR CONTEMPORARIES, THE *Natal Mercury* and *A Ray of Light* the *Times of Natal*, have consistently protested against the unjust and un-British principles underlying the two anti-Indian licensing Bills shortly to be presented to Parliament. The Indian community of Natal has good cause to be thankful when journals, avowedly not pro-Indian, can publicly declare their hostility to measures which carry in them the seeds of destruction to the Colony as a whole, by reason of their inequity towards an unrepresented section of the general community. The *Times of Natal*, indeed, has gone further, and has opened its columns to a series of articles by Mr. Henry Gaskell, who has exposed the hollowness of the outcry against the Indian trader, and has shown how needful is the latter in the present economic fabric of the Colony. The knowledge that such men as Mr. Gaskell, and Mr. L. H. Greene, who continued the discussion in the same strain, are not ashamed to speak out publicly where they conceive a wrong to be threatened, is most encouraging, and we earnestly hope that, in the great struggle for the right that we feel to be coming, there may be found more European friends of the same calibre, who will dare to come out into the open, and disprove the vulgar taunt that all Natal is violently opposed to the presence and continued existence in the Colony of the British Indian.

FOR ALL OUR DESIRE TO REGARD the Government's **Coming Events?** proposed licensing measures with due respect, the more we consider them, the less do we feel ourselves able to meet them as serious attempts to solve the economic difficulty. Whilst, apparently, the Attorney-General did not question the wisdom of the Government's policy, even he does not seem able to regard them seriously, and he certainly, at Ladysmith, made it appear as though he very much doubted (in common with ourselves) whether, in the improbable event of the Bills passing the Natal Legislature, they would be approved and accepted by the Imperial Government. One would

have thought that such a sensible avowal would have induced Mr. Carter to avoid the inevitable rebuff, but those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make blind, and the Minister has accordingly advised the Colonists to "hammer away" until the Imperial Government had been forced to yield the point. It all seems very unintelligent, nevertheless it is for the Government and not for us to judge. But Mr. Carter did not stop there. He went on to claim that this legislation was an internal matter, and that Natal could claim the same privilege as the Transvaal. Where did Mr. Carter learn his elements of Imperialism? What is his title to be a Minister of the Crown? How can a matter directly affecting the interests of three out of four subjects of the Crown, three hundred millions of people, be an internal matter for Natal? Mr. Carter's reference to the Transvaal was particularly unfortunate. On Mr. Smuts' own showing, the attitude of the Imperial Government was eminently correct—but the Transvaal Government reconsidered its policy, in the light of passive resistance.

### A Richmond Licence

The *Natal Mercury's* Richmond correspondent writes on the 13th instant:—

The appeal against the granting of a licence to an Arab, by Mr. Von Gerard, the Licensing Officer, was heard on Thursday, before the Board, consisting of the Magistrate, Mr. L. Moe (chairman), and Messrs. W. Comrie, J. P., and Fred Field, J. P. The decision of the Board was against the Licensing Officer.—Mr. R. A. Marwick appeared for the successful appellants, and Mr. Smythe for the respondent.—It behoves the Licensing Officer to be very chary in granting these people new licences, as there are more than sufficient Arab retailers in Richmond, without an increase.

And on June 17:—Upon the receipt of the news that Mr. Von Gerard, licensing officer, had granted a new licence to the Arab, whose previous licence was successfully appealed against last Thursday, it caused great indignation and consternation. It is wondered whether the Arab complied with the law, or not, in the way of the publication in the Press of his application. Surely, say, publishing on a Saturday and the following Monday cannot be construed as such, as it does not give anyone an opportunity to petition against the granting of the application. The haste in granting the licence is peculiar, to say the least.

OUR SUPPLEMENT. We call our readers' special attention to the supplement, given with this issue, containing photographs of the Indian Monument in Johannesburg.

## Transvaal Municipal Consolidation Bill

### British Indian Protest

The following is the full text of the Petition submitted to the Transvaal Legislative Assembly by the British Indian Association, in regard to the Municipal Consolidation Bill:

To The Honourable, the Speaker, and Members of the Honourable, the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal, Pretoria.

The Petition of Essop Ismail Mia, in his capacity as Chairman of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal,

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. Your Petitioner has read with grave concern Sections 68, 93, 94, and 172 of the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Municipal Government, recently published in the *Government Gazette* of this Colony.

2. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the above mentioned sections, if they are approved by this Honourable House, will impose very great hardship and loss upon the British Indian community resident in the Transvaal, will ruin many peaceable and law-abiding citizens, and break up many an Indian home.

3. Your Petitioner ventures to assert that, inasmuch as these Sections are based upon race and class distinctions, they can never give satisfaction to the British Indian community. Moreover, such distinctions cast an undeserved slur upon the community that your Petitioner has the honour to represent, as they must inevitably raise in the minds of the white colonists of the Transvaal feelings of contempt and scorn towards British Indians, thus increasing the difficulties unfortunately standing in the way of a better understanding between the two communities.

4. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the above provisions are open to serious objection on the ground that they are restrictive of the liberty of the subject, in that thereby it is sought to empower the Municipalities (a) to set apart new Asiatic bazaars, thus reasserting the principle of segregation of British Indians, a principle against which the Petitioning Association consistently protested;

(b) to close existing Asiatic bazaars without consulting the convenience of those who may be thereby affected and without guaranteeing to them fresh sites equally valuable and convenient (such uncertainty of tenure, as this Honourable House will easily perceive, cannot but militate seriously against a settled and decent mode of life, and the erection of permanent and solid residential premises, by British Indians);

(c) to arbitrarily refuse certain licences, including hawkers' and pedlars' licences, without the right of appeal

from their decisions, thus striking a deadly blow at the long-established businesses of Indian Merchants, traders, hawkers, pedlars, and others, threatening them with immediate ruin; the licences which come under this last provision, may, under the Bill, be arbitrarily refused to those who, to-day, have the right of appeal from the adverse decisions of municipalities;

(d) to indicate certain trades and businesses from which British Indians are excluded in any capacity, whether as would-be licencees or as employees thus restricting their means of earning an honest livelihood;

(e) to frame regulations prohibiting British Indians respectably-dressed and well-conducted from travelling upon municipal tram-cars, thus imposing humiliation upon a highly-civilised community and debasing it to the level of the aboriginal native of the country.

5. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, restrictions of the kind above referred to obviously confer absolutely no privileges upon British Indians, but, on the contrary, deprive them of many rights and much esteem that they at present possess.

6. Your Petitioner further ventures to remind this Honourable House that the imposition of further disabilities upon the resident British Indian population of the Transvaal will enormously intensify the irritation and bitterness of feeling already existing in the minds of many millions of His Majesty's subjects in India.

7. Wherefore your Petitioner humbly prays that this Honourable House will be pleased to reject the provisions herein before referred to, or to grant such other relief as to this Honourable House may seem meet; and for this act, etc. etc.

