

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

**D**URBAN readers are reminded that the Appeal Court to hear objections to the Burgess Roll sits at the Court House, Durban on 20th, 21st and 22nd inst. From a glance of the Burgess Roll a good number of Indian Voters who appeared last year are removed and it behoves every voter who is entitled to be on the Roll to make certain that his name appears on the new Roll and if left out to see that his name is put on. Any voter who wishes to enrol or to know whether his name appears on the Roll, may call on Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee at 110 Field Street or at Messrs. Pather & Co. Foundry Lane, who will render all assistance necessary.

We understand that the subjects of Bhavnagar State are starting a Women's University after the model of Prof. Karve's University. Three professors from the Surat Mahila Vidyalaya have promised to offer their services to this institution. It is expected that the Bhavnagar State will come forward to help this movement by munificent contribution to its finances.

In India political life has been unusually quiescent during the last month. Lord Reading has gone on leave and nothing is known in India as to the nature of the discussions going on between him and Lord Birkenhead. Lord Lytton's assumption of the Viceregal *gads* in Lord Reading's absence was historical in one respect. For the first time in history the oath of office was administered to the Governor-General and the King's representative by an Indian and the event has a significance which cannot be missed. Chief Justice Sir Shadi Lal in administering the oath of allegiance to Lord Lytton symbolised a new era in which the Viceroy will be morally responsible not to his class or his country for the administration of India, but to the people of this country. It is an act which is essentially symbolic of a new era and its importance as such should not be forgotten.

The Earl of Oxford and Asquith has established a record by his acceptance of a seat on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. He is the first ex-Premier to sit there. The Committee itself deals usually (though not always) with matters outside the orbit of the ordinary newspaper reader, but it has had in its ninety years of life some incidents of human interest, as might have been expected from any scheme in which Brougham was interested. Irreverent gossip in the thirties ascribed to Brougham the desire to transfer to the court all the appeal business of the Lords. "He wanted to be Prime Minister, retaining the emoluments and patronage of the Great Seal and getting rid of its duties." Once at least, the Committee has touched high politics. When Parliament authorised the appointment of four paid members to the Committee a difficulty arose in finding a fourth who must have been a judge either in England or in India. Several judges refused, and Gladstone decided on Coler, the Attorney General, made him a judge for a day or two, and then appointed him to the Committee. Cockburn, the Chief Justice, protested; there was a tremendous storm in and out of Parliament. In the Lords, the Government escaped censure by a single vote. In the Commons it was feared that the Speaker might

have to give a casting vote. In the end there was a majority of 27. But Gladstone's prestige suffered a great deal.

The committee of the Empire Parliamentary Association for studying Indian Affairs listened to an address of Sir Maneckji Dalabhoj on the political situation in India. Mr. Wardlaw-Milne presided. The company included members of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, Indian Legislatures and of Dominion Parliaments. Mr. Ramaswamy Mudalier, member of the Madras Legislative Council, spoke on the position in the provinces.—Reuter.

### THE SAME OLD TALE

**R**EUTER has been very busy last week reporting the speech given by Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, on the Indian question. The speech was the most disappointing one ever given by any responsible Minister of State. We must confess that we could find nothing in the speech that would suggest an improvement in the condition of Indians in India. His Lordship displayed a lack of knowledge of Indian affairs. His speech is a direct insult to the conciliatory note sounded by the late Mr. C. R. Das at Faridpur last May. When the late Mr. C. R. Das made his memorable speech at Faridpur, India appeared to be with him in his condemnation of violence, so that the attainment of Swaraj within the Empire may be accelerated. It is indeed regrettable that Lord Birkenhead should almost immediately after the lamented death of Mr. C. R. Das seize the occasion to use threatening language. For, we can import nothing further in his speech than a veiled threat.

