

Indian Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN ENGLISH AND GUJARATI

No. 22—VOL. XIII.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9TH, 1915.

Registered at the G. P. O. as a Newspaper
PRICE THREEPENCE

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News in Brief

On Empire Day the pupils of the Durban Tamil Institute, Prince Edward Street, marched to the Queen's Statue in procession, and laid upon it a large wreath of white flowers.

Mr. Polak lectured before the Johannesburg Lodge of the Theosophical Society on the 20th ult., on "Some Indian Scenes." Mr. Polak has been asked by the Workers' Educational Society to deliver a public lecture on the 16th inst. at the New Trades Hall, Johannesburg, on "The Place of India in the British Empire."

The *Manchester Guardian* recently published a photograph of a group of soldiers taken in Cairo, in which Indians, Maoris, New Zealanders, Australians, Egyptians, Manchester Territorials, and English blue-jackets are all represented.

Speaking at the Congress of the Associations of the Municipal Corporations of the Cape Province His Excellency the Governor-General, Lord Buxton, expressed pleasure at opening the Conference in Capetown, which was the birthplace of the local Government of South Africa. He expressed himself a great believer in full, free, self-government, whether it applied to various parts of the Empire, or to local bodies. One of the most important points of their work was that it brought home a greater sense of responsibility to those who were doing the work, and to the public themselves, but he was not sure that the sense of responsibility and duty to one's neighbour was not a little slack and deficient in this part of the world; he was not sure whether he had not noticed a feeling of detachment. They were told to "love your neighbour as yourself," but they did not always turn the abstract into concrete, especially when colour was involved.—*Reuter.*

The Commander-in-Chief in India has published the following report from Sir James Willcocks which he has received through Sir John French, and has directed that it shall be made known to the Indian Army:

All units of the Indian corps engaged in the fighting at Neuve Chapelle did well, and the following specially distinguished themselves: 7th (Meerut) Division; Garhwal Brigade: 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 39th Garhwal Rifles, Tehri (Garhwal) Sappers, 2nd Battalion of the 3rd (Queen Alexandra's Own) Gurkha Rifles, Dehra Dun Brigade: 2nd Battalion of the 2nd (King Edward's Own) Gurkha Rifles, and 1st Battalion of the 9th Gurkha Rifles. Divisional Troops: 3rd and 4th Companies 1st Sappers and Miners; 107th Pioneers' Machine-Gun Section; 4th Cavalry. 3rd (Lahore) Division: Jullundur Brigade: 47th Sikhs, 59th Scinde Rifles. Sirhind Brigade: 1st Battalion of the 4th Gurkha Rifles. Divisional Troops: 20th and 21st Companies 3rd Sappers and Miners, Maler Kotla Sappers, 34th Sikh Pioneers' Machine-Gun Section; 15th Lancers (Cureton's Multanis).

Referring to the criticism of Mr. Abbott, a member of the Viceroy's Council, Sir William Meyer, the Finance Member, said that he was sorry to hear the hon. member say that India had not done enough during the war. He would like to remind the hon. member that India had contributed what was more precious than silver and gold. She had given 200,000 trained soldiers. Apart from that, India had supplied munitions of war, Indians had done that long before the dominions thought of doing anything. He must say that the value of the Indian contingents and the value of India's supplying munitions of war had been the chief factors in determining the present phase of the war. He could not bear any one say that India's contribution was inferior to that of any other part of his Majesty's Empire.

Gokhale Memorial

An All-India Gokhale Memorial Committee has been formed at Delhi as the result of a meeting held on March 20th under the presidency of Mr. Surendranath Banerjee, and largely attended by members of the Imperial Legislative Council and other influential persons. His Highness the Aga Khan was requested to accept the chair of the Executive Committee, and the following were nominated as Vice-Presidents:—

Dr. Rash Bhari Ghose (Bengal), Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta (Bombay), Sir S. Subramania Aiyar (Madras), the Raja of Mahmudabad (Oudh), Dr. Sundar Lal (United Provinces), Mr. Mazhar-ul Haque (Behar), Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis (Central Provinces), Mr. Ghanasbyam Barua (Assam), Raja Sir Haroon Singh, (Punjab), Hakim Mahomed Ajmal Khan, and Mrs. Annie Besant.

