

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

THE number of children that are being turned out of school through want of accommodation is appalling. Durban proper boasts with three Government Schools and two Government-aided Schools. Surely the Indian children are entitled to receive better education at the hands of the Provincial Councillors. In our opinion it is useless relying on the Government to educate our children. The time has come when those in the community who are placed in better circumstances than their other fellowmen will have to open their purses for the education of our children.

In influential circles the need is being felt for the establishment of a Building Society for Indians. The necessity need hardly be emphasised—and more so, since the operation of the various Public Health bodies. Indian homes in the outlying districts of Durban are being condemned, and to re-build these money is required. True it is that money is obtainable at many offices, but the existence of a Building Society in our midst will be of great assistance to these poor Indians, who would be able to obtain money at a cheaper rate of interest. The prejudice against the Indian is so great that the existing Building Societies refuse to entertain applications for loans by Indians. This is indeed a channel where the well-to-do of our people could invest their moneys.

General regret will be expressed at the decision of the Supreme Court of South Africa (Natal Provincial Division) in refusing the application of Mr. Bahadur Somers for admittance as a Candidate Attorney. The decision of the learned judges is based on the fact that the Natal University College will not accept Mr. Somers as an internal student as required by the Regulations of the Natal Law Society. We are not at all surprised at the decision and this is another of those glaring instances of injustice that are continually being perpetrated on the Indian community. The Indian's progress is restricted in every respect. It would be well to test the validity of the Rules of the Natal Law Society.

In the course of his speech from the Throne, the Governor-General of South Africa, Earl Athlone, in opening the Fourth Session of the Fifth Parliament, stated that a provisional agreement, in connection with the South African Indian question, had been arrived at between the Governments of India and the Union. This statement was reiterated by the Premier, General Hertzog, in reply to a question by General Smuts, the Leader of the Opposition.

Many poor Indians will suffer heavily by the judgment delivered by the Appellate Division of the Supreme of South Africa in the case of Union & Rhodesia Wholesale Ltd. vs. Hatton. It will be remembered that this action was in the nature of a Test Case. We understand that an amount of £800,000 is involved. Many poor Indians had been

dragged in by shrewdest agents to purchase shares in the Company, which after having operated for a few months was liquidated. It is indeed regrettable that people who had derived nothing from the Company should be asked to pay up their shares in full. We learn that the Investors have resolved to take the matter to the Privy Council.

Great Britain is in the grip of Flu. Last week the deaths in London and the great towns of England and Wales numbered 725, whilst the week before the number was 470. The Union Health Officers are making elaborate arrangements to combat the disease.

Following close upon the proposal of the Kenya Government to raise the Asiatic poll-tax from 30 to 50 shillings, comes the Defence Force Bill. This Bill, while prescribing compulsory military training for Europeans, excludes the non-Europeans from the Force. The racial discrimination involved in the measure is inconsistent with the pledges of equal treatment held out to Indians. The Bill has aroused opposition both among the European and non-European residents of Kenya, though for different reasons. The former are opposed to it, because it makes military training compulsory to them, while the latter are opposed to it because military training is denied to them. The Europeans mustered strongly at Nairobi and protested against the Bill and called upon the Government to bring in a new Bill on a voluntary basis, and chiefly on account of this opposition the Bill has been postponed for another session of the Legislative Council. The defence of Kenya is as much the concern of the Europeans as of the non-Europeans. While, on the one hand, Government is compelling Europeans to undergo military training, or the other, it excludes non-Europeans from this privilege. The only conclusion that is possible is that non-Europeans are not looked upon as sons of the soil, but as foreigners. Mr. Shamsuddin, speaking in the Council, urged that Indians also should be allowed to enlist, but he was told that the principle of the Defence Force Bill had received the approval of the Secretary of State and that it would soon become the law of the land. Indians should put up a vigorous fight against this measure and see that their right to participate in the rights and duties of citizenship is vindicated.

In a communication addressed to the Indian National Congress, Mr. C. Singh, President, Young Men's Association, Fiji, depicts the miserable plight of Indians settled there. The 65,000 Indians in Fiji, he says, are regarded as hewers of wood and drawers of water, owing to the fact that they were introduced into the colony as coolies under the loathsome system of indenture, which accounts for the general impression there that India is a "Coolie Country." Physically, according to him, 9 out of every 10 Indians are unable to defend their poor lives, let alone punishing the offenders. As for secular education, the 10,000 Indian children of

school-going age have only one Anglo-Urdu Primary School established by the Government in an out of the way place and the average attendance at this School is below 40. Politically, Indians are nobodies. They pay direct and indirect taxes which amount to more than that of any other community in Fiji and yet they have not a single member of their community in the Legislative or Municipal Councils, not even a nominated member. Mr. Singh appeals to the Indian National Congress to send them a couple of patriots who can unite all the scattered elements in the colony and raise them from their miserable moral, social and physical conditions. We hope the appeal will not go in vain.

