

# Indian Opinion

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## NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

### ARREST OF MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU

#### ANOTHER MASS MEETING

THE Natal Indian Congress lost no time in recording the protest of the Indian community against the sentence inflicted upon Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, for, barely 36 hours had elapsed before its officials convened a mass meeting at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, Durban. The Hall was packed to its capacity. The chair was occupied by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee the President of the Congress, who was supported on the platform by the Joint Hon. Secretary Mr. P. R. Pather, Messrs. M. M. Lockbat, R. K. Kapitan, M. B. Naik, B. M. Patel and Pundit Prabhu Singh.

Mr. Rustomjee in the course of his speech said:—

"Not a week passes by without the Imperial Bureaucracy shewing its mailed fist to one or more of our Nationalist leaders in India. When we met last Monday evening we were happy to pass a resolution congratulating Mrs. Sarojini Naidu on her succession to the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi's volunteers. We offered prayers for the success of her mission. We then little thought, that, before a week passed by, the Indian Government would arrest Mrs. Naidu and sentence her to a term of imprisonment. On Saturday news reached us that she was sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment. Simultaneously with this came the news that a procession of over 200,000 was formed by twenty commercial houses in Bombay.

To me this appeared to be a striking protest against the action of the Indian Government in sentencing Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Nightingale of India. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to-day represents the womanhood of a country whose history is replete with striking instances of the sacrifices that have been the lot of many women of yore. In her fight for the freedom of India, she is as fearless as Mahatma Gandhi himself. We, who have acknowledged of her work for her people in this country, know how fearless she was during her tour in South Africa. Her visit here was at a time when the feelings between the European and the Indian were not rosy. The Indian was looked upon as a Pariah to whose extinction the Class Areas Bill hung as a Sword of Damocles. How Mrs. Naidu addressed the European community and showed them how narrow their visions were, how she addressed six or seven meetings a day, how she travelled to the four corners of South Africa to gain first-hand information of the conditions in which our countrymen lived, are still fresh in our minds. Her visit to South Africa proved to us, that, to her, work was a hobby.

The Indian Government is fully aware of her capacity for work and the tremendous hold she has on the peoples of India. Perhaps it believed that, if she were put in prison, the movement would lose ground. Nothing is more mistaken than that belief. Her imprisonment has, on the contrary, given a tremendous impetus to the Swaraj movement, as witness the big demonstration in Bombay, which I have already referred to. The Government may imprison Mrs. Naidu, but it will never imprison her spirit, which now hovers throughout the length and breadth of India. Her example is being followed by thousands of women in India, and although our Motherland may not produce another Sarojini, India will produce many thousands of women who, no less than the men of that country, will give their lives for the freedom of India. The spirit of independence is daily growing, and I must say that no Government will succeed in its attempt to deal a death blow to that spirit. That is what is happening in India. The Indian Government, in imprisoning the Nationalist leaders, is labouring under misapprehension, for, contrary to its expectations, the events during the last few weeks have clearly indicated that immediately a leader is sentenced, the spirit of independence grows hundredfold.

I have also to refer to the sentences inflicted upon Mr. Manilal Gandhi, Editor of INDIAN OPINION, Swami Bhawani Dayal and Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazir. These three are South African Indians. Although it grieves us to learn that they have been sentenced we are happy in the thought that the South African Indian community has also contributed its share. These three have done well, and we are proud of them.

Let us pray that, in India's fight for freedom, Almighty will guide the Indian peoples."

The following resolution was passed:—

"That this mass meeting of the Indian community, held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, hereby expresses its regret at the sentences inflicted upon Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Manilal Gandhi, Swami Bhawani Dayal and Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazir and prays that in her struggle for freedom, India will be guided by Almighty."

Mr. M. B. Naik moved and Messrs. M. M. Lokhat and E. A. Jeewa seconded and supported the resolution respectively.

## A RESPITE

**B**Y postponing the passage of the Asiatic Trading Rights Bill to the next session, the Minister of the Interior has given the Transvaal Indian community a few months respite. The respite has evidently been given to enable the Transvaal Indians to ponder over their fate. The Bill which has no parallel in any Statute Book, and which we described in our last issue as the most despicable piece of legislation, can hardly be believed that it is the handiwork of man. And yet it is. And Dr. Malan is to find a place for it in the Statute Book of a Dominion that is most democratic in character. Even when slavery was at its height a Bill of this description would never have found favour with the oppressors.

