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FAREWELL TO MRS. NAIDU

SOCIAL IN D.L.I. DRILL HALL. DISTINGUISHED VISITOR'S PARTING WORDS

ABOUT 500 guests sat down to supper in the D.L.I. Drill Hall, Greyville, on the evening of May 24th, the occasion being the farewell social given in honour of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who was due to leave by the *s.s. Karagola* on the following day. Mr. L. Renaud presided and other Europeans present were Miss K. Giddink, Mr. Kallenbach, Mrs. Kennedy, Mr. Harry Linder, Mrs. Sutton, Miss Bartlett, Dr. Sage, Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Husband and others. The hall was gaily decorated with flags and palms, prominence being given to festoons of the Indian national colours, white, green and red.

The proceedings began shortly after 8 o'clock with a programme of music which was carried out splendidly by the Misses Lawrences, Miss Paul and Mrs. A. J. Ghonoo, and during its progress the excellent repast prepared for the occasion was thoroughly enjoyed.

The guest of the evening was then garlanded, and Mr. Renaud, in the course of a few remarks which led to a number of speeches of farewell said:—

"If anybody were to come here to-night and see the assembly in this hall, he would ask what was the reason for it, because in the town of Durban it is not everyday that we have Europeans and Natives sharing the hospitality of the Indian community. But if such a stranger

came to the hall he would soon be enlightened, and he would find that we have come here to-night in real Indian fashion, to give a right royal farewell to the country-woman of whom you are so proud. You have reason to be proud of her, and any nation that has amongst its subjects people of the calibre of Mrs. Naidu, is bound to be proud of the fact. All those who have

come into contact with her must have been struck by the genius and intellect of this lady. She belongs to India, of course, in a sense, but she also belongs to the universe, because brain and genius have no limitations. They do not belong to one country, but are like precious stones that are sent to this world to glitter for every eye to see. She has come here to this country and to this town and has done honour to its inhabitants. Long after she has gone you will remember her and it will not be necessary for anybody to mention her name, for you will have her memory implanted deep into your hearts. I am sorry her stay in this country has been so short, but I am sure that since she has come here where she was unknown, she has been surrounded with such friendship and encouragement that when she has left Durban she will always have a soft corner in her heart for this part of the world and whenever, let us hope not far distant, she again pays a visit to our little town, she will again receive a most cordial welcome." (Applause.)

Mr. V. Lawrence, who was the next speaker, said that at the outset he must thank the European guests for their kindly presence on that auspicious occasion. "Our dear sister" he proceeded, in the Town Hall the night before last said she *ceper*, she saw and she laboured. But

I say vasi vidi vici, she came, she saw and she conquered. She conquered our hearts, and I am sure she is taking back with her the hearts of the 160,000 Indians in South Africa. Our devotion will go with her wherever she goes and, I am sure, she will have the same feeling for us.

Mr. Rooknooden spoke in Hindustani and afterwards interpreted his remarks in English. He said Mrs. Naidu was known as the Nightingale of India. That Nightingale first flew to Kenya and from Kenya she heard the voice of this country and had come to our assistance. Mrs. Naidu had carried out her mission splendidly. She had been instrumental in bringing together several gatherings of Europeans and Indians and had dispelled the misunderstanding that had existed long enough. They were grateful to her and hoped she would have a pleasant voyage and that she would pay them another visit, and the speaker hoped that if she was not able to return herself, she would select leaders like herself to send to us, and if possible of her own sex."

Mr. Linder, in the course of a brief speech, wished Mrs. Naidu a pleasant voyage to India, to 'home, sweet home.' India, he said, was assuredly going to be governed by Indians very shortly. (Hear, hear.) It was coming for a surety and very soon too, and once they

(Indians) had a government of their own, it would not be a case of one government dictating to another but Indians would have power to do what they wished and no longer would one and a half million people dictate to three hundred millions. No man wished to see oppression. "We were oppressed" continued the speaker, "just as you are, and one who is oppressed feels for the other.

MESSAGE FROM MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU

The following wireless message has been received by the Natal Indian Congress from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu from the *s.s. Karagola*:—

"My gratitude to entire Natal Indian community for their splendid loyalty and love. Hope the constructive Congress programme will be faithfully fulfilled with unity and determination."

Mrs. Naidu has done a wonderful amount of good since she came here, and when she goes home she will not be long, I am sure, before she will stand up in the House of the Government of India and will be able to explain the conditions over here better now than if she had not come here." The speaker thought Mrs. Naidu could do more in India when India had a government of her own than by coming here again. He wished her a very pleasant voyage.

