

Indian Opinion

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THE STRIKE ON THE NORTH COAST

SEVERAL thousand indentured Indians went out on strike last week and by Saturday there was scarcely an Indian working on the plantations from Umgeni to Tongaat. The papers contain each day columns of reports more or less true of happenings along the North Coast. What one paper states to be a fact another describes as a gross exaggeration and quotes the Acting Commandant of the Defence Force in support. The *Advertiser*, on Thursday last, came out with a report headed "Battle of Fuller's Flats." This "battle" appears to have taken the form of an attack by mounted police, armed with sticks and revolvers, upon a crowd of Indians who were simply coming along the road to join their comrades at Verulam. When, on Wednesday last, it was thought desirable to remove the body of 1,500 strikers which had gathered at Verulam, the police, who claim to have carried out this movement successfully, were assisted very materially by Mr. Sorabji Rustomjee and other members of the Natal Indian Association who addressed the people and advised them to return to their various estates where, it was understood, they would receive food and shelter. Had it not been for the co-operation of these Association members, it is quite certain that the people would not have returned to their estates. General Lukin himself requested the Indian leaders to persuade the people to return quietly, and the police were held back until the matter had been satisfactorily arranged. At the meeting of planters the day previous, at which General Lukin attended, Mr. Wm. Campbell of the Natal Estates pressed the point that strikers should be compelled to return to work. General Lukin said that he would telegraph to the Government, asking permission to act in this direction. The permission was given and the police had then the power to prevent movement along the roads. On Thursday, says one report, there was skirmishing near the Drummond Hotel and eight Indians were wounded, not very seriously, but three were removed to the hospital. In regard to the first outbreak, it is reported that the Indians were quite prepared to return to work on condition that those who had been arrested as ringleaders and sentenced to seven days' imprisonment should be released, but the managers of the estates were adamant, and insisted upon punishment being inflicted. We understand that the men also asked that the estate managers should give a written promise to do all in their power to bring about the repeal of the £3 tax, but this was also refused.

Upon his return from Verulam on Wednesday night General Lukin granted an interview to a representative of the *Mercury* at the Hotel Edward. He explained the position very briefly.

"Yesterday a certain number of the Indians on the estates refused to work. They attempted to get into Verulam," he said, "but were turned back by the

police. There were some 1,000 strikers assembled in Verulam. These were got back to their respective estates by the S.A.M.R., and detachments have been stationed at these estates to prevent intimidation, and also to protect property. It is hoped that the men will be kept on the estates; in fact, they will be kept on the estates, and now the only question is: Will they return to work?"

General Lukin informed the reporter that there was no disturbance at Verulam, and that there is no need for any alarm whatever.

The S.A.M.R., he said, would be reinforced to confine the men to their own estates, in case they should show any further intention of marching or intimidating other Indians.

The *Mercury* representative was in Verulam on Thursday and states that so effective was the carrying out of General Lukin's instructions, that order was soon completely restored in Verulam. So far as was known the Indians had all been located in their barracks without further trouble, and that they remained there, although they still refused to work.

About 400 more strikers came out that day but they did not attempt to leave the estates.

The strikers appear to have realised (says the *Mercury* of Friday last) that the authorities now in command of the situation intend to be firm in carrying out to the letter the orders of General Lukin, and any attempt to rebel against obedience would only bring trouble on their own heads. It was at any rate apparent yesterday on most of the estates that the Indians were content to sit and wait, but sight must not be lost of the fact that to-day is ration day, and that although during the last few days they have had last week's rations to live upon, the strikers will get none given to them from the estate owners. In some quarters it is thought that this will have the effect of compelling the Indians to return to their work before long; others conjecture that with the pinch of hunger the strikers will become troublesome, and that they will probably become active in their resistance. This is only conjecture. Either might happen. All contingencies had been considered by General Lukin, and yesterday, in response to his request, additional mounted men were drafted into the vicinity, including a detachment of the Cape Mounted Rifles.

One or two interesting facts (continues our contemporary) have come to light which seem to support the idea that intimidation was largely responsible for the strike. When unrest first manifested itself hereabout the authorities of the Mount Edgecombe Estates did a very wise thing. They enrolled a corps of special police, and drew a cordon around the estate, with the idea of keeping out the agitators and apostles of Gandhi, and of protecting loyal Indians from intimidation. And what has been the result? On Wednesday,

we are told, work was proceeding as usual at Mount Edgecombe, but on all the other estates the coolies had "downed tools," and gone to swell the mob of passive resisters at Verulam.

Still, in spite of the above action, all the Mount Edgecombe men were out by Saturday.

On Thursday morning, when the call to work sounded, the men who had returned from Verulam the previous day all refused to turn out to work, remaining quietly in the barracks, and they could not be persuaded to work.

Almost daily fresh reinforcements of police are drafted into the district, and men are stationed on each estate.

Strikers Show Consideration

The *Mercury* reported that on Friday some of the Mount Edgecombe men—about 1,500 out of 2,700 had struck work, the rest remaining by arrangement with the management to bring to the mill and crush all the cane that had been cut. A similar arrangement, we understand, existed at Mr. Armstrong's mill.

At Tongaat on Friday about 1,500 Indians were on strike and more were coming out. Messrs. Boulic, Acutt and Starling addressed a large meeting of Indians, urging them to go back to work, but the Indians definitely refused, saying they would not go back until the £3 tax is repealed and Mr. Gandhi released from prison.

An *Advertiser* man visited the sugar mills on Friday. At Avoca only about 30 out of 250 employees were at work. The supply of rations had been stopped. At Mount Edgecombe Mr. Campbell said that the strikers were quite orderly and respectful to him and they had made it clear to him that they did not want to harm the owners in any way and that they had no grievances against them. Up to the time of the stopping of rations by the employers around Verulam, continues the report, the Indians declared that their quarrel was with the Government, and not with the employers, and it must be said that the coolies have been very considerate with the employers, for it was their evident intention to cause as little damage and loss to them as possible. But now, by stopping rations, the Indians will probably declare that their employers have joined issue with the Government against them, and what they consider reprisals may take place.

The Government have done one wise thing—that is, closed the Indian bars in the strike area.

The Charges of Intimidation

In regard to the frequently reported charges of intimidation by strikers it is interesting to note that General Lukin reports that, on Saturday, at La Mercie, near Verulam, he received the report that the Indians were not working because of the intimidation and fear of the threats held out to them. General Lukin, through an interpreter, intimated to the men that if that were so he would offer them every protection from interference if they would return to their work. He gave them five minutes in which to show their willingness by returning to their duties. None of the men made a move, and at the end of the five minutes no one having even replied to his offer the offer was repeated. One of the ringleaders then stated that they did not intend to work; that Mr. Gandhi said they were not to work. "The police could shoot them if they choose," he added, "but they would not work." It was pointed out to them that it was not a matter of shooting them, but that if they wished to work they should have all the protection that was necessary. Thus it will be seen every consideration was offered the Indians; and by their refusal to accept it their intention to remain on strike is obvious.