The Select Committee included two of the bitterest enemies of Indians in the persons of Messrs. Alex Eaton and F. H. Acutt. The former will be remembered as the Father of the Indian Village Scheme, which he would have brought to fruition but for the determined stand that the Indian community of Durban took against it. Mr. Acutt, until recently a partner in the firm of Messrs. R. Acutt & Sons of Durban, which has done and is still doing a considerable business with the Durban Indians, has openly said that Natal should rid itself of the Indians. It is an irony that these two men should have been included in the Select Committee. For, there is no doubt that these two, prejudiced as they are against everything that is Indian, could not have served on the Committee with open minds. Mr. Eaton, with his pet scheme of segregation, and Mr. Acutt with his policy of sending the Indians away "lock, stock and barrel," must have served on the Committee not so much with the object of extricating the Indians from the entanglements in which they found themselves to be as with that of bringing their particular scheme forward. That they have succeeded in their endeavours will at once be apparent from the provisions of this drastic Bill. For, Mr. Eaton has got his segregation policy embodied in the Bill whilst the clause which provides for the disposal of all businesses within five years is Acuttsonian in character. The Indian community dreaded

their inclusion in the Committee and their dread has not been unfounded.

Not content with the disgraceful conditions that obtain in locations such as those in Vrededorp and Germiston, the Asiatic Trading Rights Bill provides for the creation of Ghettos to which the Transvaal Indians would be relegated. Commissions after Commissions have commented very strongly upon the conditions in the locations and yet the Select Committee has the affrontery to suggest the creation of further locations. Is that in consonance with the terms of the Capetown Agreement which requires the Indians to conform to the Western standard of living, we ask? Or is it in keeping with the spirit of goodwill that was the keynote at the Round Table Conference.

We grant that the Transvaal Indians have erred in evading the Law, but have those evasions in any way retarded the progress of the country? On the contrary the Transvaal Indians have contributed much to the prosperity of the country. The aggregate capital of the Indian merchants affected is the colossal figure of £3,320,000. Remember, these moneys were earned and are being spent in South Africa.

No laws that are just and equitable are ever evaded. Where the laws are repressive and aim at one section of the community, one would find the world over, that attempts are always made to evade such laws. That is exactly what has happened along the Transvaal Reef. The Government "bottlenecked" the Indians and restricted their activities. There must be an outlet for their expansion. The evasion of the law would certainly exist if the European community were in the position of the Indians. That is but natural. In our opinion the Transvaal Indians have done nothing criminally as warrant such a repressive measure.

We are afraid the Natal Indians have not taken the Bill seriously, for, we would warn them that it is the thin end of the wedge. It would not be long before the provisions of the Bill are extended to Natal. So long as there are men such as Messrs. Eaton and Acutt to represent the Natal electorate, the Natal Indian community would be well advised to be on the alert.

## Transvaal Indian Congress

### Reception To Sir Kurma Reddi

A large gathering of Indians in the Patidar Hall, Johannesburg, held on the 13th inst., expressed violent views regarding the "repressive" legislation affecting Indians, forecast by the Political Correspondent of the *Rand Daily Mail* on Saturday. At the same time, several speakers, including Sir Kurma Reddi, Agent-General for India in the Union—in whose honour the meeting was held—expressed the belief that the Government would never father legislation so drastic and so serious in its effects upon Indian traders in South Africa.

Referring to conditions in India to-day, Sir Kurma expressed the utmost hopefulness, in spite of the state of affairs as revealed in the latest cables. Lord Irwin, he said, was a great statesman whom they could trust. India never had a greater and more sympathetic Viceroy. He believed that Indians, through constitutional means, would be able to see justice done to their great country.

The chairman, Mr. M. D. Bharoochi, welcomed Sir Kurma Reddi back to South Africa, and congratulated him on his recovery from the illness which compelled his return to India some months ago. His arrival was opportune, for the Indian situation in the Transvaal was extremely critical. He was sure that Sir Kurma would succeed in bringing about a happier state of affairs when he got to Capetown.

The Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney assured Sir Kurma Reddi that he would have a united people behind him—all Indians, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsees and Christians. They were now united and were ready, if need be, to fill the goals of this country should the necessity arise.

Mr. T. Naidoo, referring to the reported intentions of the Government, said this appeared to be an effort to introduce, indirectly, the segregation which was the principle of the Bill that the Government had dropped as the result of the round-table conference in Capetown. If Dr. Malan introduced such a Bill as they had been told of, he would bring about a struggle in the Transvaal worse than that in which Mahatma Gandhi had participated during his residence in this country.

Sir Kurma Reddi said that while in India recently, he had been following with a heavy heart events in this land, and he realised the gravity of the situation in which the Indians of the Transvaal were placed. They were passing through a critical period in their history, but they had known such periods and fought such battles long before. They had succeeded before, and he was sure that the generosity and statesmanship of the Union Government would enable them to survive this crisis. He complimented Mr. Tyson and the Committee on the admirable case which they had presented to the Parliamentary Select Committee.

"We have not," went on Sir Kurma, "reached the stage when we should think of goals and such matters. That stage of desperation is not yet. There is still hope. I cannot believe that the forecast published in Johannesburg is well-founded. I believe better counsels will obtain, and that Dr. Malan and the Union Parliament, who have an international reputation to maintain, will do nothing to endanger the safety of the Indian resident in South Africa. A previous speaker mentioned South African-born Indians. He might well have omitted the word Indian. Being born here they are South Africans, sons of the soil, and I know nothing in any law that deprives such a man of his common rights.

