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Mr. West Threatened by Estate Manager.

At the Magistrate's Court, Verulam, on Tuesday last, before Mr. Theo. McDonald, assistant magistrate, a charge was brought, at the instance of Mr. A. H. West, against Mr. G. T. Todd, manager of the Phoenix Wattle Estates, Ltd., of contravening Section 34 of Act 22 of 1896, in that he violently conducted himself towards Mr. West, used language likely to provoke a breach of the peace, behaved in an offensive manner by shouldering Mr. West roughly and holding a heavy sjambok in a menacing attitude, and threatened injury to Mr. West by saying to him: "I'll thrash you. I'll teach you to interfere with my people." Mr. E. H. Britter appeared for Mr. West, and Mr. Dickinson for Mr. Todd. When the case was called, Mr. Todd pleaded "not guilty" to the first three counts, but "guilty" to the fourth. The effect of this pleading was to deny the use of the violent and offensive language, the shouldering, and the holding of a sjambok in a menacing attitude. Mr. Britter pointed out that the charges were based upon a sworn affidavit, and if Mr. Todd did not plead guilty to the whole of the charges, the case must proceed, and the witnesses be called. Mr. Dickinson then intimated acceptance of the affidavit, and Mr. Todd consented to being bound over. The following is Mr. West's statement as contained in the affidavit:—

"On Tuesday, the 2nd day of December, 1913, I arrived at Phoenix Station, from Verulam, at 2.45 p.m. On my arrival I went into the stationmaster's office, and applied at the public counter there for my letters and telegrams. Whilst doing this, Mr. G. T. Todd, manager of the Natal Wattle Estates, Ltd., Phoenix, commenced using insulting language to me. I was accompanied by my wife, my mother-in-law, and two children, and Todd remarked, 'I am afraid of being contaminated with some disease by the presence of these people,' meaning myself, my wife, my mother-in-law, and children. He continued making insulting remarks for some time, and I then asked the stationmaster whether I had the right to come to the counter to receive my letters. He answered 'Yes,' and I then told Mr. Todd I was sorry to see him behaving in such a manner, especially in the presence of ladies. He then became more abusive, and threatened to strike me. He said he was a white man, and I was 'a b— coolie.' I asked him not to use such language, and called the stationmaster's attention to the language used. He continued to threaten me, and had in his hand a heavy sjambok, which he held in a menacing attitude. He said: 'I'll thrash you. I'll teach you to interfere with my people.' He went out on to the platform, and recommenced using the bad language, and repeatedly invited me to come over and allow him to thrash me. After waiting for some time, he mounted his horse and galloped towards the mill. I telephoned to the Natal Estates, Ltd., Mount Edgecombe, informing them of what was taking place, stating that I was in

danger of my life, and demanding police protection for myself and family. Presently Todd returned to the station, and near the station office he shouldered me roughly, and again used abusive language. He repeated his threat to thrash me, and when I said that he ought to be ashamed of himself for acting in that manner in front of women and children, he replied, 'Call these women?' My wife then remonstrated with him, and he said to her, in a violent manner, 'I don't speak to women.' A little later he again rode to the mill, after repeating his threatening language, and in a few minutes again returned, evidently under the impression that we had started along the road where he could put his threat into execution. His manner was most violent, and I feel sure that he would not have stopped short of killing me if he had got a chance. A gentleman in the employ of the Provincial Road Department was standing on the platform, and heard Todd's language, and saw the attitude taken up by him. The two Indians employed at the station also heard and saw what took place. I waited at Phoenix Station until 6.30 p.m., but no assistance came from Mount Edgecombe. By chance, Rifleman Berry, of the Inanda Police Camp, came from Verulam, and he kindly escorted us to the Settlement. Just before our departure, one of the station Indians told me that he had just seen Todd waiting in the plantation, so that he had for two hours waited an opportunity to assault me, and I am convinced that, but for the presence of Rifleman Berry, he would have done me a serious injury.

"I charge the said Todd with violent conduct, using language or behaving in a manner likely to provoke a breach of the peace, and threatening injury to my person thereby contravening Section 34 of Act 22 of 1896, and apply for a warrant for his arrest."

The Magistrate ordered the accused to be bound over, in the sum of £5, to keep the peace for the period of six months. The costs were fixed at £2 10s. Mr. Dickinson opposed the granting of costs, but when he failed in his efforts he demanded that the costs be fixed then and there at a stated sum, and the Magistrate fixed the costs as above stated.

Considerable interest and importance has been attached to this case, because of the events which led up to the incidents at Phoenix Station. The "interference" alluded to by Mr. Todd referred to the part Mr. West took in listening to the complaints of the late Soorzai, who stated that he had been flogged by Mr. Todd, and in assisting him in having his deposition taken. Mr. West, naturally, took this violent conduct on Mr. Todd's part as an attempt to frighten him out of assisting such people. For this reason Mr. West considered it necessary to make an example of Mr. Todd, and establish the right to so "interfere" in any cases of ill-treatment when they may be brought to his notice.