(Sgd). ESSOP ISMAIL MIA.

Dated at Johannesburg,  
this 15th day of June, 1908.

The Colonial Secretary has notified the withdrawal of the Municipal Consolidation Bill for the present session of Parliament.

TEMPERANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA. We have received the annual report of the South African Temperance Alliance for the year ended September 30th, 1907, adopted at the meeting of the Executive Council held at Capetown on the 3rd February last. From a perusal of the pamphlet, it is obvious that the activities of the Alliance are widespread, and more than that, unfortunately, its efforts to secure an amelioration of the social condition of the inhabitants of South Africa, coloured and white, are being largely nullified by vested interests such as those which are making such tremendous efforts at Home to secure control of public opinion. We wish the Alliance every success, and trust that it will attract many adherents to the cause.

## Asiatic Immigration

### What "The Statist" Says

*The Statist* of the 25th April writes as follows on the above subject:—

According to a statement which appeared in our morning contemporaries recently, the mission to this country of Mr. Mackenzie King, Deputy Minister of Labour for Canada, in connection with the immigration of Indians into the Dominion has been concluded. Naturally Mr. Mackenzie King declined to make any statement until he has submitted his report to the Canadian Government. But he spoke highly of the sympathetic and cordial manner in which his communications have been received by the Colonial, India, and Foreign Offices. It is sincerely to be hoped that our Government will not consider Canada alone in this matter; that it will bear fully in mind all the consequences to the Empire at large of forbidding or restricting Indian immigration into any British Colony. However, we shall doubtless learn what has been done very soon now. In the same day's papers—that is, on April 8th—there was a report of a paper read before the Royal Society of Arts on the Asiatic immigration problem by Mr. Richard Jebb, and the discussion which followed, in which Mr. Alfred Lyttleton, M.P., took part.

### Colonial Feeling and its Causes

At last it would seem that the people of this country are beginning to waken up to the gravity of the Asiatic immigration question, and that thoughtful people are considering how best it can be dealt with. Mr. Jebb traced the seriousness of the question to three causes—the mere colour prejudice; the economic competition of an exceedingly industrious and clever people with fewer wants to satisfy; and the impression that white and coloured people never could fuse, or if they did fuse, that their progeny would be inferior to the whites. To this catalogue we should like to add a fourth cause, not less powerful than any of the other three, a cause which has operated in all ages and in all climates—namely, the desire to dominate where circumstances permit. Mr. Jebb wound up by recommending legislation for all the self-governing colonies of the type of the "Natal Act." He argued that it is easy to exaggerate the probable antagonism of the Asiatic Powers, and he declared that friendly commercial relations would not be lightly sacrificed to sentimental or even a material grievance. On the other hand, Mr. Lyttleton pointed out unanswerably the inconsistency and impracticability of the white pretensions. The whites claim that they shall be allowed to trade everywhere on precisely the same footing as the natives, and yet

they refuse to allow coloured people to enter their own territories, except in very small numbers and under conditions which are humiliating. He went on to ask, "How long could this last?" and he committed himself to the prediction that probably the United Kingdom would be unable to support the Colonies in their pretensions for more than twenty years. We are delighted to find that Mr. Lyttleton is at last coming to take a really statesmanlike view of a question which we have been urging upon public attention ever since the quarrel with the Boer Republics began, and which we ventured to predict again and again, would land us in inextricable difficulties if we did not take great care.

We ourselves should not like to commit ourselves to the statement that the present attitude of the Mother Country to the Daughter Countries cannot be maintained for any specific number of years. We should rather put the matter differently. At the present time, owing to a number of circumstances, we are able, without serious danger to ourselves, to humour the extravagant and unreasonable pretensions of the Colonies in this matter. One of these circumstances is the relations between Russia and Japan. Another is the fear in the minds of all thoughtful Japanese that if they could not count upon the support of the British Navy they might find themselves once more confronted by a coalition of Russia, Germany and France. A third is the relations of Japan with China. And a fourth is the absolute necessity for Japan of a long period of recuperation after the severe struggle with Russia.

### Policy of the Mother Country

Owing to all this we need not fear for the moment a serious quarrel with Japan, even though we support our Colonies in action which is certainly unfriendly to Japan. Similarly, we need not fear hostile action on the part of China, firstly, because China seems to be bitterer towards Japan than towards the European Powers; secondly, because China has not yet found a statesman capable of so reorganising her Administration of her Army as to make her formidable. Lastly, we need not entertain grave apprehensions respecting India for the moment, since the Indians have not yet learned how to combine with such effect as would make it impossible for us to continue our present policy. There are symptoms, however, that the Indian people are learning rapidly from their white rulers, and that it will not be very long before we shall have to count seriously with the irritation of the Indian populations because of our policy towards the coloured races. To cite but a single example, we are told that the discontent existing amongst the telegraph operators in India is becoming worse; that nearly 40,000 messages, some of which have been on hand

since March 30th are now awaiting transmission at various stations; that business is disorganised, and that there are no signs of an improvement. Instead, then, of talking of 20 or any other number of years, we should prefer to say that we can safely continue our present policy towards the coloured races only until either the Indian population learns from European experiences how to combine for strikes on a great scale and for general boycott of European goods, or until Japan and China come to a friendly settlement and feel safe against European aggression—which ever happens first. Whenever one or other of these things comes to pass we shall find that our policy has been suicidal, and we shall have to turn round suddenly on our Colonies, probably with the result that we shall fail to satisfy the Asiatics and shall infuriate our colonial fellow-countrymen.

At the present time, if there were any statesmanship amongst us, it would be perfectly easy to inaugurate a common-sense policy. Our people have seized a large portion of the earth—in America, Australia, South Africa, and so on—and upon the mere fact that they have got possession of it they claim the right to exclude everybody else that they please. Now it is perfectly obvious that the pretension to do this is absurd if it is not made respectable by overwhelming force. So long as Europe does not combine against us, and as China and Japan are not agreed, we have the overwhelming force, on the assumption that the United Kingdom is willing to back up her Colonies at whatever cost. But the Colonies have not overwhelming force. Australia, for example, could not shut out Japanese if this country did not support her, and so on.

### The True Policy for the Future

Therefore, the only means of giving effect to the colonial policy is the willingness of the Mother Country to use its whole Military and Naval force for carrying it into operation. In the real interest of the Colonies we hold that the facts being so, they ought to be stated calmly, quietly, and amicably to our Colonies, and the Colonies should be told that we cannot engage in a war for such a purpose. Ultimately we shall have to make the declaration because we cannot risk the loss of India, and at the same time a war with both China and Japan for a policy which in our hearts we all condemn. It is, therefore at once the wiser, the manlier and the more statesmanlike course to take to speak in all friendliness, but in all plainness, to our colonial fellow-countrymen. For this purpose, an Imperial Conference ought to be called together without delay, and at the same time a definite notice ought to be given that its business is to be to consider in all its aspects the Asiatic immigration question.