MR. COX AGAIN

It is barely a month since Mr. Cox was in the limelight. That was the occasion when he convened an Anti-Asiatic meeting at the Maritzburg Town Hall on the eve of the convention of the Round Table Conference. That meeting was held in defiance to the request of the Minister of the Interior, to maintain a calm atmosphere pending the result of the Conference. Now we have Mr. Cox again in the limelight. On this occasion he is seeking Provincial Council honours. Apparently his only plant in his platform is the Indian question. For the major portion of his speech was devoted to the Indian question. A sorry plight indeed for Mr. Cox. But then Mr. Cox can never hope to be in the limelight if he does not touch on the Indian question. We pity him.

Mr. Cox is glad that the Provincial Council has been able to restrict the progress of the Indians. He believes that the Natal Municipalities and Townships, will, with the weapon they have in the Boroughs Consolidated Ordinance, be able, in course of time, to eliminate the Indian Municipal vote. Presumably he is glad since he had a big share in the passage of this legislation, forgetting for the moment that the Ordinance is a piece of grossest injustice perpetrated on a voteless community. The injustice will certainly recoil on the heads of those who have been the sponsors of this legislation. If Mr. Cox's cry is for the maintenance of a white standard in South Africa, then how the elimination of the Indian Municipal vote will help him is beyond our comprehension.

But that is not all. Mr. Cox makes the glaring assertion that "Orientals have methods of evading sanitary bye-laws which are exceedingly difficult to combat." It is pretty easier to make wild statements but it is exceedingly difficult to verify such statements. Mr. Cox would have done us a duty if he had expounded those methods. How can one evade a bye-law, an Ordinance, or a Statutory Act. We have the officers to enforce these. And if there is an evasion, there is a penalty for such evasion. This is of course one of Mr. Cox's effusions.

We are told by Mr. Cox that some of the statements made by the Government of India Delegation are viewed with grave misgivings by the Europeans. Mr. Cox has made a grave statement. And he has made that statement after the Delegation's back had been turned. And we say it is not dignifying for a Provincial Councillor to make such a statement, well knowing that the Delegation cannot defend it. The Delegation has made no statement as to warrant the Europeans to view it with grave misgivings. The Round Table Conference was convened for the purpose of arriving at a settlement of the Indian problem—a settlement that would be satisfactory to all parties concerned. And the only statement made by the Delegation was that a perfect understanding had been arrived at between the two Governments. Can this simple statement be so alarming as to call for a grave "Statement" by Mr. Cox?

Whilst all sensible men are endeavouring to find a lasting solution, it is indeed regrettable that Mr. Cox, just to gain a little notoriety, should rake up old sores as it were. We do not think his speech on the Indian question will help him in his electioneering campaign, nor will it add to his prestige.

We would for the benefit of Mr. Cox repeat what Robt. Burns of immortal fame said:

"O would that the gifts give us to see ourselves as others see us."

(Written by Poncosamy Ruthnam Pather to express the views of the INDIAN OPINION.)

HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS

"From the lowest depths, there is a path to the loftiest heights."—"Carlyle."

OUR hopes are great as to the result of the Round Table Conference. We have suffered sufficiently long as to entertain hopes of a lasting peace. We have faced our difficulties with that spirit of toleration that is inherent in the Indian. It is therefore natural that our hopes for the future should be great. We have been advised that a perfect understanding has been reached between the Indian and the Union Governments. We shall hope that that understanding shall tend to bring about better feelings than had hitherto existed between the European and Indian communities.

Whilst we entertain hopes for the future, we shall at the same time aspire to be good citizens of South Africa.

We have no desire to touch on the duties devolving upon a citizen, but one or two matters require our attention—nay our serious consideration.