The Late Mr. Hurbatsingh.

To die in gaol would be generally considered a disgrace, and he who is buried in a convict's grave would not be termed a patriot and a hero. But Mr. Hurbatsingh, who died in the Durban Gaol on the 5th inst., was both a patriot and a hero. He had weathered the storms of life for 70 years, 30 of those years being spent under indenture as a field labourer. About two months ago Mr. Hurbatsingh left his little farm and joined the passive resisters. He crossed the border at Volksrust with 36 others, and was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, with hard labour. He was not a £3-tax payer, but so keenly did this brave old man feel the sufferings of his brothers and sisters under this bondage that he determined to face the hardships of gaol life, and suffer for the cause. Mr. Gandhi met Mr. Hurbatsingh in gaol, and was much impressed by his determination and faithfulness. That so old a man could take up the burden and bear it for his younger and stronger brethren touched him to the heart, and made him feel his own great responsibility in advising his countrymen to adopt such means of redress of their grievances. Writing in the Gujarati columns of our last issue, Mr. Gandhi gave expression to the following thought: "The real meaning of sacrifice is not to be found in the fire on the altar and the pouring on of ghee. Such sacrifice can only purify the atmosphere. Our very bodies must be given for the sacrifice, and our life's blood must take the place of the ghee. That is real sacrifice, which alone is acceptable to God." Thinking thus Mr. Gandhi came to the conclusion that Mr. Hurbatsingh might well remain in gaol, and even die for the honour of India. This staunch passive resister told Mr. Gandhi that when he found even women going to gaol, he felt that he could not remain outside, and that it was better to die in gaol rather than to live free in disgrace. In spite of his age and feeble condition, this veteran of the fight did what work he could with enthusiasm, setting a splendid example to the younger men.

Mr. Hurbatsingh had no relatives living, and so his body was buried by the gaol authorities in the Stellawood Cemetery. As soon as the community heard of his death, steps were taken to get the necessary permission to have the body cremated, according to the Hindu rites. Messrs. Adlam Reid & Co. were the undertakers, and the procession left the cemetery on Thursday at noon. Following the hearse on foot were Miss Schlesin, Mr. Pearson, and Messrs. Rustomjee, Polak, Imam A. K. Bawazeer, G. Isaac, Thambi Naidoo, West, P. K. Naidoo, Sorabjee, Shroff, Budree, Maganlal Gandhi, Tipius Patel, and others. Passing along Umbilo Road, West Street, Grey Street, and Umgeni Road, others, joined the procession, which proceeded to the crematorium at Umgeni Lagoon, reaching its destination at half-past 2. Flowers were placed on the coffin by friends, and festoons of roses were hung around the hearse. And so the memory of this unknown passive resister will be preserved in the hearts of the Indian community.

Our London Letter.

November 21, 1913.

Whatever else may be said, the subject of the treatment of British Indian subjects by the Union Government of South Africa has been the dominant topic of the week. It has had the prominent position in daily newspapers; it has been the subject of innumerable "leading articles," in addition to articles giving the ideas of people who know—or think they do—articles describing the principal "dramatis per-

sonae," not to mention cables several times a day, and in frequent cases the monopoly of the contents bills of the newspapers, especially the evening ones. The papers speak of Messrs. Polak and Kallenbach. That these two Europeans, close personal friends of Mr. Gandhi, should have thrown in their lot so completely with him as to go to prison for the cause Indians have at heart, is a memorable tribute to their devotion, and gives the lie to the statement that East and West shall never meet. They have met in the truest and deepest sense.

Indians in London are seriously exercised over the question; meetings and discussions and consultations are being held frequently. One festive celebration, which was announced to take place on Nov. 29, is postponed because it is felt that Indians and their friends here cannot make merry while their fellow-countrymen are enduring the rigours of prison for the honour of India. They certainly could do no less.

I am almost "snowed under" by newspaper articles on the subject; I make a selection, and forward them for the editor's use; to a few I will refer here as of special interest. On a personal matter, I may mention the letter of Mr. J. H. Polak, J.P., to the "Daily News." It is brief, so I quote it in full, as follows:—

Every civilised country has its Consul or other representative in South Africa to see that justice is done, whereas our poor Indian fellow-subjects in South Africa have no one to protect them. They are truly "Helots within the Empire."

Perhaps now the Indian Government will send special representatives to the four Provinces of British South Africa to protect the interests of those who are unable to defend themselves.