Rations Stopped

On Saturday afternoon a representative of INDIAN OPINION visited the Umhloti Valley Sugar Company's estate at Mount Moreland. The main object of his visit was to ascertain what was the position regarding

the question of rations. The sergeant in charge of the police stationed on the property gave the information that only about 70 men out of several hundreds were working. The others were quietly remaining in the barracks. No food was being given to the passive resisters and they were not allowed to leave the estate.

The Natal Indian Association informed the Government by telegraph that it was not possible to allow the people to starve and that if food was not supplied to them the Association would consider it their bounden duty to supply food to those who needed it. The Government replied that they might do so with the consent of General Lukin. The consent was given and on Sunday morning Mr. Taumbi Naidoo, who had arrived from the coal-mining district, set off with Mr. Sorabji and several assistants to give out rations in the North Coast strike area. They travelled by road, taking with them a large quantity of rice in trolleys. Those who returned to Durban on Monday said that the strikers were very determined and showed a splendid spirit. Messrs. Naidoo and Sorabji continued their journey to Tongaat, distributing rations along the route.

The Natal Indian Association received a telephonic message on Sunday from Mount Edgecombe Estate stating that there was a collision between the S.A.M.R. and the Indians. The Association deputed two representatives, with the approval of General Lukin, to proceed to the scene in order to pacify the men. It appears that some four Indians went round to the Estate Managers' houses in order to persuade their Indian servants to join the movement. Fearing trouble the S.A.M.R. were summoned to the scene which resulted in a panic, several Indians and one European getting injured, and had to be treated by the doctor. On ascertaining the position, Mr. Wm. Campbell and the Indian leaders advised the men to return to their respective barracks which they immediately did, without further trouble. It is also reported that someone set fire to the cane field, and, on orders from Mr. Wm. Campbell, the strikers, about 2,000, turned out to a man and succeeded in putting out the fire. General Lukin, who was also on the scene, granted permission to the Natal Indian Association to send two representatives to visit the estates and address the men, and to assist the police to keep order, and to supply food to the men where necessary.

A General Strike

Monday morning found the whole of Durban in a state of great excitement. Practically every Indian employee in the town was out, and crowds of strikers thronged the streets, marching in procession, but behaving in an orderly manner throughout. All the men of the railway, sugar refineries, dock and Corporation were out, and the Sanitary Inspector was greatly concerned about the sanitary services of the borough. Not a single man could be prevailed upon to turn out to work. The Indian staff of the Addington Hospital, whose duties comprise almost everything but actual medical work, all struck work. On being appealed to, the Indian Association sent representatives to interview the men and they did their best to persuade the strikers to return to their duties but without avail. The men were in no mood to listen. During the morning the crowds were being constantly swollen by the arrival of fresh strikers, including the hotel and club waiters, employees of the match factory, printers, and others, these being colonial-born Indians, who felt that it was their duty to show their sympathy with the tax-payers.

A Monster Meeting

It was quickly decided to hold a mass meeting in the afternoon on the recreation grounds and the crowds were directed to this large area where they gathered in large numbers to await the time of the meeting. Soon after two o'clock Mr. A. M. Paruk, in the absence of the Chairman of the Association, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, opened the proceedings and briefly announced the objects of the meeting. Both the Secretaries

were present and Mr. L. Gabriel read a cablegram from Madras stating that a monster meeting had emphatically protested against the cruel treatment of Indians in South Africa and demanded the Imperial Government's immediate intervention. The Government of India was advised to adopt a policy of retaliation. Boer perfidy was condemned. Funds were being cabled. Mr Gokhale sent the following message:—"India thrilling with indignation. Protests being sent to Government here and England from all parts against inhuman torture of our trymen in South Africa." The reading of these cablegrams to the meeting had a most inspiring effect. Mr. L. Gabriel then addressed the meeting and urged upon the strikers to remain orderly and preserve the good name of the community. He also asked the attendants of the Hospital to return to their duties as it was no part of passive resistance to do anything which might cause injury to others. In this case it might mean serious inconvenience or death. In regard to the sanitary services he urged upon the men, or at least some of them, to carry out these necessary duties upon which the health of the inhabitants depended. The speech was interpreted in Tamil and Hindustani by Messrs. Lazarus and Luganberthy.

Mr. A. Christopher, who had just come down from the coal-mining district, then addressed the gathering and proposed the first resolution which was carried unanimously as follows:—"That this mass meeting of 3,000 Indians, assembled at Durban, realising that the position is very acute, and thousands of Indians still coming out, spontaneously, showing that they have a genuine grievance to be remedied, urges the Union Government to end this trouble, alike in the interests of the Union and Indians, by re-considering their decision regarding the £3 tax."

In the course of his very earnest address, Mr. Christopher laid stress upon the message sent by Mr. Gandhi from gaol that the Indians should continue the struggle until the Government gave a promise to repeal the tax. As a Colonial-born Indian, he specially appealed to his educated brethren to throw in their lot with the passive resisters. He said that the reports coming from the mines were heartrending. The men were being whipped and taken down the mines by force and compelled to work. The mines had been turned into temporary gaols in order to break the spirit of the strikers. He asked the gathering whether they were going to desert their brethren and refuse to take the advice of their leader, Mr. Gandhi, and the immense throng, which by this time numbered fully five thousand, answered, with one voice, "No."

Mr. V. Lawrence proposed the second resolution which was enthusiastically passed as follows:—"That this mass meeting of 3,000 Indians calls the serious attention of the Imperial and Indian Governments to the fact that thousands of strikers continue coming out, and that it is impossible to forecast the result. The task of feeding and keeping them under control is becoming altogether impossible, and unless the Imperial and Indian Governments actively intervene much hardship may be caused and lives even lost."

Mr. Lawrence addressed his countrymen in Tamil, giving them some good advice and asking them to act as true passive resisters and they would show, by their suffering, that they had a real grievance which the government must redress.

Mr. Immanally supported in Hindustani and the proceedings closed after Mr. Gabriel had announced that, with the consent of the meeting, the resolutions would at once be forwarded to the Union, Imperial and Indian Governments.

Three rousing cheers were given first for Mr. Gandhi, then for Mr. Gokhale, the men and women suffering imprisonment, the ladies who were so nobly caring for the women and children at Charlestown and for Mr. Christopher and other enthusiastic workers in the cause.

The crowd dispersed in perfect order and there was not at any time the slightest disturbance.

The hospital attendants left the meeting, expressing their intention of returning at once to their duties and this they did smilingly. It was hoped also that the sanitary men would do the work which was necessary.