Lord Birkenhead's speech brings us back to the question as to the advisability of the Secretary of State for India making periodical visits to India. How Lord Birkenhead could have grasped the conditions as obtaining in India by being thousands of miles away, we certainly cannot understand. Surely the Viceroy is no authority on Indian affairs, on whom the Secretary of State for India can look for advice. All important statements by the Secretary for India should certainly be supported by facts, and before such statements are made, he should see that he possesses an intimate knowledge of the question he is about to speak on. Lord Birkenhead while making his important statement possessed neither facts concerning the conditions as obtaining in India at the

present moment nor an intimate knowledge of Indian affairs.

As the papers very aptly described, the speech was very disappointing and no student of Indian politics would have ventured such a statement. Irresponsible statements such as the one made by Lord Birkenhead make it all the more necessary that the Secretary for India to make periodical visits to India in order that a true picture of the position may be presented to him.

Indian leaders of all parties had hoped to hear from his Lordship the Imperial Government's intention to raise the Reforms Act of 1919 before the statutory date in 1929. Their hopes have evidently been "shattered to pieces" as it were. We should have thought that the recent events in India would have had an effect upon Lord Birkenhead as to suggest a revision of the Reforms Act. But it would appear that nothing would deter the Imperial Government from pursuing their policy of leaving the Indians where they are. This is a dangerous policy for any government to pursue and Lord Birkenhead's veiled threat will not prevent the Indians from pursuing their fight for Swaraj.

We do not desire to witness in India similar events as are obtaining in China, but we are afraid Lord Birkenhead's speech is not at all conciliatory in tone but will tend to bring back to play that bitterness which had of late been forgotten.

#### THE EMPIRE AND INDIA

#### BRITAIN'S HIGH OBLIGATIONS

#### MEETING OF SECRETARY AND VICEROY

#### GOVERNMENT NOT TO BE INTIMIDATED

#### OPEN TO EARNEST REPRESENTATIONS

London.—Lord Birkenhead made an important statement in the House of Lords this evening in regard to his conferences with the Viceroy, Lord Reading, on the Indian problem.

He stated that no decision would be taken before the Government of India and the Legislative Assembly had been consulted.

The Government would not be diverted from its high obligations to India by the tactics of a restless impatience. The door to the acceleration of reforms would not be open to menace; still less would it be stormed by violence, but the date of the Royal Commission to review the reforms might be accelerated when the responsible Indian leaders evidenced a genuine desire to co-operate in making the best of the existing constitution.

Any constitution produced by the Government's critics in India, backed a fair measure of general agreement of the people of India, would be very carefully examined.

Dealing with the Indians in the Empire, Lord Birkenhead asked the other parts of the Empire to remember how profoundly this problem affected the relations between the Empire and India.

He knew their difficulties, and only asked that, in every measure they took, they should exhaust every effort to avoid such discrimination as must deeply wound the ancient and dignified peoples of India —  
Reuter.

#### LONDON PRESS COMMENTS

#### BRITAIN'S CLEAR AND DEFINITE RESPONSIBILITY OPPORTUNITY MISSED BY LORD BIRKENHEAD

London.—*The Times*, commenting on the suggestions contained in the speech by Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, in the House of Lords on Tuesday night, says:

"Nothing can be said against the spirit of the suggestions. They are extremely conciliatory, and indicate that the Government have a very open mind. In practice, however, they may cause some confusion. Constitutions for India have been, and are being produced in bewildering quantities. Mrs. Besant is hurrying home now with a Constitution drawn up by certain Indian Liberals, in her trunk. After all, the British Government and the British people have a clear and definite responsibility of their own for the present system.

"So far as this country is concerned the ten years' period of trial must be maintained.

"Lord Birkenhead made much of the Empirical tendencies of the Anglo-Saxon mind. There is also a British tradition of trust and good faith. It is important to assert this, and to insist on this. We are pledged by a date in the matter of these reforms, and it is not merely a duty, but it is practically and Empirically useful for the political guidance of Indians to remind them that we are so pledged, and that we regard this definitely as part of our trust.

"To speak at this stage of inviting proposals for a new Constitution is hardly the best way to stimulate practical co-operation under the present act on which Lord Birkenhead at one moment strongly insisted.

