

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

THE Indian mercantile community has suffered a great loss by the very sudden death of Mr. M. S. Randeree which took place last Wednesday at his residence in Queen Street. Mr. Randeree suddenly took ill after leaving the Mosque at 2 o'clock and before medical aid could be applied he expired. The sad news was spread throughout Durban within a short time and was received with a great shock especially by those who had seen him hail and hearty not one or two days previously but an hour or half-an-hour before his death. The late Mr. Randeree was one of the oldest merchants of the town and ranked among the wealthiest. He came to Natal in 1889 from Bombay and was in business in Field Street and later in Pine Street. In 1925 he visited Mecca, Medina, Palestine, Egypt and India, returning to Natal in 1926. The late Mr. Randeree was religiously minded and took a prominent part in the moral and educational advancement of his own people. By the passing of Mr. Randeree a leading light has disappeared from the Indian mercantile world of Durban. His funeral which took place at 9-30 p.m. was attended by Europeans and Indians and notwithstanding the very short notice and the late hour at night the attendance was very large people from as far as Ladysmith having come to pay their last tribute to the deceased. The late Mr. Randeree died at the age of 62 leaving behind a widow, five daughters and four sons and a large family to mourn their irreparable loss. We extend to them our heartfelt sympathy.

WE heartily congratulate Kunwarani Maharaj Singh for having accepted the presidentship of the Indian Child Welfare Society. This institution has, apart from doing humanitarian work, succeeded more than perhaps any other institution in bringing Indians and Europeans into closer contact with each other, and the community, no doubt, owes a deep debt of gratitude to the many European friends who have constantly been working in co-operation with the Indians. This institution owes its success more to their co-operation than anything else. The status of the institution is greatly enhanced by the fact that the Kunwarani has taken its presidentship, and we have no doubt she will bring by her great influence still more support not only from individual Europeans but from the Government too. She will also be able to influence those of our countrymen who have so far been apathetic towards the very useful work of the institution to take more interest in it and to render every practical assistance in the preliminary work of nation-building. It is easy to bring into existence living beings but it is not as easy to bring them up into a good nation. Let this fact be remembered by every Indian and let it awaken him to the duty he owes to the children for whose existence he has been responsible. We sincerely hope that the work the Kunwarani has taken upon her shoulders will be crowned with success.

THE Government of India has cabled the Agent, Kunwar Maharaj Singh, regretting the passive resistance attitude taken by Indians at their recent conference in Johannesburg regarding the Transvaal Land Tenure Act. The cable reads:—

The Government of India regret the decision and feel that the action taken can only alienate the few friends which the Indian community has in South Africa, and will undo all the efforts of the two preceding Agents to improve relations between the two races.

COMMENTING on the Transvaal Land Tenure Act the *Servant of India* writes:—

"On the merits of the question, there cannot be any doubt that the Act is unwelcome inasmuch as for the first time it seeks to render effective the segregation law of the Transvaal, which was never accepted by Indians and which has hitherto been often evaded. . . . No wonder the spirited among the Indians refuse to accept the Act and advocate non-co-operation. While we sympathise with their feeling, we must deprecate their advocacy. For one thing, the Government of India have acquiesced in the Act and cannot now oppose it. Without the moral backing of the Government of India the agitation in South Africa will be greatly handicapped, and in such an enterprise failure is worse than defeat. On practical grounds, therefore, we urge the Indians in the Transvaal to submit to the Act, make the best of it and hope for better times."

THE above are further specimens of the discouraging messages we receive in our resolution to resist the Asiatic Land Tenure Act. But those of us who have resolved to resist the law will not be discouraged. To those who have not they may serve as a consolation. We feel that if the few friends of the Indian community in South Africa cannot help us out of our humiliations they are not our friends. We feel that since all the efforts of the two preceding Agents to improve relations between the two races have, obviously, utterly failed and have only resulted in the enactment of further repressive legislation against us, the efforts of the third Agent will be futile and that the honourable course for any civilised Government would be to sever its connection with a Government that cannot respect its word, that turns a deaf ear even to its requests and appeals. As for our contemporary we are glad to note that it admits that the present law "for the first time seeks to render effective the segregation law of the Transvaal which was never accepted by Indians." We regret, however, that while it sympathises with our refusal to accept the Act it deprecates our advocacy to resist it. Its reasons for doing so do not very much appeal to us. The Government of India has betrayed the Indian community by acquiescing in the Act. We expected it to safeguard our honour and not to sell it away for a mess of pottage for a few. We have had no help from it and we can little expect any backing

from it at this stage. Our contemporary's second reason to desist us from resisting the Act is that, it thinks failure is worse than defeat. We believe that our failure is in our submission to the Act. We might be defeated in our purpose of getting the Act repealed but our satisfaction will be in not having submitted to the humiliation imposed upon us. Thus far we will have succeeded. The rest will be left in the hands of Providence.