Mr. Pather said it was a very sorrowful if not painful matter for one who had been closely associated with their distinguished sister for the last three months, to speak on an occasion like this, where one was called upon to say farewell. Mrs. Naidu was dear and near to all of them and she had told them in the Town Hall that it was not good to say farewell because it was only her body that was going away for four or five thousand miles and that her spirit would still be with us. "My friends, I do not believe in spirits" declared the speaker. "I have not seen them. But I believe in bodies with spirits in them." (Laughter.) "Dear Sister, I thank you and we all thank you for what you have done for us. I am not so gifted as our sister to speak for hours and therefore I must finish my speech with this hope and prayer that Mrs. Naidu may come

back to us very soon with her body and her spirit in it. (Laughter and Applause.)

Mrs. Sutton, in the course of a few remarks, said it gave her great pleasure to say that the South Africans who had heard Mrs. Naidu's speeches admired her intellect and intelligence. European women had enjoyed her speeches and they wished her a pleasant voyage, a good rest and a safe return to South Africa. (Applause.)

Mr. Beethasee, who was called upon for a few words, said he used to learn at school that India was the brightest jewel in the British Crown. Since Mrs. Naidu had visited this country, however, he was beginning to realise that she was the brightest jewel in India, and during the last few months the Indians in South Africa had been feeling a little bit happier because Mrs. Naidu was amongst them. Now they had gathered to wish her good-bye and they felt sad and sorry that she had to go. Mrs. Naidu's motto was 'to serve,' and she certainly serves, no matter whether it is Indians or Europeans or Afrikanders. She wants to serve humanity. The speaker hoped that Mrs. Naidu would soon return to South Africa and wished her farewell and God-speed.

Mr. Charles Dube, representing the native community said:—"I am sorry to be here to-night in the place of my brother who is a public speaker. I am only a teacher and I am not used to public speaking. Still it is with great pleasure that I stand to honour Mrs. Naidu. The natives in the country are all asking about Mrs. Naidu. They say 'we want to see the Indian lady who goes about the country voicing the opinions of the down-trodden people, people who have no say in the Government.' They say 'we learn from the authorities that there are people in Parliament who represent us, but we never hear what they have to say for us, but this lady is struggling and doing a great deal for the Indians and we hear she is also interested in the native people.' Continuing the speaker said, "we are grateful to Mrs. Naidu for having come to this country and taken the trouble and time to look us up. We know there are men—great men, who come from England and tour the country and see the towns, but, unlike Mrs. Naidu, they never take the trouble to inquire into our troubles. So it is with great pleasure that I say these few words on behalf of the native people, that we also wish her a safe voyage to her home, and that she will return and be able to accomplish what she has already started for the Indian people and for us all. As the other speakers have said, Mrs. Naidu is for all humanity and that is more than true because she does not forget to speak for us all. She seems to be the right person who wants to see everybody get a fair chance." (Applause.)

Mr. Emammally said he echoed the sentiments of the previous speakers and joined in the desire to welcome back Mrs. Naidu. He did not agree with Mr. Pather who said the spirit was not there. They know Mrs. Naidu's services were required in India at this time when self-government was approaching, and they hoped she would participate in it. He wished her a very pleasant voyage.

Pandit Bhavani Dayal spoke in Hindustani and then Mr. B. M. Patel was called upon. He said he scarcely knew what to say, but he had to tell them he did not agree with those who looked for Mrs. Naidu's speedy return to this country. There was much work to be done in India and they should not wish for Mrs. Naidu's or any other leader's visit to this country until such time that they would be able to land here without the necessity of passes or permits, and that could only be brought about if India get's her freedom. He wished Mrs. Naidu a safe voyage.

Mr. Sheik Amod spoke in Hindustani.

Mr. Sorabjee Ratomjee, in the course of a brief address, said he was grieved that day because parting was always very difficult. "Mrs. Naidu came here as one of our leaders," said the speaker, "and we knew her and we had heard about her and read about her, but we never felt what her spirit was and what she could do for us. In her short stay of three months she has done much

more than we who live here have done for India during the last ten or fifteen years. I feel myself lost to-day. I can only say that we want a few like Mrs. Naidu in South Africa. Her duty in India is greater than here, but at the same time we are the lost children of India who want some little help from India. I sincerely trust that if the Indian leaders who are working day and night and sacrificing their all for the attainment of Swaraj, look to us to work out our destinies here in the Dominion of South Africa, they will send us one of the leaders at least once a year to teach us and enlighten us, and I assure you we will be one of whom India will always be proud. It was in this hall we said farewell to Mahatma Gandhi and to the late Mr. Gokhale, and now we are saying farewell to Mrs. Naidu, but we can assure her we are confident she will return or we shall send a deputation to bring her back. In her short stay in South Africa she has not only won the hearts of the Indians, but also inspired our European friends and native brethren as evidenced by their presence here to-night. Mrs. Naidu has inspired all the nationalities of the world in South Africa, and I say this, that it is her work for the common brotherhood of nations that tells, and not such work as that of the League of Nations. It is such work as hers that will bring brotherhood and I wish there would be a few more Mrs. Naidus in the universe and then the brotherhood of mankind would be as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow. Again thank her for all she has done for us. Parting is difficult, but as it is intermingled with the hope of her return next year, it will not be so difficult for us."

