

Indian Opinion

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PRINCE OF WALES AT BOMBAY.

MR. GANDHI ON BOMBAY RIOTS

The following is the text of the statement issued by Mr. Gandhi to the Associated Press:—

The reputation of Bombay, the hope of my dreams was being stained yesterday even whilst in my simplicity I was congratulating her citizens upon their non-violence in the face of grave provocation, for the volunteers with their captain were arrested during the previous night for pasting posters under authority on private property. The posters advised the people to boycott the Prince. They were destroyed, the Swaraj Sabha's office was mysteriously entered and the unused posters, so far as I am aware not declared unlawful, were also removed. The Prince's visit itself and the circumstances attending the ceremonials arranged and the public money wasted for the manufacture of a welcome to his Royal Highness constituted an unbearable provocation and yet Bombay had remained self-retained. This I thought was a matter for congratulation. The burning of the pile of foreign cloth was an eloquent counter-demonstration to the interested official demonstration. Little did I know that at the very time that the Prince was passing through the decorated route and the pile of foreign cloth was burning in another part of the city, the millhands were in criminal disobedience of the wishes of their masters employing them first one and then others by force (?), that a swelling mob was molesting the peaceful passengers in the tramcars and holding up the tram traffic, that it was forcibly depriving those that were wearing foreign caps of their head dresses and pelting inoffensive Europeans. As the day went up the fury of the mob now intoxicated with its initial success rose also. They burnt tramcars and a motor, smashed liquor shops and burnt two. Hearing of the outbreak at about 1 o'clock, I motored with some friends to the area of disturbances and heard the most painful and humiliating story of molestation of Parsi sisters. Some few were assaulted and even had their saris torn from them. No one from among a crowd of over fifteen hundred, who had surrounded my car denied the charge. As a Parsi with a hot rage and quivering lips was with the greatest deliberation relating the story, an elderly Parsi gentl man said: 'Please save us from this mob rule.' This news of the rough of handling Parsi sisters pierced me like a dart. I felt that my sisters or daughters had been hurt by a violent mob. Yes, some Parsis had joined the welcome. They had a right to hold their own views free of molestation. There can be no coercion in *Swaraj*. The Moplah fanatic, who forcibly converts a Hindu, believes that he is acquiring religious merit. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

As I reached the two tanks, I found too a liquor shop smashed, two policemen badly wounded and lying unconscious on cots without anybody caring for them. I alighted. Immediately the crowd surrounded me and yelled 'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai.' That sound usually grates on my ears but it has grated never so much as it did yesterday when the crowd unmindful of the two sick brethren chocked me with the shout at the top of their voices. I rebuked them and they were silent. Water was brought for the two wounded men. I requested two of my companions and some from the crowd to take the dying policemen to the hospital.

I proceeded then to the scene a little further up where I saw a fire rising. They were two tram cars which were burnt by the crowd. On returning I witnessed a burning motor car. I appealed to the crowd to disperse, and told them that they had damaged the cause of the *Kilafat*, the Punjab and *Swaraj*. I returned sick at heart and in a chastened mood.

At about five a few brave Hindu young men came to report that in *Bhindi Bazaar* the crowd was molesting every passer-by who had a foreign cap on and even seriously beating him if he refused to give up his cap. A brave old Parsi who defied the crowd and would not give up his pagree was badly handled. Maulana Azid Sobhani and I went to *Bhindi Bazaar* and reasoned with the crowd and told them that they were denying their religion by hurting innocent men. The crowd made a show of dispersing. The police were there but they were exceedingly restrained. We went further and on retracting our steps found to our horror a liquor shop on fire. Even the fire brigade was obstructed in its work. Thanks to the efforts of Paddit Nekiram Sharma and others the inmates of the shop were able to come out. The crowd did not consist of hooligans only or boys. It was not an unintelligent crowd. They were not all mill-hands. It was essentially a mixed crowd unprepared and unwilling to listen to anybody. For the moment it had lost its head. And it was not a crowd but several crowds numbering in all less than twenty thousand. It was bent upon mischief and destruction.