Mr. P. K. Desai, secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress, has come to Durban to discuss with the officials of the S.A.I.C. the line of action to be taken in connection with the Transvaal Land Tenure Act. Forty volunteers have enrolled themselves to take part in the Passive Resistance struggle the date for which is not yet fixed.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S DECISION

WE have devoted a large portion of this week's issue in reproducing from the Indian exchanges the details of the settlement of the communal question as declared on August 20 by the British Premier, which has brought about a turn of events in India. We do not claim to be competent enough to dabble in Indian politics as some of our contemporaries do without knowing the facts and relying only on a few scraps of news supplied by Reuter's Agency. We will not therefore venture to discuss here the details of the communal award. We do not know if the news agents act independently or are guided by the ruling powers who want to keep the world in the dark as to the true state of affairs and want to prove to the world that they are absolutely guiltless and are always doing nothing but the right thing. If they are acting independently we must condemn their action in giving garbled news especially about India. If they are slaves or paid servants of the ruling powers then they are certainly free from any guilt excepting that they are pawns in the Government's game of hiding facts. From the scrappy news sent out for the consumption of the people in this country about the correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and the British Premier and Sir Samuel Hoare on the communal question and about Mahatma Gandhi's decision to fast to death as a protest against the Government's award in regard to the depressed classes, one is not able to understand the real significance of Mahatma Gandhi's grave decision. To that extent an injustice has been done him and those responsible for the transmission of such news are guilty of misrepresentation. One thing we know for certain is that Mahatma Gandhi's decision to fast is not directed against the Government. The proposed fast is not to coerce anyone into submission. It is purely a religious fast as a penance for the wrongs perpetrated in Hindu social life. It is meant to cleanse the hearts of the people and to inspire them to unite into one brotherhood. Mahatma Gandhi's proposed supreme sacrifice is not for the matter of a mere detail but for a great principle. It is claimed, by the London *Times*, which speaks for the Government that the award was forced upon the Government by the persistent failure of the Congress Party and the Hindus to reach agreement on Indian minorities. This is not the truth. The Government has never recognised the Congress

and never accepted the Congress decisions. It has found them unpalatable to the extent that every Congressman is thrown into prison. It has chosen to work only with its favoured ones. If the Government did recognise the Congress as a "great and powerful organisation" as Lord Irwin declared it was when he wanted a truce after a bloody year's struggle in 1931 it would have abided by the decisions of that organisation. But can the Government afford to have a united India? From time immemorial it has ruled India with the policy of *divide et impera* and is trying to continue to do so by crushing the Congress. It is very truly said by Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer in the Assembly at Simla that the present communal award is "a conspiracy to break up the joint family of the Hindu community."

This is what the *Indian Social Reformer* has to say about the communal award: "Taking it, as it stands, it is the saddest confession by British statesmen of the total failure of British rule in this country as an influence for harmony and goodwill among the communities of India." The concern shown by the British Premier for the minorities is utter cant and hypocrisy which must doubtless end in God's good time.

Mahatma Gandhi's Decision On India's Communal Question

The following messages are reproduced from the daily papers:—

London, Monday.

Gandhi has decided upon a "fast unto death" as a protest against the Government's solution of the depressed classes problem in the communal decision which he maintains is no remedy for their crushing degradation. His decision is announced in the course of correspondence with Sir Samuel Hoare and the Prime Minister, which has been published at Gandhi's request.

When the Government's decision to give the communal award was announced in March Gandhi wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare from Prison at Poona reminding him that at the round table conference last winter he stated he would resist with his life separate electorates for the depressed classes, and announcing his intention to put the threat into effect if they were introduced. Sir Samuel replied with the assurance that the views of all concerned would be taken into consideration and suggested that a decision should be awaited.

The day after the Government's decision was announced Gandhi wrote to the Premier stating: "I shall have to resist your decision with my life. The only way I can do so is by declaring a perpetual fast unto death from all food save water, with or without soda and salt."

Gandhi added that the fast would begin on Sept. 20 but would cease if the Government withdrew communal electorates for the depressed classes.

Premier's Reply

The Premier acknowledged the letter with surprise and regret. He said he thought Gandhi had written under a misunderstanding and pointed out that under the Government's scheme the unity of Hindu society would be preserved. The depressed classes would remain part of the Hindu electorate, but for the first 20 years they would receive a limited number of special constituencies as a means of safeguarding their rights and interests. The Premier added that the Government's decision stood unless

the communities reached an alternative agreement, and suggested that Gandhi might wish to reconsider his decision in view of possible misunderstanding.

Gandhi replied on September 9 claiming to speak on behalf of the depressed classes, saying that if the decision stood it would arrest the marvellous growth of the work of Hindu reformers who had dedicated themselves to uplift their suppressed brethren, and adding that he was compelled reluctantly to adhere to his decision.—Reuter.