"I don't believe the South African Government will deprive its children of the liberty that is theirs. The matter does not rest with the committee alone.

The Parliament of South Africa is so named after the Mother of Parliaments, that of Great Britain, which has always stood for liberty, which abolished the institution of slavery. Surely the Parliament of the Union will be worthy of the name, worthy of the great institution from which it sprang."

Sir Kurma requested them to exercise restraint until they saw the terms of the Bill itself, and then leave it to him and to their leaders to get the best terms possible.

Speaking next on the present position in India, he said he could not but admit that affairs were by no means pleasant. "But I can assure you of one thing—that you can always trust the genius and statesmanship of Lord Irwin. India never had a greater statesman. A more sympathetic Viceroy never ruled over that land since Viceroyalty was established in India."

He was certain that a settlement could be arrived at by constitutional means and had great faith in the round-table conference that was to be held in England soon. Sir Kurma was confident that the British Parliament would see that justice was done to their country.

"Do not think that I am less patriotic than any of you here—than any of those who proclaim their patriotism from the house-tops," he added. "I believe in my heart of hearts that India deserves Dominion status, but I believe that that can be obtained by constitutional methods. An opportunity is coming to us in the round-table conference of placing our case before the British people and the British Parliament and demanding the right to be rulers in our own land. The British nation, always famous for its love of liberty, will not let us down."

Mr. Venu Gopaul Kurma, B.A., Cambridge, a son of Sir Kurma Reddi, who is acting as his private secretary, also addressed the meeting, and was followed by the Honourable Evelyn Baring, secretary to the Agent-General. The latter warned them not to make up their minds until they saw the report of the Parliamentary Select Committee and had read the Bill.

At the beginning of the meeting, Sir Kurma and his son were garlanded, and addresses of welcome were presented by numerous Indian organisations in the Transvaal.—*Rand Daily Mail*.

## Transvaal Asiatics

In a leading article dated May 17, *The Star* writes: The Select Committee on Asiatics in the Transvaal have now published their report, and with it is published a Bill to give effect to its recommendations. The Committee have made the subject more controversial than ever. They seem to have learned nothing since 1885, and indeed they invoke the intentions of an Act of that year to be the guiding light of their deliberations. The new measure whose second reading is to be taken on Wednesday, is somewhat complicated, and it inserts itself into a somewhat complicated situation. But its central feature is the proposal to segregate Transvaal Asiatics, within five years, both for trading and residential purposes. It is thus a virtual revival of the Class Areas Bill, which South Africa is pledged not to proceed with while the Capetown Agreement remains in force. It is certainly a further evasion of the spirit of that agreement, if not a formal repudiation of its letter. It will go far to confirm the growing impression in the outside world that in all matters where the colour question is involved South Africa is swayed exclusively by considerations of European convenience.

We are not now concerned to criticise the Bill in detail. What is more undesirable even than the Bill itself is the extraordinary method which the Minis-

ter threatens to follow in handling it. The Bill was first published yesterday. It is down for second reading on Wednesday next—that is to say, on Parliament's third working day after publication. The two intervening days give no time for Press criticism or any other expressions of public opinion, and no time for representation from interested parties before the principle of the measure is settled. It "short-heads" the Agent of the Government of India, Sir Kurma Reddi, who has only recently returned to South Africa and who cannot have been fully consulted while the Bill was in preparation. Worst of all, it entirely ignores the Government of India itself. We should have thought that it was a matter of ordinary inter-Imperial courtesy for the Union Government to refer a copy of such a Bill to the Indian Government for its observations before the taking of the second reading. In view of the Indian Government's position as a party to the Capetown Agreement, we should have thought that such reference was a matter no longer of courtesy, but of obligation. However that may be, the Minister of the Interior should be aware that such precipitancy must exhibit the Governmental attitude towards the whole Asiatic question in a deplorable light.

## Needless Haste

In a leading article under the above heading the *Cape Times* writes as follows in its issue dated May 19:—

On Friday last Dr. Malan introduced in the House of Assembly a Bill "to amend in certain respects the law relating to occupation of certain land in the Transvaal by Asiatics and to provide for certain matters incidental thereto." Superficially the Bill has neither public interest nor national import. Yet the roots of the tangle with which it purports to deal date back to 1885; the branches it proposes to lop off sprouted in 1919; a covey of gardeners, in the form of a Select Committee, has been investigating the amorphous growth since the beginning of last February; a special emissary, Mr. J. D. Tyson, invested with the authority of Acting Agent, was sent by the Government of India to give evidence before that Committee; and the Agent himself, Sir Kurma Reddi, though hardly recovered from a grave illness, hastened back to South Africa so as to be in Cape Town when the Committee's report was presented. The Bill was introduced on Friday afternoon. The report of the Select Committee on which it is based became available an hour or two later. That report contains 355 pages and 15 pages of appendices. And the second reading of the Bill has been set down for next Wednesday.

