

Indian Opinion

No. 25—VOL. XVII.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27TH, 1919.

Registered at the G. P. O. as a Newspaper
Price Three pence

NOTES AND NEWS

IN thinking over the rice question we cannot help but feel that the matter is one which could be easily solved were there to be two or three Indian merchants who would resolve to sell at a small profit on the landed cost direct to the consumers. We venture to say that if two such men would approach the Government with the offer to import rice for sale in this manner, they would be encouraged. The Government should, of course, have access to all documents, and satisfy themselves that the price was fair.

It is humiliating for us to know that any of our brethren are taking advantage of the shortage to reap a rich harvest of illegitimate profit. It is like taking the very food out of the mouths of the poor. No man is entitled to exorbitant profits, and we appeal to our biggest merchants to show their humanity by voluntarily offering rice at a reasonable price.

The Government, certainly, have failed miserably in their duty towards the people. Instead of keeping a fixed price, which might be high, they have taken off the restriction with the result that the price has practically doubled in a short time. The least they should do, therefore, is to re-fix the price at a reasonable figure, and that without delay.

Sir James Wilson, Edinburgh, in a letter to *The Times*, points out that the world's stock of gold is now about £900,000,000 worth larger than ten years ago, and estimates that about £1,650,000,000 worth is presently held or used for currency purposes, out of a total worth of £3,500,000,000, the rest being held by private individuals as ornaments, hoarded gold, or bullion. "It is now to the interest of the world generally," he says, "that everything possible should be done to encourage an effective demand for gold. All countries which are in a position to do so, especially the United Kingdom, should lose no time in putting gold into general circulation, in order that it may be utilised in this way. It would also be to the advantage of the world as a whole if the people of India, who have shown such a wonderful power of absorbing gold, were allowed to obtain it to the full extent of their heart's desire, and all restrictions on the free import of gold into India or any other country which may wish to procure it in preference to other commodities, should be removed at the earliest possible moment."

The news cabled from South Africa (says *India*) that the anti-Asiatic legislation affecting the rights and interests of Transvaal Indians, has already been introduced—has passed the second reading unanimously in the Union Assembly, is most ominous. From the news

summary it would seem that even the Unionist members have joined in the assault, and we are grieved to see Mr. Patrick Duncan's name among those who have given the Bill their blessing. Whilst, undoubtedly, this will make the Imperial Government's task more difficult, its duty is none the less clear, namely, to offer a timely warning, and, if necessary, to recommend the withholding of the Royal Assent to this legislation when passed. If they fail in this, there appear only two things that India can do with any show of self-respect. The first is to put in force the "reciprocity" resolution against South Africa. The second is to withdraw from the Imperial Conference, where, evidently, she is nothing better than the fifth wheel in the coach. If this be the result of last year's pretty speeches, co-operation with South Africa is clearly impossible, for this is an act of war, and India is bound to accept the challenge.

Referring to a statement that Natives were anti-Jewish, the president of the Reef Traders' Association, giving evidence before the Native Trading on Mines Committee at Johannesburg, said the Native unrest was not confined to the mines, and the reason why mine trading was monopolised by the Jew was that the Gentile sold out of it, and the former's success was mainly hinged upon his utter absence of false pride inherent in the Gentiles in this country. The Jew was patient beyond measure, while the Gentile wanted to get rich quickly. The Jew entered business without the high ambition of the Gentile, and his success was due to the fact that, unlike the Gentile, he considered how much he could lose on a deal.

Mr. D. Ivon Jones writes to the Durban press:—Only combination among the workers can help. An Act of Parliament may award a minimum wage; but it takes a trade union to enforce it. And the hope of the poorly paid women in the tea-rooms lies not in the Durban Wages Board, but in the fact that the white and Indian workers are combining in union under the aegis of the Shop-Assistants' Union, and thus raising the market value of the labour by creating a monopoly of it for the Union. Let the white workers avoid artificially inflated standards as dangerous pitfalls, and recognise only the minimum wage that they can command by their own economic power. They may not yet get £12 10s., but it will be rock-bottom. And when the Indian workers increase their pay by organisation the gap between the two standards will tend to lessen, and the struggle and animosity between white and black worker arising from two standards of wages will correspondingly vanish. All other remedies than that of labour solidarity only create further dislocation and social disease.