From the Editor's Chair

THE STRIKE

THERE exists at the time of writing what amounts to a general strike on the coast lands of Natal, and on Monday practically the whole of the Indian employees in Durban had struck work. This is no time for argument. There is a plain issue and there can be only one solution to the difficulty, and that is the repeal of the tax. The Natal Indian Association has assisted the Government and the employers in so far as keeping order is concerned and it is not possible to fully estimate the value of the assistance rendered by the Indian leaders especially during the early stages of the strike at Verulam. The planters complain that the police force is altogether inadequate to deal with serious disorder. And so it would be if there was not, on the whole, such a fine spirit among the strikers. Much has been said about wilful setting fire to the cane, but very little is heard of the splendid way in which the men on strike turned out as one man to put it out. Of course the strikers are suspected, and, for all we know, some misguided person may have done so, or, what is more likely and which so frequently happens in such scorching hot weather as we have had during the week end, the cane became ignited accidentally. The reports from various places show that the men were most considerate and the Managing Director of the Natal Estates has acknowledged that the men showed every consideration and agreed to get in from the fields and crush all the cane that had been cut and so cause as little loss as possible to their employers. We have no hesitation in saying that few strikes among Europeans have been carried out in such a manner. It also shows how clearly the men understand that their grievance is against the Government and not against individuals. Again, in Durban, the Hospital attendants, who had come out with others in sympathy with the movement, agreed to go back to their duties after it had been explained to them by the speakers at the mass meeting that it was against the spirit of the struggle to do injury to others, as their action would tend to do. These men went back smiling to their work in the hospital, obedient to the wishes of their leaders.

Such a demonstration as we are witnessing ought to be sufficient to prove that the movement is a genuine one. We have seen it constantly stated that the Government cannot possibly consider the matter of repeal of the tax until the strikers go back to work, and that the example set by the strikers is a most dangerous one. But we cannot help agreeing with the editor of the *Pretoria News* who considers that it would be still more dangerous to leave an impression upon the minds of the Indian people that, whilst riots, arson, attempted murder and revolution were successful on the Rand in forcing the Government to take action, peaceful methods such as simply refraining from work, have no effect.

We would point out to the sugar planters and other employers that it is utterly useless to persist in trying to punish their employees by starvation or other methods. They should look to the root of the trouble by making a strong, united appeal to the Government, not for more police, but for the immediate suspension of the tax with the ultimate object of its repeal during the next session of Parliament.

For our fellow-countrymen there is the message from Mr. Gandhi, sent from the gaol:—"No cessation of the strike without the repeal of the £3 tax."

The Great March

We were compelled in our last issue to cut down the report of the march into the Transvaal, owing to lack of time and space. One of the most interesting accounts comes from the special reporter of the *Transvaal Leader* who travelled down to Volksrust to witness the proceedings. Reporting the case before the Magistrate, the pressman writes:—

Mr. Gandhi, before pleading, asked the Magistrate for a remand in order to enable him to continue his march. He put forward the same arguments as used in his telegram to General Smuts. A remand was granted at the request of the Prosecutor, who had not evidence ready. Bail was then asked for by Mr. Gandhi, and, although the Prosecutor protested, the Magistrate pointed out that every prisoner not charged with a capital offence was in law entitled to be allowed to give bail for his appearance, and said that Mr. Gandhi could not be deprived of that right. Bail was fixed at £50, which was easily found by Indian storekeepers here, and Mr. Gandhi was remanded for a week.

He left almost at once by motor to rejoin the marchers. Thus, if there was an effort on Government's part to put an end to the demonstration by depriving the men of their leader in the hope that they would become discouraged and abandon the attempt to reach the Rand, this effort has been completely stultified. I shared the motor in which Messrs. Kallenbach and Gandhi overtook the main body of marchers about 33 miles from Volksrust. They were well on their way to Kromdraai Station, near Standerton, which is their halt for the day. The narrow ribbon of road which leads to the Rand passes through beautiful grassy country, and, as the weather was pleasant, the strikers were walking easily and showed little fatigue. They were a little beyond General Botha's farm when the car overtook them, and there was extraordinary enthusiasm as Mr. Gandhi alighted among them. The car had halted at Paardekraal, where Mr. Gandhi spoke some encouraging words to the women. Old and infirm men halted there, and Mr. Gandhi left some medicines which a doctor in Newcastle had supplied. All along the road the car passed stragglers, who lined up and saluted Mr. Gandhi, calling him "Bapoo," or father.

The Rations

Although the rations served out consist only of a pound-and-a-half loaf of bread and an ounce of sugar per man, the marchers are cheerful and patient to an extraordinary degree. They have the utmost confidence in Mr. Gandhi, and obey him implicitly, although as a class—indentured coal-miners and the like—they are totally unused to discipline unaccompanied by force. As lieutenants, Mr. Gandhi has several young Johannesburg Indians who were prominent during the former passive resistance movement, and the mounted constables accompanying the marchers told me they had orders to arrest some of these at Kromdraai and take them in to Standerton.

Cost of the Movement

Mr. Gandhi informs me that the passive resistance movement is diminishing his resources by £250 a day, and that more than the present contribution of £3,000 per month will have to be sent from India if the success of the movement is to be assured. He has, however, no doubt at all about the response from India. Apart from the women at Charlestown, there are communities of strikers in every affected area to be supported, and the cost of the march to the Rand is estimated at one shilling per day per man. Volksrust bakers have received a contract for the supply of bread, which is sent on each day by rail to an appointed station. The sugar is served out for its sustaining properties, and amounts to about five pockets a day in the aggregate. The Indians make a hole in their loaves, into which they put their handfuls of sugar. Each man carries a pannikin, which he fills with water as often as is

possible. The marchers had an unexpected treat at Paardekop, where last night tea was served to the full 2,000 odd of them at the expense of a local Indian storekeeper. Mr. Gandhi impressed upon them the fact that tea was not on the regular menu. Leaving Mr. Gandhi with the passive resisters, whose leadership to the promised land he resumed, Mr. Kallenbach and I returned to Volksrust, and passed about 13 miles from the town a further band of 100 coolies, who crossed the border this morning with as little trouble as their predecessors. Some of those who march to Johannesburg, I learn, are men who were charged at Newcastle with breaking their indentures, and were released on their own recognisances through lack of prison accommodation. They offered to await trial if food and shelter were provided, but this the local Magistrate refused, and so they departed to join in the march on Johannesburg.