Why this haste? Parliament has already entered the last lap of the session and is straining to get through its allotted task. A week or two ago, when the Prime Minister was asked to indicate what measures should, in his view, be passed before the session ended, no mention was made of this Bill. Now it is plumped on the Order Paper and the second reading proposed without either Parliament or the public being given time to appreciate its provisions or its implications. And that is not all. The Bill directly affects South Africa's relations with a sister State of the Commonwealth. Those relations, which had been growing more and more unhappy year after year, were stabilised on a satisfactory basis by the Cape Town agreement of 1927. How does this Bill consort with the letter and spirit of that agreement? That, surely, is a question which should be very minutely investigated. But how can that investigation be undertaken in so short a time? Dr. Malan and the members of the Select Committee may appreciate all the ramifications of the Bill but few members of the House

can be expected to grasp all details of so complicated a measure between Friday and Wednesday. The Bill affects, probably, three-fourths of the Indian traders now established in the "gold areas" of the Transvaal. These people are given five years in which to wind up their business and move into "defined areas," that is, locations. Admittedly, they have no right to be where they are; but the Union Government has never provided the legal machinery to remove them. On the contrary, their presence has been condoned by the issue of licences to trade. If, in short, they have been guilty of sins of commission, the Government has been guilty of sins of omission. What one party has sown, the other has fertilised. But, in the uprooting which is now proposed, one party alone is to suffer.

On that score alone there is every justification for subjecting the Bill to the most careful scrutiny. Its provisions may not be unjust; but every care should be taken to establish their justice. That care cannot be exercised in the last days of an exhausting session. The obvious course, therefore, is to hold up the Bill till next session and to allow the Government of India, in the spirit of the Cape Town agreement, adequate time to make known its views. South Africa has nothing to lose by such delay, whereas needless haste may lay it open to the suspicion of discourtesy or even dishonesty. Delay is also counselled by what seem to be curious lapses in the drafting of the Bill. What is the exact meaning, for instance, of sub-section four of section two of Clause 7 or of sub-section one of section three of the same clause? These points might, it is true, be elucidated in committee, but the vital fact remains that, if this Bill is rushed on to the Statute Book without all its implications being appreciated and considered, South Africa may invite the charge of having gone back, between Friday and Wednesday, on undertakings solemnly given, after months of negotiation, little more than two years ago. We do not think such a charge would be justified, but why give it even, the semblance of justification by such unjustifiable haste?

## Transvaal Asiatic Bill

Sir Kurma Reddi At Capetown

Sir Kurma V. Reddi, the Agent-General of the Government of India in South Africa, arrived in Capetown accompanied by his son and private secretary, Mr. Gopaul Kurma. As he stepped upon the platform he was surrounded by his countrymen and garlanded, addresses of welcome also being presented.

The Agent-General was disinclined to express any views regarding recent developments in India and in regard to the questions affecting the position of Indians in the Union, he intimated that he could not say anything until after his interview with the Minister of the Interior in reference to the report of the Select Committee on legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal.

### Indian Deputation To Capetown

The Minister for the Interior (Dr. D. F. Malan) received a deputation representative of the Indian community in the Transvaal to hear protests against the proposed Asiatics Trading Rights Bill. The deputation consisted of Messrs. P. K. Desai (secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress), E. Mall (secretary of the S. A. Indian Congress), J. E. Gardi, S. B. Medh, and the Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney.

The second reading of the Transvaal Asiatic Tenure (Amendment) Bill was first on the order for May 21.

The Select Committee which submitted this

measure strongly recommended its enactment during the present session "in view of the immediate urgency."

Under the circumstances (writes the Lobby correspondent of *The Argus*) one must regard with caution the report now current that the Bill will be held over till next year. The report or rumour emanates from a well-informed quarter, the reasons suggested for the Minister's willingness to delay the passage of the Bill being the intricacy of the subject and the paucity of time available to deal with it.

### Asiatic Bill To Be Held Over

Writes the *Cape Argus* on 21st instant:—

The Government is arranging for Parliament to conclude business this day week. The next day is Ascension Thursday, and the following Saturday Union Day, so the only business day of the week remaining would be Friday.

The first step in fitting in the business for the six remaining days is the dropping of the Transvaal Asiatic Tenure Bill for this session.

### Alleged Breach Of Privilege

An alleged breach of privilege of Parliament was the subject of a special motion which prompted an interesting debate in the House of Assembly recently.

Dr. Malan, Minister of the Interior, said he wished to draw the attention of the Speaker to what he thought was a breach of the privilege of the House, in that a report of the Select Committee had been published before the report had been printed and laid on the table of the House. "I refer," he said, "to a telegram which appeared in the *Rand Daily Mail* on Saturday." This report had stated that notice to quit would probably be given to Indians occupying stands on proclaimed ground in the Transvaal.

The Select Committee on Asiatics in the Transvaal, stated the message, had concluded its labours and a majority report would be presented to Parliament recommending that the present Indian occupiers of stands on proclaimed ground be ordered to vacate their stands after five years.