Gandhi's Release Expected

MEASURES TO SAVE HIS LIFE

Simla, Monday.

Gandhi will probably be released on September 20 according to Assembly lobby circles. Immediately after starting his fast he will be taken to Sabarmati Ashram, his retreat in a suburb of Ahmedabad. The Government is taking precautionary measures to meet any untoward developments. Gandhi is expected to survive his fast for a month.

It is recalled that Gandhi's previous 21-day fast during Lord Reading's vice-royalty led to the convening of an all-party conference, and it is expected a similar movement on this occasion will secure mutual agreement to save Gandhi's life.—Reuter.

The London correspondent of the *Natal Advertiser* states in a message dated Tuesday :—

The *Times*, in a leader, says that Gandhi will probably keep his word, but it is also certain that the British Government will stand by the award, unless the Indian communities reached an agreed solution in time. The alternative is the betrayal of its obligations to the depressed communities which is unthinkable, and the mass of public opinion in Britain support the Government's refusal to submit to the cruel threat.

The Government's case is unanswerable. Gandhi announces that he will by his suicide protest against the Government's award, but that award was forced upon the Government by the persistent failure of the Congress Party and the Hindus to reach an agreement on Indian minorities.

If Gandhi starves himself to death he may be regarded as a martyr by his own simpler followers, but the less sentimental will note that he sought to throw the blame of the consequences of his own political and religious convictions on the Government instead of imputing it to the failure of his own countrymen to agree.

Gandhi contemplates suicide over the difference between an unknown, probably infinitesimal, quantity of representatives of the depressed classes who might be elected under the common franchise and 4½ per cent. of the total who will be elected under the Government's award. In Europe and America the difference will hardly seem worth the sacrifice.

English Press And Gandhi

London, Tuesday.—A careful examination of Gandhi's arguments by the English Press leads to the general conclusion that the Government's decision as regards the representation of the depressed classes cannot be deflected by his threat of suicide. The *Times* points out that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald vainly sought to reason with him in an altogether admirable reply, and the *Daily Telegraph* asserts that there were no attempts at any point to refute the Premier's long and careful presentation of the issue. The *Daily Herald*, whose pronounced sympathy with Gandhi is long-standing, admits it hard for the average Englishman to understand the working of his mind, and points out that his threatened sacrifice is not for what appears to the average British mind the larger issue but one which seems to be a detail of constitution-framing.—Reuter.

Assembly Debate At Simla

The *Natal Advertiser* London correspondent in a message dated Wednesday states :—

The Legislative Assembly, says the Simla correspondent of the *Times*, yesterday talked out a motion for an adjournment to discuss Gandhi's suicide threat. The debate showed that Gandhi's move has little sympathy except with a handful of members.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer, moving the motion, declared that if Gandhi died as a result of "this conspiracy to break up the joint family of the Hindu community," the British connection would die with it.

Mr. Haig, the Home member, acknowledged the sincerity of Gandhi's communal creed, but said his action was intended to bring coercive pressure not on the Government but on the depressed classes' representatives for the purpose of forcing his particular solution in a matter of public policy.

The feeling that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has completely demolished Gandhi's case is by no means confined to official quarters or to Gandhi's habitual non-official opponents. Sir Annapu Patro, leader of the Justice Party in Madras, for example, deploras Gandhi's "tragic attitude of mind on the problem of the Untouchables," while the remedy lay with him to redress the cruel wrongs perpetrated against his fellow-beings in the name of Hindu religious beliefs.

Mr. V. J. Patel, a former president of the Indian National Congress, who is in London, cabled to Gandhi asking him to reconsider his decision to fast. Interviewed by Reuter, he said: "I am of the opinion that Gandhi's disappearance will be a greater loss to hundreds of millions whose eyes are turned towards him for their deliverance than even his presence in retirement if he chooses that alternative."

Child Welfare Society

Fifth Anniversary

The fifth anniversary of the Indian Child Welfare Society was celebrated last Monday night at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall, Queen Street, Durban. Mrs. S. Moodley was in the chair. Among those present were the Kunwar and Kunwarani Maharaj Singh. Mrs. Moodley in the course of her speech paid a high tribute to the European friends who had taken a keen interest in the Society's work and made special mention of Mrs. Benson in this respect.

The Agent was then garlanded and bouquets were presented to the Kunwarani and the European friends in recognition of their voluntary services.

Secretary's Report

The secretary Mrs. G. Christopher submitted her report of the fifth year of the Society's work. The report was for the eight months ending July, 1931, in order that the future year would be covered from August 1 to July 31.