I heard that there was firing resulting in deaths and that in the Anglo-Indian quarter every one who passed with *khadder* on came in for hard beating, if he did not put off his *khadder* cap or shirt. I heard that many were seriously injured. I am writing this in the midst of six Hindu and Musalman workers who have just come in with broken heads and bleeding and one with a broken nasal bone and other lacerated wounds and in danger of losing his life. They went to Parel, led by Maulana Azid Subhani and Mr. Muazzam Ali, to pacify the mill-hands who, it was reported, were holding up tram cars there. The workers, however, were unable to proceed to their destination. They returned with their bleedings to speak for themselves.

Thus the hope of reviving mass civil disobedience has once more been dashed, in my opinion, to pieces. The atmosphere for mass civil disobedience is absent. It is not enough that such an atmosphere is to be found in Bardoli and, therefore, it may go on side by side with violence in Bombay. This is impossible. Neither Bardoli nor Bombay can be treated as separate unconnected units. They are parts of one great indivisible whole. It was possible to isolate Malabar. It was also possible to disregard Malegaon. But it is not possible to ignore Bombay. Non-co-operators cannot escape liability. It is true that non-co-operators were ceaselessly remonstrating everywhere with the people at considerable risk to themselves to arrest or stop the mischief, and that they are responsible for saving many precious lives. But that is not enough for launching out on civil disobedience or to discharge us from liability for the violence that has taken place. We claim to have established a peaceful atmosphere, i. e., to have attained by our non-violence sufficient

control over the people to keep their violence under check. We have failed when we ought to have succeeded, for yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult. And we broke that pledge inasmuch as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take in the welcome as we were to refrain. Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday 24 hours fast till *Swaraj* is obtained.

The working committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof whether mere civil disobedience can be at all encouraged until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I confess my inability to conduct a campaign of civil disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people. I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity. But I know I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

MR. GANDHI'S APPEAL

Readers will recollect seeing in these columns a Reuter's report cabled from Bombay, which stated that Mr. Gandhi in a statement issued by him to the press confessed the failure of the non-co-operation movement which he has inaugurated in India. A full text of the statement referred to is published below, from which will be seen that Reuter has sent a distorted news, and has misread, whether willfully or not we leave our readers to judge, the contents of the same in cabling the news broadcast.

Men and Women of Bombay.—It is not possible to describe the agony I have suffered during and after the past two days. I am writing this now at 3-30 a. m. in perfect peace. After two hours prayer and meditation I have found that I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till the Hindus and Mahomedans of Bombay have made peace with the Parsis, Christians and Jews and till the non-co-operators have made peace with co-operators. The mob *Swaraj* that I have witnessed during the last two days has sunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim union has been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and Jews. The non-violence of the non-co-operators has been worse than the violence of the co-operators. For with violence on our lips we have terrorised those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all, whether we find him through the Koran, Bible, Zend-Avesta, Talmud or Geeta and he is the God of Truth and Love. I have no interest in living save for this faith in me. I cannot have an Englishman or anyone else. I have spoken and written much against his institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall continue to do so if I live. But we must not mistake my condemnation of the system for the man. My religion requires me to love him as I love myself. I would deny God if I did not attempt to prove it at this critical moment. I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Mussalmans would be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them and their honour with their lives. They have only recently proved their liberality and friendship. The Mussalmans are specially beholden to them, for

the Parsis have, compared to their numbers, given more than they themselves to the *Khilafat* funds. I cannot face again the appealing eyes of the Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th instant as I passed through them, unless the Hindus and Mussalmans have expressed their full and free repentance. Nor can I face Mr. Andrews when he returns from East Africa if we have done no reparation to the Indian-born Christians whom are bound to protect as our own brothers and sisters. We may not think of what they in self-defence or by way of reprisals have done to some of us. You see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussalman to do likewise. But I do not want any one to fast. Fasting is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Mussalman to retire to his home and ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of their heart. I invite my fellow-workers not to waste a word of sympathy on me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make a ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we can make any further progress with our struggle we must cleanse our hearts.