Capetown, June 21.—Reuter Agency is informed that on Friday, June 20, at the Government House, Capetown, the Governor-General received a deputation from the Transvaal British Indian Association, consisting of five, the chairman, the secretary, and the members of the committee of the Association. The deputation, on behalf of the Association, requested his Excellency to withhold consent to the Asiatics (Land and Trading) Amendment Bill, which was recently passed through both Houses of the Union Parliament. They explained very fully their reasons for the request, and intimated that the Bill was unacceptable to their Association, and that they thought also, to the Transvaal Indian community generally. His Excellency promised to consider their representation, and the deputation withdrew, after thanking him for the courteous and patient hearing which he had given them.

At a farewell party given in honour of the Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru who sailed for England on the 28th of April, (says the *Leader Poona* correspondent) Mr. Sastri discussed the present situation arising out of the disturbances in the Punjab and elsewhere. He said that though he was going to England on behalf of the Moderate Party, it was for the object of advancing common national aspirations. The regrettable events of the last few days had greatly added to the difficulties which were already visible in the way of reforms..... The trouble had many phases and proceeded from more than one circumstance. The blame did not, therefore, lie altogether on one side, but if it was necessary to single out anything to which the tragic occurrences could be traced, he had no hesitation in ascribing them in a great measure to the obstinacy of the authorities in passing the Rowlatt Bill in opposition to the universal opinion of the country.

The *Times of India* states: When Mr. Jinnah recently visited Hyderabad, his Exalted Highness the Nizam, hearing that Mr. Jinnah intended to address a meeting on matters which might involve political topics, sent an official to inform him that he should not address the meeting. Mr. Jinnah, however, declined to comply with the order unless he was served with a written order to that effect or unless the meeting was prohibited by his Exalted Highness. The address, which dealt in part with the political problems of India, was delivered to an audience consisting chiefly of school-goers and illiterate persons and his Exalted Highness has in consequence directed Mr. Jinnah to refrain from visiting, without permission, any part of his dominions on any account whatsoever, professional or otherwise. It is understood that the Nizam, on informing Mr. Jinnah that he should not address the meeting, was actuated by the belief that while grave events were happening in many parts of the British India, it was undesirable that any public meeting in connection with those matters directly should be held in his dominions.

In the concluding paragraph of a lengthy appeal sent by Mr. Tilak to M. Clemenceau, the president of the Peace Conference, he says:—

"Under the circumstances, in discharge of the duty devolving upon me, as the elected representative of all

the British India under the above resolution of the Congress, I earnestly appeal to the Peace Conference, *firstly* to concede to India the same right of representation on the League of Nations that is accorded to the British Dominions, and *secondly* to declare that Indians are quite capable of governing themselves, that as a progressive nation they are entitled to the application of the principle of Self-Determination, and that in the exercise of the principle they are also entitled to determine the form of Government, founded upon accepted democratic lines, which they deem most suitable for Self-development according to the genius of the people. The immortal principles of justice and the rule of right against might justify such a declaration. I beg to assure the Conference, through you, Sir, as its President that such a declaration will not only excite the warmest enthusiasm and the deepest gratitude throughout India, with its 375 millions of people, but that its enforcement by the British Parliament would ensure the peace of the World, the prosperity of India and the continuance of a beneficial British connection with our own great empire of Hindustan."

VICTORY!