Indians resident in South Africa must decide to make either South Africa or India their home. This point was brought home to our countrymen by the Government of India Delegation. The present system of having one home in India, and another in South Africa must not be encouraged. If it is our desire to be treated fairly by the rulers of this country then it is highly necessary for the members of the Indian community to fit themselves to be good South Africans. That is only possible when South Africa is made their home. A visit to India by every Indian in South Africa is to be encouraged by all means, but the idea of having

homes in India should be discouraged to the fullest extent. This step would undoubtedly seem serious to some, but we are sure that it would commend to those who have the general good of the community at heart.

Education will have to receive our serious thought. Hitherto the education of our children had been neglected. Only a small percentage of the children of school going age receive education. Given these children do not receive that standard of education as would make them good South Africans.

Many of the elementary schools in Natal are officered by Teachers who have received scant education. We do not desire to place the blame on the Teachers. It is the system that we desire to attack. There is an immediate necessity for a Training College for Teachers. The moulding of the younger generation is entrusted to the Teachers, and unless the latter are properly trained, the future of the children will not be very hopeful.

To improve the education of our children, it is imperative that the present system of education should be altered. More elementary schools will have to be established to accommodate the thousands of children of the school-going age. These schools must be officered by efficient Teachers. Our foremost duty for the present is to educate our children, and we feel that our last appeal to our richmen will have received their serious considerations.

We have dealt with two of the salient points that will have to be considered in fitting ourselves to be good citizens of South Africa, and we commend these to the notice of our readers.

Mr. Andrews in Pretoria

A Busy Time

On January 31st, early in the morning, Mr. C. F. Andrews reached Pretoria in order to deal with some cases where deportation from South Africa had been ordered on that very day.

After seeing Mr. Hartshorne for a very long interview in the morning and Mr. Venn, of the Department of the Interior, in the afternoon, Mr. Andrews was able to intercede for certain persons who had orders to be deported. There is a good hope that one case, at least, may be cancelled; but it is not yet quite settled. The interviews, which Mr. Andrews had with the Government officials, were very important, and it is expected that great good will come from them for the Indian community in the Transvaal.

When in Capetown, after the Habibullah Delegation had left, Mr. Andrews was able to see the leading Cabinet Ministers who had dealt with the Indian Question at the Round Table Conference, including the Chairman, Dr. Malan. He found that they had been very deeply impressed by the personality of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Sastri, P.C., and

that his influence had been the greatest of all in the Conference itself. Sir Muhammad Habibullah, as leader, had made him the chief speaker on important occasions.

Mr. Andrews also saw General Hertzog, the present Prime Minister, and General Smuts, the late Prime Minister. He was very greatly struck by the welcome change of atmosphere, which had taken place, and with the universal good-will expressed towards India by everyone concerned. The visit of the South African Deputation to India, and the return visit of the Indian Deputation to South Africa, have both done much to accomplish this happy change for the better. It now remains for all those who love India to consolidate the good-will that has been established.

In the evening, Mr. C. F. Andrews addressed a meeting in the Pretoria Indian location, and a second crowded gathering in the Library, Prinsloo Street, Pretoria, where all the Indian merchants of the city were present. He looked very tired at the end of a long day, but spoke at some length, leaving the meeting at 10 p.m. and staying the night at Mr. Vyas's house close by.

The Chairman, Tar Muhammad Pir Muhammad, in introducing Mr. Andrews, and garlanding him, spoke of the way in which he had come back to South Africa, time after time, in order to take up the Indian cause. He thanked him on behalf of all the united communities of Indians in South Africa.

Mr. Andrews laid the greatest stress of all on the need for a school in the city of Pretoria for Indian children. It should be placed on a non-sectarian, Gujerati vernacular basis; but English and if possible, Afrikaans, should also be taught. Only by showing self-help would the Indian community be able to receive substantial help from the Union Government. Mr. Andrews emphasised the fact that the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, in his Durban Town Hall speech, had put this subject of improvement of Indian Education above all others.

Mr. Andrews concluded by saying that he had a good hope that he would be able to get expert European voluntary assistance on committee to aid in surmounting the initial difficulties about getting the school started.

The meeting was very enthusiastic and there seems no doubt that Mr. Andrews' proposal will be taken in hand and that there will soon be an Indian School in Pretoria City, where it is so very badly needed.

On the morning of Tuesday, Feb. 1st, Mr. Andrews went down for a second time to the Location where he was entertained. He went over the area which has been set apart by the Municipality for a Football Ground and urged them to get on with the fencing of the ground as soon as possible. He pointed out the great value of having such an open space in the middle of the location, acting as a lung to give plenty of fresh air instead of crowding the location with shops and houses.