During the eight months under review the number of attendance was 4,968. 65 medical sessions were held by Dr. Janet Jackson and Dr. Minnie Alpar, at which the number of attendance was 1,450. 942 babies under one year attended. 290 school children were examined by one or other of the lady doctors. Many came for treatment when there was no clinic. 218 expectant mothers came for advice and treatment. The midwife attended 46 cases and made 112 antenatal visits.

The Society had several cases of adopted, protected children and deserted wives. Adopted and protected children were visited regularly by the Health Visitor and by two members of the Committee, who also investigate and recommend adoptions. The cases of deserted wives were also

taken up. All this necessitated visits to the Domestic Officer at the Law Courts and investigations at the homes of these cases.

Food And Medicine Supplied

1171 lbs of lactogen were distributed, that is to say, 380lbs were given free and 791lbs were sold at half cost, 1980 ozs. of cod liver oil Emulsion were given free to mothers who were in very poor circumstances and were unable to feed their babies naturally. 930 ozs. cough mixtures, 209 ozs. liquid paraffin, 692 quinine tablets, 500 aspirin tablets and many useful drugs were given free to indigent cases.

Addington Hospital

The Society found it difficult to get patients to go to the Addington Hospital for treatment, as many poor cases were being charged fees which they were unable to pay. A sub-committee was appointed and interviewed Dr. Stewart, the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, who promised to give free treatment to all poor cases recommended by our Society. The Society had to send four poor cases to St. Aidan's Mission Hospital at the Society's expense owing to its difficulty in getting patients to go to Addington Hospital. The Society was, however, glad to report that patients sent to the Addington Hospital have since received better consideration.

Grants-in-Aid

The Society receives the following grants:—

(a) £50 annual grant-in-aid from the Provincial Council; (b) the Durban Town Council pays salaries to the Health Visitor who is in charge of the Centre, of a mid-wife and an Indian lady attendant. The Council has also given the use of the building with electric light and telephone in Brook Street, which is the Society's Centre.

Thanks of the Society were expressed in the report to Mrs. Benson, chairwoman of the Municipal Health Committee, Dr. Gunn, Medical Officer of Health, Dr. D. McNeill in charge of the Child Welfare Department and Dr. Stewart, Superintendent of the Addington Hospital, for their ever ready help in the Society's child welfare work.

Thanks were also expressed to Dr. Janet Jackson, Dr. Minnie Alper, Dr. Seadat, Mrs. Maurice Webb, Miss Standing, *Indian Opinion*, *Indian View* and the donors to the Society Bazaar.

In conclusion the secretary said: "In every department of our work, there is a marked increase in the number of cases. Each year has shown an increase and during the eight months under review there has been a big increase all round. The demand for baby food and medicine is growing. Unemployment which is very acute among our people brings increased want, and our women and children suffer the most. We appeal to the public, more especially to the members of our community to give of their charity, to bring a little happiness into the lives of the poor children and their distressed mothers."

Financial Statement

The financial statement was submitted by Mrs. V. Lawrence which after disbursements showed a credit balance of £144-12-2.

Speeches

In moving the adoption of the reports, the Agent, Kunwar Maharaj Singh, pointed out to the usefulness of such an institution and what good it had done in India where infantile mortality was so great. He gave the instance of Cawnpore where four hundred deaths per thousand took place among infants but owing to child welfare movement the situation had greatly improved. The Agent complimented the workers both European and Indian for their voluntary services and on the excellent results they had achieved. "This is a work," said the

Agent, "in which we all can co-operate whatever our nationality or creed."

In seconding the motion Dr. Campbell said he was very pleased with the report of the work done and pointed out to the need for both men and women interesting themselves in the welfare of their children.

Kunwarani's Appeal

Kunwarani Maharaj Singh, who, the chairwoman announced, had very kindly consented to accept the presidency of the Society for the ensuing year, said that this was going to be the beginning of the useful work she proposed doing for her people. Mr. Sastri's parting words to her at Bombay, she said, were that this institution was one of his small efforts for the community and he hoped she would interest herself in it. The Kunwarani was very much encouraged by the progress the institution had made.

"From what I have seen in Durban hospitals," declared the speaker, "there is a crying need for medical relief for the community. What struck me is the appalling lack of nursing and hospital accommodation." The Kunwarani said she felt very much ashamed when she found Europeans, quite strangers to her, coming forward to offer financial help when there was, so far, not a single offer made by our countrymen. "I am sorry," she said, "that people who can give hold back their hand. We certainly appreciate offers from other people but we must first help ourselves."

Mrs. Benson

"There is one thing on which we all can agree upon while we might differ in other things, and that is to do our best for our children whatever colour they have," said Councillor Mrs. Benson. She assured the Indian section of the support of the European division of the Child Welfare Society. "Our needs are great, but there are also your children, whose needs we cannot forget in that we have a common basis. Child welfare is not only a woman's job," she added.