A strong Executive Committee was also appointed. The general Secretaries are Mr. Ratan Tata, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, of the Servants of India Society, and Rai Bahadur Lala Sultan Singh. It was resolved also that proposals for a statue at Delhi and for an endowment for the Servants of India Society should be put before the public as the two forms of the All-India Memorial, and the promoters of provincial movements were invited to co-operate.

It has been decided that the Bengal memorial to Mr. Gokhale shall take the shape of a permanent institution to be called the Gokhale Society, the objects of which shall be the diffusion of elementary education among all classes of the people, the establishment of a well-equipped library for the study of political, economic, historical and administrative questions, the encouragement by award of prizes and scholarships of a study of public questions connected with contemporary history, the publication from time to time of pamphlets on current affairs, and the training of a band of missionaries and their utilisation when needs be for political and social service.—*India.*

India's Equality

Speaking from the presidential chair of the United Provinces Provincial Conference last month, Mrs. Annie Besant said:—

You will demand that India shall, in the common Empire, have a footing of equality with the other Self-Governing Dominions. Why should she stand on a lower level than Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa? Her brain-power is, to say the very least, as good as theirs; man for man she is their equal; her literature is greater, her civilisation older, her fighters as gallant, her merchants as shrewd, her labourers as skillful and more artistic, her manufactures—before she was ruled by foreigners—immensely in advance of those of Europeans, and sought for eagerly in the world's markets; why is she ever to remain in tutelage? and who has the right to give to her, or to withhold from her, Freedom? She is no pauper, begging for alms, for the crumbs of Freedom that fall from the tables of western Liberty. She is a discrowned Queen, claiming her heritage.

In her relations with the Colonies you will endorse Lord Hardinge's idea of Reciprocity. Exactly the measure meted out to India by each Colony shall be the measure meted out to each Colony by India. No immigration of Indians into a Colony? Then no immigration of these Colonials into India. No land there to be bought by Indians? Then, no land here to be bought by Colonials. No concessions to trading, manufacturing, railway, mining companies there to Indians? Then, no concessions here of similar kinds to Colonials. It is quite simple; and it is just.

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(two), 113th Infantry, 129th Baluchis (three), and battalion, 3rd Gurkha Rifles (three), 11th Mule Corps, and Medical Service (five).

The losses among officers in Flanders continue to be very great. Within the four days ending with Wednesday last over 170 were reported: and the list published on that day afforded melancholy proof that the Indian troops are taking their share in the fighting. Of the 170 casualties then announced, 120 belonged to the Indian Forces, five of the killed and 47 of the wounded being Indian officers. The 40th Pathans who were at Hong Kong when the war broke out figure for the first time in the roll of honour. An analysis of the list gives the following results:—

40th Pathans, 3 English officers and 1 Indian officer killed, and 5 English officers and eleven Indian officers wounded (including the colonel and the subadar-major); 129th Baluchis, 1 Indian officer killed and 6 English officers and 9 Indian officers wounded; 47th Sikhs, 3 English officers killed and 5 English and 7 Indian officers wounded; 57th Wilde's Rifles, 3 English and 3 Indian officers killed and 4 English and 7 Indian officers wounded; 9th Bhopal Infantry, 1 English officer killed and 2 English and 4 Indian officers wounded; 34th Sikh Pioneers, 2 English officers killed and 1 English and 1 Indian officer wounded; 59th Scinde Rifles, 4 English and 3 Indian officers wounded; 15th Ludhiana Sikhs, 2 English officers killed (including the colonel) and 1 wounded; 1st Battalion, 1st Gurkha Rifles, 1 English officer killed and 4 wounded; 1st Battalion, 4th Gurkha Rifles, 1 English officer killed and 5 wounded; 6th Jats and 17th Cavalry, 1 English officer wounded; 58th Rifles, 1 English officer killed and 1 wounded; 3rd Sappers and Miners, 4 Indian officers wounded.—*India.*

Maharajah's Gift of Guns

The King on Tuesday in mail week received thirty-one machine guns as a personal gift from the Maharajah Sir Chandra Shum Shere Jung of Nepal, and after inspection gave instructions that they should be sent to the front immediately.

The gift serves to emphasise the remarkable spirit of generosity shown by the Maharajah. From his private purse he subscribed to the Imperial Fund Rs. 100,000, to the Prince of Wales's Fund Rs. 75,000 and to the relief of families of Gurkha soldiers who have gone to the front Rs. 50,000. He presented 5,000 thick blankets for soldiers at the front and gave 44,175 lbs and 400,000 lbs of cardamoms. The Maharajah has also offered to the Indian Government the whole of the military resources of the Nepal Government.