An article in the "Daily News" declares that: "No Englishman acquainted with the facts of the controversy can read without shame the accounts given in the Reuter telegram from Bombay of the methods by which the Indian strike in Natal is being repressed." Your contemporary shows how the supposed "guarantees" for the protection of Indians are practically useless. The following day the "Daily Mail" published a cartoon, entitled "Drop It," showing an Indian soldier seizing by the wrist a Colonial who has just let go a placard on which appears the words, "Poll Tax," "Prohibited Immigration," "Forced Labour," and others. "The Times" of the same day, Nov. 19, publishes a "leader" under the heading of "From Bad to Worse in South Africa," which concludes on the forceful note that "the Imperial Government cannot neglect its responsibilities because Parliament is not sitting." The long article is remarkable for its sympathy, and makes a strong appeal to General Botha's Government not to forfeit its reputation for moderate and broad-minded statesmanship by ignoring "all broad opinion in South Africa—certainly the opinion of the most responsible organ of the Press—which has shown itself in favour of a sympathetic redress of Indian grievances." "The Times" still urges that an official representative of standing be sent by the Indian Government to negotiate with General Botha and his Ministers, and suggests Sir James Meston, but adds that if the step be impracticable, some other must be taken. Still, on the same day, Nov. 19, the "Westminster Gazette," which is practically the official evening organ of the Government, devotes its "leader" to the subject, and says: "It is impossible that the Imperial Government can look on at this movement without the greatest concern. It is answerable to India, and it cannot escape responsibility for what is done in South Africa." Even the "Standard" is roused to insist that: "The best solution would be for the Union

Government to recognise these facts [that the British Indian is in a different category from the Kafir; that he is peaceful, law-abiding, industrious, with some degree of education], and put him on the same footing as the European or American immigrants, while taking precaution against an excessive influx of more unskilled coolies." The "Standard," if it had truly lived up to its character of Imperialism might have known that indentured immigration is stopped, and that Mr. Gandhi and the Indian community have accepted the education test in immigration. Another Tory paper, the "Pall Mall Gazette," to whose sarcastic notes on Indians I have frequently referred, insists that: "We must earnestly hope for a statesmanship that will realise the vast Imperial interests at stake, and the duty of shaping South African policy so that it will not provoke convulsions of which the reaction must be almost literally world-wide."

The "Manchester Guardian" points out that the demands of Indians are indeed "modest"; they ask for no political rights, make no demand for full British citizenship, but only ask to live without oppression. "The grant of self-government to South Africa does not wholly absolve us," it adds, "from our obligations to these men."

Mr. M. de P. Webb enters the ranks of the many writers of articles to the Press, and in the "Daily Mail" points out the dangers of ignorance of the character of Indians, and the great soldiers, merchants, thinkers, and writers India has produced. He sees the force of the commercial competition objection, but declares that it must be met by civilised methods, "not by oppression, exaction, or torture. These India will never endure." Mr. W. H. Hosking, in the "Daily Telegraph," writes with knowledge on the subject, and observes that if the Administration is wise the antiquated poll-tax will go, and cultured Indians will be allowed to speak for their ignorant brethren. Lord Amthill, needless to state, has been to the fore in the Press. He sent out to the Press the cable that the flogging stories could be substantiated, although they have been strenuously denied; he gave an interesting interview to the "Standard," published to-day and in to-day's "Times" a letter from him appears, expressing grateful acknowledgment of the "leading article" to which I have referred. He points out that the "alarming situation" was foreseen, and might have been avoided if promises had been kept.

The publicity now gained cannot be without effect, and the meetings in India and the money subscribed are having an important influence in high quarters here. There is genuine alarm about the "safety of India," and the result of uncontrolled indignation in that country.

Great Meeting at Calcutta.

A public meeting, convened by the Sheriff of Calcutta, was held (says the "Statesman") in the Town Hall, on the 3rd of December, to consider the position of Indians in South Africa, to demand equal rights as citizens in all parts of the British Empire, to express sympathy with the passive resistance movement initiated by Indians for the redress of their grievances to express indignation at the treatment of Indians in South Africa, and thanks to the Viceroy for his kind and sympathetic interest in the question and the demand made by him for an independent inquiry into the alleged atrocities committed on Indians in South Africa. Occasion was also taken to protest against the action of the Canadian Government in insisting upon continuous journey of Indians emigrating into Canada. The building was filled to its extreme capacity, there being fully 4,000 present. The

Maharajahdiraj of Burdwan presided. It was an unprecedented gathering, since the days of the Vernacular Press Act agitation and the Libert Bill, and strongly worded speeches were the order of the day. Every community in Bengal was represented at the meeting. A noteworthy feature was that the attendance consisted almost entirely of the educated classes.

On the motion of Mr. Saroda Churn Mitter, a late judge of the High Court, seconded by Mr. Mehta, the Hon. Maharajahdiraj of Burdwan was voted to the chair.