MRS. NAIDU'S ADDRESS

Mrs. Naidu, as she rose to make a reply, was greeted with loud and continued applause. "Well," she said, "nearly every speaker has been so insistent upon my staying here that I am beginning to wonder whether I should not go and unpack my boxes and stay here until you are so tired of me that you will want me deported. (Laughter.) That would be a good punishment for all of you for your sins. But I have to go. There are many reasons why I must go. It almost appears—it might have been different if women had spoken—that India cannot get on without me, that I am so necessary for the destiny of India, but that is not the real reason why I must go home. I am one of the most loyal servants of India, but I am going to tell you a secret. My heart is dragging me homewards not because of my sense of duty, but because my little daughter, whom I have not seen for three years, is coming back from Oxford for a holiday and the first thing she will say is 'where is my mother?' And though in the course of the last three months you have not remembered I have a home and family, I have to confess to a little homesickness in my heart because my children are not here. Excuse me therefore, if I do not unpack my things and stay. I wish, indeed, I could get home sooner than I shall, but I am going to be waylaid for a month on my way by people who are jealous and do not like you at all, the people up in East Africa who say: "How dare the South Africans take up so much of your time. We are your children also." And so you see there is that jealousy and I shall have to break my journey and I think I shall not get home much before July. However between this July and next July much water will flow under the bridge of the Tugela river, and the same ocean into which it flows may bring me back here. When I left home with a temperature of 104 I said 'Oh, I am coming back on the 10th of February' and so I just put in a few clothes and left all my nice things at home. It is now the 24th of May and I do not know even now what a capricious fate may have been in store for me. Friends, how am I to thank you before I go. Everyday I have said to you that I am not going to say farewell and I am not saying farewell. It is you who are piling on the agony, not I. If Mr. Pather were a proper Indian he would realise that the body does not matter. It does not matter in my case, because though I become weary, I should not be tired, and yet sometimes I get cross about it. Now, I am not going to

say good-bye, but, *au revoir*, because in my country—not the great country of India, but Hyderabad, there is a saying 'that once you drink of the waters of Hyderabad, you must return, even against your will.' It is never against one's will to go back to Hyderabad, but surely there is something in the magic of South Africa that will bring me back some day, sooner or later. (Applause.) There is prophecy in Africa, there is destiny in Africa and I know that my people to-day, though they be despised, though they be looked upon as the Asiatic menace, are going to have a very important share in the fulfilment of that prophecy and the building up of that destiny. I am not afraid and I tell you everyday that I am not a slave. It is in no man's power to make rivers flow backwards or destroy the far-distant things in men's lives, and I know as surely as I stand here—and though it may seem arrogant to claim the gift of prevision, it is none the less my right to possess the gift of vision. I know that even as my country and my countrymen have taken their part throughout the centuries in the evolution of the great civilisations in other lands, so here also, though to-day in such despair and suffering such bitterness, they will have their opportunity of realising themselves and making their splendid contribution to the great tradition that is to be born in South Africa as the gospel of humanity. I go away with a heart full of hope. I came here with a heart full of despair because I was ignorant, but I go back high with hope because I have knowledge to-day—knowledge of the rights of the coloured and the native and of my own community. There is not one fault or folly that I do not know, or one strength or power that I have not glimpsed. I have always felt for the oppressed people of the world, oppressed by their own ignorance, their own follies, their own lack of knowledge of their own greatness and destiny, and I have made up my mind to set open the doors of every cage, either that we have made for ourselves or that others have made for us, and because I have so passionate a love of freedom myself, so passionate a love of justice for myself and in my soul. I would give my life to secure justice for every nation and for every individual whether poor or rich. It would not matter whether he were my most bitter enemy, the thing within me, bigger than personal feeling, would rise up and say, 'do not let the blood of the children be on your head; you must give him justice and a generous understanding of his education that you would demand,' and therefore in South Africa or any other part of the world, my heart goes out to all people that suffer. So many suffer from their own sins and follies and so many suffer because Nature is red in tooth and claw, because hatred exists where there should be brotherhood and peace. It is because I do not make a difference between community and community and between nation and nation that I can truly say I do preach the gospel of brotherhood. I speak for my own community because my own community is in trouble in South Africa. I work for my people in India because they have not yet attained that freedom, but do not for a moment believe that I love my Indian brethren any more than I love my brothers and sisters in other nations, but where the need is greatest my service must be most loyal and loving. Even to-morrow, were the Indians in South Africa to rise and oppress the black communities I would fight against my own people. (Applause.) I do not think that the Indian civilisation has ever taught narrowness or bitterness. I do not think the religion of Christ or the Prophets or the great teacher of the Zoroaster ever taught the division of humanity, but always union, always fellowship, always self-sacrifice for the good of humanity, and because India is the one country in the world where all the creeds are reconciled and where all creeds go to make one unified nation, I think it is the duty, as it is the privilege of my community in South Africa to hold aloft that wonderful torch that should light the people of this land, and I look forward to the day when my misunderstood people, this little community of Indians who are toiling honestly, who are producers and creators of this land, will be the torch-bearers in the work of civilisation, because

they will not be seekers of their own good at the expense of any other community. In that day it will be realised that in brotherhood and brotherhood alone lies the redemption of a sorrowful world. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Albert Christopher in returning a vote of thanks to Mrs. Naidu said that all he could say might be summed up in the words "we love Mrs. Naidu for what she has done for us."