By the time these lines are printed, it is hoped and expected that Peace will have been signed and that we shall be able to give a great sigh of relief that the War is over at last. For almost five years the greater part of the world has been in a state of war. The forces of hatred and distrust have been let loose, and the much-vaunted modern civilisation has suffered a set-back such as could not have been contemplated before August 1914. For five long years the peaceful methods of diplomacy and arbitration have been set aside in favour of physical force. What this terrible war has cost in human lives and worldly treasure it is impossible to estimate. Some will look upon the events of the war as nothing but a tragedy. To them it is merely one set of nations matching their physical strength against that of another set. Others again, looking deeper, will see running through it all a Divine purpose. The nations of Europe had grown materialistic and had forgotten God. Only by suffering can men and nations see the error of their ways; and so this war was necessary to turn men's minds away from the things of earth towards the higher or spiritual kingdom. How far this change has been brought about is not easy, at the moment to know. We can only hope that the nations, having come through the fire, will be purified as gold is purified. Having gone to war for the sake of protecting the rights of weak nations, we should expect to find, after the war is ended, that the rights of smaller nations and unrepresented peoples throughout the world would be respected in a way they have never been before. The British Empire, standing as it has done, as the champion of Belgium and the friend of France, should be expected at least to champion the rights of every people and nation under its sway. If the flag of England always stood for freedom in the past, how much more should it now do so. To demand for other nations what it would deny to its

own children would indeed be a matter for severe censure. During the next few years, the principles for which the war is said to have been fought will be put to the test. India, for instance, will demand of Britain right of self-determination. The pledges of her dead and living statesmen will have to be redeemed. India must be ruled for the benefit of India and Indians and not for the benefit of England and Englishmen. The lessons of the war must not only be learnt but put into effect. "Freedom" is a word beloved by all and is no monopoly of any nation. It is a much simpler thing to fight for one's own freedom than it is to grant the same freedom to others. And so India must not wait for freedom to come to her. Like all others she will obtain freedom only by hard toil and much suffering. The whole of India must wake from sleep. The people must be educated to a knowledge of government. The mass of the people must receive education. There is a great work to be done. But all this can be done if the spirit that won the war for the Allies is applied to the restoration of every right and privilege of every human being under the British flag.

THE INDIAN SITUATION

Mr. Satyananda Bose, the well-known political worker of Calcutta, writes to us (*India*) as follows:—

The recent events in various parts of India ought to rouse the British Government from its dogmatic slumber. It should read the new situation in a new spirit and forgo its traditional modes of thought and action. There exists a deep and widespread feeling of discontent in the country, and it has been heightened by the passing of the Rowlett Act in defiance of the united opposition of the people. Discontent is now no longer confined to the educated community, but it has permeated the masses. Mr. Gandhi's passive resistance movement may have furnished the occasion, but it is certainly not the cause of the recent disturbances. Nor will it carry conviction to the intelligent public to attribute them to the influence of Bolshevism. The real fact of the situation is that a long and continuous policy of absolute disregard for the demands of the people for higher rights and privileges has produced a feeling of distrust of the good faith and intentions of the Government. To this may be added the sufferings of the people due to increasing poverty and the ravages of disease. The intelligent classes perceive that without a change in the system of Government there is no real hope for the country. And the masses are not quite impervious to the prevailing public opinion in the country. Besides, we cannot brook it that while the whole world is moving towards greater freedom we shall remain where we are. The vital question, therefore, is the grant of an adequate measure of responsible government in India. High hopes were raised that a satisfactory solution of the question was forthcoming. But already they have given place to despair owing to the attitude of the Government of India and the local Governments. The present disturbances can all be

traced to a lurking sense of distrust and disappointment. You can effectually quell these disturbances by aero-planes and machine-guns. But force, it ought to be remembered, is no lasting remedy. It, therefore, behoves the British Government not to tamper with the question of constitutional reforms which is the sovereign remedy for the situation. A rhetorical compliance with the declaration of August 20 will not avail in the least. A substantial move forward towards responsible Government will only conciliate the educated community, and unless they are conciliated the country at large will not be. The European newspapers are putting forward the present unrest and excitement as a reason for not granting any constitutional reform in this country. To our minds this is the most adequate reason for granting them. For true as the sun rises in the East the people cannot be conciliated without a genuine measure of self-government. Will the British Government rise to the height of the occasion and deal with the problem in a statesmanlike spirit? Let us wait and see.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The London correspondent of the *Leader* (Allahabad), referring in his letter to Indians in South Africa writes as follows:—