In opening the proceedings, he said:—Need I point out to you for what purpose we have assembled here in such large numbers this afternoon? Day after day, in the newspaper columns, you have been reading with anxiety, with sorrow and chagrin, of the plight of your fellow-countrymen in South Africa. South Africa might have been a name to have conjured with in the past, for Indians were going there in large numbers, but may I ask what our feelings are to-day? Alas! All the enthusiasm for colonising or seeing people go out there has given place to a disappointment, bitter and sad. It is not my intention in any way to mention in my speech the individual sufferings of the Indians in South Africa, nor is it my desire to enter into the controversy as to the extent of the provocation given by the Indians to their exacting employers or the punishment meted out to them for it. Whilst we are thankful to Lord Gladstone and General Botha for having realised that the situation needs attention, we cannot say that we have been satisfied with the announcements so far made. What we demand is a representative Committee to make a thorough and sifting inquiry into the position of the Indians in South Africa—(Hear, hear)—and the sooner the South African Government realise this the better for all parties concerned.

After paying a high tribute to Mr. Gokhale, the President, proceeding, said:—He should be respected and regarded with the warmest affection and esteem by our countrymen for having brought before the civilised world the treatment of Indians in South Africa, a thing most incompatible with that Western civilisation which we so much talk of and rush to imitate. Although Lord Crewe's reply to the deputation of Indians that waited on his Lordship in London on Monday last has given us hope and some courage, it has not brought to us the same contentment or assurance that we had expected. We are very grateful to the Secretary of State for India for his sympathy and weighty advice but, at the same time, we cannot help feeling that his Majesty's Government in England should at an early date announce the definite line of action that they propose to take for the protection of Indians in South Africa. (Loud applause.) The delay in doing so is much to be regretted. It is not unoften that a charge is levelled at the head of the educated classes in India that what they voice is not the voice of the masses. I say to-day emphatically that what we voice regarding the feeling of Indians on the condition of their fellow-brothers in South Africa is a universal one—(cheers and applause)—and not merely the feeling of the enlightened classes, who, whatever their faults may be, are the band of workers who, taught by the British, inspired by British ideals, imbued with the spirit of British justice and righteousness, and emboldened by the ideas of British liberty, equality, and fraternity, are trying their best, according to their lights, to raise from the quagmire of stagnation and apathy their fellow-countrymen who do not or cannot understand modern impulses or modern requirements. What answer are we loyal Indian subjects of the King-Emperor to give to our less enlightened and less educated brethren when they question us as to why the same Government which has given so much peace

and progress, so much security to life and property in India, fail to do so out in South Africa, for they do not understand the difference between the prestige and position of the British Government in the Colonies and that in the Indian Empire. To them the British Raj, its principle and its strength, seem the same. Where is the answer to this? Whatever, therefore, has got to be done must be done at once, for until then the feeling of the Indians regarding the sufferings of their fellow-countrymen in South Africa must remain bitter, and at the same time poignant with grief, sorrow, and shame.

Out in India what we have to consider is, Should we or should we not retaliate? Whether retaliation is an unmixed blessing, I am not prepared to say; but as his Excellency the Viceroy, in his momentous speech that he made in Madras the other day, pointed out, that retaliation in the past had some effect, I think we ought to retaliate—(Hear, hear, and applause)—for when the Government of India stopped indentured labour to South Africa in 1911, a deputation came from Natal, climbing down, and requesting the Indian Government not to stop immigration, and assuring them of better treatment of the Indians. But as they have not kept that assurance, as they have not been true to the word that they gave, it is the duty of the Government out in this country, as well as the people, to retaliate, to raise funds to bring back, if necessary, every single Indian now in South Africa—(applause)—or to tell the South African Government to give us the same protection and the same privileges as the British Government give to Indians in India, but if we are not to enjoy that peace, that protection, or those privileges, if we are to be ill-treated on the plea of colour bar or some other ignoble or barbarous practice—(“Shame, shame”)—then we should not allow them to remain in South Africa, nor should we tolerate such a different kind of treatment of Indians under the same flag for what will our people say, what answer shall we have to give them? Gentlemen, as you all know, in many of our darkest hours of trial in the history of the growth of our political and civic rights, the beacon-light has come from the noble-minded public men of England, and we, therefore, appeal to them to request the Home Government to remove this sorrow of ours, so genuine and deep, by coming to a satisfactory arrangement with the South African Government regarding the position of the Indians out there, without further delay.

In contrast with the silence of his Britannic Majesty's Government in England, is the sympathy and the sympathetic announcement of his Excellency Lord Hardinge in India. (Immense applause.) The Viceroy's speech has been severely criticised in some quarters, particularly by the Press abroad. With that we have no concern. But, as president of this memorable meeting, I would be failing in the discharge of my duties if I were not to voice the gratitude and warm sentiments—(Hear, hear)—that we feel towards Lord Hardinge for the most sympathetic and strong attitude that he has taken up, not only by word, but by deed also, towards the Indian sufferers in South Africa. (Applause.) He spoke like a brave man—(applause)—and as we in India know how to honour him when he does a brave deed, we will, I am sure, not fail to show our esteem and regard for Lord Hardinge for this latest proof of his Excellency's deep and genuine sympathy for Indians, by according him a right royal welcome when he comes amidst us in about three week's time. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, before concluding, I appeal to you strongly, on behalf of myself and of those who have kindly invited me here to-day, to contribute handsomely towards the funds which have been started

to relieve the sufferings of the Indians in South Africa, and thereby give a practical proof of your sympathy and co-operation with them. (Loud applause.)