Picturesque Pilgrims

The *Sunday Post* of the 9th instant gives, in the course of a special report, the following:—

The pilgrims whom Mr. Gandhi is guiding to the farm of his European friend and supporter, Mr. Kallenbach, near Johannesburg, are an exceedingly picturesque crew. Consisting mostly of the very lowest castes of Hindus, the crowd has the merest sprinkling of Mahomedans—say three per cent. The Hindus are either coal-miners or workers in the sugar plantations—some free, and others indentured—and they are, taken as a whole, decidedly inferior to the more prosperous class of Indians familiar to people outside Natal. To the eye they appear most meagre—indeed, emaciated; their legs are mere sticks, but the way they are marching on the starvation rations provided shows them to be particularly hardy, as indeed does the kind of work they performed in the collieries. The rations referred to are a 1½ lb. loaf of white bread and a handful of sugar per day per man. Notwithstanding the arduous and seemingly futile effort on which they are engaged, and the small amount of food provided from day to day, the marchers were, at any rate before the rain came, most cheerful and docile. Mr. Gandhi is looked upon with absolute veneration, and is habitually addressed as Bapoo, signifying father. Nearly everyone has a small pack—containing all his belongings—to carry, and, while some are in European dress and wear boots, most are swathed, as to the lower part of their bodies, in loin-cloths like the Mozambique mine-boys wear on the Rand, although of brighter colouring. Many have long matted hair. With the marchers there remain barely a dozen women, but it is a common sight to see small boys carried on the shoulders of their fathers as they march. Of the 2,000, some 1,500 walk together in a fairly compact body, the rest following in little groups of stragglers within two or three miles. There is a band of about a hundred following about a day's march behind. According to Mr. Gandhi's own statement, the marchers contain many known bad characters, but he is confident that his presence will suffice to preserve order. Certainly, the mounted police accompanying the procession have thus far had a sinecure.

Mr. Gandhi at Work

The special correspondent of the *Sunday Times*, writing from Volksrust before the march commenced, thus describes a scene of the campaign:—

Mr. Gandhi I found in the evil-smelling backyard of a tin shanty at Charlestown, a dorp about half the size of Volksrust, situated on the lower slopes of the historic Majuba mountain. It is the first station across the border in Natal. The redoubtable Gandhi sat in an outhouse on an upturned milk case. Before him was a rough deal table, and at his side were twelve sacks containing 500 loaves of bread. On the table was a large enamelled basin full of coarse, white sugar, and standing round in the shed and yard were sundry oval gal-vanised hip-baths, full of an unsavoury concoction which I took to be soup. Glad only in his

shirt and trousers, Mr. Gandhi, with incredible rapidity and a large clasp-knife, cut the loaves into three-inch hunks, made a depression with his thumb in the centre of each hunk, filled it with sugar from the bowl at his elbow, and passed them on to the waiting queue of Indians, who were admitted to the yard in batches of twelve through a hole in the fence. And all the time he explained his plan of campaign to me in perfect and cultured English, interspersing his remarks with learned references to "Gladstonian Liberalism" (this was a smack at General Smuts), and other recondite subjects.

Mr. Gandhi Sentenced

Mr. Gandhi was on the 11th instant charged on three counts, before the Resident Magistrate, Mr. J. W. Cross, of Dundee, with inducing indentured immigrants to leave the Province. The court was crowded with Indians and Europeans. Mr. W. Dalzell-Turnbull was specially instructed by the Attorney-General to appear for the prosecution, and Mr. Advocate J. W. Godfrey appeared for Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty to the charges.

Mr. Turnbull read the section and left the matter in the hands of the Magistrate.

Mr. Godfrey stated that he was under an obligation to the defendant not to plead in mitigation in any way whatsoever. The circumstances which had brought Mr. Gandhi before the Magistrate were well known to all persons, and he was only expressing the desire of the defendant when he stated that the Magistrate had a duty to perform, and that he was expected to perform that duty fearlessly, and should therefore not hesitate to impose the highest sentence upon the prisoner if he felt that the circumstances in the case justified it.

Mr. Gandhi obtained the permission of the Court, and made the following statement:—As a member of the profession, and being an old resident of Natal, he thought that, in justice to himself and the public, he should state that the counts against him were of such a nature that he took the responsibility imposed upon him, for he believed that the demonstration for which these people were taken out of the Colony was one for a worthy object. He felt that he should say that he had nothing against the employers, and regretted that in this campaign serious losses were being caused to them. He appealed to the employers also, and he felt that the tax was one which was heavily weighing down his countrymen, and should be removed. He also felt that he was in honour bound, in view of the position of things between Mr. Smuts and Professor Gokhale, to produce a striking demonstration. He was aware of the miseries caused to the women and babes in arms. On the whole, he felt he had not gone beyond the principles and honour of the profession of which he was a member. He felt that he had only done his duty in advising his countrymen, and it was his duty to advise them again, that until the tax were removed, to leave work and subsist upon rations obtained by charity. He was certain that without suffering it was not possible for them to get their grievance remedied.

The Magistrate then addressed as follows:—In this case, the accused had pleaded guilty to the three counts, and the section of law under which the accused was charged made him liable to a fine of £20 for each immigrant he attempted to induce, or induced, to leave the Province. Mr. Gandhi was an educated gentleman, and had the distinction of being a member of the legal profession, and whatever he had done, he had done with a full knowledge of the consequences of his act. The Magistrate then referred to the conditions under which Indians were brought into this Province, and the terms they had agreed upon for remaining here after the expiry of their indentures. He also referred to the contention of the Indians regarding Mr. Smuts's alleged promise to the Indians. The Natal members of Parliament had consented to the tax being removed

so far as it affected the women and children, but not the men. The Government had, therefore, not broken faith with the Indians, and he believed this was the ground upon which Mr. Gandhi had advised the Indians to strike. To strike was to defy the law, and the Government's position was that, so long as the Indians were out on strike, it was impossible for them to consider any legislation regarding repeal. The defendant was by his threatening conduct, only bringing ruination to the men and harshness upon themselves. He therefore advised the Indians to stop the passive resistance, and make representations to the Government. He also believed that the Indians were alienating the sympathy of the Europeans who were at one with the Indians in requesting the Government for the repeal of the tax. It was a painful duty to pass sentence upon the conduct of a gentleman like Mr. Gandhi, upon the deliberate contravention of the law, but he had a duty to perform, and Mr. Godfrey, his counsel, had asked him fearlessly to perform that duty. The accused having pleaded guilty, he (the Magistrate) accepted that plea, and passed the following sentences:—Count 1, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour; Count 2, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, to take effect upon the expiration of the sentence in respect to Count 1; Count 3, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, this to take effect upon the expiration of the sentence imposed in Count 2.

Mr. Gandhi, in a clear and calm voice, said: "I elect to go to gaol."

A large crowd of friends waited outside to see Mr. Gandhi come out, but for some unaccountable reason the police took the greatest pains to ensure secrecy, and no one knew how he was taken away.

His counsel visited him later, and, though him, desires it to be stated that he was cheerful and confident, and sends as his message to the strikers the following: "No cessation of the strike without the repeal of the £3 tax. The Government, having imprisoned me, can gracefully make a declaration regarding the repeal."

Alleged Ill-treatment on Mines

The Indian Association received telegrams from Newcastle stating that the men on the Ballengeich mine had been brutally whipped in consequence of their refusal to work. Some were unconscious. The Ballengeich men were charged before the Court and 50 were sentenced to three months' hard labour and 136 to six months. Eight ringleaders were sent to Maritzburg gaol and the rest were locked in the mine compound which had been proclaimed as a gaol and surrounded by a fence of wire netting.