The rule he referred to reads: "The proceedings of, or the report of, any select committee, or a summary of such proceedings or report, shall not be published by any member of such committee or by any other person until the report has been printed by order of the House."

He formally brought the matter to the attention of the Speaker.

At the latter's request he then moved: "That a select committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the breach of privilege committed by the publication in the *Rand Daily Mail* of May 10 of a statement disclosing the recommendations of the Select Committee on Asiatics in the Transvaal before the committee's report had been published.

The motion was carried.

### Inquiry Into Breach Of Privilege

The *Cape Times* dated May 24 writes:—

There was laid on the table in the House of Assembly yesterday the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the breach of privilege alleged to have been committed by the publication of a disclosure of the recommendations of the Select Committee on Asiatics in the Transvaal before the report had been published. The Minister of Native Affairs Mr. E. G. Jansen was Chairman of the Committee.

The Committee gave it as its opinion "that the public interest is best served by strictly maintaining the privacy of a Select Committee's proceedings and conclusions until the report of the Committee is printed".

After "some hesitation," the Committee came to the conclusion that the privilege of Parliament was infringed by the publication of the statement in question. The report adds:

"The writer of the article complained of, Mr. A. G. Barlow, has, however, tendered an apology to your Committee for the offence, which he states he inadvertently committed, and in the circumstances your Committee recommends that in this instance no further action be taken and hopes that, as attention has now been drawn to the fact that the proceedings and conclusions of a Select Committee or any portion thereof should not be published before the report of the Committee is printed, the Press and the public generally will assist in maintaining what your Committee considers an important feature of the practice of this House and the privilege of Parliament."

### Indian Traders At Springs

#### Consternation Among Property Owners

The steady increase in the number of Indian traders in the chief business centre of Springs is causing much consternation among the business people and property owners generally, says *The Star*, and the feeling is one of anxiety as to the future development of the shopping centre which is established in the old Government Township, and was proclaimed by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal in 1904.

A recent judgment in the appellate division of the Supreme Court was given against the Springs Municipality to the effect that Asiatics had the right to reside in this township, that it did not come under Section 131 of the Gold Law and that this section was never intended to apply to land proclaimed under Section 52.

The Indian community had carried on business in 2nd Street and 3rd Street at the junction of the Boksburg Road prior to the Asiatic Act of 1919, and no further encroachment on the business centre was made until last year when Messrs. Matwadia and Co. applied for a general dealers certificate for Erf 65 at the corner of 4th Street and 2nd Avenue, which certificate was granted, as a result of this judgment.

Evidently encouraged by this success other Asiatic applicants came into the field and during the past six months three additional certificates have been granted. At the last meeting of the Council a number of applications came before it for consideration and of these three were deferred pending the erection of buildings and other six have still to be decided upon.

The position is rather peculiar to Springs in view of the terms of the proclamation inasmuch as the Springs New Township situated contiguous to the established shopping centre is protected against trading and residence by coloured persons. Without new legislation it will mean a gradual transferring of the business centre away from the old Government Township.

It is confidently anticipated that legislation will remedy the existing state of affairs.

## Mrs. Sarojini Naidu Sentenced

Bombay, Friday.—Mrs. Naidu has been sentenced to nine months' simple imprisonment. She will be treated as an "A" class prisoner. Manilal Gandhi (the Mahatma's son) and Pyrae Lal have been sentenced to a year's rigorous imprisonment. Imam Saheb of Bhawagir has been sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment, and will be treated as a "B" class prisoner.

### Huge Demonstration In Bombay

At 6 o'clock this evening a monster procession estimated at 200,000 strong, organised by 28 Indian commercial bodies, marched from the Indian quarter, and was confronted at the Victoria Terminus, the junction of the five busiest streets, by 450 police, drawn up four-deep across the roadway. Police were determined not to permit demonstrators to enter the Fort area, which contains the principal commercial and Government offices.

The demonstrators squatted in the road, chanting Swarajist songs, and the excitement became feverish and traffic was held up.

After four hours the gigantic procession was allowed to traverse the Fort area, the leaders undertaking that it would remain non-violent. It was the biggest procession ever seen in Bombay City, and took half an hour to pass a given point at a fairly brisk pace.

The only incident occurred while the demonstrators were squatting in the roadway when a volunteer scaled a statue in front of the Corporation building and planted a Nationalist flag in the hand of the figure, amid a storm of cheering.—Renter.

## Our Letter From India

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

Calcutta, April 11.

### Indians In South Africa

With the relinquishment of his office on March 31, as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in charge of Health, Education and Lands, Sir Mahomed Habibullah brought to a close an administration which has throughout been attended with conspicuous success. For over thirty years Sir Mahomed has been an outstanding figure in the public life of this country. In 1926 he led the deputation consisting of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and others to South Africa whose successes have added a memorable chapter to the history of India's diplomatic relations. In 1929 he went to Geneva as Leader of the Indian delegation.