Nawab Ali Chowdhury.

Nawab Ali Chowdhury moved the first resolution, which ran as follows: “That this meeting places on record its emphatic protest against the various restrictions and disabilities imposed on Indians in South Africa, including the £3 licence tax in Natal, which the Union Government has not removed, in spite of the assurances given by responsible Ministers in 1911. This meeting, further, expresses its sense of grievous disappointment at the action of the Imperial Government in giving sanction to the Immigrants' Regulations Act, which violates the conditions declared to be essential for a settlement of the Indian question by Lord Crewe, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. This meeting demands of his Majesty's Government such measures as would secure to Indians equal rights of citizenship in South Africa, as also in other parts of the British Empire.”

In doing so, he said that this was a question which to-day held the most prominent place in the minds of 300 millions of his Majesty's Indian subjects, and the happenings in South Africa had staggered them all and given them the rudest shock imaginable. They could not understand at all how such barbarous atrocities could be perpetrated against citizens of the Empire where the British flag floated. The entire population of India demanded the redress of this grievance in the name of justice and humanity.

Rev. Mr. Milburn.

The Rev. Mr. Milburn in seconding, wished to tell them why, as an Englishman, he felt so strongly the obligation which rested upon members of his own race to express sympathy with India in this matter. (Hear, hear.) They would be false to the highest ideals and most sacred national traditions if they did not give their Imperial support to India in this crisis. England had identified herself more with the idea of freedom than with any other ideal, and if they refused to recognise this now, they would be false, not only to India, but themselves and their own principles that freedom was the very essence of national existence. Therefore, they were bound to stand by India in this matter. Loyalty must be mutual. England must be loyal to India just as much as India should be loyal to England. (Applause.) Was it not the duty of England to fulfil her part of the obligation? The speaker then dealt with the objections that had been raised. As regards the underselling of white labour, he said that if one had to pay a legitimate debt there might be lots of economical objections to that, and if they were bound to pay it they would have to do so, notwithstanding these economical objections. The next point was that all countries must learn to adopt themselves to new economic conditions. The Asiatic settlement was not a more disturbing factor than the introduction of machinery or the rise of trade unions. A country must learn to adapt itself to these changes without resorting to such barbarous methods, which seemed to be the only one which occurred to the minds of the Afrianders. The nearest analogy to the present state of affairs was anti-semitism in certain countries in Europe. His next answer was that, whatever line they took must be applied equally in one way or another in this country. In India swadeshi enterprise had suffered from European competition. Among other things, two swadeshi enterprises, steamship companies from Tuticorin and other places, were undersold by competition with British steamship companies, and the people of the country had to take that as best they

could. If it is right for South Africa to protect bideshi trade or labour with which they cannot compete, India has a right to expect her swadeshi enterprises to be protected against bideshi competition. In the next place, if South Africa or Canada were afraid that the price of labour or of goods was being brought too low, it was open to them to fix a minimum rate of wages or to say nothing shall be hawked about at less than double its value. The plea of economic necessity was simply a confession of a settled determination to perpetuate an economic injustice. As regards what had been said about embarrassing General Botha, and causing irritation in South Africa, this was a small matter in comparison with the issues at stake. If the dispute led to a separation of the Colonies from England, it would be better for her to lose the Colonies than to lose her high principles, and let them drag her down. If she weakly yielded to South Africa she would have to bear the responsibility of driving men into indentured slavery, and women to sell their honour. England would have to bear her share of the responsibility for the greatest conflict that was threatening, a conflict brought about between the white and coloured races. Referring to the suggestion which appeared in the "Statesman," to repatriate every Indian in South Africa, he said that, upon consideration, it amounted to a surrender of their great principles, and meant only a temporary respite, and would leave India weaker for the next struggle that came. They had a right to demand that the Home Government should recognise this principle of equal rights everywhere under the British flag as the ideal and ultimate aim of their policy until the Home Government recognised this more explicitly. All he could say was that if they had sufficient courage and self-sacrifice—Fight on! Fight on!

Nawab Sujat Ali Beg supported the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Hon M. Fazal Haq.

The Hon. Maulvi Fazal Haq moved the next resolution: "That this meeting accords its unqualified support to the passive resistance movement initiated by Indians for the redress of their grievances in South Africa, and expresses its high sense of admiration for the heroism and self-sacrifice displayed by Mr. Gandhi and his followers and fellow-workers in carrying on this campaign against heavy odds."

It was seconded by Babu Motilal Ghosh, and supported by Mr. B. C. Ghose and Mr. Rasul, and carried by acclamation.