One special word to my Mussalman brothers. I have approached the *Khilafat* as a sacred cause. I have striven for Hindu-Muslim unity because India cannot live free without it and because we would both deny God if we considered one another as natural enemies. I have thrown myself into the arms of the Ali brothers because I believe them to be true and God-fearing men. The Mussalmans have to my knowledge played a leading part during the two days of carnage. It has deeply hurt me. I ask every Mussalman worker to rise to his full height to realize his duty to his faith and see that the carnage stops.

May God bless everyone of us with wisdom and courage to do the right at any cost.

I am,
Your servant,
(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE

The following account is given by Reuters in connection with the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League held in Ahmedabad during Christmas week:—

Ahmedabad, Dec. 28.—The Indian Nationalist Congress opened under the presidency of Ajmal Khan, who welcomed the Government policy of "repression," which he said strengthened the people's determination to continue the struggle.

A message was read from the Nationalist leader Das, who is in prison, exhorting them to continue the struggle.

A split has developed in the Congress resolution proposed by Mohani, declaring that the destruction of British Imperialism and establishment of complete independence was the goal of Caliphatism. The president ruled out the resolution on the ground that it conflicted with the Caliphate constitution. After the Congress had adjourned, Mohani's supporters passed a resolution in favour of independence.

Ahmedabad, Dec. 29.—A split at the Indian Nationalist Conference, over the resolution by Mohani, declaring that the destruction of British Imperialism, and the establishment of complete independence was the goal of the Caliphate movement, which was ruled

out of order as conducting with the Caliphate constitution, occurred at the Caliphate Conference, which met simultaneously with the Subjects Committee of the Nationalist Conference.

The Nationalist Congress with a dozen dissentients adopted Gandhi's creed resolution previously adopted by the Subjects Committee. The resolution also recommended the maintenance of the present non-violence creed.

The Congress rejected Mohani's motion for altering the creed in the sense of declaring the object of the Congress to be the attainment of complete independence without the Empire by "possible and proper" instead of "legitimate and peaceful" means, after a lively debate, in which the motion received appreciable support.

Gandhi, in opposing the motion, emphasised the seriousness of madly adopting a course which would limit the present wide door.

The Congress, following Gandhi's advice, overwhelmingly rejected Pundit Malaviya's proposal to delete that portion of the Subjects Committee's resolution advising aggressive civil disobedience, and to submit to Congress a resolution in favour of a round table conference on reasonable and honourable terms. Gandhi pointed out that the rejection did not preclude subsequent agreement to a round table conference.

Ahmedabad, Dec. 30.—The Subjects of the National Congress passed a resolution that all other activities should be suspended in order to concentrate attention on civil disobedience.

The resolution urges the organisation of meetings throughout the country notwithstanding their prohibition, and appeals to all to offer themselves for arrest by becoming volunteers.

The resolution also invests Gandhi (or his successor) in case he is arrested with full powers over the Congress organisation, with the proviso that he is not authorised to conclude any terms of peace with the Government without the previous sanction of the Congress.

ALL INDIA MUSLEM LEAGUE.

Ahmedabad, Dec. 31.—A fiery plea for the establishment of a republic designated the United States of India, with its own armies and Parliament, was made at the annual session of the All India Moslem League.

Gandhi was present, and Mahani said he did not believe in losing time, and proposed that a republic be declared on Jan. 1, and should be attained by all possible means, including guerilla warfare if martial law were proclaimed.

Mohani assured the Hindus that their apprehensions were groundless regarding what might occur to them under "Free India."

Ahmedabad, Jan. 1.—The Moslem League Conference passed a resolution condemning "severity" displayed by the Government in dealing with the Moplah rising, also condemning the Moplahs who had ill-treated a number of Hindus.

A resolution was talked out which declared that as the attitude of the British Government did not offer any hope of the Moslem territories, including Palestine and Mesopotamia, remaining immune from non-Moslem interference, it was essential to put an end to British Imperialism and to co-operate with other communities for arriving at the complete independence of India.

A Reuter's message from Allahabad dated Dec. 28, states:—The arrests of Congress volunteers continue. Eighty were sentenced to three months rigorous imprisonment.

NON-RETALIATION IS SOUL-FORCE.

MRS. GANDHI'S APPEAL.