From Dundee a telegram stated that there were allegations of serious assaults upon passive resisters at Burnside by native police, instigated by and in the presence of the compound manager of the S.A. Colliery who with the police actively assaulted the men. One woman was in hospital and others were seriously injured. Similar complaints were hourly multiplied from all the mines.

The Indian Association wired to the Magistrate at Dundee, to investigate the matter and permit a representative of the Association to be present. The Government replied stating that the inquiry would be made but not agreeing with the latter suggestion.

A further message states that Mr. J. W. Cross, Dundee, and Mr. D. G. Giles, Newcastle, Magistrates, warned Indians refusing to work that they would be starved and thereafter mercilessly flogged under gaol regulations into submission and forcibly driven underground with the lash. Hundreds of Indians on the Ballengeich, Navigation, and Cambrian mines are flogged and shot at. Two have been wounded. The Magistrates refuse protection. Indians leaving the mine to complain to the Magistrates will be shot as escaping prisoners.

Support for the Movement

At a crowded meeting of Indians, held in Johannesburg on the 12th inst, a resolution was passed expressing admiration and gratitude for the brave leaders, Messrs. Gandhi, Kallenbach and Polak, and the rank and file of passive resisters, and pledging itself in every way to maintain the struggle. Mr. Bain, secretary of the Federation of trades, in the course of a speech, said he hoped that at a later date the Party of which he was secretary would endorse what he said now, and that was: "Your struggle is our struggle, and the injury done to the most humble of your race is an injury done to humanity. Therefore we must fight for human rights, whether they are human rights for the white race or human rights for the coloured race matters not at all."

A great meeting of Indians was held at Maritzburg on Thursday evening. The chief speaker was Mr. Greene, a well known Socialist, who proposed a resolution protesting against the use of force against strikers. Mr. Greene made a very sympathetic speech and urged all persons to unite.

The Awakened India Society, Capetown, held a meeting on the 9th instant and congratulated its Secretary, Mr. Vartak, in courtship imprisonment, and reminding him that others would soon follow in his footsteps.

The Indians of Cradock have cabled to the Archbishop of Canterbury appealing to his Lordship to awaken the spirit of Christianity in regard to the struggle.

The Natal Indian Association held a public meeting on Thursday when resolutions were passed congratulating Mr. Gandhi and others and requesting the Government to repeal the tax. A further resolution expressed the feeling that in view of the inevitable disorganisation caused to the coal, sugar and other industries, the co-operation of the representatives of the industries in a deputation with the representatives of the Natal Indian Association, in order to discuss with the Government the position was most desirable.

General Smuts and the £3 Tax

Commenting on General Smuts's references to the Natal Indians' strike, the *Cape Times* of the 30th ultimo says: Whether the strike of Indians on the Natal coal mines is wise is one question; whether the £3 tax on Indians in Natal is defensible at this time of day is another question. General Smuts, judging by his references to the subject in his speech at Pretoria on Tuesday night, seems to imagine that you are clearly entitled to answer the latter question in the affirmative if only you are convinced that the former ought to be answered in the negative. This, as it seems to us, is not a very hopeful way of approaching the matter. Had a non-party vote been taken last session in the Union Parliament for or against the retention of the £3 tax, we are tolerably certain the great majority would have voted against its continuance. The tax is not more demonstrably just, or wise, or defensible, because Mr. Gandhi's methods of protest may be open to doubt. . . . "The Government," General Smuts reminds us "told Mr. Gokhale that fiscally the tax was of little account, but it had been imposed as a matter of policy, and, if the Natal members did not object to the repeal of the tax, the Government would consider it. Those members, however, had seriously objected." This is true, but it is not the whole truth. Mr. Gokhale knew that the Union Government, in the financial arrangement with the Natal Province, had increased the Provincial subsidy by £10,000 expressly in order to leave the Central Government free to deal with the question of the £3 tax. How could Mr. Gokhale, or anybody else, imagine that after this compensation had been given the decision of the Union Government would still hinge upon the attitude of the Natal members? Moreover, as reference to the Hansard debates

on the subject will show, even the Natal members were by no means unanimously in favour of the retention of the tax. The policy of the tax upon which General Smuts grounds the *non possumus* of the Government ought to be considered.

The paper adds: All that some Indians ask for may not be within the sphere of practical politics, but the soonest way to prevent the formulation of unreasonable or impracticable demands is to do at once what is both reasonable and practicable. The abolition of the £3 tax is plainly within this category. It is useless from the revenue point of view, and the plea that Natal "policy" ought to be allowed to over-ride the higher considerations of Union and Imperial policy will not bear a moment's serious scrutiny. It is more than doubtful, indeed, if such a plea would be generally endorsed, even in Natal. On the whole, we cannot help feeling that General Smuts has missed an opportunity.

News in Brief

✓ Mr. Gandhi was sentenced to a further three months' imprisonment at Volksrust on Friday.

On Saturday Mr. Kallenbach appeared before the Magistrate and received sentence of three months' imprisonment without hard labour.

Mr. Polak was brought before the Magistrate on Monday. He declined to plead to the charge. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment without hard labour. The Court was crowded.

Mr. Gandhi was yesterday transferred to Maritzburg Gaol, Mr. Kallenbach to Krugersdorp and Mr. Polak to Boksburg.

The passive resistance prisoners in Maritzburg Gaol, on the 10th instant, resolved upon a hunger strike until the Government should be pleased to grant the addition of ghee to their diet. The strike lasted three days. The Indian Committee telegraphed to the Government stating the facts and requesting that ghee should at once be given otherwise the condition of the prisoners would be most serious. A reply quickly came from the Minister stating that, as "an act of grace," he had given instructions that ghee should be issued.

We have since learned that the Indian ladies fasted for three days until they were given bread which they demanded.

The Indian assistants who were arrested and charged at Standerton along with Mr. Gandhi and under the same charge were Messrs. P. K. Naidoo, Behareelal Maharaj, Ramnarain Singh, Ragoo Narsoo and Rahim Khan. Their cases have been remanded.

A Reuter message from Lahore states that the Hon. Mr. Gokhale addressed a meeting there on behalf of the South African Indians. A sum of £2,000 was subscribed on the spot, a European missionary giving £300, his life savings.

Mr. Jumnadas Gandhi has been arrested and released again at Kimberley. He has now left that place in company with others to court arrest at Christiansburg.

It has been decided by the Supreme Court that an Indian formerly domiciled in this country for three years is entitled to re-enter after being absent and establishing a domicile elsewhere. The Court held that the right of the appellant, acquired under the Natal Act of 1903, to return to the Province free of any restriction as an immigrant had not been abrogated. The decision of the Appeal Board was wrong.

The Rev. H. J. Batts, President of the S. A. Baptist Union, in a letter to the Press, associates himself with the Indian people in their appeal to the Government to remit the £3 tax.

The Indians of Maritzburg have announced their intention of marching into the Transvaal next week unless the Government promise to repeal the tax.