There is just one other matter that I should like to deal with briefly in this letter. It is the situation in South Africa, aggravated by the recent decision of the courts in the matter of Indian trading rights in Transvaal mining areas. Ever since the commencement of hostilities, South African Indians, instead of pressing for the removal of grievances admittedly felt unredressed by the Passive Resistance Settlement of 1914, confined themselves, whilst offering their co-operation to the Government in its difficulties, to an endeavour to prevent any extension of disabilities which the colonists disregarding of the truce, endeavoured constantly to impose upon them, sometimes with the sympathetic knowledge of the administration. But the Government itself, ordinarily—the instances of the decision in the case of the rights of subjects of Native States under the Immigration Law and of the Railway Regulations were exceptional—took no active part in these hostile demonstrations. The recent Court decision under the Mining Law of 1908, however, seems to have been delivered under the stimulus of Government action. For Indian trade expansion in the Transvaal gold areas has long been a rock of offence to Government and colonists alike. But if the decision is allowed to stand and the Government act upon it, it means the destruction of the Transvaal Indian community, and with it the most virile section of the Indian population in South Africa. The appointment of a Select Committee by the Union Assembly to investigate Indians' grievances is a good sign; but that Sir Thomas Watt, the Minister of the Interior, should have referred to it the question of the Indian practice, in the Transvaal, of acquiring landed property through private limited liability companies in defeat of the clear intention of the prohibition provisions of the Republic Law of 1883 against the ownership of "fixed" property by Asiatics, makes one somewhat nervous, for I have reason to know that the Minister does not look with approval at this method of evading—quite legally—law that ought to have been struck off the Statute Book long ago. I may be mistaken in his motive, and if so, and the objectionable prohibition disappears, he will rejoice more than I.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTION AGAINST MR. HORNIMAN

EVENTS PRECEDING ARREST AND DEPORTATION

Bombay, April 26.

Dr. G. L. D'Avoine, M.D., one of the medical attendants of Mr. Horniman, relates the events immediately preceding the arrest and deportation in the month of April of Mr. B. G. Horniman, editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, as follows:—

As is well known Mr. Horniman was operated on the 17th instant by Major D. S. Mukh, F.R.C.S. (Eng) I.M.S., assisted by Dr. Erulkar, M.D. (London), Dr. Sathaye and myself. Naturally he was under medical supervision and was confined to his bed. He was progressing favourably, though still in a weak condition. I used to see him frequently in company with the other medical attendants. Dr. Anvar Khan, a young Mahomedan graduate of the Bombay University, lived at his bungalow at Worli to look after him night and day.

This afternoon at about 2.30 p.m. Col. A. Street, F.R.C.S. (Eng) I.M.S., called at my bungalow at Moorland Road and requested me to accompany him to see a patient. I went and found Col. Gordon Tucker, M.B., I.M.S., waiting in a taxi. I got into this taxi with Col. Street; the car started immediately and began to go in the direction of Jacob's Circle. On the way Col. Street told me that we are going to Mr. Horniman's bungalow and that he and Col. Tucker have been ordered by the Government to examine him in the presence of one of his medical advisers. On reaching Jacob's Circle we found Mr. Griffith and another European waiting in a motor car at the Jacob's Circle police station. We then drove to Worli and reached Mr. Horniman's bungalow at about 3 p.m. I showed them the way and at the request of Col. Street I went in and informed Mr. Horniman that I have been asked to accompany Col. Street and Tucker who have been ordered to examine him. Mr. Horniman at once asked them to come. The doctors, followed by Mr. Griffith and the European entered, and Mr. Griffith served the written orders of Government which Mr. Horniman signed. After this Col. Street asked Mr. Horniman to allow himself to be examined. Mr. Horniman consented and requested me to undo the dressing. Col. Street examined him and also Col. Tucker; after the examination the medical officers consulted Mr. Griffith who asked me whether I consider Mr. Horniman fit for removal to the Colaba War Hospital or on board a steamer. Knowing that, in any case, he had to be removed from his bungalow which is situated at the crest of the Worli Hill, a place reputed for its salubrious atmosphere, I thought that he would be in much better hands if he was put on board at once, instead of being taken to the War Hospital at Colaba, I expressed my opinion accordingly and Mr. Griffith requested me to sign a certificate to that effect which I did. Mr. Horniman was then requested to dress up while under strict guard and soon after he was taken down in an invalid chair by the ambulance men who were also present. At first they wanted to take him on a stretcher but he preferred to be carried in the chair.