Six thousand troops have already left Nepal for India, 4,000 under Commanding General Padma Shum Shere Jung, R.B., and 2,000 under General Tez Shum Shere Jung, R.B., both nephews of the Maharajah. The Maharajah's second son, General Baber Shum Shere Jung, R.B., has been attached to the staff of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India.

The number of guns, thirty-one, was selected by the Maharajah on account of that being the number of the King's salute—a graceful and thoughtful act.

At the wish of the Maharajah his agent, Mr. Keymer, visits the wounded Gurkhas in the different hospitals throughout the country. He takes boxes of cigarettes from the Maharajah containing his portrait and with the following message:—

"The Gurkhas now in the field are very dear to me. I am touched to the innermost depth of my heart when I read about their cheerfulness triumphing over suffering, and their undying spirit of courage and devotion. I, with all their countrymen, am proud of them and of the devotion with which they are serving the Empire of which their country is an Ally."—*The Observer.*

The Transfer of a Licence

An application was recently made by Ismail Mahomed Halfajee of Durban, manager, for the transfer of the licence recently held by Mr. W. R. Millar of the Inanda Division.

The premises licensed consisted of a retail store situate in the Inanda Mission Reserve and the application was opposed on the ground that it was contrary to the Law to allow Indians to trade in that locality.

At the hearing, the Applicant, who was represented by Mr. G. A. F. Brett of Durban, solicitor, put in correspondence shewing that it was not the intention of the applicant to carry on business in the Reserve, but, as soon as the transfer had been granted, application was to be made for the transfer of the licence to new premises, outside the Reserve altogether.

The matter was contested for nearly two days when the Licensing Officer decided to grant the transfer applied for.

The opponents to the application consisted of R. L. Scott, Walter Foss, (who subsequently withdrew his opposition) Mamojee Essop, Z. Goba and other persons.

As this case is a somewhat unusual one, we give the Licensing Officer's reasons for his decision which are as follows:—

This is an application in terms of sub-section b, section 15, Act 43, 1898, in which the transferee applies to acquire the rights of the present holder of the licence.

The application is opposed on four separate grounds. The first is that, within a radius of one mile of the premises in question, there are already three native stores. This application being one for the transfer of an existing licence that has been held by the transferor for a period of some five years, I do not think that the fact that there are already three native stores already in existence can affect the issue of this case as the present licence has been in existence for so long. The transferor has held this licence since 1910 and it has been renewed annually since that date.

Mr. R. L. Scott, one of the objectors, obtained his licence in 1912, Momojee Essop and Co. obtained their licence in November, 1914, and S. Goba for a number of years has held a licence, stated by him in evidence to be a period of about twenty years. W. R. Millar, therefore, obtained his licence prior to R. L. Scott and M. Essop & Co. and I do not think I can be influenced by the fact that the objectors held licences which have been obtained subsequent to the transferor.

The third ground of objection, namely, that one of the objectors, M. Essop & Co., relied upon the fact that, when they obtained their licence in 1914 no Asiatic would be allowed to carry on a retail dealer's business within the Reserve, does not, I think, affect the present application because it is admitted that in this case the applicant will neither have the authority nor the desire to trade in the Location. The present application, therefore, does not place any undue hardship upon the objectors in this respect.

At the hearing of this application a letter, marked "B" from the chief Native Commissioner was put up in evidence shewing that the Natal Native Trust is not prepared to transfer the lease presently held by the transferor to the transferee.

As regards the 4th ground of objection, namely that the first objectors' application for transfer to them of the licence presently held by them was opposed by Mr. Millar on the ground that they were in close proximity to the Reserve, do not weigh with me in my decision as Mr. Millar failed in his objections.

Dealing lastly with the second ground of objection, it is admitted on the statement set forth in the document already referred to that the applicant will have no opportunity of trading within the Reserve.

It was necessary for the applicant to satisfy me of his ability to conform to the requirements of section 7, Act 18, 1897 and I have to say that he has done so.

The question of the applicant's nationality was not raised either in the objections nor at the hearing, and, even if it had been, I am prohibited by the ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of Ismail Bothanya *versus* Batcourt Licensing Board and other rulings. The provisions of the Licensing Law imposes upon me the necessity of ascertaining the applicant's ability to conform to the law.