## Common-Sense on the Asiatic Question

### A European's Views

Writing in the *Times of Natal* recently, Mr. Henry Gaskell says:—

Statements have been fired off in regard to Indians which in no way admit of proof, and in many instances are deliberately misleading. I remember a statement made by a prominent member of our Assembly which was promptly challenged by the Indians of Johannesburg, and a justification for that statement has not been accepted since, albeit that was over a year ago.

There is a danger that the colony will be too concerned with inter-colonial questions at the time when the Government Bills to restrict the issue of licences to Indians shall come under consideration by the Assembly, and because the European community is clamouring for the enactment of some such legislation, possibly these Bills may be passed. In these circumstances I feel that another effort is due to me to prevent what, in my opinion, would be a disastrous step to oppress the Indian, and put on the statute book a law which any of us would resent if enacted by the Indian or any Asiatic in his own country to apply in the same manner to Britishers. How in this 20th century of our civilisation men's minds can conceive such devices and place them before the public for serious consideration passes my comprehension, and if these Bills become the law of the colony, it will be with the deepest regret, and as a blot on our national escutcheon, that I should regard the occurrence.

The Government proposals are first to prevent the further importation of indentured Indians after a fixed period, second to prevent the issue of licences to fresh applicants, and third to prevent the issue of any licences after a period of ten years.

With the first of these proposals I am in agreement, since I consider that the act of importing thousands of Indians and at the end of their indentures to dump them down in our midst without regard to the comfort or health of the people already present in the colony, is just as brutal an act as that of Surajah Dowlah, who crowded over a hundred people into the "black hole" of Calcutta, and left them to suffocate. Our legalised form of overcrowding, however, is more subtle and therefore more treacherous. With this intention of the Government most of the Indians of the colony will be in perfect agreement: in fact, they have already signalled their opinions by presenting memorials against the further importation of indentured labour.

The second and third proposals are practically the same, and are

directed to bring about the extinction of the Indian as a trader in Natal, whether he be fitted to trade on the best lines or not. Very probably the idea of stopping the issue of licences to Indians was suggested by the discussion of the former proposal to prevent the further importation, but an entirely different principle is embodied in each. The first is to guard against overcrowding people in a country before the resources are sufficiently developed to support them, the second and third are directed against the Indian himself. The former is just and humane, the latter is the outcome of prejudice and defeat.

The importation of indentured labour was first strenuously protested against by the Labour Party at the last general election, and Mr. Nelson Palmer was careful to explain that his objection to indentured labour applied to all forms of imported labour. The proposal to stop the issue of licences was not thought of until the fertile brain of Mr. Ralph Tatham, then the leader of the Labour Party, drew up a Bill on these lines in order to carry favour with a section of the community which, hitherto, had withheld its support from his party.

He urged that under the existing law the municipalities had a perfect right to refuse the issue of licences to Indians, and this constituted the sole justification (if justification it may be called) for urging municipalities to take this course. But whether this power remains to a township or not, it was clearly never given to them to exercise in the wholesale manner suggested, but merely to guard against the issue of licences to undesirable persons, European and Indian alike.

To merely claim that we can perform an act is not an argument that we should be right in doing so, or that justice was the mainspring of our action. The Government now wish to make such a law as will demand that we must refuse licences to Indians, whether it be just or not.

As in the first instance the proposals were advanced to carry favour, there seems no other explanation for the present action of the Government than that they feel their position to be insecure, and they are anxious to prolong their term of office by enlisting the support of the storekeepers. Or they may have been bullied into supporting Louis Botha in order to strengthen the hands of the Transvaal in the attitude that State has adopted.

We hear a lot about our duty towards the native as belonging to a lower order of humanity, and as being in want of our guidance and control, or help and encouragement, and what applies in this instance to the native applies in the same sense to those we have brought to live in this country. For whether it was right or wrong that they were brought here in the first place is no part of the question,

the fact is they are here, and being here our colony's legislators are responsible that justice be meted out to the Indians. It may be said that shirking our responsibility in the first place towards the native, neglecting to offer encouragement to him to take part in the labours of the country, shelving him and our duty, and importing Indians, has been responsible for the more difficult problem with which we are confronted. And now angered in consequence of our former folly, with an outward wrath for an inward shame, we would inflict an injustice upon him who is innocent of wrong towards us.

I had thought that these Bills were impossible in a civilised country, much less the riots and plunder that takes place against the Asiatic in British Columbia, and what happens now in Vancouver may happen here in Natal. And who knows where riotous conduct will stop?

There is sufficient evidence of lack of judgment, and greater in proportion than in the earlier times, seeing that civilisation and enlightenment are farther advanced. In those earlier times the objection raised against the Jew were commercial, but the persecutions were carried out under the cloak of religion. To-day the oppression is in consequence of commercial objections, and is being fostered by race and colour prejudice.

The proposed Bills indicate that the welfare of the Indian is not a concern of this Government, and if he chooses to accept the most degraded course of living, is no matter, so long as he may not compete with our European storekeeper. Suppose we carry the principle embodied in the Bills a step further and refuse him the right to compete with the farmer, and then in ordinary labour, we should have on our hands a starving population, and we should have either to shock humanity by letting them starve, or bear the brunt of Indian ill-feeling engendered towards us in consequence of our brutal action. Yet the carpenter or the bricklayer has the same right to complain of Indian competition and seek redress in the same manner as the storekeeper. Are we going to admit that right? We see then that the principle contained in the Bills cannot be pushed a step farther without disclosing its injustice and barefaced oppressiveness.

But these remarks about freedom and expression may not weigh with some people, and unless an argument is couched in such terms as are deemed practical politics, the justice or ethics of a question is entirely ignored. Yet when it suits some people to talk of British ideals to strengthen an argument against the Militia Act, or other circumstances, we have loud enough trumpeting about injustice and interfering with the liberty of the subject, of conscientious scruples, that there is reason to wonder whether people are

genuine who at one time have scruples and another throw every scruple aside to make a point.

Let us suppose that the Bills are passed, and that ten years have elapsed and the fullest effect has been given to the law. We shall then have a large number of Indians out of employment. Some number of these may retire to India, the majority, however, will be thrown into competition in every other industrial occupation. The ranks of unemployed artisans will be swelled by numbers of Indians seeking service in their trade, and they will be prepared to offer their services for a much lower figure than the European artisan could accept. Don't think for a moment that the storekeeper will be kindhearted enough to pay more to the European when he can get it done for less by the Indian. Other Indians will go on to the land, and compete with the farmer; some will go into offices, and the present competition with the clerk will be greatly increased. So that although we may lessen the competition with the storekeeper who takes out a licence, yet we increase the competition in every other branch of industry. We have not removed one whit of the competition from the community as a whole, and everybody but the merchant is taxed in order to bolster up the latter's position. To remove competition from the community as a whole, the only course to adopt is that suggested above, to make it illegal for Indians to do work of any kind.