Asked by a Press representative at Madras for his views with regard to the present position on the matter of the grant of trading licences to Indians in South Africa, Sir Mahomed Habibullah said: "It has been asserted that various Indians are giving and occupying properties in the prohibited areas and carrying on trade there. At present there is an inquiry going on and this inquiry is practically for the purpose of finding out whether there is any violation of the law and if so what should be done to prevent such a violation. The question as to what should be done with regard to the people who are already carrying on their business there would also be considered. The Inquiry Committee has been appointed by the Union Parliament with Dr.

Malan, Minister of the Interior as Chairman, and this Committee is taking evidence there. Mr. J. D. Tyson, I.C.S., who was formerly Secretary to the Right Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, has been deputed by the Government of India to represent the Indian case, as he is familiar with the position of affairs in the absence of Sir K. V. Reddi. It is expected that Sir K. V. Reddi will reach South Africa about the middle of next month and then Mr. Tyson will return to India. As the subject is practically *sub judice* I cannot say anything further about it."

### Emigrants From South Africa

#### INQUIRY INTO THE WORK OF INDIAN ORGANISATIONS

The Government of India have decided to review the arrangements now in force for the reception and care of emigrants returning from the Union of South Africa under the scheme of assisted emigration, recommended by the Capetown Conference and agreed to by the Governments of South Africa and India in 1927. The object of the proposed inquiry is to ascertain how far these arrangements are adequate and what improvements, if any, are required, especially to ensure that those able and willing to work are given all possible help to secure employment suited to their attitude. In regard to emigrants of Madras Presidency, it is proposed to entrust the inquiry to Mr. J. Gray, Commissioner of Labour, Madras, and Mr. G. A. Natesan. Besides inspecting the working of the special organisation set up by the Government of India in 1927 to assist and advise returning emigrants, Messrs. Gray and Natesan will also review the information collected by the officer in charge of the special organisation, to show how far his efforts to help the emigrants to find suitable occupation have proved successful. In regard to emigrants who, after their return, settle in Northern India, a similar review is also contemplated.

### Defiance Of Salt Laws In India

The six of April is a memorable day in the history of India when the non-violent campaign to thwart salt laws in this country was launched by a world-figure whose sanctity of purpose claims no explanation whatsoever. All-India enthusiastically and promptly responded to the clarion call with the solemn pledge of preferring death to national humiliation. Throughout the country there are organised and trained Satyagrahis (volunteers) under prominent leaders who have been manufacturing salt where it is convenient to do so and have been giving instructions to villagers to do likewise. An atmosphere of complete non-violence prevailed everywhere amongst the Satyagrahis. The non-interfering attitude of the Government to the salt-tax campaign on its first stage has now been changed. There have been wholesale arrests and prosecutions of prominent local workers including the two sons of Mahatma Gandhi with a view, as the *Hindustan Times* of Delhi observes, "to first lop off the tall poppies, the best and most trustworthy lieutenants of Mahatma Gandhi with the intention probably of facilitating Mahatma Gandhi's arrest and of wrecking, if possible, the whole movement." But the repressive policy pursued by the Government will only give additional and necessary impetus to the people to make the movement successful. Mahatma Gandhi has made it clear that by arresting the leaders and others, the Government were fueling their pulse and putting them to the test. It was their duty to show that their spirit could not be cowed down by going to jail. As news of arrests and sentences to the leaders are pouring in, his joy

knows no bounds as that was the only way which would hasten the advent of Swaraj. In congratulating the Satyagrahis on their arrests, Mahatma Gandhi, in the course of a statement issued from Jalalpur on Monday, said: "After all, that is the logical outcome of civil resistance. Imprisonment and the like is the test through which a civil resister has to pass."

The present political situation in the country is unprecedented in its history. The only wise course to tide over this deadlock is to offer additional assurances to the Indian nation with regard to their immediate and legitimate demand for Dominion Status. Referring Mahatma's march and his defiance of the salt-laws, the Conservative and the Liberal Press in England blame Lord Irwin for his policy of alleged "reaction" and press for repression. But in striking contrast, the *Daily Herald*, the Labour organ, maintains vigorously in its editorial that these demands for strong action are all signs of irresponsible mentality. Says the *Daily Herald*:

"We draw attention to reports from India which call for the carefullest restraint and sympathetic understanding of the Indian problems on the part of the British public. There is from certain quarters undoubted demonstrations of utter irresponsibility and the usual clamour for the strong hand of repression. We trust, these irresponsible talks and demands would be given no heed to by either Mr. Wedgwood Benn or Lord Irwin. Hitherto Mr. Wedgwood Benn, the Viceroy, and his advisers have been acting with commendable wisdom and statesmanship in handling the Indian situation. Any effort to rattle them into a different course of action would undo what good work has been done so far. The essence of the problem is to keep steadfastly before India the British determination to take the people of India as speedily as possible to the goal of Dominion Status."

This is the only way to the solution of the present tangle.