Later on in the morning Mr. Andrews paid some further visits in the city among the Europeans on behalf of the Indian community and returned to Johannesburg at the end of the second day of his visit. His stay in Johannesburg will be reported in the next week's issue of INDIAN OPINION.

41st Indian National Congress Gauhati Session

The Congress met at Pandavanagar at 2 p.m. on the 26th December 1926 in the Khadi Pandal which was tastefully decorated. Photos of patriots and mottoes and sayings of great Indian heroes lent a gravity to the proceedings. There were seated on the platform all prominent Swarajist leaders. The absence of Messrs. Lala Lajpat Rai, Jayakar and N. C. Kelkar was marked and it proved topic for the discussion.

The proceedings commenced with the National Anthem sung by Vishnu Digambar, all standing.

MR. T. R. POOKHAN'S SPEECH

Mr. Tarun Ram Pookhan, Chairman of Reception Committee, began at 2-30 p.m. to deliver his welcome speech. After deploring the loss of leaders like Mr. C. R. Das, Swami Shraddhanand and others, he extended a hearty welcome to the delegates. In describing the beauty of his country, he said that it was not without reason that reference was made in the "Joginitantra" of Kamrup as the place where the gods even desired to die not to speak of human beings.

The place where we have assembled to-day, is sacred with thousand memories of India's past glories, memories of culture, of heroic deeds, of scientific achievements, of great happenings cherished in tradition and chronicled in history. The yonder hillock on the Brahmaputra enshrines a temple of Shiva, known as Pandu-Nath which was founded by the Pandavas during their exile. There is the Nilachala (the blue mountain) wherein stands the famous temple of Kamakshi, Devi. For centuries Kamakshi in Kamarupa has been the meeting place of devout pilgrims from all parts of India.

After giving a brief history of modern times, he turned to its place in regard to religious activities when he said: However poor our condition under the British raj may be to-day, we are inheritors of a very ancient Hindu culture and I am proud to say that if there is any place, where catholic and progressive Hindu religion is a living force, that place is Assam. In days of yore, the non-Aryan culture had to yield to Hindu culture is evidenced by the acceptance of overlordship by Asur Kings of the Aryan Monarchs of Delhi. During mediæval days, Hindu orthodoxy of a rather sordid character seemed to dominate the religious beliefs of the Assamese. But the preaching of two of the greatest religious reformers of that age—Shankara and Madhava, and their Brahmanical contemporary Damodar ushered into Assam an era of religious renaissance, the like of which can be compared only with the contemporary Vaishanava movement of India or the Protestant movement of Europe. These great teachers suffered privation at the hands of the powers that were and practised Satyagraha against the Brahmanical "hierarchy" of Assam backed as they were by the powerful support of the Assamese monarch. But the truth came out triumphant in the end and these two mighty spirits have left for Assam such a catholic faith of love, amity and brotherhood that without adopting the process of conversion by missions, hundreds of our animistic brothers are being Hinduised and are being brought within the folds of Hindu society. It is for the preachings of these great spirits also that the evils of untouchability do not appear to be so acute as they do in other places of India. Mighty as they appear as religious teachers, no less great were they in the realm of letters.

After referring to the progress of Khaddar and the effects of opium, he turned to the factions in the Congress, and said:

I deeply regret to have to note the difference that is subsisting in the Congress camp to-day. How can

I help deploring the occasion of personalities like Messrs. Jayakar and Kelkar, Dr. Moonje and Mr. Aney, of Lalaji and Malaviyaji from the majority party of the Congress?

In such a critical state of the country I may be pardoned if I take the liberty of striking a personal note and appeal to Mahatma Gandhi once again to give us the lead.

He concluded his brilliant address with an appeal for unity.

MR. PHOOKAN'S APPEAL TO MAHATMAJI

A very significant feature was noticed when Mr. Phookan in his address before the Congress to-day, struck a personal note and appealed to Mahatma Gandhi once again to give the country the lead. There were cries of "hear, hear" on this appeal. Mahatma Gandhi was heard to reply "I don't hear" and at the same time he nodded negatively.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Mr. Shrinivas Iyengar was garlanded by a girl and received ovation as he came to the rostrum.

There were cries of "Hindi Hindi" when Mr. Shrinivas Iyengar began his speech in English. Mr. Iyengar regretted he could not speak in Hindi for this fault lay with those who had elected him. (Laughter).