"A very clear lead was wanted at this moment, and on this, in spite of Lord Birkenhead's lucid exposition, as on several other questions of urgent importance, the Government have not apparently seen their way clear to give it now."

The *Morning Post* says: "Lord Birkenhead proposes to put in practice the recommendations of the Muddiman report. The Executive officer, the backbone of our Indian Administration, was altogether unrepresented. Lawyers and politicians composed the Committee, the majority recommended minor concessions, the minority demanded major concessions, and for that reason we suppose the majority report is to be preferred to the minority report.

"But why make any concessions at all? They will not placate the implacable minority who have captured the electoral machinery in India. They will still further weaken and stultify the British Administration, and they will not encourage a good type of Englishman to enlist in the Indian services.

"What have these experiments done either for India or the British Empire? They have weakened and discredited the British Administration, they have substituted a bad for a good system of Government, and exasperated and given a weapon into the hands of the Indian politician.

Lord Birkenhead had an opportunity of doing a service to India and re-establishing himself in the confidence of his Party over this question. He has missed it. India and Great Britain are to be left in doubt while Lord Reading pursues his vacillations in India, and Lord Birkenhead supports them."

The *Daily News* says: "His speech is likely to produce nothing but exasperation in India, and all the conversations with Lord Reading seem to have led to nothing but hot air. Lord Birkenhead has not added to his reputation by his speech, but he has probably greatly added to the difficulties of the situation.

The *Westminster Gazette* says, "The Government of India by anyone presents almost insuperable difficulties. The Diarchy offers a chance to those who claim 'India a nation' for their watchword to learn something of its limitations. Is this chance

to be completely neglected? We can hardly think so.

"Yet it remains the fact that two-thirds of the trial period has passed without revealing any organisation capable of ruling, although it has shown a very vigorous organisation for wrecking.

"Lord Birkenhead added little to our knowledge last night, but at least he showed some comprehension of the difficulties of the question, and did not attempt to remove the responsibility of its solution from the hands of the people of India.—Reuter.

### THE CHALLENGE OF SOUTH AFRICA

The position of India in the British Empire is a peculiar one. For Indians are the only non-White race among a group of white Dominions having a civilisation of their own and claiming equal civic and national rights with fellow-citizens of the Empire. But the colour issue sharply divides the Empire rendering Indians not equal members but the underdogs of the imperial commonwealth; because the war has rehabilitated the tottering arrogance of the White man as effectively as it has given a new self-consciousness to the peoples of Asia. Until, however, the Empire endeavours to solve the complex and serious inter-racial problems that arise within its wide ambit in accordance with some established principles of righteousness, it will not function as an efficient unit. Indeed, not only the growth but the very existence of the Empire is also imperilled by its consistent and deliberate refusal to apply standards of equity and justice in dealing with divergent racial elements composing the commonwealth. It is this fundamental issue of the basis and composition of the Empire that is at stake in the problem of Indians residing in its different parts; and the ideal of a glorious imperial federation seems a cruel mockery to Indians who have no place consistent with self-respect in any quarter of the Empire which turns them out after building its prosperity on their labour. South Africa is the crux of the imperial problem so far as the racial question is concerned; colour hatred, economic hostility and political prejudice have there deprived Indians of their civic status, social rights and economic liberty. Repeatedly it has pronounced the verdict on the status to which Indian citizens are doomed in the Empire while the Imperial Government have remained callously neutral and the Government of India criminally apathetic and inactive.

Within the short space of a week, news has come from South Africa which, were India an autonomous and self-reliant nation, would constitute enough provocation for her taking the strongest measures possible to safeguard her nationals abroad. For accentuating as the legislative proposals and action do the policy of differentiation and humiliation, they reduce Indians to the state of pure helotry. Consider the position: Indian immigration has been stopped and vigorous efforts are being made to induce Indians to repatriate themselves. The Indians residing in Africa are deprived of parliamentary franchise, shut out from public life and social intercourse, prohibited from purchasing land and denied educational facilities and ordinary municipal amenities. Evidently this is not enough for the Whites. Last week Gandhiji received a cable informing him that a Bill was being introduced in the Union Assembly by Colonel Collins prohibiting the grant or renewal of trading or business licences to any Asiatics within six miles of the Transvaal Municipal or Township areas. On the 6th March when Colonel Collins was to introduce this Transvaal Further Restrictions (Asiatic) Bill; he withdrew it on the ground that the Government itself intended to bring in a comprehensive measure dealing with the subject. The retreat of the gallant Colonel, however, was a