At the hearing of the applicant, the objector's counsel took exception on the grounds that the applicant was applying for an abstract right to trade, owing to the fact that under a clause of the lease held by Mr. Millar, the applicant was prohibited from trading at the present site. I cannot, however, hold that such a ground defeats the applicant's right in law to make the present application. It undoubtedly places him under some disability and even some risk, but that is purely personal; the applicant, moreover, stated in evidence that if the present applicant were approved he would immediately have the buildings removed as he has purchased these from the transferor.

Under the foregoing conditions and for the above reasons, I consider the application is entitled to succeed and I grant the application.

There are other features in the evidence that I do not consider necessary to refer to.

HERBERT C. WYNNE COLE,
Licensing Officer for Natal.

Pietermaritzburg,
26th April, 1915.

From the Editor's Chair

A GRAVE POSITION

It will be remembered that at the time of the appointment of the Transvaal Immigration Department Commission, the Secretary for the Interior addressed a letter to the British Indian Association, stating that the Department of the Interior were prepared to indemnify against prosecution witnesses who came forward to give their evidence before the Commission, and who spoke the truth. One Lalla Chhana, an alleged minor, was, about 10 days ago, arrested on the instructions of the Commissioner, for having made a false representation that he was a minor and the son of a man named Chhana Rama, in the course of an application for his registration. The Commissioner was fully justified in causing this arrest, as otherwise a Certificate of Registration would undoubtedly have been issued that day. The alleged son had not given evidence before the Commission. Next day a warrant was issued for the arrest of Chhana Rama, the reputed father, and he was subsequently arrested, liberated on bail, and remanded by the Pretoria Magistrate until the 3rd instant. Subsequent to this, this man appeared before the Commissioner in Johannesburg, and gave his evidence in a satisfactory manner, whereupon he received an indemnity from the Commissioner who at once addressed a letter to the Department of the Interior pointing out the facts and asking for the withdrawal of the prosecution against the man. Nothing further, however, was heard in the matter, and the Commissioner telegraphed to the Police at Pretoria, and also the Public Prosecutor, stating the facts and that he had indemnified this man against prosecution and asking for its withdrawal. The result of this request will be seen in the extract from the *Rand Daily Mail* of the 4th instant, that we publish in another column. On Friday last, therefore, the Transvaal British Indian Association formally notified the Commissioner that if the Govern-

ment proceeded with this prosecution, the Association would withdraw its co-operation from the Commissioner, and notified the Minister in similar terms. We believe that as a matter of fact the Department of the Interior was ignorant of the circumstances and that the Prosecutor acted in an arbitrary and improper manner. Seeing that the prosecution had been initiated by the Commissioner himself, it was at least due to him that the circumstances should have been fully explained to the Court, and a gross discourtesy was offered towards him by those responsible for this extraordinary act of negligence. At the time of writing we understand that the Department of the Interior is investigating the circumstances, and we have no doubt that the matter will be satisfactorily settled. Undoubtedly, however, the action taken by the Public Prosecutor is a breach of the Declaration of Indemnity, and we trust that he will be suitably reminded of his obligation in this matter.

IMPERIAL INTERFERENCE

It takes quite a long time in South Africa to make people realise that it is an insult to the British Constitution to expect from it all the advantages that it confers without accepting liability for any of its responsibilities; yet that seems to be the view of quite a large number of persons here on the subject of the relations of the Imperial Government and the Union on many questions of vital importance to the future welfare of this country. It is interesting to observe from a pamphlet recently published here, and from which we print extracts in another column, that the value of the Imperial connection, even on the much vexed Asiatic question, is modestly recognised, and it is interesting to note that this connection is invoked as a measure of protection against the one Asiatic power that is in a position to express its national sentiment with military effectiveness. We do not wish at this moment to prove that matter too deeply, but it is a matter of satisfaction that there is a growing feeling amongst thoughtful men in South Africa that Imperial advantages connote corresponding responsibilities, and it is in that spirit that we anticipate that a solution of the Indian problem in this country will be approached.