NATIONAL DEMAND

After introductory remarks the president said that the foremost of their duties in the coming year was to mobilise all forces on the issue of a National demand. He then traced the history of this National demand, in 1924 and 1925, its rejection by the Government and the failure of the Government to get the Assembly's sanction to the report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee. Coming to the Cawnpore programme and the general elections, he described Swarajist success as remarkable, as a sign of change of political centre of gravity to the Congress, and as an endorsement of the National demand and the walk-out policy. With regard to working dyarchy, the president advised to keep the door open for a just and honourable settlement but at the same time he warned his countrymen not to be too optimistic. "The least that we must insist upon," he said, "is a businesslike statement in public, precise and concrete, and satisfactory in content and tone by the Government in India or in England." The president then demonstrated at length the unworkable and unsatisfactory nature of dyarchy in Provincial Government and irresponsibility of the Central Government. He concluded his survey of the Reform constitution by saying that it would be a tragedy if they still sought to discover, in the statutory hypocrisy of the Reforms, the germs of Self-government.

Side by side with the abolition of dyarchy and introduction of responsibility in the Central legislature, the president dwelt upon the necessity of repealing repressive laws, giving India effective equality of status in the Empire and full control over the civil service, the army and the navy.

THE QUESTION OF OFFICE

Coming to the question of acceptance of office the president observed:

Controversy has raged round the question of non-acceptance of office; but it should be easy to come to a decision upon it, if we kept in view the spirit and objective of our fight against the bureaucracy. In no province is the Congress party in the Council in an absolute majority so as to be able to take office and dictate terms to the head of the Government and the reserved half. To form a Ministry, it will have to coalesce with other groups and to lower its flag and to lose its distinctive character. And any such Ministry if formed, can hold office only on sufferance and with the support of the Government and its nominated and official group of votes. On the one hand, it will be indistinguishable in achievement or rather the lack of it, from a Ministry formed by

any non-Congress group of members. If, on the other hand, it attempts to maintain its spirit and carry out its purpose it must either resign instantly or acquiesce ignominiously in its failure. Again, a strong Minister can only attempt to improve some of the details of administration but can neither help to change the system of government nor can effect even material improvements in administration. By improving a detail here and a detail there of administration, he would rather help to perpetuate the existing system of government by casting his reflected benevolence on the bureaucracy. In reality, no one who has closely followed the achievements of Ministers in the several provinces, can seriously believe that any Ministry can, without a system of proper self-government, get good government for the country.

We should also clearly realise that the power of an opposition, though indirect, is very real and much more effective than the power of Ministers and that if we are disciplined and energetic and in sufficient numbers in any Council we can carry out our policy and programme more easily than the Ministers.

The refusal to accept office till a satisfactory response is made, constitutes an amount of political pressure that is necessary and sufficient to induce the Government to come to a settlement. By accepting office, the Congress is bound to become an unconscious ally of the bureaucracy. And, if the most advanced party in the country takes office, where will be the determined and disciplined opposition in each Council to fight against Dyarchy or for Swarajya? Neither the Ministers nor their party can openly speak and vote against the administration of reserved subjects. Again, neither the refusal of the Government to release political prisoners and internees nor the rejection of our reasonable demand nor that of our offer of honourable co-operation can be forgotten when we are asked to take office, not as part of a settlement, but as a token of our unconditional surrender. Our self-respect prohibits us from retracing our steps when, instead of defeat, victory beckons us to march ahead.

It is said that if we cannot organise forthwith civil disobedience there is no other honest alternative than to own ourselves beaten and accept office. Neither horn of the dilemma exists save in one's imagination. The policy we are pursuing is thoroughly logical and practical and, if persisted in for a while longer, will be crowned with success. After the severest denunciations of the Reforms Act on a thousand platforms and the most cogent demonstration of the futility of taking office, it were an anti-climax to think of Ministries now. I am certain that the Government wants Congressmen to become Ministers only on the terms of "sober and whole-hearted co-operation", with the reserved half and the bureaucracy. I am sure, we are all convinced that without a fair measure of self-denial we shall never be able to achieve anything, and that a policy of continuous opposition and resistance to the bureaucracy is required to give tone to our organisation and life and vigour to our movement. Lastly, let us not forget that the policy of non-acceptance of office is neither unconditional nor for all time. On the other hand, its relaxation or modification depends upon the attitude of the Government and its willingness to agree to conditions more or less similar to those that were adumbrated by Deshbandhu Das at Faridpur.