reprieve, not a final deliverance, for the Indians, for he is again proposing to introduce the measure. In order to realise the manner in which the bill will prove detrimental to the economic interests of Indians, it is necessary to understand its implications which have been well pointed out in the *African Chronicle*. If the Bill is passed, no Indian will be entitled to live or trade in urban area or buy land anywhere; if, for example, an Indian, is dying he will have to walk six miles in case an Indian doctor is not available. The bill, as Gandhiji emphasised, is a manifest breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement in 1914, and is much more inimical to Indian interests than the Class Areas Bill which lapsed owing to the fall of the Smuts Government. But what the Class Areas Bill failed to do by means of "proclaiming" areas has been accomplished in Natal through the Natal Township Franchise Ordinance to which assent was given by the Governor-General-in-Council recently. Here again there is the same sordid tale of broken pledges. When, in 1894, Indians were deprived of political franchise, the Ministers at the time assured them that since India had municipal and local self-government similar rights to Indian nationals would be given in Africa. But for some years White Natal has been almost unanimously and vehemently demanding their exclusion from municipal franchise. Since Indians, except at the Cape have no parliamentary vote, an Ordinance has been passed disqualifying those persons from voting at election who are not entitled to be placed on the Parliamentary Voters' Roll of the Province of Natal. Indians are not specifically mentioned but this mean trick is sought to be resorted to deprive them of franchise rights they have enjoyed so long. Moreover, the Ordinance empowers the local boards and Townships, as in the Transvaal, to allocate separate areas for Natives and Asiatics to live and trade; it is hence an instrument not merely of municipal disenfranchisement, but also of racial segregation. Close upon this comes the news that the Mines and Works Regulations Amendment, Bill giving the Minister of Mines a blank cheque to impose colour bar on any class of work has passed its second reading. We showed sometime back how the Bill spells economic ruin for the Indian and militates against his national honour. It threatens to oust from employment numerous Indian wage-earners, voiceless and voteless as they are, with a stroke of the Minister's pen and disallows the employment of Indians save perhaps, as manual labourer. As though the colour bar were not sufficiently wide, having been extended to all industries, Mr. Beyers, the Minister of Mines and Industries, wanted it to spread territorially also. He hinted that the Bill should be applied to the Cape also where racial discrimination has not yet been introduced and where Indians have even parliamentary vote. We are uninterested in the particular formula through which Indians are to be excluded and hounded out and Mr. Beyers' concessions in phrasemongering such as is resorted to in Township franchise leaves us absolutely cold. The hard fact of racial exclusion and peril to economic well-being of Indians remains.

The position of Indians has, to put it very mildly, been steadily and continuously deteriorating in every respect. We have not touched upon the South African Nationality Bill or the Minimum Wages Bill or various executive regulations prompted anti-Asiatic Leagues which, in the guise of achieving some reform, are calculated to hit the Indian citizen or trader. What is the Government of India's retort to this energetic policy of persecution and insult of their nationals? General Hertzog laconically mentioned in a speech that he had received a proposal for a Round Table Conference with the representatives of the Indian Government and then passed on to other subjects. That is the