Enough has been said to show that the principle of the Bills is unsound, and that they will not fulfil to the community what has been expected of them. Yet I am in perfect accord that the present state of affairs cannot continue, or rather should not continue, but that it is a menace to the welfare of the colony; but I differ first in my conception of what the real state of affairs is, or the nature of the Asiatic problem; and, secondly, in regard to the measure that should be adopted to bring about a change.

#### A Parallel

I consider the Indian in Natal as occupying a position in our social system equivalent to that of the labouring classes in England, or for that, in any civilised European country, and many of the latter may, by industry and perseverance, rise to a comparative eminence by becoming perhaps shopkeepers or something else above their former position and occupation. So with the Indians in Natal; they perform generally the labourer's work, but some become merchants. The large majority, however, like the English labourer, are doomed to serve in the conditions in which they are born. But would the British public think for one moment of introducing legislation to prevent members of the labouring class from becoming shopkeepers, if they were

able, or if they choose to be so? The same argument might be used against them that they existed under squalid conditions, or that they did not spend money in proportion to their earnings. On the contrary, instead of railing at the labouring class for indecency of dress or for living in dreadfully insanitary conditions, and thereby constituting a menace to the general health of the community, we have the British public doing what they can to improve those conditions. We have them insisting upon landlords pulling down unhealthy buildings, and building afresh. But this has not turned out to the advantage of the labouring class in every way, for when the landlord spent more money on his building he charged more rent. So we had the labourer obliged to live under better conditions for health, yet earning no more, and not able to pay for his higher standard of living.

We may see then that though the labouring classes at Home and the Indians out here live under foul conditions, they are not altogether to blame for the state of affairs, when their standard of living is limited to the extent of their earnings, or rather should it be called rate of pay.

I should like to quote one instance, which is not altogether singular, and which I was able to inquire into. It is the case of an Indian woman, over 70 years of age, whose husband and only son had died. She made a living by selling bones and bottles which she collected about the town. Some days she earned (no, earned is not the word)—she received sixpence, some days threepence. Seldom was it above the threepence, however, and often her strength was not sufficient to allow her to work at all. Not for a very long time had she made 12s. in a month. She lodged where friends would allow her a place to lie down, and as each became tired, off she went to another. She slept without blankets, and with no other covering than the few rags that served to clothe her in the daytime in compliance with the law. One day she received sixpence for her labour, and a friend where she had sought lodging rather too often was trying to squeeze threepence out of her for the accommodation. As the old woman sat with her back against the wall pleading the hardship of her case she died. Here we had a woman over seventy years of age, working to the last at a filthy occupation, and dying within a few hours of the end of her day's work.

#### Developing Callousness

Was that not a hardship? And yet I say this case is not singular. And can the people of this colony light-heartedly increase the competition among such people as these in order to make it easier for those who are better able to bear the burden? And as hard as that lot is, are they

not peaceable and law-abiding? We appear to be disinclined to listen to the story of the hardships of the poor in this country because generally they are of another race and colour. We have developed a callous-heartedness which allows us to pass them by with such expressions as "he is only a nigger or a coolie," and our sympathy and help are withheld in consequence. It would seem that the gentler constituents of character, our facilities for sympathy and pity, are falling into disuse and decay.

(To be continued).

## Transvaal Railway Regulations

### New Railway Regulation Bill

A Bill "to amend the Railway Regulation Ordinance, 1903, is published in a *Transvaal Gazette Extraordinary*. Section 4 (2) empowers the Governor in Council to make, alter, or rescind regulations, not inconsistent with the Act, with respect to, among other things

(b) the reservation of railway premises, or of any railway carriage, or of any portion thereof for the exclusive use of males or females, white or coloured persons, Asiatics or natives, and the restriction of any such person to the use of the premises, carriage or portion thereof, so reserved.

## The Assault Case

### Another Remand

#### Threatening the Magistrate

[SPECIAL TO INDIAN OPINION]

On Friday, the 12th inst., Shahji and Mansook Madee were brought before Mr. Jordan in "B" Court, Johannesburg, on remand, the one charged with inciting to commit grievous bodily harm, the other, with committing an assault upon Mr. Essop Ismail Mia, Chairman of the British Indian Association.

Owing to the shortness of time left before the rising of the Court, due to the inability to secure the services of the Court Interpreter, it was found necessary to further adjourn the hearing of the case, and the accused were remanded until the 24th inst.

Previously, however, the Magistrate commented severely upon the fact of the receipt by him of a letter, purporting to come from a Pathan, threatening to take his life if he gave a judgment adverse to the accused. Mr. Jordan remarked that if the case eventually went before a Judge, and the accused were found guilty, this letter would tell very heavily against them.

## Transvaal Gold Law

### British Indian Protest

The following is the text of the Petition submitted to the Transvaal Legislative Assembly by the British Indian Association, in regard to the Draft Gold Law :

To the Honourable, the  
Speaker, and Members of  
Honourable the Legislative  
Assembly of the Transvaal,  
Pretoria.

The Petition of Essop Ismail Mia, in his capacity as Chairman of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal,

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Petitioner has read with alarm Sections 3, 104, 113, 114, 127, 128 of the Bill to amend the Gold Law of the Colony, recently published in the *Government Gazette*.

2. Your Petitioner humbly submits that the above-mentioned Sections, if they are approved by this Honourable House, will impose upon British Indians resident in the Transvaal disabilities graver than those contemplated by the existing Gold Law, thereby inflicting grave loss to and threatening with ruin a community admitted to be peaceable and law-abiding.

3. Your Petitioner ventures to draw the attention of this Honourable House to the following specific objections on the part of the British Indians resident in this Colony.

(a) The Bill retains in the definition of the term "coloured person" the word "coolie," which, as this Honourable House is doubtless aware, when applied to the present British Indian population of the Colony, is an offensive term, there being in the Transvaal very few, if any, "coolies," in the proper sense of the term. Moreover, the bracketing together of African aboriginal natives and Asiatics, British subjects and non-British subjects, is to ignore the peculiar position occupied by British Indian subjects of the Crown.

(b) In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the definition of "unwrought gold" is calculated to prevent Indian Goldsmiths from plying their trade of manufacturing goldware and jewellery even out of goldbars prepared in and imported from England, and, it is submitted, this would be a grievous hardship for the goldsmiths in question.

(c) The retention of the original law as to dealing in unwrought gold, in so far as it specially affects coloured people, besides their coming under the general prohibitions of the law, assumes that coloured people are the greater offenders in respect of this crime, whereas, in the humble opinion of the petitioning Association, the

contrary is the fact, in so far as British Indians are concerned.