In supporting the vote of thanks Mr. P. R. Pather referred to the presence of Mr. Renaud who had been courageous enough to preside, and added that the Indian community were fortunate in possessing such a man as Mr. Renaud, and also the others who had a warm heart for the Indians. He proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the chair.

The function concluded with further musical items, followed by "God Save the King."

FAREWELL MEETING AT THE TOWN HALL

A farewell meeting in honour of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was held in the Durban Town Hall on Thursday night the 22nd May when the Hall was crowded with Indians and there was a large attendance of Europeans also. Sharp at 8 p.m. the guest of the evening entered the Hall accompanied by the Chairman Mr. Leon Renaud and was greeted with loud and prolonged applause.

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH

The Chairman (Mr. Leon Renaud) addressed the meeting as follows:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are assembled to-night to say farewell to Mrs. Naidu. I am sure I am voicing the expression of all of you when I say that although we are pleased to meet Mrs. Naidu to-night, our pleasure is somewhat diminished by the idea that she will soon be leaving our shores. But wherever she is and however far she may go, her presence will always be in the soul of every Indian in South Africa.

When Mrs. Naidu came here you were somewhat down-hearted, but she had been a very little time among you when it braced up your courage and you felt that after all there were many nice things in this country and in life held out to you, and all on account of this spirit that Mrs. Naidu has known how to inspire into every Indian in South Africa, and the good example she has given them. The energy with which she had fought your case and the simplemindedness with which she has always gone on her straight path, must have told in the long run, and must result in benefit not only to yourselves but to the whole community in South Africa.

The time has now come when she must say "farewell" because apparently she is a lady that has a great work to do. I think the way she has undertaken her work and the way she has worked during the short time she has been among us shows to every one of us what is likely to be the life of this good lady. It is a life of work and travel and work again, and all along for the freedom of her own people. You all know and you all realise the benefit of the work she has done for you, so it is useless, and I need not to-night remind you of it, but there is one thing that I may say, that the European community as well as the Indian community must have appreciated the good work that she has done for their cause. She has now seen South Africa from one end of the country to the other: she has been feted all round, wherever she has gone, and I was glad to see in a speech she made in Rhodesia that she stated she had been well received everywhere else in South Africa. Of course it could not be otherwise. Now the time has come when she has to go and all her Indian friends have come round to-day to show her their appreciation. I can see faces round this hall every one full of gratitude for what she has done. Our presence to-night will be to her a testimonial of the appreciation of the Indian community for the work she has done and what the Secretary of the

Congress and the other speakers are to say will be better expressed than what I can do myself; but still I hope that Mrs. Naidu when she has left this country will always have a good remembrance of the treatment she has received here and of the good work she has done among us. (Applause).

The following speech of Mr. Amod Bayat the Chairman of the Natal Indian Congress, was then read by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee:—

On behalf of the Indian community of Natal, as President of the Natal Indian Congress, it is with mixed feelings I speak. We are glad to have you among us again and sorry that in another three days you will have gone away from us.

You have since your coming to South Africa worked ceaselessly for a just understanding between the peoples whom it has pleased God to place in this land. We know you represent in the world those who believe in sacrifice and labour, for the betterment of mankind—regardless of race or creed. And we are grateful that you do not believe in theoretical things alone and that you have during your stay in this country given of your best for our improvement in things that matter. Tomorrow will witness the inauguration of a Show for the encouragement of Agricultural and Industrial Products, Home Industries, School Children's Work, Poultry, Dogs and Live Stock. It is a small beginning but it is one to your inspiration and encouragement.

You have taken a practical interest in our educational question and the ideas to which the South African Indian Congress gave expression is another indication of your profound understanding of the need of education and character building for any community which has to live a useful and honourable life in any country.

You have been no mere globe-trotter. You have gone into every part of South Africa and Rhodesia. You have lived among them all and you have met the Europeans, the Eurasians, the Malays and the Natives of this great country and you can really claim to know all of us who are the inhabitants of this country. With the first-hand knowledge you now have, you will, we are sure, continue to sponse our cause—as you will do all just causes.

It was the happiest moment in the life of the Indian community of South Africa when you graciously accepted the Presidentship of the South African Indian Congress, and the work that has been done and is being done under you is epoch making in many respects. And the Indian community in the future will be all the better for it.

We feel that your departure will leave a void in our hearts which will be difficult to fill for there is not one among us, man, woman or child, who does not love you as one of God's best on this earth.