total result of the furtive negotiations and earnest representations of Lord Reading. We are not surprised at the General's snub because a subordinate branch of His Majesty's Government can hardly expect a more fruitful response. Lord Birkenhead and Lord Reading cannot feel the humiliation which their Indian fellow-subjects feel: they can at best sympathise with, and at worst, ignore the popular feeling of indignation and exacerbation. It is not possible to appeal to the sense of justice of General Hertzog who in his reply to General Smuts pleaded for discarding ethical principles. The subject having been lifted from what Nietzsche would call "slave-morality" into the higher and practical atmosphere of economic self-interest backed by physical force aiming at the preservation of the civilisation of superman, even intellectual virtues like honesty are of little account since solemn pledges are wantonly and repeatedly broken. There is only one thing South Africa can understand—resolute action. Palmerston in a famous utterance said that "as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say *Civis Romanus sum*, so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him from injustice and oppression." Can an Indian feel such confidence either as regards the Imperial or "his" Government? To-day Indian citizenship is an assurance not of zealous protection but of helpless submission to humiliation. No wonder Lord Reading resorts to vapid platitudes and stale counsels of patience whenever he is confronted with the menace of South Africa.—*Bombay Chronicle*.

#### EXCLUSION OR INEQUALITY

Those who are closely watching the progress of anti-Asiatic legislation in South Africa and the recent developments in Kenya must be wondering as to which after all is more tolerable: admission to such Colonies only to live there in a position of marked racial inferiority or exclusion from such Colonies altogether. South Africa and East Africa needed coolie labour to cultivate tropical regions unsuitable for white settlement, and India supplied a considerable part of it only to find that her population could but remain there, if at all, as helots. Australia and Canada, on the other hand, have almost from the commencement prohibited the entry of Asiatics and, by keeping their regions pure white, have also kept their commonwealths free from the taint of slave labour. It must remain a puzzle to many as to which of these policies is less odious. The objective of both policies is the same, viz. the establishment of white supremacy. South Africa pursues this ideal no less openly than Australia. The only difference that exists between them relates to the method of translating the objective into action. When one hears the arguments advanced by the protagonists of either school, one is almost tempted to exclaim that the White Australia policy is much better than that followed in South Africa, where at every turn Asiatics are subjected to disqualifications on the ground of colour. One feels at any rate that Australia's is the more logical and even humaner method.

The case for this school of thought is very ably put forward in the "History of the White Australia Policy" by Myra Willard. The history of Chinese immigration, the attempt to introduce Indian labour and the experiment of the Kanaka system are relating in this treatise with a wealth of detail that leaves nothing to be desired. The book is fully documented throughout and is thoroughly reliable as to facts. The last chapter in which reasons for the White Australia policy are summarised is no doubt the most interesting of all and evokes in the reader reflexions on the comparative merits of the policies pursued in Australia and South Africa. Australia saw the advantage of drawing upon Asiatic

labour to develop her northern territory where the employment of white labour was deemed to be out of the question by reason of climate alone. But she very soon came to the conclusion that Asiatic labour must be excluded even from such tropical regions. In the first place, Australians felt that coolie indentured labour was subject to such contract conditions as no civilised country should countenance. It was necessarily a form of "limited slavery," as remarked by a Premier of Queensland on one occasion. It involved the rivetting of the capitalistic system of production on Australia and the deliberate commercial exploitation of a backward by an advanced race. In the next place it would be impossible to restrict Asiatics, when once allowed to enter the country, to the hotter regions thereof. When their periods of indenture were over, on the ground of humanity alone they could not be prohibited from engaging in other kinds of work which they showed themselves able and willing to do.

Once allowed to enter, coloured people must be allowed to spread to temperate regions as well, and when they once become resident members of the population, they must be admitted to full citizenship rights. It was a cardinal principle with Australians that the growth of democracy on sound lines required the grant of equality of social and political status to all sections of inhabitants. To withhold the vote and other rights of citizenship from the non-whites was to leave the whites in control of the destinies of a politically inferior people who entered into competition with them in various branches of industry. Apart from this being unjust to the coloured people, the institution of such a racial division would be fatal, they felt, to a free democratic society which they wished to see established in Australia. It was thus a general sentiment to which Sir Henry Parkes gave expression in 1888: "We should not encourage or admit amongst us any class of persons whatever whom we are not prepared to advance to all our franchises, to all our privileges as citizens and to all our social rights, including the right of marriage." That those who do not ultimately fuse racially with the whites must be sternly excluded, became thus the governing policy of the Australians. Asiatics would not generally amalgamate; they ever remained an alien element in the population. In this case their country would be cursed with all the evils and dangers of a racial division in her community. If, on the contrary, they mixed with the whites, the political and social institutions of the latter would undergo such radical changes that the preservation of a British-Australian nationality, which was the end and aim of their policy, would become an impossibility. Every nation had the inherent right to self-realisation, and to this end they must take all measures that might be necessary to maintain the British character and institutions in the Australian Colonies. Why then, it may be asked, is the policy directed exclusively against non-whites, why is it not equally directed against all non-British races? The answer to the question is that the only unsought immigration, except from Britain, that flowed with any strength was that of non-Europeans, and thus the White Australia policy seemed to draw the line on colour. Recently however Greeks are trying to come in, and only the other day we read that Australia had closed her door against them.