(d) Your Petitioner ventures to assert that Section 127 of the Bill is vaguely drawn and seems to contemplate entire prohibition of the acquisition by British Indians of any rights under it. The prohibition, under the same section, to holders of rights acquired previously to the Bill, to transfer or sub-let such rights to a coloured person makes the proposed law retrospective in its effect.

(e) Section 128 contemplates the compulsory segregation of British Indians residing within certain proclaimed areas, to wit, the entire Witwatersrand District, and, if approved by this Honourable House, would make it impossible for a very large number of British Indians even to remain in the Colony. Your Petitioner would remind this Honourable House that the large majority of British Indians resident in the Transvaal are to be found in the above-mentioned areas, whilst the principle of compulsory segregation of British Indians under penalty is a direct extension of existing disabilities by indirect means, which disabilities the petitioning Association has consistently protested against.

4. Your Petitioner ventures to assert that inasmuch as these Sections are based upon race and class distinctions, they can never give satisfaction to the British Indian community. Moreover, such distinctions cast an undeserved slur upon the community that your Petitioner has the honour to represent, as they must inevitably raise in the minds of the white colonists of the Transvaal feelings of contempt and scorn towards British Indians, thus increasing the difficulties unfortunately standing in the way of a better understanding between the two communities.

5. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, restrictions of the kind above referred to obviously confer absolutely no privileges upon British Indians, but, on the contrary, deprive them of many rights and much esteem that they at present possess.

Your Petitioner further ventures to remind this Honourable House that the imposition of further disabilities upon the resident British Indian population of the Transvaal will enormously intensify the irritation and bitterness of feeling already existing in the minds of many millions of His Majesty's subjects in India.

7. Wherefore your Petitioner humbly prays that this Honourable House will be pleased to reject the provisions herein before referred to, or to grant such other relief as to this Honorable House may seem meet; and for this act, etc., etc.,

(Sgd.) ESSOP ISMAIL MIA.

Dated at Johannesburg,  
this 15th day of June, 1908.

## Transvaal Parliament

### New Asiatic Legislation

#### Governor's Speech

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Monday, June 15th

In the course of the Governor's Speech, at the re-opening of Parliament, His Excellency said :

The Asiatic Law Amendment Act, which was passed last session, met with serious opposition in its administration. A compromise was, however, effected with the leaders of the Asiatic community, as the result of which, practically the whole of the Asiatic population of this Colony, to the number of 9,072, have tendered voluntary registration, and provisional registration certificates have already been issued to 7,617 Asiatics lawfully resident therein. A Bill to legalise these certificates will be submitted for your consideration.

#### Police Debate

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

June 16.

In the course of the Debate on the Police Bill, Sir George Farrar said :—

There were precedents for what the Government were now asked to do. When the Government had trouble with the regulations dealing with the Asiatic Law, they approached the Opposition and asked if they would agree to a certain course of procedure, and they said they would. They now asked the Government to give the policemen their due. They had all fought together, and on that ground they were men whom some consideration should be given to. They knew what happened in the case of the Indians, and why would not the Government do common acts of justice to these policemen, the way that they did to the Indians? Surely they were not going to treat the policemen worse than they treated the Indians. The Colonial Secretary had said that the position he took up in his public life was that the man who could not climb down was a very small and contemptible man. (Laughter). The Colonial Secretary had set the example.

TRANSVAAL LEGISLATION. The Parliamentary Correspondent of the *Rand Daily Mail* writes as follows: Mistakes have been made; and it is the duty of an Opposition to make early and often allusion to these errors. Hard worker as Mr. Smuts has shown himself to be, the Asiatic muddle has not impressed the public with the strategical cleverness of the Government. The iron hand within the velvet glove has not appeared to be uniformly formidable.

### The Labour Party and the Indian Question

At the Natal Labour Congress which met in Durban on the 7th instant, the policy of the Natal Labour Party as regards the free Asiatic population of the Colony was discussed on the following report of a Special Committee (Mr. A. L. Clark, chairman): "In formulating a definite policy dealing with the free Asiatic population of the Colony, your Committee are unable to lay down any general principles which would justify the party in seeking a solution of the free Asiatic question, which are not equally applicable to the European working-class community of the Colony. In other words, your Committee are unable to differentiate between the coloured or Asiatic workers, as to the best policy to be adopted in securing the just and equal rights of both the European and the free Asiatic workers of the Colony, but would recommend the party to agitate, educate, and work to promote the adoption of such legislation as will secure a minimum wage for all skilled and unskilled workers in the Colony. Further, the Committee would recommend the Congress to re-affirm the absolute necessity of the immediate and entire stoppage of all Asiatic immigration into the Colony, and to delete paragraph (b) industrial section of the programme as being in conflict in some respects with (a) of the same section."

Mr. J. Connolly, M.L.A., in moving the adoption of the report, said the problem of dealing with the free Indian population was most difficult, on account of the unreasoning prejudice which existed against that section of the community. It was absolutely necessary that some clear and definite policy should be substituted for the confused notions which prevailed among even the leaders of the party on the subject. He thought that the Committee's statement, that they were unable to differentiate as between the European and the coloured or Asiatic workers, was the only possible attitude for any responsible organised body to take up. He pointed out that, as the standard of living of the Asiatics was much lower than that of the Europeans, the tendency under the present system of unrestricted industrial competition was for the former to oust the latter from every sphere of industrial activity. So serious was the position, that some of the responsible leaders of the Labour Party had taken up an attitude of hostility to the Asiatics that betokened an utter disregard of the simplest principles of equity, as well as a most inexplicable ignorance of the obvious tendency of modern industrial methods. Such a policy was undeserving of consideration, since, even if it were possible to get rid of 100,000 people, they were bound to be con-

fronted with the same difficulty in regard to the native population in a very few years. It was obviously imperative, therefore, that they should make provisions for safeguarding the interests of white workers, while allowing for all reasonable expansion and uplifting of the coloured races. It was also advocated that the Asiatics should be prevented, either by means of appeal on behalf of the white men to popular sympathy, or by means of legislative enactments, from entering into competition with Europeans either in trade or industries. He held that such a proposal was impossible of acceptance by any body of civilised beings, and least of all by a party whose very title to existence was based on their theory of equality of rights for all men. Proceeding, he said that he considered their policy should be to endeavour to secure legislation providing for a maximum and minimum rate of wages for all skilled work, and a maximum wage that would enable a white man to live and bring up a family respectably for all semi-skilled employments, and for such unskilled labour as might be suitable for Europeans, these rates to apply to all classes and colours. He also advocated the encouraging, by every means in their power, the industrial organisation of the coloured workers, skilled and unskilled, and to endeavour to secure the gradual recognition and extension of their political rights. With regard to the Government Indian Bills, he did not consider the question of Asiatic trading affected their policy in any shape or form, being merely a question of abstract justice. Personally, he believed that the passing of the Asiatic Trading Bill would be a most contemptible and unwarrantable act of oppression and injustice, and he would strenuously oppose it. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Nelson Palmer said he had always advocated the stoppage of Asiatic trading, and he was still of the same opinion. He considered it was essential, in the interests of the white population, that the Indian competition should be eliminated. If the party decided that they were against him on the subject of Asiatic licences, he might have to consider the advisability of severing his connection with them.