Mrs. O. Siedle

Mrs. O. Siedle said she was keenly interested in child welfare work and she would do everything to help in the good work of the Society.

Dr. M. Alper

Dr. M. Alper paid a tribute to the work of the Society and said that the Society should render as much free service as possible to the poor and for this a larger collection should be made and the money collected should not be banked but spent. It is not so much of importance to show a good bank balance at the end of the year as to show the amount of practical work done.

Mr. A. Christopher paid a high tribute to the generous help given by the many European friends in this work and thanked them for their presence at the meeting. He referred to the Immigration laws affecting Natal which were still in operation and which allowed child marriage. "In India this question was being seriously tackled," he said, "and yet in a country like South Africa where we are expected to follow western standards girls are given and taken in marriage before reaching the age of puberty—and this was sanctioned by law. He felt that as the matter affected child welfare, the new President, Kunwarani Maharaj Singh, might tackle the question.

Mr. V. Lawrence moved a vote of thanks to the European guests.

The chairwoman announced that the election would take place on September 24 and the function terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair.

Among those present were Senator S. S. Brisker, Mr. and Mrs. D. L. Forbes, president of the National

Council of Women of South Africa (Durban branch), Dr. and Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. and Miss Whitcott, Mrs. Maurice Webb, Miss Standing, Miss M. M. Kriel, Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. and others.

M. K. Gandhi Library And Parsee Rustomjee Hall

Eleventh Anniversary

The eleventh anniversary of the above institution was celebrated on Tuesday, September 6. Mr. O. H. A. Jhaveri, chairman of the Library and the Hall Committee, presided.

Among those present included the Kunwar and the Kunwarani Maharaj Singh, Bishop Ferguson-Davie, Rev. Satchell, Mr. W. Doull, and Mr. A. H. West. The hall was full every section of the community being represented and a large number of ladies were also present.

The chairman, in his opening remarks, stated that they had gathered on an auspicious occasion, it being the New Year of the Parsee community. He paid a high tribute to the charitable disposition of the Parsees as a race and quoted, as an instance, the late Parsee Rustomjee, the founder of the institution whose anniversary they had gathered that night to celebrate. The chairman wished the Parsee community a very happy and a prosperous New Year.

Flowers were then presented to the Agent and the Kunwarani and to Mr. Doull in appreciation of the useful services he had rendered to the institution as Secretary and Trustee of the Jerbai Rustomjee Trust which financed the Library.

Secretary's Report

Mr. B. M. Patel, Secretary of the Library and Hall Committee, in submitting the eleventh report for the year ended August 31, stated that the attendance of the public at the Library for the year under review was 74,965, which showed an increase of 7,843 on that of the previous year.

The attendance of the students from the various schools (which is included in the above total) was 14,402 an increase of 1,138 on that of the previous year.

Amongst those who visited the Library during the year were the following distinguished persons :

Professor Rallaram, Vice Principal, D.A.V. College, Hoshiarpur, Punjab; Professor D. K. Karve, Indian Women's University, Poona; Mr. H. Wodson, Editor *Natal Advertiser*; Kunwar and the Kunwarani Maharaj Singh, His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Mr. Oliver Lea.

Although every Friday was specially reserved for ladies to attend the Library between the hours 3 to 5 p.m., sufficient advantage had not been taken by them. The attendance during the year was 531.

The Committee had done everything possible to encourage the ladies to attend, but of no avail. An appeal was made to the menfolk to assist their womenfolk to take advantage of this opportunity.

Books

The books in the Library for the use of the public total 5,753 comprising English 2,759, Gujarati 1,692, Hindi 654, Tamil 382, Telugu 42, Urdu 224. This showed an addition of 132 books during the year made up as follows:—92 English and 40 Gujarati. 450 English and 287 Gujarati books out of these were specially set aside for the use of juveniles and students!

Newspapers And Periodicals

There were 173 periodicals and newspapers, including dailies, weeklies and monthlies, in the following languages:—English 85, Gujarati 55, Hindi 14, Tamil 16, Telugu 2, Urdu 1.

These included 20 papers in English, Hindi and Gujarati languages specially provided for the use of students and children. The decrease in the number of papers was due to the fact that several papers have either suspended or ceased publication on account of the Press Act in India.

A special table with suitable papers and periodicals had been set aside for the use of teachers.

There were 4,337 English, 1,786 Gujarati, 312 Hindi, 457 Tamil, 183 Telugu and 51 Urdu, making a total of 7,126 books issued for reading in the Library during the year, which showed an increase of 1,146 on those issued during the previous year.

There was an increase of 580 English, 300 Gujarati, 22 Tamil and 72 Telugu, but a decrease of 9 Hindi and 19 Urdu books issued during the year.

The Committee was provided with the necessary funds for the upkeep of the Library by the Bai Jerbai Rustomjee Trust. The sum of £332-15-1 had been spent during the year.