## Johannesburg School Clinic Fund

The chairman of the Johannesburg Indian School Clinic desires to acknowledge with grateful thanks the following donations to the Fund:—

Messrs. City Shirt Co. £1 1s, G. Punoomal £1 1s, A. Jajbhay & Son £5 5s, H. D. Maal £5 5s, E. S. Dangor £1 1s, A. S. Mohamed £1 1s, M. E. Bulbulia (Vrededorp) 10s, C. M. Mockaria £1 1s, S. M. Jusab £2 2s, V. N. Naidu £1 1s, A. M. Khan 10s. 6d, N. Ismail £1 1s, Abdool Gafoor £1 1s, M. H. Bulbulia 10s. 6d, M. E. Wades 10s. 6d, Aboo Adam 10s. 6d, Ranoo Cassim £2 2s, Patel & Son £2 2s, M. E. Bulbulia (Newtown) £2 2s, M. A. Kara 10s. 6d, Dawood Ismail Haffjee 5s, D. Jamal 10s., Joosub Ismail 5s., A. Khan 5s., E. M. Akhalwaja & Sons £1, M. Kallan £1 1s, Parag Panohia £1, M. S. Bhamjee 10s. 6d, Ismail Hassim 10s. 6d, N. K. Gopal & Co. £1 1s, M. D. Maal £1 1s, Misa Brothers £2 2s, Jina Daya 10s. 6d, Peralan Silk House £5 5s, Sindhi Silk House £1 10s. 6d, Union Silk House 12s. 6d, Dawjee Patel £2 2s, K. Ebrahim £1 1s, Mohamed Haffjee £2 2s, Ghunlial Koorerji £1 1s, Patidar Trading Co. £1 1s, M. S. Nana £3 3s, Parahotam Jaysing 10s. 6d, Mustapha Hassim £3 3s, V. Bhanabhai & Co £1 1s, Jogi & Co. 10s. 6d, S. E. Aswat £1 1s, N. M. Soni, 10s. 6d, D. Makan £1 1s, Saley Hassen 10s. 6d.

## "Sastri Nursing Home"

A correspondent writes as follows to *The Star*:—  
Through the foresight and energy of the Rev. Bernard Sigamoney a nursing home for Asiatic and coloured women and children is shortly to be opened in Doornfontein. Such an institution will not only fill a long-felt want and help to relieve the overwhelming pressure on existing institutions, but will also solve a trouble which often prevents non-Christian patients from availing themselves of skilled treatment by hospital nurses, i.e. the trouble of finding themselves unable to follow out the dictates of their particular religious faiths in certain directions such as the cooking of food, etc.

Under a roof which will offer peace and renewed health to non-European women of all sects, it will be the endeavour of the nursing sister to observe a patient's sectarian orthodoxies as far as it is humanly possible.

While it is expected that the home will be locally supported by Asiatic endeavour with, it is hoped, financial assistance from sympathisers in India, the initial difficult beginnings would be considerably eased if European friends would contribute something for the first year; if not in money then, perhaps, in necessary furniture, such as small iron beds, crockery or enamel sets, washstands, small wardrobes, screens, chest-of-drawers, cupboards, chairs, small bedside tables, muslin or cretonne curtains, sheets and towels, kitchen utensils, household china, or any other thing that suggests itself to householders with, of course, the exception of mattresses and pillows. Many houses have surplus or discarded furniture in box-rooms and outhouses which would save the home the expense of buying new articles.

A letter to the Rev. Bernard Sigamoney, 18, Moseley Street, Doornfontein, would receive grateful acknowledgment in the report and a trolley would be sent to collect the goods.

It is proposed to make a great effort all through the months of May and June to furnish the house. Gifts and donations will therefore be doubly welcome then.

## The Auction Sales

A good suggestion has been made that if half a dozen ladies would come forward with an offer to attend auction sales and search the auction rooms for such articles as have been mentioned above, which so often are bought at sales for a very small outlay, the price of the articles they have bought will be paid from the home funds on production of the auctioneer's bill and their efforts and expenditure of time most thankfully acknowledged. If every such helper would hold herself responsible for the furnishing of one room, it would considerably help matters. Will any such good friends apply to the secretary for further information, advice as to outlay, etc., by postcard or in person?

Gifts of money will be spent on the purchase of new mattresses, pillows and blankets, or on hospital appliances, etc.

A hopeful feature is the lively desire amongst the Indian and coloured community to help towards the founding of their home. Men are coming forward to offer their services as carpenters, plumbers, handy men, painters etc. Shabby furniture will, therefore, be cleaned and repainted, as well as the fabric of the house where necessary, by volunteers. Merchants are offering to stock the home with a good supply of groceries, coal and wood, for the first month or two.

It is hoped to have six beds available and the kitchen fire lit by June 1, when a proper house warming will take place.

### Sister Schmidt's Offer

But all these plans would be difficult to realise were it not for the fine offer of Sister H. Schmidt to undertake the post of matron-sister, assisted by two probationers, in an honorary capacity until such time as sufficient funds are assured to offer a definite salary.