The best part in this exposition of White Australia policy is the frank recognition that all resident peoples must be treated alike, not only in respect of political privileges but social privileges as well. If equality of status is to be denied to any people, then their entry into the country should be prohibited. Such prohibition would appear to be preferable so a policy of constant discrimination and consequent irritation that is followed in South Africa. It may of course be asked what moral right Australians have to keep out other people from the land which they themselves are unable to use. Primitive peoples of other countries, the Australian aboriginals themselves, were deprived of their land on the ground that all unoccupied land was an asset of the whole world and whoever could put it to the best

use must be given an opportunity to exploit it. How does the question present itself when viewed from this aspect? The answer is given by the author in the following words: "A people at present fewer in number than the population of London possess Australia, a continent almost of the size of Europe." The author at any rate has a lively recognition of duties which the right, claimed by Australia, of self-realisation as a member of the nations of the world, entails upon her. "The world needs the supplies that it would receive if the resources of Australia were fully developed. On Australia's willingness and ability to develop these resources within a reasonable time seems to depend her right to retain her identity by the exclusion of people who would be quite willing to enter her country and do this work." And since this condition, of course, she cannot possibly fulfil, it is clear that from the point of view of humanity as a whole the dilemma of either choosing to keep Australia purely British in culture, but undeveloped; or else risking a new and largely Asiatic culture to develop there which however would ensure the Continent making its full contribution to the needs of the world; can only be solved by boldly and unflinchingly declaring for the latter alternative.

#### COMMONWEALTH BILL

##### INDIA UNDER AN INDIAN CONSTITUTION

The most striking feature of the present constitution is the vast power wielded by the Secretary of State for India. Seated six thousands of miles away, he has complete authority over the administration and the revenues of India. He is a member of the British Cabinet, responsible to Parliament alone for the manner in which he exercises his powers of superintendence, direction and control over the affairs of India. All these powers are swept away by the Commonwealth of India Bill. The Secretary of State is barely mentioned, except for the purpose of transferring his authority to India. A self-governing India will take all decisions herself without reference to the Secretary of State. She will perform, through her Cabinet responsible to a fully elected Legislature, the functions now vested in him. Beyond acting as a channel of communication between India and His Majesty's Government in matters which concern Imperial affairs, he will cease to figure in the government of the Commonwealth of India. The centre of political gravity will be shifted from London to Delhi.

In India, the Governor-General will be replaced by the Viceroy who will act on all occasions—subject only to the condition that he shall enjoy the prerogatives of the Crown which belong to him in virtue of his office—with the advice of the Indian Cabinet. The elected Parliament will be the supreme authority, for a Cabinet which dares to advise the Viceroy in a manner contrary to the wishes of the Legislature is liable to prompt dismissal. The Governor-General at present combines in himself the dual role of Prime Minister and autocrat. He may act on occasions independently of his Executive Council, over-ride the decisions of the Legislature, issue Ordinances on his own responsibility curtailing the liberties of the subject, and govern by Certification and Veto. He will have none of these powers, which distinguish him from a constitutional ruler. In a free India, he will cease to preside at meetings of the Cabinet. His functions will pass on to the Prime Minister, who will become the real head of the Government, so long as his party is in power. But the Legislature will have the final voice in administration, with power to turn out of office an unsatisfactory or recalcitrant Ministry. No money may be spent without the consent of the Legislature, no tax imposed except with its approval. No part of the Budget will be non-votable, except, for a temporary period, a sum for the Defence