The following is the translation of a Gujarati appeal issued by Mahatma Gandhi after peace was restored in Bombay.—

TO THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY

By God's grace we are once more at peace. We are no longer engaged in the occupation of breaking one another's head, throwing stones or burning buildings. Nevertheless, some of us still anger, bitterness and fear in us. This is evident from the language of the numerous letters I have been receiving. We can call it a real peace only when our minds are free from these impurities. The first step towards such a consummation is that Hindus and Mussalmans make a clear confession of their guilt. Those who cast the first stone must be held guilty. If I begin by using an abusive word, I must take the consequences of all that may follow. If Hindus and Mussalmans made the commencement by forcibly removing foreign caps or by throwing stones, they were the guilty party. Moreover, they are an overwhelming majority. And it is largely Hindus and Mussalmans who have taken the pledge of non-violence. Therefore, it is they who should realise their responsibility in the first instance.

I am not here considering the responsibility in law. I am simply thinking of it as between man and man. If Parsis and Christians too do not feel their share of the guilt it is difficult to establish a lasting peace. If Parsis and Christians had not retaliated when Hindus and Mussalmans began violence they would have been considered angels and they would have given to the world an astonishing proof of their soul-force. But they not only defended themselves, which was quite right, but they also were engaged and went beyond the limits of self-defence. Some of them used greater violence than was necessary. And if they do not admit as much, it would be difficult to attain immediate heart-peace because Hindus and Mussalmans will not acknowledge their complete innocence even after provocation. If only one party were to continue its guilt and the other consistently remained patient and stiff-necked, the guilty party would be exhausted in the effort. If there was no reaction following action the world would attain salvation. But generally we answer abuse with a slap. A slap is returned with a double slap. The letter is followed by a kick, a kick by a bullet, and so the circle of sin ever widens but generally those who believe in taking tooth for tooth after a time forgive one another and become friends. Is it impossible for us to follow this common rule? I do not, therefore, hesitate to ask Parsi and Christian friends to recognise this rule of mutual forgiveness and forget one another's wrongs.

But I do lay stress upon the special responsibility that rests upon Hindus and Mussalmans. Whether the Parsis and the Christians forgive or not, Hindus and Mussalmans are bound to pacify themselves by confessing their guilt, asking God for forgiveness, and by remaining peaceful. Those who have suffered a loss or are deprived of their dear ones are bound to feel the effect of the injury received. Some of them are too poor to bear their losses. We must appreciate their situation. And I trust that there will be an impartial non-official committee appointed to investigate the losses suffered by those who cannot bear them and to collect the funds necessary for these purposes. At the same time I hope that no one will seek the assistance of law or Government. This advice I tender not merely as a non-cooperator but also from my wide experience that such matters are more truly and more expeditiously adjudicated by private arbitration. That is also the way to avoid accidents. The easiest method of achieving peace is to give up the idea of complaining against one another in a court of law and to concentrate our attention upon taking preventive measures so that there is no result.

of such madness. And I hope that Bombay
 retrieve her lost reputation by adopting such
 measures.

I remain,
 Your Servant,
 (SGD.) M. K. GANDHI

BOOK REVIEW

"THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIA"

We have been favoured for the purpose of review,
 with a small booklet entitled "The Truth about India"
 consisting of 53 pages. The booklet is written by
 Mr. H. M. Hyndman, and contains two chapters, one
 on the "British Raj in India", and the other on
 "The Economic basis in India." Every page is full
 of information to students of Indian politics and
 economics. An account, shortly stated, of British rule
 in India from the time of the East India Company is
 given, as also the economical conditions as prevailing
 in India to-day. The criticisms, based upon facts and
 figures, passed by the author are well worth a perusal.
 The whole administrative and economic history is
 given in a nutshell. As a sample, we quote a passage
 from it:—

"The yearly drains from British India of commercial
 produce, of which there is no commercial return I
 put at upward of £30,000,000 a year. If India
 with its vast population were even a moderately rich
 country, this drain of produce to a foreign power,
 going on year after year, and increasing rather than
 diminishing, would be a matter of concern, especially
 as it has proceeded now for just 150 years. But when
 the amount thus calculated is extorted from the poorest
 population on the planet, then it is clear that the
 process I gave to this process nearly fifty years ago,
 "bleeding to death," represents what is being done."

INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

We have received the following from Mr. L. W.
 Cich from Johannesburg:—

Sir.—Mr. Andrews, from my knowledge of him,
 would shrink from the mere suggestion of a vote
 of thanks, but that fact in nowise lessens the obligation
 under which he has placed every intelligent Indian,
 and for that matter every impartial non-Indian for his
 very clear and arresting article.

Twenty years ago or thereabouts, what time I first
 became associated politically with Mr Gandhi, I
 ventured the bold, if then immature opinion that in
 preference to claiming the modification of existing
 disabilities, the thing to do, as it appeared to me,
 was "go for the gloves" i. e. seek to achieve political
 equality. It seemed to me that the acceptance of any-
 thing short of political equality, carried with it an
 implied admission of inferiority affording an
 excuse, if not actually justifying, the lesser
 disabilities laboured under. It may be—indeed I think
 it more than probable—that in South Africa the larger
 claim would have been resisted too strenuously to have
 succeeded. Irish resistance would, however, have
 been not without its advantages to India. For the
 Anglo-Boer war was ostensibly fought largely over the
 humiliations to which British Indians were subjected
 under the government of the Transvaal Republic, and
 their complete emancipation, after the war, could have
 been denied them only by an admission that the Brit-
 ish Indian grievances had been but a pretext, or that
 they were unjustified because they belonged to a "sub-
 ject people." I still utterly fail to understand how
 the Imperial Government ever reconciled its "British
 Indian grievances" count in the indictment it framed
 against the government of the Republic with its

retention on the statute book of the newly conquered
 colony of Law 3 of 1885.

INDIAN OPINION of the 23rd December re-
 produced a Reuter's message from Nairobi in which
 the Convention of Associations is reported to have
 declared: "that Indians have not proved themselves
 capable of self-government and (therefore) should not
 be judged capable of governing others."

The declaration may not be convincing, but it
 certainly seems to furnish the key to the situation.
 That "situation" is the status of the British Indian in
 India, and the key the achieving of full and complete
 status both 'libertas' and 'civitas'—to borrow an
 illustration from ancient Rome. Be master in your
 own household, and you will elsewhere command the
 respect accorded to a Man! A truth as obvious as it
 is elementary and as truly applicable to peoples as to
 individuals.

Yours etc.
 L. W. RITCH.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The case of Messrs. Ismail Gora, Sorabjee Rustom-
 jee and Manilal Gandhi in connection with the recent
 point trouble which was to have been heard on Friday
 before last has been adjourned till the 16th of
 February pending the judgment of the Supreme Court
 in the case of Mr. Sorabjee who has lodged an appeal
 against the decision of Mr. Clerk in his previous case.

Calcutta, Dec. 29—In view of the conflicting
 accounts of the Prince of Wales' reception at Calcutta,
 (says Reuter), an official announcement has been made
 which says that there was an importation of a disorderly
 element into Calcutta on Dec. 23 to enforce the 'hartal'
 by terrorising the shopkeepers, which resulted in 650
 arrests for obstruction and disorderly conduct. The
 total arrests made in Calcutta during the past six weeks
 amount to 3,500. The hartal in the northern quarter
 of the city on the Prince's arrival did not prevent
 numerous Indians from participating in the welcome.

BOOKS FOR SALE

To be obtained from the *Indian Opinion Press*, Phoenix,
 Natal. Postal Orders to be made payable at Durban.

We have just received the following books from India. The
 prices given include cost of postage:—

Folk-lore of the Telugus	2 0
The Hon. Mr. Gokhale and the Indenture System	2 0
From Colombo to Almora	4 0
Essays on Indian Art, Industry and Education, by E. B. Havell,	2 0
The Indian National Congress, its Origin and Growth	2 6
My Indian Reminiscences by Dr. Paul	2 6
Lift Irrigation	3 9
The Swadeshi Movement	9
Speeches on Indian Affairs by John Morley	3 6
Hindu Psalms and Hymns	2 0
The Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Tour in South Africa: Special INDIAN OPINION Souvenir.	2 6
The Ethics of Passive Resistance	9 3
Indian Home Rule, by M. K. Gandhi	1 6

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