The home is fortunate in obtaining the services of Dr. Rachel Getz as hospital doctor (which will not, however, prevent patients being treated by their own doctors, should they so prefer).

There is a feeling among many Indians here that in the absence of any other such commemorative institution the home should be named in grateful remembrance of the first Agent-General for India, who, by his magnificent work for South African Indians, endeared himself to all South Africa. It is proposed, therefore, that it be called the "Sastri Nursing Home."

Requests for further information, offers of help, etc., may be addressed to the following members:—

Mr. F. J. Brocklebank, (treasurer), Country Club, Auckland Park (donations only).

Mrs. Florence van Heijst, (chairman), late Sister of St. Thomas' and Charing Cross Hospitals, London), whose address is 13 Muller Street, Yeoville, or care of F. van Heijst, Esq., St. John's College.

Mrs. Max Mohlis, (late missionary and Army nurse,) 21 First Street, Fairwood.

Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis, 26 Loch Avenue, Parktown West, telephone Hillbrow 387, or to the secretary, 18 Moseley Street, Doornfontein.

The following committee has been formed:—

Dr. Erasmus Ellis, Col. Dawson Squibbs, D.S.O., Mr. Methven Beverley, Mr. F. J. Brocklebank, (treasurer), Mrs. Erasmus Ellis, Dr. Rachel Getz, Mrs. C. D. Don, Mrs. van Heijst, (chairman), Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis, Mrs. Macmillan, Mrs. Max Mohlis, S. D. Roycepen, S. Joseph, W. Ernest, Mrs. Frank Madray, B. Barlow, H. A. Bennett, Mrs. B. L. E. Sigamoney, Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney, (honorary secretary), K. Naransamy, S. M. Nana, P. K. Desai, M. D. Desai, O. K. T. Naidoo, Mrs. Lily Williams, J. Marian, Jinnah Parag, Mustafa Hassim, F. Mills, S. Extien, R. Carstens, J. H. Peters, David Cutting, Mrs. D. Cutting, Miss G. Linden, Mr. Daniels and Mrs. Cass.

### Obituary Notice

The death occurred on the 30th April 1930, of a prominent member of the Indian community in the person of Mr. Sompayan Onoposamy, a wholesale fish merchant of Port Elizabeth. The deceased was 41 years old and had resided in Port Elizabeth for many years and was very well-known and well-respected by both Europeans and non-Europeans.

He held a prominent position in the Indian community. He was also a patron of our Hindu Valibar Sangam since its inception and contributed much towards its progress. His death is a great loss to the Indian community. We sympathise with the deceased's relatives in their sad bereavement.

C. GANESA PILLAY,

Assist. Secretary.

Hindu Valibar Sangam.

### Mr. Blackwell On Justice For Black And White

Speaking at Sea Point recently, Mr. Leslie Blackwell, M.P., stated that it seemed as if there was one law for Europeans and another for natives in South Africa. He was addressing a joint meeting of the men's, women's and junior branches of the Sea Point division of the South African Party.

"I am sickened and saddened," said Mr. Blackwell, "when I read of things like the recent events at Worcester. When you hear of armed policemen firing into that mob and killing those men, one wonders where we are going to end in this country."

"The impression is created in this country, in our courts and in the administration of justice, that there is not equality between black and white; that a native will be punished condignly for an offence for which a white man will escape lightly or go scot free; that a white man for an offence against a native will be acquitted by a white jury, but if the offence is by a native against a white man, a verdict of guilty and punishment usually follows."

"You hear of unprovoked attacks on white people by natives. There is growing up a feeling of hostility that is due largely to the unequal administration of justice."

### THE DELICATE GIRL

#### WHAT PARENTS SHOULD DO

"I'm getting quite worried about her," says many a mother. Yes, and if growing girls are to become healthy, well-developed women, their health must be carefully watched. Parents should not ignore the various troubles that tell of approaching womanhood. Where pallor, headache, backache and anaemia are already evident, you must provide the suffering with the surest means of making new blood. Nothing meets the case so surely as Dr. Williams' pink pills; these pills actually create new rich blood, and by this means quickly transform anemic, sickly girls into strong, happy women.

Miss M. Housley, of 35, Queen's Road, Doncaster, states: "For two years my life was a misery through anaemia. I suffered severely with pains in my head and fits of dizziness. I had no energy, and felt fit for neither work nor pleasure. I consulted a doctor but got no better.

"One day I read about Dr. Williams' pink pills, and decided to try them. After taking the pills a few days, there was a distinct improvement; my appetite picked up and I felt more energetic. As I persevered with the pills, the headaches and dizziness disappeared and before long I was a different girl, as well as could be."

Your own dealer sells Dr. Williams' pink pills, or direct from Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., P.O. Box 604, Cape Town; 3s. 3d. for one bottle, or six for 18s. post free.

#### "INDIAN OPINION"

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