The Question of Reciprocity

In reply to a question put by the hon. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar the hon. Member for Commerce and Industry stated in the hon. Member for Commerce and Industry Council on March 22 that the Governor-General in Council had laid no proposals before his Majesty's Government for negotiations with the self-governing dominions on the subject of Indian emigration. 'The hon. member will recollect' the hon. Mr. Clark added, 'that his Excellency intimated in his speech in Council on the 8th September 1914, that the Government of India, before approaching the Secretary of State, wished to ascertain whether the policy which he then outlined commended itself to the people of India.' The press of India and public bodies have during the last few months expressed themselves pretty plainly on the subject (says the *Leader of Allahabad*). Indian opinion is that there should be equality of treatment as between India and the dominions. Unrestricted migration there may or may not be. But if only a limited number of Indians be allowed to proceed to the dominions and settle there and if they are to be accorded treatment of a certain description, precisely the same number of colonials should be allowed to come to this country and they should be accorded the identical treatment, enjoy the same rights, suffer the same disabilities. This alone will be a true reciprocity; it alone will satisfy India's national self-respect. And India will be grateful indeed to his Excellency if he can endeavour to secure a settlement on these lines.

The Value of the Imperial Connection

The Executive of the United Municipal Association have issued the third of a series of pamphlets entitled "Thoughts for South Africans on the Questions of the Day." The question now answered is "Would Independence bring unity and strength to South Africa?"

The Native question, the question of Asiatic immigration and the question of indigence among the European population are dealt with in reference to the question whether a change would help South Africa to solve her own problems more effectively. In regard to the native question, whatever may have been the case in the past it cannot truly be said that any policy has been imposed on South Africa by the British Government or that the people of South Africa have been hindered from giving effect to any policy on which they could agree. People in the Free State complain that there are not such strict laws against natives and coloured persons as there used to be in the days of the republic. But what is the reason? Not the interference of the British Government, but the fact that the Union Government and Parliament will not introduce or pass such laws. When the Union Parliament passed a Native Land Act to which a large body of native opinion was strongly averse, the British Government did not interfere even though a deputation of natives went to England to protest against it. It may well be that a policy which is bitterly opposed to the feelings of a section of the European people in one Province is nevertheless substantially in accordance with the general wish of the European people of the whole Union, or at any rate may be the policy on which the larger number is willing to agree. The grievance of the minority is against the majority, not against the Constitution. Neither a new Constitution nor the establishment of an independent republic would alter the fact that among the European people of South Africa opinion is strongly divided on this question and that if there is to be a Union of South Africa at all, whatever its form of Government may be, its policy will be that which most nearly satisfies the majority of the people.

The immigration of Asiatics supplies one of the arguments most frequently used by those who hold that membership of the Empire is detrimental to the interests of South Africa. No doubt that argument is strengthened by the fact that the British Government was in frequent conflict with the Government of the South African Republics in regard to the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal. But while bound to see that ordinary justice was observed in the treatment of its Indian subjects by a foreign Government it cannot be said that the British Government has ever tried to force the South African people to open their doors to Indian immigration. In the Free State before the war the law absolutely prohibited the settlement of Indian immigrants in that country. The British Government did not then bring any pressure on the people to alter that law, and even after the war, when the country was governed as a Crown Colony, the law remained in force. If the British Government had wanted to open the country to Indian immigration, surely it would have done it then.

Transvaal Indians

Referring to the Indian question in the Transvaal, the pamphlet proceeds: It is clear that during the time when the British Government was ruling the Transvaal no attempt was made to open the country to Asiatic immigration. How then can it be said that the Imperial Government has forced Asiatic immigration on South Africa? The Asiatic question for South Africa is not now the question of how to prevent Asiatics from coming into the country, but how to deal with the large Asiatic population now in the Union, the vast majority of whom are here not because the Imperial

Government forced us to let them in, but because certain industries in Natal brought them over in order to have cheap labour.

But what would the position be if South Africa were independent of the Empire? In attempting to prohibit the immigration of British Indians she would then have to deal with the British Government, not by way of friendly consultation as now, but at arm's length. There are also other Asiatic powers which would have to be reckoned with if we attempted to keep out Asiatics. The Government of Japan would speak to us in a very different tone if our coasts were not protected by the British Fleet and our interests were not supported by the influence and power of the Empire.—*Star*.

The Indian Question in Canada

Canadians cannot afford to close their ears against the plea of the stranger within the gates when he declares that justice is denied (says the *Toronto Globe*) Dr. Sunder Singh, speaking for the natives of India resident in Canada, ninety per cent. of whom are Sikhs says that "Canada's reputation in the Empire is a hazard and her fame in the world in danger so long a fair play is made to wait upon the presumed interest of politicians, who have never studied the real place of India in the Empire or her relation to the future of such a cosmopolitan country as Canada."