Babu A. C. Mazumdar.

Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar proposed: "That this meeting expresses its strong feeling of indignation at the inhuman treatment of the Indians on strike in Natal and the high-handed and arbitrary measures that have been adopted for suppressing the passive resistance movement by the executive authorities of the Union Government."

The resolution, he said, was couched in very mild terms. He spoke of the greatness, strength, and resources of the British Empire, and India was said to be the brightest jewel in her diadem, but that precious jewel had now become little more than a mere bauble. Indians were subjects of the Empire, but were they privileged citizens anywhere but in Great Britain, and did they share any of the greatness of the Empire? They were not allowed to land in Australia, although Australians came and settled in India and enjoyed every advantage there. Canada was also closed to them unless they could make an uninterrupted journey to the Dominions. The Dominion Government should take time by the forelock and extend their restrictions because some day

a direct line might be established, or in some way it might become possible for Indians to fly from India to Quebec. The Indians served the English with characteristic devotion during the Boer War, and the Boer was now feeding fat his ancient grudge. It was said that the British Government could not interfere in the matter, but Indians could not understand this sophistry. If she was the suzerain of the Colonies was she not bound to see whether the Colonial principles were in consonance with the principles of the Motherland? Supposing Messrs. Botha, Smuts, Hertzog & Co. were to start and run a most lucrative business in slavery, would not England be justified in interfering? Would not the conscience of England rebel against this, and would it not be possible for her to say that it was something more than the internal administration of the Colonial Government? Was it or was it not practically a question of slavery? Would they dare to treat Germans or Italians or Frenchmen or any other nation in this manner? Was it not a question of national morality? Were they to understand that the liberty and freedom of Britons were to be sacrificed to Dutch peasantry under British rule? If this were so the Boer War did not terminate in a victory but in a defeat for England. He concluded a strongly-worded speech by hoping that the great Motherland would rise equal to the occasion and prove true to her glorious traditions.

Babu Devi Prasad Khaitan seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Rai Hari Ram Goenka moved: "That this meeting records its grateful thanks to his Excellency the Viceroy for his kind and sympathetic interest in the Indian question in South Africa, and for the earnest and pressing demand made by the Government of India for an independent inquiry by a Committee on which Indians shall be adequately represented, into the outrages alleged to have been committed upon Indians by the authorities of the Union Government. This meeting also urges the Government of India to adopt such retaliatory measures as may be deemed advisable in the event of a failure to bring about a satisfactory settlement of the grievances of Indians in South Africa."

Mr. B. Chakravarti, in seconding, referred to the courageous utterances of his Excellency the Viceroy, expressing sympathy in their troubles, and hoped they would bear in mind what their chairman had said, and give his Excellency a great ovation when he arrived in this city.

Babu Saskanko Jiban Roy supported the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Surendranath Banerjea.

The Hon. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, who, on rising, was greeted with prolonged applause, moved the following resolution: "That this meeting appeals to the public to come forward with funds to help the Indians in South Africa in maintaining the struggle in which they are engaged for the vindication of their rights and for the honour and prestige of their Motherland. In the course of a long and impassioned speech, which was listened to with the utmost attention, he eulogised Lord Hardinge, who had won their most heartfelt gratitude and admiration for the testimony he had given of his sympathy in their suffering. He referred to the Proclamation of Queen Victoria of Nov. 1, 1858, binding England to her Indian subjects by the same obligations which bound her to her other subjects.

Raja Rishi Kesh Law seconded, and the Rev. Mr. Holland and two gentlemen who spoke in Hindustani supported the resolution, which was carried.

A collection was made, and it was announced that Rs.13,000 had been received, and shortly after other

donations, including one of Rs.2,000 was mentioned.

The following other resolutions were also carried unanimously, among the movers and seconders being the Raja of Santosh, and Mr. J. Chaudhury:—

“That this meeting takes this occasion to protest against the action of the Government of Canada in insisting upon continuous journey for Indians emigrating into Canada, the effect of which is to separate Indian immigrants already settled there from their wives and children, and urges the Imperial Government to intervene for the removal of their grievances in this matter.” “That copies of the foregoing resolutions be sent to the Secretary of State for India, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Government of India, Mr. Gandhi, and the Indian Association in Natal, over the signature of the President.”

With a vote of thanks, moved by the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, the proceedings terminated.

The Real Issue in South Africa.

The Rev. C. F. Andrews writes to the “Statesman” (Calcutta):—

I have read with the greatest interest your leading article published on the above question. The conclusion at which you arrived, namely, the repatriation of all Indians, has at first sight much to commend it, and your statement of the case was very strong indeed. But a deeper consideration of the issues makes the solution you propose fail at the most crucial point of all.