Objection is raised to the continuance of our present policy in the Councils on the ground that it has been tried for the past three years and that we are not yet in sight of the realisation of our hopes. The charge of barrenness is falsified by the party's splendid record of achievement in the last Assembly and in the Councils, and by the results of the general elections as a whole. Shall we forget that

the Councils and in the country that we entered the former and that we succeeded in making their atmosphere invigorating and markedly differing from what it was before? We have not yet fully acquired the habit of resistance. And the power of resistance must be indefinitely increased till it fulfils itself. Again, this time, the work in the country must be our first care; it will then easily gather such volume and intensity as to sweep everything before it.

The Cawnpore session of the Congress marked a turning point in the history of the Congress and of the country. By making the programme and policy of the Swarajya Party its own and by absorbing that party, the Congress gave a new orientation to our political activities. It resolved upon the nationalisation of the legislatures established by Government by bringing them under its own control. This change of attitude on the part of the Congress towards legislatures has been fiercely attacked from more than one quarter. It has been denounced as a constitutional heresy to claim for the Congress a control over the legislatures. The justification of the claim is, however, obvious. Experience during the period of the Non-co-operation movement had shown that the Councils functioned as anti-national institutions and thwarted the attempts of the Congress to obtain Swaraj. It was, therefore, necessary to ensure that the political institutions established by the nation and the political institutions established by the Government should function as a single organ and speak with one voice."

With regard to the enforcement of the National demand, the president observed that when the electorate, the legislatures and the Congress act as a single organisation sanctions for the enforcement of demands would spring into existence of themselves. The president then urged the necessity of organising the country in respect of the many serious grievances of the people, the capture of local bodies with a view to their reform and bringing them under national control. The president then turned to the constructive programme including Khaddar, prohibition, removal of untouchability, labour organisation. He condemned the currency policy of the Government and welcomed the formation of the Currency League. But he said that the League would achieve nothing either by debate in the Assembly or by protest outside unless it comes in a line with the Congress and unless its members harness themselves to the dynamic politics of the Congress. Turning to the problem of Native States, he demonstrated the necessity of bringing them in a line with British India in the matter of self-government and giving State subjects representation in the Assembly. As for the Indians abroad, the president remarked that they could help them only by winning Swaraj, in the meanwhile the foreign department of the Congress should be opened according to the Cawnpore resolution. He also suggested the holding of Congress session once in South Africa. He asked his countrymen to begin to consider seriously the problem of Asiatic Federation.

COMMUNALISM

He deprecated the recent outbursts of communal passions. The last elections according to him had given their verdict against communalism and that sincere propaganda exposing the fallacies of communalism would drive it to the wall. "There should be," he said, "a fundamental law of Swaraj to guard against the making of laws by any legislature in India that may affect liberty of conscience, freedom of religious observance and association, the right to religious education and at the option of the community concerned, and the right to personal laws. That much abused expression communal representation is a misnomer for all the communities are equally interested in the country's progress and in peace

cular solutions of them." The president then concluded by a fervent appeal for religious and political unity amongst Hindus and Moslems and amongst political parties in the Congress and outside.

Mahatma Gandhi then proposed the first resolution in connection with the death of Swami Shradhdhanandji. Speaking in Hindi, he asked the audience to read the account of his relationship with Swamiji which he would write to *Young India*. He read the Quran as respectfully as the Gita but he had found nothing that sanctioned murder of the kind perpetrated. But Abdul Rashid was not the sinner. The sinners were the leaders of both Hindu and Muslim opinion and a few papers in India had become a walking plague. He had been told that many Muslim newspapers never wrote on the subject without throwing mud on Swamiji, Pandit Malaviya, and Lala Lajpat Rai. Why was it so? He knew that none of these was the enemy of Islam. Similarly there were a kind of sheet that never wrote without throwing mud on Sir Abdur Rahim or Mian Fazil Hussain and other Muslims. What harm was there if Sir Abdur Rahim was doing his best to better the position of Muslims? Why should they consider him their enemy?

Gandhiji fervently appealed that all should take the lesson by his death as he served his country while he was alive. "Let us then cleanse our heart and wash it with the innocent blood of Swamiji."

Mr. Mahomed Ali in seconding the resolution, characterised it as the height of treachery, dastardliness and cowardice.