We ask your acceptance of this token of our love for you and in asking you, also, to convey the accompanying tokens of our love for Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Mahomed Alli and Maulana Shaukat Alli; we appeal to you to come—and come soon—to us again with Mahatma Gandhi and the Alli Brothers—whom we would delight to receive. No matter what happens, our hearts and our homes are yours to command at any time.

We pray it may please God to protect, bless and prosper you, our beloved Sister, and in God's good time we all may meet again.

Mrs. Naidu was then garlanded and presented with a bouquet of flowers, and a presentation of a gold card-case was made to her and was also asked to convey to Mahatma Gandhi and Maulanas Mahomed and Shaukat Alli a leather hand bag each with a silver plate attached with the inscription: "As a token of love from the Natal Indian Congress, May, 1924." There was considerable amusement, laughter and applause when the above was being presented.

An illuminated address was then read and presented to Mrs. Naidu amidst loud applause.

Messrs. V. S. C. Pather, Bhawani Dayal and Rooknooden, delivered short addresses to the meeting the

latter delivering the concluding portion of his speech as follows:—

"I am not anxious to stand between you and Mrs. Naidu whose address you are all anxious to hear. I will only say that the South African Indian community has been very grateful to her for she has brought into use all the wonderful gifts that God has given her. All her energy, her vitality, her winsome eloquence, and her great influence have been brought to bear upon the Indian question. I hope her first-hand knowledge of the question will stand in good stead to us when she goes back to India."

Mr. V. Lawrence addressed the meeting as follows:—

"I think it was Shakespeare who said "parting was a sweet sorrow." A sweet sorrow indeed it is to part with our dear sister, who, within a short space of time, has endeared everybody to her who has come in contact with her. But we take consolation in the fact that although in body she will be thousands of miles away yet she will be with us in spirit and her thoughts will always be with us, because is she not the President of the South African Indian Congress? As such her thoughts are certainly with the South African Indians in connection with their grievances here. Dear sister, I do not think I can adequately express our deep debt of gratitude for the service you have rendered to our community in South Africa. I know you will say, "oh well it was but my duty" but, dear sister, no words of mine can adequately express the deep sentiments of love and affection we have for you and the high appreciation we have for the service you have rendered to us. I do not think I will keep the audience waiting any longer which is anxious to hear the sweet words that will flow from your lips; but I can only say that I echo and re-echo the sentiments expressed in the chairman's speech and by the previous speakers. Before you go away I want to assure you that you are carrying away with you our deep and sincere affection and we will always remember you and the service you have rendered. We wish you a pleasant voyage and a safe return to your people and our people in India, and that you will carry on with the noble work you have been doing in the past since you undertook public work in the interests of the people in India and South Africa." (Applause.)

MRS. NAIDU'S ADDRESS

Mrs. Naidu, who was greeted with loud applause on rising, addressed the meeting as follows:—

"Are you not tired of listening to me speaking? I am so tired of making speeches. But you have been so long suffering and your ordeal of polite listening is almost over. I am really going away in three days from now, and by next week you will be suffering from the pleasant reaction of not having to listen to my speeches, my platitudes, my good advice about unity and all those humdrum things which I have been carrying through the length and breadth of this country, and I think it is time for me to go home now, not because you are tired of me; you know more about my public life probably than my private life, but I have some children who have brought me up very strictly, and yesterday among my letters I found a letter from a stern young daughter saying, "don't you think it rather vulgar to be spread over a column and a half everyday in the newspapers." She goes on to say, "I hope you will be deported soon." (Laughter.) Then she says in another letter, "of course you did not teach us geography properly, but we understand that Africa is a huge series of veldts with straggling villages of Native Africans. Is there not enough room for you and Smuts and the editor of the *Cape Times* in the veldt." So you see they begin to feel that their mother might be outstaying not her welcome but the allotted space in South Africa. But to make up for this stern young daughter I have a very kind son. He is not in India, he is in Germany, and he writes, "it is unavoidable that you should be such a success. Courage and hope always come from the mouth of a woman." (Applause.) So I have a kind of analysis as well as a synthesis of my mission and work, my comparative failures or success in South Africa.