The present struggle in South Africa is not now primarily an economic one, as it has been in the past. Immigration of cheap Indian labour has now ceased, and even new indentured labour is prohibited after the expiry of the present time services. The real issue is whether the naturalised Indians already settled in South Africa, who have shown such remarkable industrial and moral qualities, are to be regarded as a civilised or as an uncivilised community, and behind this issue lies the larger issue still of the status of India herself. Is she to-day, with her own great past traditions and her more recent modern progress to rank among the civilised peoples of the world? Or is she to be an outcast and a pariah among the nations?

Such a vital issue will not be settled by a mere repatriation of the South African Indians. On the contrary, this will have the appearance of a surrender of the main position. Canada may next clamour for the repatriation of the flourishing Sikh community in Vancouver, Australia may close entirely her already half-shut doors. British East Africa and the West Indian Colonial group may pass outrageous penal laws. Even the United States may not prove strong enough to stem the forces of race prejudice on her western borders. Thus India, whose very progress seems more and more to depend on having outlets for her new activities, may become sealed up, and shut within her own borders.

The struggle, therefore—so it appears to me—must be fought out to the bitter end. For every one of us in this country it is necessary to recognise the fact that the honour of India is involved in the struggle. If she loses, she sinks to the level of the backward nations. Our duty is to see that she does not lose, but win.

In the course of some editorial remarks on the passing year, the “Pretoria News” says: “The Indian Empire is being shaken to its foundations by the obstinate stupidity with which the Government persists in pursuing a profitless quarrel with the Indians in South Africa.”

From the Editor's Chair.

Mr. Gandhi and the Railway Strike.

Mr. Gandhi and the Rev. C. F. Andrews left for Pretoria on Wednesday evening last. The editor of the “Pretoria News” has obtained from Mr. Gandhi an assurance that, whilst the railway strike is proceeding, he would do nothing by the revival of the strike or of passive resistance to complicate the situation. “I shall take no unfair advantage of the Government,” said Mr. Gandhi. “We shall resume operations, if it be necessary to resume them at all, only after the railway strike is settled. You have my personal assurance of that.”

Mr. Gandhi's attitude will doubtless (adds the “News”) be much appreciated throughout the Union.

Commenting upon the above, the “Natal Mercury” says: “Mr. Gandhi has done a sensible thing in deciding that he will discountenance any resumption of the so-called ‘passive resistance’ movement as long as the railway strike is in progress. If the desire to refrain from further embarrassing the Government while they have other and more serious troubles on their hands is the main consideration influencing him, Mr. Gandhi is entitled to credit for the fact. As we have pointed out, however, there were conclusive reasons why Mr. Gandhi should, in the interests of the people whose welfare he has at heart, recede from the false position in which he has landed himself in advising a renewal of their contumacy. Whether Mr. Gandhi has now been convinced that he had made a mistake, or is genuinely desirous to ease the present embarrassments of the Government, it is some satisfaction to know that a recrudescence of the Indian trouble is not to be added to the perplexities of the hour.”

[Note.—We deal with the above comment in our editorial columns.—Ed. “I.O.”]

Sir Benjamin Robertson.

On behalf of the South African Indian community, we tender a respectful welcome to Sir Benjamin Robertson, K.C.S.I., the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, who reached Durban on Sunday morning from Bombay by the R.I.M.S. Hardinge. Sir Benjamin's visit to South Africa is due to his appointment to give evidence before the Commission on behalf of the Government of India, a fact that emphasises the more the semi-political character of the Commission. He may rest assured that the Indian community will do nothing avoidable to embarrass him in the delicate position in which he is placed, and Mr. Gandhi has already made it clear that, in view of the most serious preoccupations of the Union Government at the present time, he has no intention of taking advantage of the present situation, and so make it still harder for the Government to accede to the simple demands of the Indian community. In this he has but acted as he did at the time of the Rand strike last July, and his present action will have convinced Sir Benjamin, if conviction were necessary, that the passive resisters' object is not obstructive, but constructive. Mr. Gandhi has always declared his desire to assist the Government, and this is far from being the first time that he has given effective demonstration of that desire. Should, unhappily, it be found impossible to obtain an honourable settlement, Mr. Gandhi will be obliged to assist them in a way that may be unwelcome, but none the

less necessary, just as a doctor is often obliged to administer a nauseous drug to a refractory patient. But we trust that such a procedure will not be necessary, and that, especially after Sir Benjamin's arrival, with a full knowledge of the situation in India, better counsels will prevail. We do, however, deprecate the "Natal Mercury's" suggestion that Mr. Gandhi's sincerity in this matter may be doubted. The "Mercury" has, for some time now, much to our regret, apparently been much more anxious to discredit Mr. Gandhi and the passive resistance movement than to help to a permanent settlement of the present trouble. With all respect to our contemporary, such insinuations as these are, at such a juncture as this, ill-timed and undiplomatic, to say the least. In our turn, we would suggest that Mr. Gandhi is in a far better position to know where the interests of the Indian community lie than our contemporary, whose writers, after all, have not had to bear the brunt of an anxious and terrible struggle for over six years, and cannot possibly be supposed to have Indian honour so nearly at heart as the Indian leader.