Proceeding, the Maulana said, "Whilst I thus whole-heartedly associate myself with the condemnation of the atrocious deed I would not be true to my faith and therefore to the nation if I did not say that the same value would not be put by the Mussalmans as by the Hindus upon every part of Swami Shradhdhanand's life-work. He certainly felt most keenly his position as one living in an unfree country. He had dedicated his great gifts and though here too differences of opinion no doubt exist with regard to some of the methods adopted by him there can be no doubt that he worked with unmistakable intensity and missionary zeal in the cause of his faith as he understood it.

Pandit Motilal Nehru and Pandit Malaviya supported the resolution which was passed, all standing. Another resolution mourning the death of Mr. Omar Sobhani was similarly passed.

Mahatmajji then moved the resolution regarding the South African situation. He prayed for success of the Round Table Conference and asked all to pray to God to shower His blessings on all those engaged in the discussion. Mr. Abdul Kalam Azad seconded the resolution which was unanimously passed. The Congress rose at 7 p.m. for the day.

Congress Resolutions

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDJI

(1) That this Congress expresses its horror and indignation at the cowardly and treacherous murder of Swami Shradhdhanand, and places on record its sense of the irreparable loss the nation has sustained by the tragic death of a brave and noble patriot who dedicated his life and his great gifts to the service of the nation, and espoused with fearlessness and devotion, the cause of the lowly, the fallen and the weak.

UMAR SOBHANI

(2) That this Congress places on record its deep regret at the untimely death of Mr. Umar Sobhani who had rendered signal services to the Congress and the country during the days of the Non-cooperation movement.

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS

(3) This Congress welcomes the Round Table Conference now sitting in South Africa, to deliberate

upon the best method of dealing with the question of the status of Indian settlers in that sub-continent, and prays for divine blessing and guidance upon its deliberations. This Congress once more tenders its thanks to that good Englishman, Mr. C. F. Andrews, who has been chiefly instrumental in preparing, in South Africa, a calm atmosphere suitable for the holding of the Conference. This Congress authorises the President to cable the text of the resolution to General Hertzog, Sir Habibullah and Mr. C. F. Andrews.

KENYA POLL-TAX

(4) In the opinion of the Congress, the progressively restrictive legislation against the Indian settlers of Kenya as induced by the latest action of the Kenya Government, in increasing the original poll-tax of 20 shillings which by currency manipulation was raised to 30 shillings and which has now been raised to 50 shillings by legislation, is calculated to demonstrate afresh that British imperialism means the conservation of European interests, at the cost of Indian interests, liberty and aspirations.

SWARAJYIST COUNCIL-PROGRAMME

(5) That Congressmen shall (a) refuse to accept Ministries or other offices in the gift of the Government and oppose the formation of a Ministry by other parties until in the opinion of the Congress or the All-India Congress Committee a satisfactory response is made by the Government to the national demand, subject to Clause D, refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government or unless otherwise directed by the All-India Congress Committee throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers; (b) move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of the country and for the protection of the freedom of person, speech, association and of the press and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy; (c) take steps to improve the condition of agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with a view to ensure a speedy amelioration of the condition of the tenants; (d) generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust on an equitable basis, the relations between land-lords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

(6) The Congress adopts the following programme of work in the country. The work in the country shall be directed to the education of the people in their political rights, and training them to acquire the necessary strength and power of resistance to win those rights by carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress, with the special reference to popularising the spinning wheel and khaddar, promoting intercommunal unity, and the removal of untouchability, ameliorating the condition of the suppressed classes and the removal of the drink and drug evil. The programme shall include the capture of the local bodies, the organisation of villages, the promotion of education on national lines, the organisation of labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of relations between the employers and workmen and between land-lords and tenants, and the general advancement of national, economic, industrial and commercial interests of the country.

PROPAGANDA ABROAD

(7) (a) Work outside the country shall be directed to the dissemination of accurate information in foreign countries with a view to interest them in

India's freedom. (b) This Congress appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its representative to the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities which will be held in Brussels on January next.

BENGAL DETENUEES

(8) This Congress is emphatically of opinion that Government had no justification whatsoever, for the application of an emergency legislation like Regulation III of 1818, which has been the subject repeatedly of condemnation by the Congress and other public bodies, and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1225, which was passed into law as the result of an arbitrary exercise of autocratic power against the expressed wishes of the elected members of the legislatures, under which a large number of peaceful public workers of Bengal were arrested and imprisoned without the formulation of definite charges and without an open trial, and still remain without any knowledge of the charges against them and any trial. This Congress strongly condemns their continued incarceration and deportation outside Bengal, notwithstanding the clearly expressed opinion of the elected members of the legislatures and the country.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

PART II.