But I see that from the mouths of your representatives

you express a hope and a wish that I may return. I even see that in view of the many friends that I shall have to make and the many thousands I have made; the Natal Indian Congress have handed me a card-case full of cards. Their kindness to me has been unspeakable and in their hands I am well content to leave the destiny of my people. When I arrived in South Africa about three months ago I hardly knew a soul, white, black, or brown, in this country and to-day I am going back over-whelmed with the consciousness that many millions of picture-postcards will be necessary for me to keep in touch with all the people I know; because it is part of my social rules to send at least once a year a remembrance to my friends. But what a tax on my memory to remember all the names and addresses of all the people! But though my memory might find it a tax to remember the names my heart will never forget their kindness, their sympathy, the hope and inspiration they have given to me—a lonely pilgrim in a very difficult and perilous path in a strange country—and yet it was the hands of strangers supposed to be antagonistic enemies who helped me and encouraged me, re-lit the flickering torch that was almost extinguished in the stream of despair, and said to me “take courage, be not weary of hoping, for hope is God-like, it creates the conditions of its own fulfilment.” I am very thankful therefore that I came to South Africa. When I arrived at Pretoria I confess I was very nervous, because you see distance does not always lend enchantment; it sometimes casts nightmare shadows on one’s imagination. When I landed in South Africa I really felt I was doing a very heroic thing. I said, here is a dreadful country; every time a white man looks at you he curses you, every time your shadow falls across a white man he literally goes for you with whatever instrument he might possess at the time. I really believed it and I wondered—you will be surprised at my ignorance, but my ignorance was as vast as my daughter’s—and I really thought that Indians would have to be hiding in holes, that they dare not show their faces in the streets, and I thought if I did go on to Durban I wonder if I could get a taxi or a carriage to take me anywhere; whether the Indians would be allowed to come so far as the docks to receive me; shall I get a porter to carry my luggage! These were the kind of things that made me think I was doing a heroic thing in coming to South Africa. But there was nothing heroic because there was a welcome; there were decorated motor cars, and many hundreds of welcome faces and voices. I had said to myself, “I am going to be extremely unhappy, everybody’s hand will be against me and I shall be humiliated from the moment I land to the moment I leave.” But what a happy disappointment! what an agreeable surprise! I came, I saw and I loved the people. I am not going to say with the arrogance of Cæsar “I came, I saw, I conquered.” No! But I came, I saw, and I loved the people of South Africa. I feel that after all it is not a matter that South Africa was a new country to me; that my own compatriots were as much strangers to me as the native African races, or the conquering European races. I began to realise how true was my proud boast that I do not know the barriers of race or creed or colour or caste or language, because the moment I came to South Africa I felt I had come home. There are those that may not know it, those who may think they are strangers, those who may think I am an alien, but there was something in Africa that bade me remember I had come home to Africa. Why is Africa a home! Why is this country, this sweet rich South Africa a home for one’s spirit. Because, as I have said so often before, this Continent reminds me of the early history of India. Because it is so vast, so rich, so full of possibilities, so impregnated with prophecies, so teeming with the manifold destinies of manifold people, is waiting as my own country awaited centuries ago for the fulfilment of a great destiny, not built up by the achievements of one power, one race, or one tradition, but by the complexity of a million achievements, customs, and traditions of many races that have come to live in this country, and because in modern Africa I see history about to repeat itself, that my heart is drawn

to this country, and I look back upon the ancient history of my land when race after race coming to that country, coming to that rich soil, drinking of its sweet rivers, standing in the shadow of its great mountains, thought this was a strange land, yet by some sorcery of the East found it was not a strange land but the very home of the spirit, where there was space for freedom to grow, to build, to express, and to realise itself.

And so in Africa, that is made up not merely of the African races but of every type of race from the Asiatic and the European continents. As I see them seething to-day in an ocean of conflict, I say to myself, “this is only the preliminary stage, this seething, this conflict, is a necessity for the moment before that final awakening comes which is the assimilation of many things diverse in their source but united in their final and ultimate attainment. Therefore I am not disturbed in my inmost mind. There is a superficial mind in most of us that can be disturbed by mere surface troubles. I confess that I have that weakness also, that that superficial mind of mine does get disturbed by mere temporary storms. My mind is a little disturbed, but then I see all volition in life itself before it is harmonised; all nations before they come into a comradeship; all great waters, streams and currents before they unite to go into a common sea, have their moment of conflict. The seething foam of their meeting is more apparent to the eye than the reality of the union that is going on underneath that seething foam and momentary conflict. But the deeper mind tells me not to be disturbed because for a moment there seems to be something in Africa almost like a race conflict, almost like a colour war. It says these things are temporary they have no abiding place in the evolution of Africa. Therefore let that knowledge of that deeper mind be stronger than the trouble of that superficial mind that is disturbed for a moment in its serenity by the apparent conflict, the apparent disunion, the apparent disharmony between race and race in this land. So was it in ancient India, so was it in the old countries where it took many races and many creeds to build up the evolution and culture of those lands. So was it in my country before the ancient Hindu people could assimilate the younger Musselman, the younger Christian, and the other people who came to India at the intervals of few centuries; but India has assimilated all these races, creeds, cultures, traditions and therefore to-day my great country does stand as an ideal for younger nations with their problems similar in spirit though different in detail; for the problems of South Africa have been solved by Mother India. That wise mother has solved problems more complicated, more perilous, than the problems that await young South Africa for solution. Therefore I am not afraid for the destiny of my people. I say to you I am not afraid on your behalf. There might be years of trouble ahead, but years are a mere nothing, a mere illusion, in that long period of time that marks the time of nations in any country. What is trouble but an opportunity for you to prove your strength? What are difficulties and disadvantages excepting the glory of a strong united people saying, “out of the very limitations that would break us do we create the conditions of our victory.” I am glad there is trouble for my people in South Africa for this reason: I am glad because I want my people to vindicate the proud boast I have made in their name that my people have the strength of India in them, the wisdom of India in them, the courage of India, that pride of India in them, which says to mountains, “become like grains of sands.” and says to the seas, “become ye like little drops of water.” I want you to say to the difficulties that seem to crush you, “you are nothing but little grains of sand under our feet.” Say to the rivers and oceans of difficulties that seem to conflict you, “thus far and no further.” You can say to the seas and mountains, “dry up oceans” “break up oh mountains” because you have that thing behind you and within you which is called the faith of your nation. Though powers may fall that thing in you cannot die; though your