Parsee Rustomjee Hall

The above hall was used by public bodies on 25 occasions during the year for meetings, conferences, lectures and receptions.

Eighteen committee meetings were held during the year:

The secretary expressed the thanks of the Committee to the several publishers who supplied the Library with free copies of their papers during the year.

Mr. J. W. Godfrey moved the adoption of the report and in doing so pointed out with satisfaction to the marked improvement made during the year under review in the attendance in the Library as well as in the books read, but expressed his disappointment at the apathy shown by Indian women in taking advantage of the facilities provided for them in the Library. He appealed to the ladies to take more interest.

Mr. Rooknoodeen complimented the Parsee community on their charitable nature and wished them every happiness and prosperity in their New Year, and while expressing disappointment at the ladies not patronising the Library as they should, the speaker struck a note of optimism by saying that since the Kunwarani was now in their midst she would no doubt by her great influence bring about an awakening among our womenfolk.

On behalf of the trustees Mr. Wm. Doull said they were pleased indeed at the steady advance the library was making and this fact would have certainly given great pleasure to the donor if he were alive to-day. The Indian community could show their appreciation of the founder's gift by making the fullest use of the library. He thanked the officials, particularly Mr. B. M. Patel for their consistent work.

The Agent complimented the members of the Committee on the very useful work they had done and urged the women to take an increasing interest.

Bishop J. C. Ferguson-Davie pleaded for light literature for the use of young people.

Mr. T. R. Nair of the Sastri College, complained that the Library had no lending section. He complimented the secretary and the two librarians who were at all times very courteous and helpful.

The Rev. Satchell also paid a high tribute to the

courtesy shown to the attending public by the librarians.

The Kunwarani suggested that the authorities should first set themselves out to attract children and then their mothers would follow.

Mr. A. H. West, one of the trustees, replying to the suggestion of a lending library, said the trustees had considered this question seriously and had come to the conclusion that there were not sufficient funds to take such a step. It was more a reference library and it would not be advisable to lend out valuable books for there would be the risk of losing them.

Among the other speakers were Messrs. A. I. Kaje and A. H. Kaze and Satyadev,

Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, on behalf of the Parsees, thanked the speakers for their good wishes for their New Year.

Mr. V. S. C. Pather moved a vote of thanks to the chair which was passed with acclamation.

India's Communal Question

Separate Electorates For Minorities

The following extracts from the Government communique on the subject give the gist of the communal award.

His Majesty's Government have decided that they will include provisions to give effect to the scheme set out below in the proposals relating to the Indian constitution to be laid in due course before Parliament. The scope of this scheme is purposely confined to the arrangements to be made for representation of the British Indian communities in the provincial legislatures, the consideration of representation in the legislature at the centre being deferred for the reason given in a later paragraph. The decision to limit the scope of the scheme implies no failure to realise that the framing of the constitution will necessitate decision of a number of other problems of great importance to the minorities, but has been taken in the hope that once a pronouncement has been made upon the basic questions of the method and procedure of representation, the communities themselves may find it possible to arrive at a *modus vivendi* on other communal problems which have not as yet received the examination they require.

His Majesty's Government wish it to be most clearly understood that they themselves can be no parties to any negotiations which may be initiated with a view to a revision of their decision and will not be prepared to give consideration to any representation aimed at securing a modification of it which is not supported by all parties affected. But they are most desirous to close no door to an agreed settlement, should such happily be forthcoming. If, therefore, before the new Government of India Act has passed into law they are satisfied that the communities who are concerned are mutually agreed upon a practicable alternative scheme either in respect of any one or more of the Governor's provinces or in respect of the whole of British India, they will be prepared to recommend to Parliament that the alternative should be substituted for the provisions now outlined.

Seats in the Legislative Councils in the Governor's provinces or in the Lower House, in an Upper Chamber, will be allocated as shown in detail below.

Election to the seats allotted to Mahomedan, European and Sikh constituencies will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates covering between them the whole area of a province (apart from any portions which may in special cases be excluded from the electoral area as 'backward').

Provisions will be made in the constitution itself to empower the revision of this electoral arrangement (and other similar arrangements mentioned below) after 10 years; with the assent of the communities affected, for the ascertainment of which suitable means will be devised.

All qualified electors who are not voters either in a Mahomedan, Sikh, Indian Christian, Anglo-Indian or European constituency will be entitled to vote in a general constituency.

Seven seats will be reserved for Mah rattas in certain selected plural member general constituencies in Bombay.

Members of the 'depressed classes' are qualified to vote in a general constituency. In view of the fact that for a considerable period these classes would be unlikely by this means alone to secure any adequate representation in the legislature a number of special seats will be assigned to them as shown in the paragraph below. These seats will be filled by election from special constituencies in which only members of 'the depressed classes' electorally qualified will be entitled to vote. Any person voting in such a special constituency will, as stated above, be also entitled to vote in a general constituency. It is intended that these constituencies should be formed in selected areas where the depressed classes are most numerous and that except in Madras they should not cover the whole area of province.