Mr. C. H. Häggar endorsed Mr. Palmer's views. He held that it was a right discussion at a wrong time, as they had not yet mastered the alphabet of the matter. The objection was not to competition, but to unfair conditions of competition. There had been no proposal to deport the Indians, and, with reference to vested interests, there could be none against the common good. They all agreed that the establishment of a standard wage and day for standard work was the best method, but that drove them to this—one meant killing the Indian, the other meant starving him to death. He stood for the method of value for

would assert that equal conditions meant the complete defeat of the free Indian. The latter was here, and as such should have the opportunity, but should not be allowed to endanger the chance of another.

The Conference then adjourned for lunch.

On the Conference resuming after luncheon, the free Indian question was resumed.

Mr. J. Edwards and the Chairman spoke, the latter stating that, if they agreed to a minimum rate of wages, the upshot would be that the white man would get the work. The Indian should be allowed to compete with white men under white men's conditions only.

Mr. H. Norrie supported Mr. Connolly's line of argument.

After Mr. Connolly had replied, the recommendations were adopted, several of the delegates not voting.—*Natal Mercury.*

### Indian Affairs in the Natal Parliament

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

17th June.

A number of Bills were read a first time, including those dealing with Asiatic trading and immigration, and those providing for native reforms.

The PRIME MINISTER, in reply to a question by Mr. Smythe, stated that the Indian Government having still insisted, as a condition precedent to the acceptance of the Municipal Corporations Bill, that there should be an amendment of the Dealers' Licence No. 19 of 1897, to allow of the right of appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Licensing Officer, correspondence between the Natal Government and the Government of India since last session of Parliament had necessarily been restricted. Such correspondence as affected the question would be laid on the table of the House.

18th June.

#### Indian's Petition

Mr. WYLIE presented two petitions from the Natal Indian Congress. The first approved of the Bill for the abolishing of indentured Indian labour, and expressed the hope that if the Bill were passed into law the House would repeal the £3 annual licence imposed upon Indians, who had served their indentures, and did not wish to renew. The second protested against the Bills regarding the stoppage of Asiatic licences, and said that the complaints against Asiatic traders were made by trade rivals, who wished to do away with their competition. It characterised the Bills as unjust, un-British, and unconstitutional.—*Natal Mercury.*

[Copies of the above petitions will appear in our columns next week.—Ed. J. O.]

## British Guiana and its Development

(Concluded)

### Indian Industry

The rice industry, as I have shown above, has arisen through the efforts of the coolies who have left the estates, although now a considerable number of black people are engaged in it. The fact that the exports of rice have risen from 160 lb. in 1901 to 3,500,000 lb. in 1906, and that the acreage has grown in that time from 6,000 acres to 30,000, shows the vitality of the industry. Now, there is only one reason why this 30,000 acres should not be increased a hundredfold, and that, it is almost needless to say, is the absence of population. With half a million of people settled on the land, British Guiana would become the greatest rice-producing country of the Western hemisphere.

### Indian Immigrant—the Best

Now there are at present five nations which are seemingly desirous of making their way into other lands. They are the Italians, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and East Indians; but I shall not detain you in discussing the respective merits of these races in detail, except to say that in the future the Italians and Spaniards may be found the best type of colonist for the high savannas, because I am convinced that for present purposes the East Indians are the best suited immigrants. They are British subjects; there are already over 100,000 of them settled in the Colony; they have proved themselves good colonists once they are acclimatised, and the organization for their importation already exists both in India and in Guiana.

I urge, then, that an effort be made to increase the annual indent of immigrants, and that the planters and the Government divide the whole cost, the planters getting the men indentured to the estates for five, or even a less term of years, and in return teaching, training, and acclimatising them, and the Colony then getting the benefit of them for the remainder of their lives.

The Colony's portion should be paid for out of the general revenue; and if I am met with the reply that the Colony cannot afford it, I would point out that it last year could afford to devote a large amount of surplus revenue to taking off the duty on kerosine oil, an act which was of no apparent benefit, and which I would describe as almost criminal when the needs of development were staring the community in the face. Then, the new rice industry shows that immigration has put £37,500 of fresh capital in circulation in the land. Is it not right that some of the benefit of this should be devoted to increasing immigration? and is it not fair to assume that such an increase would

bring about a corresponding increase of circulating capital?

### Mr. Davson's Proposals

My proposals briefly are these:—

1. That the Colony should pay half of the cost of importation of East Indians out of the general revenue.

2. That a Commission of three, similar to the Commission which is being sent from Natal this year for the same purpose, should visit India and investigate the conditions of recruiting there. The visit of Natal's Commission makes the time opportune, and I think it would be found that economies and improvements could be effected in various ways, such as in the cost of transport. One member of this Commission should be the Immigration Agent-General of the Colony, and I am sure that his visit would be productive of much good.

3. As vacancies occur in the Immigration Service an effort should be made to fill the posts with men from the Civil Service of India, who have had a lifelong experience of the Indian in his native land.

4. The half-share of the return passage to India should be abolished, in accordance with the resolution passed in the Combined Court in 1890. This is a surviving anachronism of the time when the Indian Government distrusted the intention or ability of Guiana to take care of its people. The fact that the earnings carried back by return immigrants average £100—far more than they would save in India—and sometimes have reached as high as £3,000, has since 1903 influenced the Indian Government to make the coolie pay half of the fare; and in view of the fact that the whole cost is only £10 a small amount out of the individual's savings, I do not think that much persuasion would be required for the Indian Government to let this be charged to the individual. For the necessity of providing for the half-cost of the return passage of all coolies imported compels the planters to lock up large sums, which may never be drawn upon: while the fact that he has the right to this half-ticket often induces a coolie to return when he has no real wish to go. So he departs with his savings, meaning to return to Guiana on a fresh indenture; but when he applies in Calcutta he finds that he is too old or has developed some minor infirmity; he soon loses all his money, thanks to the rapacity of his relations, and as he is compelled to work for a few pence per day, instead of being the man of means he was in Guiana, he lingers on a discontented and useless unit of the Indian population. The rise of the rice industry and the knowledge that every East Indian can make a living out of it would make this a fitting time for the Colonial Office to open negotiations with the India Office on the subject.

### Political Condition

The franchise was given to the Colony in 1892, and five electoral

districts were created, two towns and three counties. These return fourteen members to the Combined Court, while the Official or Government section numbers eight. You will therefore see that the elective section has a permanent majority, and thus holds the power in all legislation which concerns taxation and finance. The qualification for the franchise is, put shortly, the ownership of three acres of cultivated land or an income of £100.