Forces of the Commonwealth, to be decided by a Commission appointed by the Viceroy in consultation with the Cabinet. But the Commission will also report every five years on the progress of Indianisation of the Defence Forces, with a view to enable India to undertake the full responsibility for Defence as quickly as possible. And even during the interval, no money from Indian revenues shall be spent on those branches of the Army which exclude Indians from commissioned rank. In the Provinces, the same principles will apply as in the Central Government, the only distinction being that whereas in the Legislature of the latter, there will be two Houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Senate, each Province will be provided with a Unicameral Legislature with freedom to add a Second Chamber, if it so decides.

It is the aim of the Commonwealth of India Bill to make India self-contained and autonomous in the three great spheres of activity, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. The Government of India, as now conducted through a foreign agency, is anti-Indian in outlook and policy. It will be substituted by an administration indigenous in character and inspired by a zeal for India's welfare and prosperity.

#### THREE GREAT MEN OF ASIA

A estimate of the life-work of Sun Yat Sen leads a writer in *Asia* (New York) to compare the three men who, by common consent, are esteemed the greatest men of modern Asia. They are Gandhi, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, and Sun Yat Sen. But between Sun and the other two, he says, there is this unlikeness: Gandhi has the respect, the worship even, of the Indians, and Kemal the power over the Turks; but Sun Yat Sen is regarded by the Chinese with indifference and sometimes with mockery. Yet Sun Yat Sen no less than the other two is entitled to his place in the *triumvirate* that may truly be said to have fired with new spirit the aged soul of the East. Indeed, he was the first of the three, and made the task of the other two easier. If he is without honour, save in history, it is a phase of the paradox that has marked his career no less than his personality.

#### GANDHI AS A BARRISTER

Writing in the April number of the "Bombay Law Journal," Sir F. C. O. Beaman, Retired Judge of the Bombay High Court opines that Mahatma Gandhi would never have been a successful barrister, had he stuck up to the profession for which he was intended. He says:

"Ahmedabad was my first station. How well I remember it, and my arrival one very cold morning in January, and how it captivated my young untravelled imagination with its kaleidoscope of new and strange appeals to the senses. As I sit here, in dark foggy London, but a few days later in the year, then when I alighted on the Ahmedabad platform, I can see it all as plainly as though it were yesterday, and not nearer half a century ago, and the contrast. It is pleasing to know that Ahmedabad is so well and worthily represented on the bench and at the bar to-day. Best known, the last few years is one of her great sons by choice and adoption, Mr. Gandhi. Him too, I knew in his youth, but not for long. For when I first went to Kathiawad, he must have been very young indeed, an unconsidered human trifle in the streets of his birthplace, Porbander. Old Kappad Gandhi, his highly respected father, was a name well-known among Agency officers and held in much esteem. Although he held many posts, as Manager and Administrator, being an honest man, he did not accumulate great wealth, and unless I am much mistaken

he had comparatively little to be divided between his sons. If it is true, that the young "Mahatma" got no more than some ten thousand rupees as his share, it speaks well for his courage and confidence in himself, that he should have shared the kalapani and at least three years' study in England, in order to be called to the Bar on so small a capital. Be that as it may, he was called to the Bar, and returned to Kathiawad, intending to practice the pro-saic and mercenary profession of the law in the Agency Courts. And that is when I met him. Indeed he must have made his *debut* in the Chief Court before me, somewhere about 1893. As he has evolved, it is a little difficult to picture him, a strenuous competitor in that mundane and most unspiritual arena. But his destiny soon called him elsewhere. Assuredly, he would never have been a successful barrister."

#### OUR LONDON LETTER

[ FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT ]

19th June, 1925.

Mr. H. S. L. Polak last Sunday addressed a gathering of students of many nationalities at the Student's Movement House in London on the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi. Everybody is interested in Mahatma as one of the world figures, and Mr. Polak's address, charged with a fullness of knowledge, which he alone can command on the subject, was much appreciated.