material prosperity become poverty that thing cannot die; though enemies attack you that thing in you cannot die, because it is the spiritual vision, that sense of realisation of communion with God, which is your talisman, which is your strength, which is your guarantee of a life that cannot be destroyed in any country of the world. I want you to realise this. This is the boast that I have made in your name. That no nation upon this earth is strong enough to strangle or destroy the spirit of India. That spirit, whether it be in the homeland of the Indians or in other countries, has led them to earn their livelihood to build up their families, and to become ambassadors of India. You know how fond I am of the word "ambassador." More than once you have heard me call you ambassadors of India. So much so that people have begun to say that I use a very responsible and dignified word rather too glibly, too frequently; but whenever I use that word "ambassador" it is with that very consciousness of the dignity, the responsibility, the nobility and its significance. You are the ambassadors of India in this country. I was not an ambassador; I was a missionary; but you are ambassadors. I came from East Africa because the voice of your crying was very poignant. It clove my heart and I said to myself "I cannot rest while my people are in trouble across the sea." But, friends, it was not necessary for me to come. It was a satisfaction to me that I was able to come and hold out the hand of fellowship to you and to assure you that 315 millions of your countrymen have their strength behind you, so that you may not be dismayed. But all my coming were in vain if it was not that you had in yourselves all those elements of victory, all those elements of heroic endeavour, all those elements of heroic martyrdom if the hour of martyrdom has come. It is not a new thing, I bring no new message. It was from South Africa that India received its great gospel of Soul force, of the men who walk in the path of truth. It was from South Africa that you sent the greatest gift that India has yet received through the ages, the gift of Mahatma Gandhi. He came to South Africa like any one of us—a man to seek his livelihood. He came as a barrister, a man pre-occupied like all of us with worldly things, family ties, his own business, his career, but he returned to India the messiah of his people, perfected in that crucible of suffering of his in South Africa, but he was not the only soul that emerged literally as stainless gold; but with him thousands upon thousands of his countrymen—poor men working in mines, in little shops, eking out a livelihood to feed their families and though they are not famous like Mahatma Gandhi their leader, shall even Mahatma Gandhi say that they are made of stuff less divine, less heroic, because they are not famous like him? I think that all the conditions of greatness are in the Indian community here and I am not afraid that the Indian community will fail in the year of crisis or in the hour of danger. I know that even if to-day there are—like among all the nations and races—little differences of opinion, little groups of men who stand aloof from one another, it is because these are the perilous times of peace; the devastating effects of ignoble people are terrible to my mind, but I hope that the hour of crisis will come for your own salvation and administration because I think it is necessary that after ten years you should once more have the occasion to prove your own worth, to prove your own courage, to prove your own unity, to prove how thoroughly, how stainless, how faithfully you are in truth the ambassadors of the ideals and cultures of India.

My people, this is supposed to be a farewell address. I do not know why it should be a farewell address. You and I do not think so much of the mere bodily presence; have I not been saying through the length and breadth of this country

that we Indians live in the life of the spirit and not by the life of the flesh. Why therefore should it be my farewell address to you. My body goes back to India but that part of me that belongs to you remains with you your unalienable gift and possessions, that power to me that was predestined to be yours remains with you though I go a hundred thousand miles away from my countrymen in South Africa. Nay, more than that, I believe quite apart from you or my love of you, you or your need of me, there is some message in Mother Africa that compels my love and I cannot be true to myself unless in this great multitude I paid my public homage to Africa, Mother Africa—that is going to fulfil in the modern age those great traditions which my own Mother-country fulfilled in the centuries gone by. When I go back to India, when I see the Himalayas with the snows, the great temples, the rich pasture lands, the hill fortresses, the green rice fields and lotus pools of Bengal, when I hear the teeming life of that great city of Bombay whose political destiny lies in the hollow of my hand, when I go back for a little while for a brief holiday to my own home with my children, where my childhood memories are and all the love of my womanhood is, I shall still look back with a passionate homesickness for the veldts of the Transvaal, the huge mountains of the Cape Colony, for the green fields of Natal, and though you may be very jealous of it, more than all perhaps my heart will go to that great country from which I have just come where the great spirit of Cecil Rhodes broods; that country where he broods fulfilling the old idea that was breathed 2500 years ago by the Lord Buddha, confirmed from the sands of Arabia 1400 years ago by the Prophet Mahomed, sweetly whispered from the Mount of Olives nearly 2000 years ago by Christ, whom they crucified because he loved humanity. It is the same dream, the same ideal, the same tradition, the same vision, that broods over the Matoppos saying "equal rights for all civilised men." What is civilisation? I ask it three times, of each heart here to-day; the heart of the white man, the heart of the brown man, and the heart of the black man. What is civilisation that gives equal rights to humanity; what is this equal right of humanity that was preached in the ages long ago. What is this ideal of equality. It is only this, that whether it be in this age or in the ages gone by, whether in this land or in any other land where God sends this revelation to his great Prophets and seers, equal right for humanity only means the equal chance of humanity to evolve itself in accordance with its own great dream of its conception of God. It means nothing mechanical, not like the fastening of sticks of equal lengths in a bundle with a piece of string; that is not equality, but equality means that every community, every creed, and every race shall have its even chance in this world to evolve itself, realise and fulfill itself, express itself, in accordance with its own vision of love, service, sacrifice and self-fulfilment.