Chapter XII

THE FIGHT FOR THE INDIAN CAUSE

Before writing further about Christian contacts, I must record other experiences of the same period.

Seth Tyeb Haji Khan Mahomed had in Pretoria the same position as was enjoyed by Dada Abdulla in Natal. There was no public movement that could be conducted without him. I made his acquaintance the very first week, and told him of my intention to get in touch with every Indian in Pretoria. I expressed a desire to study the conditions of Indians there and asked for his help in my work, which he gladly agreed to give.

My first step was to call a meeting of all the Indians in Pretoria and to present to them a picture of their condition in the Transvaal. The meeting was held at the house of Seth Haji Mahomed Haji Joosub to whom I had a letter of introduction. It was principally attended by Memon merchants though there was a sprinkling of Hindus as well. The Hindu population in Pretoria was, as a matter of fact, very small.

My speech at this meeting may be said to have been the first public speech in my life. I went fairly prepared with my subject which was about observing truthfulness in business. I had always heard the merchants say that truth was not possible in business. I did not believe it then, nor do I now. Even to-day there are merchant-friends who contend that truth is inconsistent with business. Business, they say, is a very practical affair, and truth a matter of religion; and argue that practical affairs are one thing while religion is quite another. Pure truth, they hold, is out of the question in business, one can speak it only so far as is suitable. I strongly contested the position in my speech and awakened the merchants to a sense of their duty which was two-fold. Their responsibility to be truthful was all the greater in a foreign land because the conduct of a few Indians was the measure of that of the millions of their fellow-countrymen.

I had found our people's habits to be in many respects as compared with those of the Englishmen around

them and drew their attention to it. I laid stress on the necessity of forgetting all distinctions such as Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Gujaratis, Madrasis, Punjabis, Sindhis, Cutchies, Surtees and so on.

I suggested, in conclusion, the formation of an association to make representations to the authorities concerned, in respect of the hardships of the Indian settlers, and offered to place at its disposal as much of my time and service as was possible.

I saw that I made a considerable impression on the meeting.

TEACHES ENGLISH

My speech was followed by discussion. Some offered to supply me with facts. I felt encouraged. I saw that very few amongst my audience knew English. As I felt that knowledge of English would be useful in that land, I advised those who had leisure to learn English. I told them that it was possible to learn a language even at an advanced age and cited cases of people who had done so. I undertook, besides, to teach a class, if one was started, or to instruct personally individuals desiring to learn the language.

The class was not started but three young men expressed their readiness to learn, at their convenience, and on condition that I went to their places to teach them. Of these, two were Mussalmans,—one of them a barber and the other a clerk—and the third was a Hindu, a petty shop-keeper. I agreed to suit them all. I had no misgiving regarding my capacity to teach. My pupils might become tired, but not I. Sometimes it happened that I would go to their places only to find them engaged in their business. But I did not lose patience. None of the three desired a deep study of English, but two may be said to have made fairly good progress in about eight months. Two learnt enough to keep accounts and write ordinary business letters. The barber's ambition was confined to acquiring just enough English for dealing with his customers. As a result of their studies two of the pupils were equipped for making a fair income.

I was satisfied with the result of the meeting. It was decided to hold such meetings, as far as I remember, once a week, or may be, once a month. These were held more or less regularly and on these occasions there was a free exchange of ideas. The result was that there was now in Pretoria no Indian I did not know or whose condition I was not acquainted with. This prompted me in turn to make the acquaintance of the British Agent in Pretoria, Mr. Jacobus de Wet. He had sympathy for the Indians, but he had very little influence. However he agreed to help, as best as he could and invited me to meet him whenever I so desired.

I now communicated with the railway authorities and told them that even under their own regulations the disabilities about travelling under which the Indians laboured could not be justified. I got a letter in reply to the effect that first and second class tickets would be booked for Indians who were properly dressed. This was far from giving adequate relief, as it rested with the stationmaster to decide as to who was 'properly dressed.'

The British Agent showed me some papers dealing with Indian affairs. Tyeb Seth had also given me similar papers. I learnt from them how cruelly the Indians were hounded out from the Orange Free State.

In short, my stay in Pretoria enabled me to make a deep study of the social, economic and political condition of the Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. I had no idea that this study was of invaluable service to me in the future. For, I had thought of returning home by the end of the year, or even earlier if the case was finished before the year was out.

But God had disposed otherwise.