Mr. R. K. Khan is touring the British Isles, and already speaks of the many towns and villages he has visited. The weather has been suitable for the tour to be made by motorcar. Mr. D. Mainkum who is now a resident in England is touring with him.

The discussions on the budget are still proceeding in the House of Commons, and no inconsiderable portion of the time, has been devoted to silk and artificial silk. The writer happened to be present when the discussion was at its height. Mr. Winston Churchill versatile and brilliant as he is, finds no unworthy foeman in his predecessor in office, the labour ex-Chancellor, Mr. Snowden. Mr. Winston Churchill, of course, has the advantage with his party majority of carrying the day on any question, if he so wills it, with the concurrence of his chief.

Quite a lot of people turned up at the Oval, Kennington to see Duleepsinhji continue his innings for Cambridge against Surrey. There is no doubt that he is a fine bat, and shows promise of developing into a first class cricketer. He has been making good scores, and to-day he was out for 51, the highest score on his side.

Recently there passed away Sir Rider Haggard, who in the early stages of his life, was secretary to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and was present at the annexation of the Transvaal to the British. On his return to England, he studied law and was called to the bar as a member of Lincoln's Inn. But he did not practice, taking up however reporting, and thus in course of time, he entered the field of literature and became so famous as a writer of African stories.

The news of the sudden death of Mr. C. R. Das has come as a shock to Indians, particularly of the student class, to whom he was representative in his person, of the aspirations of India.

Wherever one goes, one is struck with the many announcements of the various forms of amusement, and places of interest one may visit, whether in the British Isles, or on the continent. The people of England know not only how to work, but to take their holidays. Life to them is not a question of mere money making—it represents to them a means

to the appreciation of the better things of this life, and this no doubt to a great extent accounts for the buoyancy of the spirit, and the confidence of the British in themselves.

Expectations in regard to the attendances at the Wembley Exhibition, has not been fulfilled, though the claim has been made that the Wembley of this year is better and brighter than last year's. The admission charged inclusive of the train fare from places, within a radius of 20 miles from Wembley, has been reduced to two shillings from two shillings and nine pence—in the hope of attracting larger crowds.

It is a matter of thankfulness, that the Dawes Scheme for the reparation payments by Germany, to the Allies, has during the last eight months worked satisfactorily, and there is every indication that this scheme will achieve its highly desirable purposes.

#### NATAL COLONIAL-BORN INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The first adjourned annual general meeting of the above Association will take place at the Tamil Institute, Cross Street, on Sunday the 26th day of July 1925 commencing at 2-3 p. m when the following business will be transacted.

1. Minutes.
2. Report.
3. Balance Sheet.
4. Alteration and Revision of rules.
5. Elections.
6. General.

Members only will be able to participate in the deliberations.

## NOTICE

### THE REGENERATION OF INDIAN YOUTH.

A Lecture on the above Subject will be delivered by Mr T. M. Naicker, Senior Assistant of The Government School Umgeni, at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, 140, Queen Street, Durban, on Wednesday the 22nd July at 7 p. m. sharp.

All are requested to attend.

### હીંદી જીવાનનો પુનરોદ્ધાર

ઉપર જણાવેલા વિષય ઉપર અંગ્રેજીમાં અ.વેલી હીંદી સરકારી નિશાળના વડા મદદન શ શિક્ષક શ્રીયુત ટી. એમ. નાઇકર ૧૪૦ કવીન સ્ટ્રીટમાં, અવેલા પારસી રસ્ટમજી હાલમાં ના ૨૨ મી જીવાનને યુધવારે સાંજના સાત વાગે બંધ વ્યાખ્યાન આપશે.

સર્વે ભાષ્યોને વખતસર પધારવા વિનંતી છે.

O. H. A. Jhaveri,  
Chairman.

B. M. Patel,  
Hon. Secretary.

The M. K. Gandhi Library and Parsee Rustomjee Hall Committee.