Mr. Dubé, who has always taken an active part in the work in London, has been elected Hon. Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee.

THE LONDON COMMITTEE AT WORK.

The following letter, dated September 23, has been addressed to the British Press by Lord Ampthill, the Chairman, and Mr. Bhugwandin Dubé, the Hon. Secretary of the S.A. British Indian Committee, in connection with the revival of passive resistance:—

Sir,—There is very serious news from South Africa in regard to the position of British Indians there which, in the midst of our anxious preoccupation in regard to domestic affairs, has not received that prominence which is due to a matter of vital importance to the Empire.

On behalf of the South Africa British Indian Committee, we beg you to be good enough to accord us a small space in your columns in order that we may call attention to some of the facts of the situation.

The Immigrants Regulation Act, 1913, to which His Majesty's Government, without even waiting to see the final text of the measure, allowed the Governor-General to give immediate assent, has failed to solve that problem of the treatment of Indians in South Africa, which owing to the neglect and mismanagement of a decade has assumed such serious proportions. It has not only failed to carry out the pledges given by the Union Government to the Indian community under the provisional settlement of 1911, on the faith of which passive resistance was suspended, but the new Act has actually increased the hardships of the Indians instead of alleviating them.

To point to a few recent instances:

Section 5, Clause (g) of the Act provides that "the wife or child of a lawful and monogamous marriage duly celebrated according to the rites of any religious faith outside the Union" shall not be prohibited immigrants, or, in other words, that such a wife (and children by her) shall be entitled to reside with her husband in South Africa. In a letter dated August 19, 1913, General Smuts' view on the subject was, "after full consideration by the Minister," communicated to Mr. Gandhi in the following words: "The present practice of admitting one wife of an Indian now entitled to reside in any Province or who may in future be permitted to enter the Union, irrespective of the fact that his marriage to such wife may have been solemnised according to tenets which recognise polygamy, or that she is one of several wives married abroad, will be continued so long as she is his only wife in South Africa." As soon as a case arose the assurance given above was violated, as will appear from the case of Kulsan Bibi. She applied to enter the Union as the only lawful living wife of Mahboob Khan. The Immigration Officer having rejected her claim, the matter was heard by the Board of Appeal on August 18 last. The Board found the facts as follows: "(1) That Mahboob Khan and Kulsan Bibi were duly married in India according to Mohammedan law, and that it was a legally valid marriage. (2) That Kulsan Bibi is the only lawful living wife of Mahboob Khan, and that her marriage to him was contracted when he was a widower, and that he has not since gone through a ceremony of marriage purporting to be legal with any other woman." On these facts the Board of Appeal goes on to say in its judgment: "It was contended on

behalf of the Immigration Department that the mere fact that the marriage was celebrated under a law which allowed four wives, the marriage of Mahboob Khan with Kulsan Bibi was not monogamous."

The Board of Appeal, however, did not decide the point, but stated the case for the decision of the Superior Court. Such a flagrant instance of breach of faith on the part of the Minister responsible for the Immigration Department speaks for itself.

Again, under the new Act, the Immigration Officer has refused several Indians on their return from a visit to their relatives in India the right of re-entering the Union, because in his opinion they had lost their domicile. These poor Indians were put to the trouble, worry, and expense of an appeal. The law compels them to deposit £26 before exercising the right of appeal. The Board of Appeal recently allowed certain of the appeals, whilst the rest are still pending judgment.

The Indian community used every endeavour to get the defects of the new Act remedied by administrative action, and negotiated with the Government for a long time, but the negotiations have unhappily fallen through. The Indians have, therefore, been obliged to resume passive resistance, for they have no other means of calling attention to the injustice of their treatment than that of undergoing conspicuous personal suffering. It will be remembered that between 1907 and 1911 about 4,000 Indians served various terms of imprisonment with hard labour rather than submit to unjust laws.

In other words, the pitiable struggle between the strong and the weak which has gone on for ten years past, and has been so discreditable to British statesmanship and to Imperial rule, is to be continued, in spite of repeated promises of settlement and repeated assurances year after year that settlement was at hand. This is not a local South African affair, in which we have no concern. If anybody has doubts on this point let him look to the effect which has been produced in India by the continued neglect to redress grievances which roused national indignation when they were inflicted by the South African Republic, and that in lesser degree than they have been since the Transvaal passed under the British flag. All Indians bitterly feel that their countrymen are being relentlessly persecuted in South Africa, and that the elementary rights of a British citizen are denied them.

It is a matter of the good faith, honour and credit of British statesmanship with which every citizen and well-wisher of this country and the Empire is concerned.

WHAT THE BRITISH PRESS SAYS.

We print the following from the mail papers to hand:—

"THE TIMES."

It is deplorable that, in spite of the patient and accommodating spirit shown for so many months upon both sides, the understanding between the Union Government and the British Indian community in South Africa should again have broken down. Two months ago we called attention to the

grave danger of another campaign of passive resistance, failing the negotiation of some compromise regarding three or four provisions in the Immigrants Regulation Act passed by the Union Parliament last session. There seemed at the time to be some hope of an arrangement being reached, and the Indian leaders showed a wise restraint in letting their grievances stand over until the Government was free of the serious preoccupations of the Rand strike. Most unfortunately, for reasons of which we are not aware, an arrangement has proved unattainable. The Government apparently considers itself unable to promise any modification of the Act itself, and the Indian leaders will not accept as adequate redress the promise of sympathetic administration which the Government has made. The Indians therefore have fallen back upon their original declaration that passive resistance would be renewed if their requests were not satisfied. Some have already gone to prison for technical breaches of the Act, and others are preparing to do so. Though the great majority of Indians in South Africa are of an uneducated and lowly class, they are represented in this matter by fellow-countrymen of knowledge and experience, whose capacity and fortunes have been placed absolutely at the service of what they believe to be a just and momentous cause. The Indian character is often tenacious of principle in ways which seem unimportant to Western minds, and it is capable of infinite sacrifice for the sake of a belief or an idea. Those will misjudge it gravely who surmise that the resistance now begun will be abandoned without great hardship to the community involved and very serious prejudice to the British Imperial system in India and elsewhere.