In Bengal it seems possible that in some general constituencies the majority of votes will belong to the depressed classes. Accordingly pending further investigation no number has been fixed for the members to be returned from the special depressed class constituencies in that province. It is intended to secure that the depressed classes should obtain no less than 10 seats in the Bengal legislature.

The precise definition in each province of those who (if electorally qualified) will be entitled to vote in the special depressed class constituencies has not yet finally determined. It will be based as a rule on the general principles advocated in the Franchise Committee's report. Modification may, however, be found necessary in some provinces in northern India where the application of the general criteria of untouchability might result in a definition inequitable in some respects to the special conditions of the province.

His Majesty's Government do not consider that these special depressed classes constituencies will be required for more than a limited time. They intend that the constitution shall provide that they shall come to an end after 20 years if they have not previously been abolished under the general powers of electoral revision referred to.

The method of filling seats assigned for representatives from the backward areas is still under investigation and the number of seats so assigned should be regarded as provisional pending a final decision as to the constitutional arrangements to be made in relation to such areas.

His Majesty's Government attach great importance to securing that new legislatures should contain at least a small number of women members. They feel at the outset that this object could not be achieved without creating a certain number of seats specially allotted to women. They also feel it is essential that women members should not be drawn disproportionately from one community. They have been unable to find any system which would avoid this risk and would be consistent with the rest of the scheme for representation which they have found it necessary to adopt except that of limiting the electorate for each special woman's seat to voters from one community subject to the exception explained in sec. 24 below. Special women's seats have accordingly been specially divided as explained in sec. 24 below between the various communities. The precise electoral machinery to be employed in these special constituencies is still under consideration.

His Majesty's Government have found it impossible

in determining these questions of representation in provincial legislatures to avoid entering into considerable detail. There remains nevertheless the determination of constituencies. They intend that this task should be undertaken in India as early as possible.

It is possible in some instances that delimitation of constituencies might be materially improved by slight variations from the number of seats now given. His Majesty's Government reserve the right to make such slight variations for such a purpose, provided they would not materially affect the essential balance between the communities. No such variations will, however, be made in the case of Bengal and the Punjab.

The question of composition of second chambers in the provinces has so far received comparatively little attention in constitutional discussions and requires further consideration before a decision is reached as to which provinces shall have a second chamber or a scheme is drawn up for their composition.

His Majesty's Government consider that the composition of the upper house in a province should be such as not to disturb in any essential the balance between the communities resulting from the composition of the lower house.

His Majesty's Government do not propose at present to enter into the question of the size and composition of the Legislature at the centre since this involves among other questions that of representation of Indian states which still needs further discussion. They will, of course, when considering the composition, pay full regard to the claims of all the communities for an adequate representation therein.

His Majesty's Government have already accepted the principle that Sind should be constituted a separate province if a satisfactory means of financing it can be found. As the financial problems involved still have to be reviewed in connection with other problems of federal finance, His Majesty's Government have thought it preferable to include at this stage figures for a legislature for the existing province of Bombay, in addition to the scheme for separate legislatures for the Bombay Presidency proper and Sind.

The figures given for Bihar and Orissa relate to the existing province. The question of constituting a separate province of Orissa is still under investigation.

The inclusion in para 24 below of figures relating to the legislature for the Central Provinces, including Berar, does not imply that any decision has yet been reached regarding the future constitutional position of Berar.

The following will be the allocation of seats in the provincial legislatures (Lower House only):—

MADRAS	
General seats ...	184
(Including 6 women.)	
Depressed classes ...	18
Representative from the backward areas ...	1
Muhammadans ...	29
(Including one woman.)	
Indian Christians ...	9
(Including one woman.)	
Anglo-Indians ...	2
Europeans ...	3
Commerce and Industry, mining and planting ...	6
Landholders ...	6
University ...	1
Labour ...	6
Total	215

BOMBAY (Including Sind.)	
General seats ...	97
(Including 5 women.)	
Depressed classes ...	10

Representative from the backward areas ...	1
Muhammadans ...	65
(Including one woman.)	
Indian Christians ...	3
Anglo-Indians ...	2
Europeans ...	4
Commerce etc. ...	8
Landholders ...	3
University ...	1
Labour ...	8
Total	200

BENGAL	
General seats ...	80
(Including two women.)	
Depressed classes ...	blank
Muhammadans ...	119
(Including two women.)	
Indian Christians ...	2
Anglo-Indians ...	4
(Including one woman.)	
Europeans ...	11
Commerce, etc. ...	19
Landholders ...	5
University ...	2
Labour ...	8
Total	250