In what consists this denial of justice of which the Sikh leader now visiting Toronto speaks? In his own words: "A stigma is put upon us in Canada such as is not put upon the Japanese or the Chinese, or even upon the negro." That stigma takes the form of an absolute refusal to admit natives of India to the Dominion save under immigration regulations that cannot be complied with, while the Japanese, the Chinese and the negro enter the country under different provision of the law or no provision at all. The lowest type of Canton coolie can live in Canada on payment of a head tax of \$500. The most pugnacious Jap who ever trod the streets of Tokyo can come in without paying any head tax at all, under a sort of gentleman's agreement between the Government of Canada and that of Japan strictly limiting to a few hundreds yearly the number of Japanese labourers permitted to emigrate to the Dominion. The negro can and does slip in at the border unchallenged and unnoticed. The fighting Sikh, who shares the trenches in France with the Canadian in defence of the Empire to which both owe allegiance, is refused admission, and, as in the case of the *Komagata Maru's* passengers, has the hose turned upon him if he insists.

That cannot continue. If we are determined to make and keep Canada a white man's country, as most of us are, and to prevent the immigration of men of other races in such numbers as to imperil the supremacy of the white, we must either bar out the tribute-paying Chinese and the pushing Jap altogether or permit the Hindu also to enter on similar terms. The leaders of the Sikhs do not urge unrestricted immigration of Asiatics. They know how strong the sentiment is on the Pacific seaboard against such a policy. Were the politicians at Ottawa weak and foolish enough to attempt to throw the door wide open they would bring about the disruption of Confederation.

Short of unrestricted admission, what remedy is there for the undoubted grievance against which Dr. Sunder Singh and his fellow-Sikhs protest? In the first place *bona fide* merchants and students from India should be as freely admitted as those of any other Oriental country who desire to sell goods or study in Canada. In the second place, some sort of agreement such as is now operative between Canada and Japan might well be entered into between Ottawa and Calcutta by which the *amour propre* of the native of India might be saved, and a small—a very small—number of selected immi-

grants from India would be permitted to enter the Dominion yearly.

Our position is not logical, and the Indian is quick in detecting the flaw in our reasoning. We admit the Chinese because he is a profitable source of revenue. We admit the Jap because he insists upon admission as an ally of Britain and as a sign and token of racial equality. We reject the Sikh, racially nearer to us than the Jap, because we think he is not in a position to enforce respect. That is as dangerous as it is unfair. It is against such discrimination that the Hindus protest rather than against Canada's unalterable resolution to prevent racial fusion on the Pacific slope.

Indian Traders in Rhodesia

The following anonymous letter appeared recently in the *Bulawayo Chronicle*—

We believe there is a Trade Protection Association in Bulawayo. Its members might do worse than pay some attention to the question of Indian trading, which so vitally affects their interests and those of the community. At the forthcoming court the Indian will roll up smiling to endeavour to persuade the board to grant him the much-coveted "scrap of paper" which will enable him to blossom out as a general merchant and ultimately oust his white competitors.

The Government of these territories appears to love the Indian. On no other assumption can one account for their increasing numbers. It is rather a bad outlook. An increasing Asiatic population, a diminishing European. All the usual arguments will be trotted out in favour of granting licences—loyal British subjects, etc. The native of the soil is also a loyal British subject. Why not grant him a licence? He has certainly more right to consideration. Fortunately for Bulawayo, the Town Council is alive to the need of putting down Asiatic trading with a firm hand. The utter apathy shown by the European storekeepers to their own interests would almost make one think that they despise the competition of the Indian. If their profits are so large as to warrant contemptuous treatment of their opponents, they can count on getting plenty of healthy competitors by and by from men of their own race. The Indian is rapidly encroaching on the business centres of the town and becoming firmly fixed as part of the business community. If we cannot eradicate the evil we can at least stop it from getting any worse by refusing to grant any licence to trade to any Asiatic, whether hailing from India or no.