And so, if Africa will but realise that this equality of which one of her own sons, Cecil Rhodes, spoke, is no more and no less than the ideal of justice—not blindfold but with wide open eyes—saying "to each community do I give the even chance that shall make of that community a wonderful asset in this wonderful country;" then and then only shall the sweet Mother Africa send to the world a new gospel for which it is thirsting to-day, and in which the European, the Indian, the Euro-African, and the African shall share; and the world shall be relieved from its sorrow and mankind from the burden of its shame." (Loud applause.)

VOTE OF THANKS

Mr. Christopher in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Naidu, spoke as follows:—

"I am happy to be privileged to propose a vote of

thanks to Mrs. Naidu because, although it is the practice to propose votes of thanks, on this occasion I propose it in love and affection of the service Mrs. Naidu has rendered to us, and I have no doubt whatever that you in like love and appreciation will give the vote of thanks which I am now proposing. I do not intend, as is usual, to talk of Mrs. Naidu. You all know she has exemplified in many ways the lovable characteristics of Indian womanhood." (Loud applause.)

The meeting terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to the chairman, Mr. Renand.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu sailed by the *s.s. Karagola* last Sunday morning. Before going to the boat a touching ceremony was performed at Mr. Parsee Rustonjee's premises. Mr. Parsee Rustonjee in wishing Mrs. Naidu a pleasant voyage presented her with beautiful flowers and to the numerous valuable gifts he had made to Mr. Naidu he added a beautiful Kashmir Shawl and valuable rosaries. There were over three thousand people including a large number of women present at the Point to have a last glimpse of one who had become as dear as a mother to them. Just as the boat was about to move prayers were offered for the safe voyage and health of Mrs. Naidu. The scene at the Point was marked with solemnity and tears were running from the eyes of hundreds as the boat left. Mrs. Naidu will be spending about a month in Kenya before going to India.

નવાં આવેલાં વાંચવા લાયક પુસ્તકો

નીચેનાં પુસ્તકો તરફ અમારા ગ્રાહકોનું ખાસ ધ્યાન ખેંચીએ છીએ. તેમાંનું એક એક પુસ્તક તરફ હિંદીએ વાંચવા લાયક અને પોતાનાં પુસ્તકકાલયમાં સંગ્રહ કરવા લાયક છે. નકામી નવલકથાઓ વાંચવી એ કીમતી વખત ગુમાવવા જેવું છે અને વળી તે મગજને ભ્રષ્ટીત કરી ઉંધે મારે દારવે છે. એવાં પુસ્તકોનો અમે સંગ્રહ કરીએ તો અલખત ઘણા ખપાવી શકીએ. પરંતુ એવું વાંચન અમે પસંદ કરતાં નથી અને તેને ઉત્તેજન આપવાં ઇચ્છતા નથી. અમે જે પુસ્તકોનું લીસ્ટ આપીએ છીએ તે સારામાં સારી કેળવણી આપનારાં સ્વદેશીભાનની લાગણી ઉત્પન્ન કરનારાં અને તેને પોષનારાં અને મનને તંદુરસ્ત રાખનારાં છે અને મન તંદુરસ્ત હોય તો શરીર તો તંદુરસ્ત રહેજ. નીચેનાં પુસ્તકો 'ઈન્ડિયન એપીનીયન' ની એડીટરી મંળી શકશે. મંગાવનારાઓએ એડિટર સાથે પત્ર સા મોકલતાં શુક્રવું નહિ કેમકે પેઈસ વગરના અને વી. પી. નાં એડરેસ ખીલકુલ ધ્યાન દેવામાં આવશે નહિ. કાગળ લખવાનું ઠેકાણું નીચે પ્રમાણે:

Manager,
INDIAN OPINION
Phoenix Natal.

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