UNITED PROVINCES	
General seats ...	132
(Including 4 women.)	
Depressed classes ...	12
Muhammadans ...	66
(Including two women.)	
Indian Christians ...	1
Anglo-Indians ...	1
Europeans ...	2
Commerce, etc. ...	3
Landholders ...	6
University ...	1
Labour ...	3
Total	228

PUNJAB	
General seats ...	48
(Including one woman.)	
Sikhs ...	32
(Including one woman.)	
Muhammadans ...	86
(Including two women.)	
Indian Christians ...	2
Anglo-Indians ...	1
Europeans ...	1
Commerce, etc. ...	1
Landholders ...	5
University ...	1
Labour ...	8
Total	176

BIHAR AND ORISSA	
General seats ...	99
(Including three women.)	
Depressed classes ...	7
Representatives from the backward areas ...	8
Muhammadans ...	49
(Including one woman.)	
Indian Christians ...	9
Anglo-Indians ...	9
Europeans ...	1
Commerce, etc. ...	4

Landholders	...	...	5
University	...	...	1
Labour	...	...	4
		Total	175

CENTRAL PROVINCES

(Including Berar)

General seats	...	...	77
(Including three women.)			
Depressed classes	...	...	10
Representative from the backward areas	...	...	1
Muhammadans	...	...	14
Anglo-Indians	...	...	1
Europeans	...	...	1
Commerce, etc.	...	...	2
Landholders	...	...	3
University	...	...	1
Labour	...	...	2
		Total	113

ASSAM

General seats	...	...	44
(Including one woman.)			
Depressed classes	...	...	4
Representative from the backward areas	...	...	9
Muhammadans	...	...	34
Indian Christians	...	...	1
Europeans	...	...	1
Commerce, etc.	...	...	11
Labour	...	...	4
		Total	108

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

General seats	...	...	9
Sikhs	...	...	3
Muhammadans	...	...	36
Landholders	...	...	2
		Total	50

Seats are also allocated for Bombay without Sind and for Sind as follows:—

BOMBAY WITHOUT SIND

General seats	...	...	109
(Including 5 women.)			
Depressed classes	...	...	10
Representative from the backward areas	...	...	1
Muhammadans	...	...	80
(Including one woman.)			
Indian Christians	...	...	3
Anglo-Indians	...	...	2
Europeans	...	...	3
Commerce, etc.	...	...	7
Labour	...	...	7
		Total	175

SIND

General seats	...	...	19
(Including one woman.)			
Muhammadans	...	...	34
Europeans	...	...	2
Commerce, etc.	...	...	2
Landholders	...	...	2
Labour	...	...	1
		Total	60

An Appeal

Municipal Barracks Free School

The above school will be holding a sale of works in the Barracks Hall, Somtseu Road, Durban, in November 1932. It is the desire of the school to appeal to the general public for wares and condiments etc. Mr. M. P. Pillay of 16 Madressa Arcade has been authorised to collect the wares and condiments. It is the sincere belief of this school that the fortunate will generously contribute towards the sale. The Secretary Mr. V. Chengiah will gratefully accept all remittances for the school which should be sent to the following address:—The hon. Secretary, Municipal Barracks Free School, Somtseu Road, Durban.

News In Brief

A plea for the aid of the Church in promoting better feeling between the Indians and Europeans in South Africa was made by the Agent, Kunwar Maharaj Singh, at the Anglican Diocesan Synod on Tuesday afternoon. The Kunwar is reported to have said that he had been a member of the synods in India and knew the excellent work that the Church was doing there. There were more than 6,000,000 Christians in India, most of whom were Indians. All the bishops of the Syrian Church were Indians. In India Europeans and Indians generally worshipped together. The Kunwar pleaded for joint Communion services similar to those held in India and asked for the support of the members of the Synod for the work of the Joint Councils. These bodies, he said, were doing good work in the quiet way in which all good work was done. He congratulated the Mission on its recent progress and the zeal of the Indian people in bringing the Gospel to their own people.

At a meeting of the Association of University Women (Durban branch) Kunwarani Maharaj Singh and Mrs. P. Morel of the Indian Girls' High School, were the guests of honour. Mrs. Morel referred to the lack of interest among the Indian community in female education. The Kunwarani said she felt that the Indian community here with regard to these questions was only waiting to be led. She hoped that when domicile in Durban, with her own home, her European friends would come to her house and try to meet some of the Indian women of Durban, who after all were Natalians now and as much their countrywomen as the Kunwarani's own. She said she felt sure that if the European women would only try to see more of the Indian they could influence them to the betterment of their conditions. At present they had no chance of knowing better things, and they wanted leadership and sympathy. The Kunwarani considered that it was a great pity that the University education was not open to Indian women here, as they could then be trained for service amongst their own people.