Suicide in Fiji

We take the following from the reports recently issued on the condition of Indian emigrants abroad:—

The suicides in Fiji during each of the last ten years were 109 among indentured and 27 among the free Indians. We were informed that the Madras labourers were much more prone to commit suicide than other Indians. In 1911 special instructions were on this account issued to employers to treat these immigrants with special care particularly during the first few months after their arrival. Cases arising out of domestic quarrels and jealousy were the largest class, next to these coming cases in which the deceased had been accused of a serious crime, and cases in which chronic ill health had produced despondency. In two cases the deceased had been struck by a Sirdar a short time previously. In many cases no probable motive was ascertainable. The rate amongst free Indians is high and amongst indentured Indians very high in this colony. Yet for some years the conditions under which the indentured people work have compared favourably with those in other colonies. Prosecutions have been few, and sentences of imprisonment much fewer. The

health conditions are unusually good owing to the absence of malarial fever and to good sanitary and medical arrangements. Wages are higher than in any colony and the standard of task is lower. A circumstance peculiar to the colony is that the sale of alcoholic liquor to Indians is forbidden. Doubtless occasional evasion of the prohibition occur but broadly speaking alcoholic liquor in any form is unobtainable. The colony is being newly opened up and comparatively large communities of Indians such as are found all over West Indian colonies do not exist. Immigrants find themselves in small groups in a strange and very sparsely populated country. Labourers on many estates cannot during holidays or week-ends exchange the monotony of their daily lives for the social attractions of an Indian town or village in the vicinity. The few Fijian villages could have no attraction for Indians, who regard their amiable and interesting but rather primitive inhabitants as "junglies"

Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty

It might have been expected (says *India*) that Mr. Mahomed Ali, of the Delhi *Comrade*, would hardly have been the foremost to support the proposal, which is being so widely taken up all over India, for an extension of Lord Hardinge's term of office as Viceroy. But this is exactly what has happened. At a public meeting held at Delhi on March 25th, Mr. Mahomed Ali was one of the principal speakers. The columns of the *Hamdard* and of the *Comrade*, which were not dead as some would like to believe, but only in a state of suspended animation, had (he said) borne witness on innumerable occasions to the policy and work of Lord Hardinge. It might be imagined by some people that the recent legislation of his Excellency's Government had affected that attitude, but without attempting in the least to disguise disapproval of the Press Act, he felt that now it had become the law of the land, it was all the more necessary to distinguish the policy of the Viceroy from the policy of those who believed in repression instead of reconciliation and reform. Those who were intimately acquainted with such affairs knew how consistently and in what a determined manner Lord Hardinge had held in check the ambitions of a particular section of officialdom. Had this powerful party had its way, his Excellency's regime would have been even more reactionary than that of Lord Curzon, but evidently the party counted without Lord Hardinge. Even such measures and schemes of a reactionary character as this party had succeeded in carrying through bore upon them the impress of the Viceroy's moderating influence.

Those who carefully examined his masterly inactivity in the matter of the Seditious Meetings Act could appreciate to some extent the policy he had pursued. Still more recent was the example of the Defence of India Act and its application to a comparatively restricted area. After nearly five years of constant association with bureaucrats, he was free from the prejudice of a caste and the passions of service. Even if this war had not occurred, Indians would be justified in asking for an extension of office for Lord Hardinge, as it was necessary that the same Viceroy should be at the head of affairs for at least five years to ensure the success of the new policy which he was greatly instrumental in shaping at the time of the Durbar. But since the outbreak of the war it had become an imperative necessity to keep him where he was, for no new Viceroy would be qualified to exercise his own independent judgment during a crisis of this magnitude. Not only India but the British Empire, as a whole, had to fear more from the reactionary than from the rebel, and while no one asked that quarter should be given to the rebellious, Indians felt that Lord Hardinge, while stern in suppressing every form of disloyalty, knew also how to hold the reactionary in the leash.

Enticement of Labour in Assam

In the House of Commons on the 5th May, Sir J. D. REES asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he would explain why the Enticements Clauses in the draft Labour Bill were disallowed by the Secretary of State in view of the fact that such Clauses found a place in the Ceylon Labour Ordinance, were approved by the Labour Enquiry Committee, the Administration of Assam, and the Government of India, and were allowed by all these authorities to be needed to safeguard the planter against the loss he incurs when coolies, imported at his expense from distant Indian provinces, were enticed away without compensation to other employment.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS: The hon. member presumably refers to a Bill against enticement of labour that the local Government of Assam proposed in 1913 to introduce into its local Legislative Council. The Secretary of State was not able to approve its provisions, as they would have imposed on immigrant labourers in Assam restrictions from which the great majority of them are, in fact, free. The Bill consequently was not introduced. The Labour and Emigration Amendment Act which has just been passed by the Imperial Legislative Council never contained any Clause as to enticement. I am not aware that the Ceylon Labour Ordinance is open to the objections taken to the Bill discussed in Assam.