The psychology of the situation is, indeed, the secret of its great difficulty, and those who understand it will feel an almost equal sympathy for the Indians and for the Government. The main lines of policy are no longer in dispute. It was agreed two years ago that all further immigration of Indians into South Africa must be stopped. It was also agreed that the existing barriers against the inter-provincial migration of Indians within the Union should be maintained. The Indians accepted both these propositions—which together embody the main determination of the white population—on two conditions. The first was that exclusion should not be enforced against Indians "eo nomine," since such discrimination was felt to be opprobrious to the race. The second was that the rights of Indians legally resident in the Union should be respected and no new disabilities imposed. The legislation of this year unfortunately does not completely carry out this agreement. The Act, itself, indeed, provides for exclusion without race discrimination in any form, but it also adopts and perpetuates in the Free State Province an old Free State measure which discriminates against Indians as such. Indians are willing to accept complete exclusion from the Free State, where they have no existing rights, but they consider that under their agreement legislation directed openly against their race should be repealed. The new Act, moreover, sanctions the exclusion from the Cape Province of Indians who at present have a right of entry there, and, by a loosely drafted provision which Parliament apparently overlooked, it refuses recognition to monogamous Indian marriages legally contracted in South Africa. Both these provisions are breaches of the guarantee of existing rights. The Government has, we believe, undertaken to make the guarantee good by sympathetic administration, but this the Indians will not accept. In doing so they no doubt seem to the majority of the white population to be refusing the substance of their claims for the sake of a mere form; but it would be a mistake to suppose that the form is of no account. The objection to the Government offer, we imagine, is not merely that Govern-

ments change and that methods of administration may change at the same time. Much more important is the belief of the Indian community that they are contending for treatment consistent in form as well as substance with their dignity as a race and their status as fellow-subjects of the British Crown. It is, in fact, largely a question of sentiment on both sides, neither understanding the other's point of view; and it is the very depth and strength of the sentiment in each community which makes adjustment so difficult. Some further steps are obviously necessary to prevent, if possible, the very serious injuries which a prolongation of passive resistance will inflict both upon South Africa and upon the Imperial system as a whole. Everything that could be tried in the way of negotiation between the Union Government and the Indian leaders has now been tried in vain. Such negotiations are necessarily conducted at a disadvantage on both sides. On the one hand, a Government must feel some danger of compromising its dignity in dealing with a section of its subjects who threaten rebellion in the event of their demands not being satisfied; and, on the other, a small community is struggling, beyond its strength, to make good a moral claim on behalf of a whole race. These conditions make for exaggeration and over-sensitiveness in the weaker party, and they tell against concession by the stronger one. Is there no other resource to be tried? Would not the situation admit of easier remedy if the Government of India were to send its own official representative to South Africa to discuss the problem with the South African Government at first hand? The principles, as has been shown, are not in dispute. The difficulty is in matters of form. Such differences, in which sentiment plays a governing part, are usually best settled by representatives who negotiate on equal terms. We can hardly doubt that General Botha would welcome any officer appointed for that purpose by the Indian Government, and it is surely not too late to hope that a settlement might then be reached of permanent validity and honourable to both sides. Since every other expedient has failed, we trust that this one may be considered and, if practicable, tried. [Note.—We understand that General Botha has declined to accept the proposal.—Ed., "I. O."]

"DUNDEE ADVERTISER."

The bitter cry of the British Indians in South Africa must awaken warm sympathy in this country. It is not an agreeable thought that these fellow-subjects of ours, possessing qualities which place them high in the scale of civilisation, should be ranked, in a British Dominion, with the lowly kafirs. The South Africans, swayed by the fear of being under-lived, do all in their power to humiliate the Indians in their land. The efforts of the Indians to obtain reasonable civic rights have now taken the form of a great passive resistance movement, which is to be continued until the racial bar has been moved from the recent Immigration Act and other injustices have been remedied. What makes the treatment of the Indians in South Africa especially serious is the disturbing effect it has in the general Dependency. The Viceroy recently made a notable pronouncement on this point.

"NEWCASTLE DAILY JOURNAL."

Indians in South Africa have decided to adopt an attitude of passive resistance towards the legislation affecting them. The penalising measures of the Union Government raise very large questions, which have caused great anxiety to the authorities at home, and it is to be feared the controversy will now e-

on an embittered stage. No one can pretend to be surprised at the decision of the Indian immigrants to resist the Government. They will receive a considerable amount of sympathy from people in this country, because the legislation of which they complain deprives them of their rights as citizens of the British Empire.

A serious view is taken of the treatment of British Indians by the South African Government. Writing to "The Morning Post," Lord Ampthill ascribes the persecution of the Indian community to economic jealousy. That cause is not avowed, but in racial disputes the preponderating party usually seeks to hide the real pretext for a punitive policy. Probably Lord Ampthill has discovered the actual source of the trouble. The matter is of great importance, because, unless the British Government can secure humane treatment for the Indians in South Africa, there will undoubtedly be a dangerous agitation in India. Further, the Government will be hampered in their negotiations with foreign Governments. For instance, if we make representations to Portugal on the subject of slavery, we may be told to put our own house in order before we lecture others. And, in the light of events in South Africa, who can say that such an answer would be unfair?

"MORNING POST."

As Lord Ampthill pointed out in the eloquent and powerful letter of protest which we publish on September 25, this Act does not fulfil certain pledges made in the so-called "provisional settlement of 1911" between the Union Government and the British Indian community. This settlement guaranteed "existing rights," and the abolition of the "racial bar" inside the Union and also the repeal of the offending Act of 1907. The (Indian) community complain that these grievances are not only serious in themselves but amount to a breach of faith. And we are bound to say that Lord Ampthill does not exaggerate the hardships, and, as some would say, the injustice of their position. We have also to remember that the British Indians have already submitted to exclusion from all political rights in South Africa, as well as free entry into South Africa. What they are fighting for is the civil and legal status of those already in the country, including the freedom to move about in the Union, and the abolition of restrictions and conditions which they regard as harsh and humiliating.

Now whether this hostility is justified upon any "national" ground, or makes for the good of South Africa, is a question on which an outsider might be diffident about giving an opinion. As to the cry of a "White South Africa" we have to remember that the actual conflict is largely and probably chiefly between the Russian and Polish Jews and the British Indian. Whether the low class shop-keeping and "native truck" are to be done by "Peruvians" or British Indians does not seem to us to be a question which can stir any very deep or poetical sentiment in the breast of the White South African. The fact that really inclines the balance is that the "Peruvian" has a vote and the British Indian is without one. It may be said that the Peruvian is more easy to assimilate to the white South African type than the British Indian; but that is a question which can hardly be called settled. Still, what South African politicians are forced to consider is public opinion expressed by votes, and this public opinion, an interested and prejudiced and unjust opinion as it may be, does regard the British Indian as a

menace to "White South Africa," and does insist that measures should be taken to keep him from over-running the country.

Majorities are narrow in South Africa; Ministers have to consider votes, and public opinion is decidedly against the British Indian. Public opinion is indeed so much against him, and South African Governments are so conscious of this public opinion, that whatever representations the Imperial Government may make the present policy of persecution will probably go on. It is nevertheless the duty of the Imperial Government to use all possible influence to secure for the British Indian as much in the way of civil rights and liberties as can be obtained, and to use every opportunity to support the case of the British Indian community, at least against the tyrannical side of the South African policy. It seems to us a good compromise that no more Indians should be allowed into the country, but that those in it should be given the rights of civilised men, and we should try to secure as near an approach to this policy as can be got. But it becomes clear from the dismal teaching of experience that even this compromise will constantly be broken, and that attempts to enforce it only kindle popular passion and prejudice.

"DAILY NEWS AND LEADER."