In the towns, which return five members, out of 20,000 male inhabitants over fifteen years of age, 1,600 hold the franchise and 1,200 voted at the last election, i.e. a proportion of 6 per cent. of the male population.

In the counties, which return nine members and have a population of 80,000 males over fifteen, 1,966 had the right of recording their vote, this giving an average of actual voters of about 2 per cent., the majority of these being blacks. You will thus see that if a population of 306,000 is inadequate for a Colony of 90,000 square miles, a voter list of 3,500, or just over 1 per cent. of the inhabitants, or one voter to every 25 square miles, is even more ridiculous to direct its destiny, especially when the major part of this power is in the hands of a certain section of the black or coloured community. This section has banded together in more or less open association to further its own interests, and constitutes, to my mind, a hindrance, if not a danger, to the State, especially when it can always command a majority at the polls. Its tendency is unduly to emphasise the colour question, and to direct legislation not to the national good, but to the furtherance of its own particular aims.

Sir Charles Bruce in concluding the proceedings remarked:

I do not propose to deal at any length with Mr. Davson's criticism of the constitutional system of British Guiana. It is a system which, as proved by long experience in other colonies, can only exist by virtue of a spirit of mutual forbearance and goodwill. It is a form of government by suasion, and government by suasion is perhaps the most difficult of all administrative arts. Nevertheless experience has also proved that government by suasion, prompted by a spirit of equal sympathy with every section of a heterogeneous community, can produce results that perhaps no other form of government could attain in the same conditions. It has been my fortune to administer this form of government in two colonies, in British Guiana and Mauritius, and I look back to my experience with a lively sense of the goodwill and forbearance of all who have co-operated with me in making this form of government an instrument of advantage to the Colony and of strength to the Empire. I see no reason to doubt that the Government may be carried on in the same spirit in British Guiana.



### Ladysmith Legislators Discuss Asiatics

A meeting was held in the Town Hall, Ladysmith, on the 9th instant, and from the speeches delivered we extract the following:—

Mr. J. Farquhar, C.M.G., said that the first of the proposed Indian Bills aimed severely at vested interests of planters at the coast, as well as at that portion of the farming community who extensively employed Indian labour. He quite agreed that the time had arrived when the introduction of Indian labour should cease. (Applause.) But he would first like to be satisfied that they had a reliable and suitable supply in their stead. (A Voice: "We have.") He presumed that the Bill against the issue of new licences to Indians would be heartily supported in Parliament, as it did not interfere with vested interests. (Hear, hear.) The third Bill, "To prohibit the holding of trading licences by Indians after the 31st of December, 1908," required careful consideration, inasmuch as certain Imperial affairs were involved that required more than passing attention. However, it must be apparent to almost everyone that the time had arrived when the Arab trader must be dealt with, on account of the manner in which he had encroached upon the European traders' rights. (Cheers.) He would appeal to his audience to support European traders by every possible means, as it meant employment and homes for their own children (Applause.)

Mr. J. Connolly said, with regard to the Asiatic Bills, he was in favour of the first one—stopping indentured labour. As for the Asiatic trading Bills, he did not think they were just measures, and he did not believe it would be in the interest of the working classes to deprive the Indian traders of their licences. He was in favour of eliminating anything that might be unfair in the competition between Indians and Europeans; but the matter could be dealt with in a far more scientific way than was proposed in the Bills. He believed, however, that the Bills had been introduced because it was well known that they would never be passed in that House, and in any case the Natal Government knew that the Home Government would never agree to them in their present form. The remedy for competition between white and coloured labour was to compel the same wages to be paid, and then it was only after all the white men were employed that the Indian would be employed. The competition of the Indian storekeeper could also be made fair by making him pay his assistants the same wage that European assistants were paid.

The Hon. Mr. T. F. Carter said the Bills were there for consideration, and, however long the threshing out might take, the change must come. (Applause.) Indeed, it was an open secret that there could be no federation or unity of South African States

worth the name, so far as they were concerned, while the Indian and his satellite (the Arab) overran Natal.

Questions being invited, Mr. L. W. Christopherson asked whether the members did not think five years was a sufficient period of notice to Arab traders.

Mr. Farquhar considered five years ample notice.

Mr. Connolly said that if they were going to do an injustice they might just as well do it quick. (Laughter.)

Mr. Carter said that, as far as he was concerned he would like to be between the quick and the slow, and he would say that the period should be seven years. (Applause.)

Replying to a question dealing with the possibility of the Home Government refusing to sanction the proposed Asiatic legislation, Mr. Carter said that, in such a case, they must just hammer away until they got it passed. It was an internal matter, and surely they could claim in that connection the same privilege as was given to the Transvaal.—*Natal Mercury*.

### The Cape Indian Conference

#### Important Questions to be Discussed

Mr. S. Casimale, Hon. Secretary of the South African Indian Association, Cape Town, sends us the following copy of a circular letter addressed to the different Associations in Cape Colony, and at the same time informs us that a Public Meeting will be held in the National Theatre Buildings, William Street, Cape Town, at 2 p.m., on the 28th instant.

Cape Town, 12th June, 1908.

Dear Sir, — I beg to inform you that the 24th of June is the date appointed for the meeting of the Conference of the several Indian Associations in Cape Colony, to be held at Cape Town. The delegates are expected to arrive on the morning of the 24th the latest, as the Meeting of the Delegates to transact the business portion of the Conference commences at 10 a.m. on the 25th.

I am directed by the Committee of this Association to acquaint you that the following will form the subjects of discussion at the Conference, and in the order named:—

1. The Immigration Act.
2. The General Dealer's Act.
3. Any minor grievances which might be suggested by the country delegates.
4. That it is to the interest of the Indian community that the several Associations existing in the principal centres of the Colony should unite and act in concert through a central body.

I shall be glad to hear from you by return of post the names of the delegates which your Association will send to the Conference, and that they will be here without fail on the date fixed.

### Transvaal Registration Act

#### London Rumours

London, June 16.—Indian circles declare that the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act will be repealed very shortly, owing to the representations of the Imperial Government, and also in view of recent events in India, where native politicians are watching South Africa and British Columbia very closely. Influential committees are being formed throughout India for the purpose of safeguarding Indians belonging to the Empire.

#### Colonial Office Statement

London, June 16.—The Colonial Office authorities state that they have not heard that the Registration Act is being repealed, and declare that no pressure has been used in the matter.

Sir Richard Solomon, interviewed by Reuter's Agency, said that there might be certain modifications in the Registration Act, but he did not believe it would be repealed.—Reuter.

On Tuesday last, the 16th inst, the *Pretoria News* contained the following announcement:—

We understand that the Government, when introducing the Bill to legalise the voluntary registration of Asiatics, will in terms of General Smuts' promise to Mr. Gandhi repeal the obnoxious Registration Act. It is also the intention of the Government to amend the Immigrants' Restriction Act, providing in cases of expulsion for an appeal to the courts against the decision of the Colonial Secretary. This amendment is to be made in response to "suggestions from the Home Government."