Sir J. D. REES: If there was an official recommendation in favour of the Enticements Clauses, surely these Clauses in substance should be in the Bill?

Mr. ROBERTS: No, Sir; I think the Bill which became an Act never contained any Enticements Clauses.

Sir J. D. REES: Was not the inclusion of such Clauses officially recommended?

Mr. ROBERTS: No; not in connexion with that Bill.—*India.*

The Future of Fiji

We do not know what has given rise to the reports to which the *Times* correspondent at Sydney has more than once given currency, that the islands of Fiji will shortly be placed under the control of the Commonwealth (says *India*). It would appear that a suggestion of that sort must have emanated from the Colonial Office, but we trust that is not the case. Such an arrangement would give rise to profound dissatisfaction in India, which is every year acquiring a larger interest in this remote Crown colony on account of the ever-increasing number of Indian coolie emigrants, who now amount to nearly 50,000 and are in many respects the most important portion of the population of the islands.

The prosperity of Fiji, as well as of Mauritius, is principally due to the settlement of Indian emigrants, and the British Government is responsible for providing an absolute guarantee for their protection. It is a well-founded complaint that the Colonial Office does not meet this responsibility with sufficient firmness, but no one supposes that the Government of Australia would be in a position to effect any improvement. The control of Indian emigration to Fiji could hardly in any case be in their hands. Nor while the relations between India and the Commonwealth remain as they are at present in respect to the admission of Indians to Australia itself is Indian opinion likely to look with favour on any proposal for extending Australian control over Indian emigration to any part of the world.

It may be gathered from the *Times* correspondent that the Australians on their part have no desire to undertake this new responsibility. The whole Press, we are told, gives utterance to the apparently unanimous opinion of the public that "if this step is taken because

it is imperially important that Australia should relieve the United Kingdom of certain responsibilities in the Pacific, then the Commonwealth will accept the responsibility and strive to fulfil the duty to the best of its power. But from a purely Australian point of view it is undesirable to yoke the Commonwealth with an established, tropical, and partially self-governing colony which is largely populated by Indian coolies."

It is added that the jealousy of New Zealand would probably be roused should the Commonwealth take control of Fiji. Of that we know nothing, but at least this is certain, that the indignation of India would be considerable. In all the circumstances the proposal, if it has ever been seriously put forward, is one which should at once be allowed to drop.

A Generous Prince

The Viceroy arrived at Gwalior on March 31st and was entertained by the Maharaja Scindia at a State banquet. In replying to the toast of his health, Lord Hardinge took the opportunity to pay a high and thoroughly well-deserved tribute to the boundless generosity shown by his host in connexion with the war.

Besides maintaining two regiments and a transport corps at the front and making princely donations to the various relief funds, amounting to over £50,000, his Highness has undertaken to pay the whole of the balance of the cost of the hospital ship "Loyalty" after the subscriptions from other sources have been deducted. He is maintaining a convalescent home for wounded Indian soldiers in East Africa, and has presented a motor ambulance fleet at an estimated cost of £25,000, besides motor transport and motor cars for the British Expeditionary Force at a cost of £23,000. He has offered six aeroplanes mounted with guns and armoured, and, in fact, one can hardly open the newspaper without reading of some fresh instance of his Highness's generosity.

The spontaneous outburst of loyal devotion shown by the ruling princes was not unexpected by those who knew the feelings and traditions of the States, but (said the Viceroy) it came as a revelation to the outside world, who have at last learned to appreciate what India and its princes and peoples mean to the British Empire.—*India.*

News in Brief

The Chairman of the Natal Sugar Association, in his annual report, says:—The Indian labourers appear now to have settled down very comfortably after their strike, and the number returning to India upon termination of their term of indenture is merely normal. Very few are re-indenturing, the general desire among them being apparently to become "free labourers."

The new Labour Board, which is to supervise the supply of Assam Tea-garden Labour, will consist (says *India*) of a Chairman and fifteen members, the Executive Committee being the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and five members with a Secretary. The Board will be under the administrative control of the Government of India, who are now considering the necessary rules for its management.

They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

—J. R. LOWELL.