It is difficult to believe that the South African Government can have anything to gain even on the lowest ground by allowing a very grave scandal to the Empire to come again to a head. There is not now any attempt to assert the right of free immigration from India into the South African colonies. All that is asked is that the Indian colonists already there may be granted without further pettifoggery the elementary rights already theirs by every legal as well as moral title. It is mere meanness which allows the clear intention of the new Regulations to be defeated by such exceptions as those recited by Lord Ampthill. To refuse entry to an Indian's wife—though his only wife—on the ground that the law under which he married her permits polygamy, is obviously straining to the uttermost the sense of the agreement arrived at with the British Indian community in South Africa; and to make trouble in the case of colonists who, having ventured to revisit India, desire to return, is the sort of petty persecution which injures the Government that stoops to it quite as much as its victims.

"THE GLOBE."

A decision just given by the Supreme Court of Natal re-opens in an acute form the British-Indian difficulty in South Africa. The position of British Indians has for years been a source of serious embarrassment to the Indian and Imperial Governments. And it must be admitted that the treatment of the Indians by the Colonial Government does not reflect any great credit upon British justice. It may be agreed that the Indians themselves have often been unreasonable and have brought much of their trouble on themselves, but, granting that, the whites have shown a grievous lack of tact, and are now laying themselves open to the charge of breaking faith. The latest decision declares that monogamous marriages celebrated under the rites of a religion which permits polygamy are invalid. That may be good law, but it is not good sense. Indians in South Africa are allowed, under the Immigration Act of last year, to marry one wife, and it seems monstrous to say that he cannot marry her under the

ceremonies of his own faith, even though he be resolved to have no other wife but her. This, and various other vexatious actions, which have led to imprisonment, hunger strikes, and all the rest of it, threaten to reopen a most thorny controversy. If it affected South Africa only it would be bad enough; but it is having a very serious effect on public opinion in India.

SIR CHARLES BRUCE SPEAKS.

Sir Charles Bruce, writing to "The Times" on October 6, says:—

Will you allow me, as a member of the South Africa British Indian Committee who has taken an active part in its proceedings, to say a word on your leader in "The Times" of October 1 on passive resistance in South Africa. I believe that in substance and tone your article will command the general assent of the committee, but what is of first importance is your proposal that the Government of India should send its own official representative to South Africa to discuss the problem with the South African Government at first hand. I may remind you that on January 31, 1908, Lord (then Mr.) Morley announced in the House of Commons a settlement of the Asiatic difficulty in the Transvaal, an announcement received with unqualified satisfaction. Nevertheless, when the subject was discussed in the House of Lords on February 4, Lord Roberts expressed his regret that an official representative of the Indian Government had not been deputed to confer with the Transvaal Government. A very few days sufficed to justify Lord Roberts's regret, for the settlement failed within a week of the announcement. Since that time the wish has again and again been father to the hope that a settlement of the question of the British Indians in South Africa was being arrived at. After the hope of a settlement through the agency of the Imperial Conference had been disappointed, it was hoped that much good would result from Mr. Gokhale's unofficial visit to South Africa, the South African Ministers having promised, as is shown in a recent Blue Book [Cd. 6940], to take into consideration the informal representations made to them by Mr. Gokhale. Nevertheless the visit was almost immediately followed by the passing of the Immigrants Regulation Act, which has brought about the present crisis. It is much to be desired that the method by which "The Times" proposes to meet it may be approved by all the Governments concerned, because it would be difficult to exaggerate the magnitude of the interests involved. For the last two years Mr. Harcourt, in his statements in Parliament on the Colonial Office Vote, has confined himself almost exclusively to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, as distinct from the Dominions. It results from his statements that there is being established in Equatorial Africa an aggregation of Crown Colonies and Protectorates gradually but rapidly developing into a tropical African Empire of a territorial extent exceeding the British Empire in India. I do not think that I exaggerate in claiming that the reconciliation of conflicting interests in the Dominions, British India, and the Crown Colonies and Protectorates is the problem of the century and of the destiny of our race. And I believe that the proposal of "The Times" is of capital importance with a view to bringing about a reconciliation within the Union of South Africa, the point of greatest and immediate danger.

LORD AMPHILL'S ADVOCACY.

Writing to the "Morning Post" on October 1, Lord Amphil says:—

It is certainly disappointing that anyone who has made such deep study of Imperial questions as Mr.

Richard Jebb should regard the South African problem as insoluble, but he has not persuaded me to incline in the smallest degree towards his pessimistic view.

The problem can be solved at once by ordinary fair dealing and by the honest fulfilment of the pledges which have been given both by the South African and the Imperial Governments.

With all respect to Mr. Jebb, I think he is mistaken both as to the cause and the cure of the evil. The root cause of the persecution of the Indian community is not the fear of being swamped, but simply economic jealousy, and if the fear of being outnumbered did exist it would not be reasonable, for those who are confident of their future as a great white nation ought also to be confident of holding their own in racial preponderance.

The notion that the "native" of South Africa, whom Mr. Jebb describes as "relatively savages," can be trained to European ideas and usages and that the Indian who comes of the same Aryan stock as ourselves cannot be thus "assimilated" is neither complimentary to European civilisation nor to the peoples of India, nor is it in accordance with conspicuous facts and the experience of more than a century.

As for the proposed solution, how does Mr. Jebb reconcile it with ideals of Imperial unity and British Liberty? The Indians in South Africa are to be bribed to go elsewhere! Mr. Jebb does not say whither, and he ignores the fact that most of these Indians regard South Africa as their home, and could certainly not be bribed to expatriate themselves even for the sum of £100 per family. They have every right to regard South Africa as their home because they have helped to develop the country, and, more than that, they have helped to defend it. Natal has been made with the help of Indians, and could not have been made without their help. The Indians, therefore, have not only a stake in the country, but also as good a right to be there as any other Colonists. Is it conceivable that they should give up that stake and sell that right unless there were some inducement far greater than any cash payment that could possibly be offered to them?

And what about India? Would India be satisfied with Mr. Jebb's solution of the problem? I can assure Mr. Jebb from my knowledge of India that her people have sentiments and ideals which cannot be affected by any cash inducements; they expect much of British statesmanship, they have a right to expect something as British subjects, and the very least to which they are entitled is fair dealing and humane treatment.

THE HOME RULE STRUGGLE.

At a parade of the Ulster Volunteers at Killeel, County Down (says Reuter), Sir Edward Carson, in the course of an address to them, said that the time for talking had ended, and the representatives of the whole of Ulster would meet in council next week to arrange for the details of the Government of the Province. This Government was, of course, illegal, but they must not be afraid of illegalities in protection of their rights.

Sir Edward Carson, speaking at Dromore, said they could not shrink from the task before them, because their cause was just. They could not fail, because they trusted in God. They had counted the cost, and believed that their cause was worth not merely a petty sacrifice, but the greatest sacrifice a man could make—his own life. The dangers were very real, and the sooner that was realised the better.