#### "Pretoria News" Comment

In its leading columns the *Pretoria News* says:—

The Speech very wisely says very little about the Asiatics. The surrender of the Government in that connection, as we have shown in another column, is complete, not only are they going to legalise the voluntary registrations, but they are apparently going to repeal the Asiatic Registration Ordinance and recast the Immigration Act. In view of the attitude which the Colonial Secretary has taken up in this matter, Mr. Gandhi would be wise to refrain from reorganising his passive resistance movement. It is very clear that the British Indians have good friends among the Liberal Party.

INDIAN MAIL. For Bombay, per S.S. *Praesident*, until 3 p.m. Tuesday, the 23rd instant. For Colombo, Calcutta and Madras, per S.S. *Umhloti*, on or about the 24th instant.

## Swami Shankeranand

Mr. Mokamchand writes to us as follows:—

I have already intimated to the public through these columns that I have procured the services of the learned Sanyasee Swami Shankeranand with the concurrence of the Aryans at Lahore, and with the assistance of many well-wishers of the Aryan nation in India.

The Swami is the respected Guru of Maharaja Veerpoor of Kathiawar, Professor Parmanand and many distinguished persons. One of the lectures delivered by the Swami during the last Delhi Durbar was very highly spoken of by the Governor of Australia who was present.

It is necessary for the public to sacrifice a little towards the assistance of a fund which is meant to defray the travelling expenses, etc., of the Swami. I have started a "Fund" and have collected up to date a sum of £50 6 6. There are many promises for contributions which when collected will amount to a fairly large sum.

To show the public how and when the funds were collected I here briefly state some facts.

After publishing the appeal for funds, I first started collection in Pietermaritzburg where, with the very warm support of the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Young Men's Association, I was able to collect in a few days a sum of £13 4 6.

The Durban Theosophical Society started a fund among the members of the Durban and Pietermaritzburg lodges for the support of the "Fund" and collected £8. They also received £7 from Mr. Henry Dijkman of Pretoria to be handed over to me. The £7 from Pretoria, I am informed was made up of £2 from Pretoria Theosophical Society and £5 from the Indian public through Mr. N. Gopaul. In all I received £15 through the Durban Theosophical Society. Great credit is due to Mr. Henry Dijkman, the Presidential Agent for South Africa of the Theosophical Society, and the Durban and Pietermaritzburg lodges for their keen interest, willing advice and able assistance in this matter.

At the instigation of Mr. Henry Dijkman, Mr. G. Isaac of Johannesburg has started collection in aid of the "Fund." I will report as to his success as early as I receive information. The Hindu Young Men's Association of Durban are collecting funds, but so far I have not had their report.

The Hindu Suratee Association of Durban have very kindly forwarded me a cheque for £5 for which I thank them.

I have travelled to Ladysmith and Dundee but, owing to adverse circumstances of Indians, I was unable to collect any money. I regret that the evil law should be spent in vain

The "Fund" is still open and will remain so for some time. I shall be glad to receive any contributions.

I annex hereto statement showing the total receipts £50 6 6, and expenditure £44 18 6, leaving a balance in hand of £5 8 0.

Credit.	
By P.M. Burg public subscriptions ... ..	£13 4 6
By Theosophical Societies ... ..	15 0 0
By Hindu Suratee Association ... ..	5 0 0
By Public Contributions ... ..	17 2 0
Debit.	
To Swami Shankeranand per Principal rala Hansraj, Lahore ...	£40 0 0
To Travelling expenses to P.M. Burg, Ladysmith and Dundee ...	2 19 3
To Cable Expenses ...	1 19 3
Balance in hand ...	5 8 0
	£50 6 6
	£50 6 6

## Imperial Parliament

### Flogging Sentences on Indians in Natal

In the House of Commons, on Thursday, May 14th, Mr. BYLES asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he was cognisant of the almost daily recurrence, in certain of the Magistrates' Courts in Natal, of sentences of flogging imposed upon native and Indian subjects, the severity and frequency of which punishments were provoking severe strictures in the local Press; and could he see his way to any step which would tend to bring Colonial Tribunals more nearly into conformity with the humanitarian practice of English Courts of Justice.

COLONEL SEELY: I have seen some of the severe strictures in the Natal local Press to which my hon. friend refers, and which relate to the exceptional action of certain individual magistrates. Any action must rest with the Government and Legislature of the Colony.

### Mozambique Regulations

SIR WILLIAM BULL asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether his attention had been drawn to the regulations recently published by the authorities of the Portuguese province of Mozambique, and especially to the differential treatment under which our Asiatic fellow subjects will labour compared with that of Asiatics who are subjects of the Portuguese Government; and would he say if he proposed to take any, and if any, what, action in the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY, in reply said: The regulations referred to have not been brought to the notice of my right Hon. Friend, but he will make enquiries on the subject.

## Two Laws?

### A Suggestive Contrast

During the past few months we have had to record many curious sentences in the Natal Courts. The latest instance is in connection with the prosecutions for adulteration of milk. In the City Police Court on Wednesday, a European, Mrs. Goddard, was found guilty of having sold milk containing 30.3 per cent. of water. It appeared that there were three previous convictions, but, as these did not appear on the summons, the Magistrate did not take them into account. He imposed a sentence of £2. On the same day, in the Durban Police Court, an Indian was found guilty of selling milk "deficient in solids" to the extent of 17.64 per cent. No previous convictions were mentioned in the Court proceedings. Mr. Brunton Warner sentenced the Indian to a fine of £25, or six weeks' imprisonment. Doubtless the accused was glad to escape without lashes. Had he stolen a tin whistle or an empty beer bottle he would probably have made the acquaintance of the "cat." Now we want to know who was right—the City Magistrate or the Durban Magistrate?—*Times of Natal.*

## Late News

[SPECIAL TELEGRAM]

Johannesburg, Thursday.

A Petition has been presented before the Rhodesian Legislative Council by the local Indian Community protesting against the Registration Ordinance. To-day the Committee stage was reached and some modifications were made. The third reading takes place to-morrow.

The *Transvaal Leader* contains a Pretoria message stating that London reports that the Registration Act will be repealed are unauthorised, but does not definitely contradict the assertion.

To-day's *Rand Daily Mail* publishes a lengthy leading article advocating the repeal of the Registration Act, and says the public does not care so long as the Government can assure them that the Asiatics are fully identified, as it appears from the Governor's speech before Parliament.

Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the Parsee Baronet of Bombay, is dead.

INDIAN AGRICULTURE. We have received a copy of Mr. A. Seturama Aiyar's book on agriculture, entitled "God Speed the Plough." The text is in Tamil and there are numerous illustrations. The price is Rs 1. 2.