Mr. Horniman was informed while in the bungalow that he could communicate with nobody, not even for his private affairs. He could only be allowed to address a communication to H.E. the Governor of Bombay if he wanted to do so. Mr. Horniman then asked if a verbal private communication can be sent to Mr. Azad and as Mr. Griffith agreed to this, I carried out Mr. Horniman's last instructions.

Mr. Horniman was then taken down and placed in a closed motor ambulance and driven away to Ballard Pier. The orders served on him were to the effect that he was to be deported by the s.s. *Takada* which is to sail to-morrow for England. I then drove home and sent the message as desired by Mr. Horniman and met Mr. Azad subsequently in the evening and gave him his statement.

MR. HORNIMAN'S MESSAGE

Bombay, April 28.

The Bombay Government have provided Mr. Horniman with Rs. 500 for expenses. He delivered through Mr. M. K. Azad, barrister, who had a few minutes' interview with him on board the ship, two messages, one to the directors of the *Chronicle* that there was a good deal of work in England and another to the people, saying, 'Go on with your fight. Your cause is just. In politics only those who are really weak resort to physical force. Do not be dismayed. Your strength is the strength of God.'

Mr. Azad says he had reasons to believe that the order of the deportation emanated from the Government of India and the Bombay Government had to execute it.

MR. GANDHI'S TRIBUTE TO MR. HORNIMAN

On receipt of the news of Mr. Horniman's deportation Mr. M. K. Gandhi issued the following manifesto:—

'Brothers and sisters,—With great sorrow and equal pleasure I have to inform you that Government have to-day removed Mr. Horniman from Bombay and he has been placed on board a steamer bound for England. Mr. Horniman is a very brave and generous Englishman. He has given us the *mantram* of Liberty. He has fearlessly exposed wrong wherever he has seen it and has thus been an ornament to the race to which he belongs and has rendered it a great service. Every Indian knows his services to India. I am sorry for the event because a brave Satyagrahi has been deported, while I retain my physical liberty. I am glad because Mr. Horniman has been given the occasion of fulfilling his pledge.

The publication of the *Chronicle* will for the time being be discontinued, because the directors have wisely decided not to accede to the improper demands of Government. In reality, however, the continuance of the *Chronicle* without Mr. Horniman would be like an attempt to sustain a body when the soul has departed.

The condition I have described is truly serious. Satyagraha is on the anvil. At the same time, this is a fine opportunity for demonstrating its purity and its invincibility. It will rest with Satyagrahis and other inhabitants of India to take advantage of the opportunity. I can fully appreciate the deep wound that will be caused to every Satyagrahi by the separation of a dear comrade. The nation will certainly feel hurt to find that the one who presented it with a daily draught of liberty is no more in its midst. At the time like this Satyagrahis and others will, in my opinion, demonstrate their true affection for Mr. Horniman only by remaining perfectly calm. It will be sheer thoughtlessness to break the peace. Modern civilization challenges the ancient. The Satyagraha now going on is based upon the teachings of ancient civilization and if India accepts Satyagraha the superiority of the ancient civilization will be vindicated. The world will see modern civilization in its nakedness and there is no doubt that its votaries will retrace their steps. The following are the practical suggestions I venture to place before you:—There should be no stoppage of business anywhere in Hindustan. There should be no large public meetings of protests, no processions, no violence of any kind whatsoever, and every effort should be made to stop any tendency thereto. I ask Satyagrahis and the sympathisers not to lose faith in the efficacy of Satyagraha and firmly to believe that the Satyagraha pledge will be carried out in its entirety.'