An Amazing Insult.

One would have expected, from an ex-Governor of the Island of Ceylon, if not politically, ethnically, and spiritually, an integral part of India, a sympathetic reference to the Indian trouble in South Africa. But Sir West Ridgeway, as might have been anticipated from the man who, as chairman of the Transvaal Constitution Committee, helped Mr. Winston Churchill to "jockey" the Transvaal Indians out of their claims to the franchise by a strained and politically-coloured interpretation of the ninth term of the Treaty of Vereeniging, has, however, gone out of his way to support the action of the Union Government, jeer at Lord Hardinge, and insinuate that South African Indians are but pawns in the game of scheming agitators in India. We will not characterise Sir West Ridgeway's incursion into this dangerous field of controversy as it deserves, but will rather quote from the quiet, but effective, rebuke administered by the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 9th ult. Says our contemporary:

"Sir West Ridgeway's remarkable letter in this morning's 'Times' about Indians in South Africa needs, in our view, some qualification. We fully agree, and have repeatedly said, that the danger now being produced by the agitation in India is greater than the public in this country realises. At the same time, it is not quite fair to suggest that Indian agitators are merely using the South African trouble as a pretext to claim full political and civil rights for Indians throughout the Empire. . . . We are convinced that on this particular point Sir West Ridgeway is wrong, and that large numbers of prominent Indians are excited for no obscurer reason than that they believe their fellow-countrymen in South Africa are suffering unjustifiable indignities. The real dark side of the trouble is that malignants in India will soon be using it, not to claim full rights of citizenship, but rather to inflame the people against British rule."

"From Our Own Correspondent."

During the most agitated days of the Indian strike local Indians were accused of sending to India wild and exaggerated telegrams, with the object of inflaming public opinion there. What, however, are we to think of the following, "From Our Special Correspondent" at Durban, appearing in "The Times" of November 28 last?: "Arab merchants, lawyers,

and clerks are conspicuously active in inciting the indentured coolies to strike in this (Mount Edgecombe) neighbourhood, where the leaders seem to be of a more revolutionary type than those encountered elsewhere. It is here that the newspaper, 'Indian Opinion,' is published, and Mr. Gandhi's private Tolstoy farm is situated. The labouring population on the sugar estates is saturated with anarchy and fanaticism." Could anything more lurid have been cabled by the most irresponsible Indian? "Revolutionary," "Indian Opinion," "Mr. Gandhi," "anarchy," "fanaticism"—what an amazing juxtaposition! This is even worse than Sir West Ridgeway! We do not for a moment suppose that the local correspondent deliberately over-coloured his canvas. He was, no doubt, excited by the fevered atmosphere of false reports by which he was surrounded. Nothing, however, is better calculated than such an example of vivid journalism to make one read with the utmost caution cabled news from South Africa, even in so careful an organ as "The Times."

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The Labour Party Condemns the Indenture System.

At the South African Labour Party Conference, held at Pretoria recently, Mr. Boydell, M.L.A., moved that the Conference protest against the indentured labour system, and the treatment of a breach of contract as a criminal offence, "and condemns as incompatible with liberty the use of the police and military to force Indian strikers to work; that the Conference is convinced that the presence of an Indian population in South Africa will always lead to grave difficulties, and calls upon the Government to take immediate steps to induce, by every possible means; the repatriation of Indians, under adequate compensation." Speaking in support of the motion, Mr. Boydell stated that there were 135,000 Indians in Natal, against a white population of 90,000. Out of the Indian population 50,000 were men, 27,000 women, and 58,000 children. In the tailoring, French polishing, tinsmithing, upholstering, painting, and other trades Indians now had practically a monopoly. During the next ten years it was possible for the volume of Natal trade to double itself, and for the white population to be reduced to half its present number. White men were leaving the country, because the white worker was not prepared to come down to the Indian level. The speaker pointed out that any Indian refusing to pay the £3 tax could not be proceeded against criminally, but only civilly, and he could not be repatriated for non-payment. Last year 10,206 men and 5,089 women were subjected to the tax, and out of the total population of 135,000 only 1,594 men and 41 women paid the tax. A sum of £45,000 should have been collected by the Government, but as a matter of fact only £4,905 was collected. Therefore, as a matter of revenue, the tax had failed. There were 35,000 men and women exempt from the tax altogether. In dealing with this subject they had to deal with these people sympathetically, and induce as many as possible of them to go back to their own country. He thought many Indians in Natal would be only too glad to return to their country if sufficient inducement were offered them—not all of them, but the bulk of them; therefore he urged a policy of compensation to that end, for the sake of posterity, calling upon those who first brought the Indians to Natal to contribute largely to a fund for that purpose.

Mr. Haggart seconded the motion, which, after a short discussion, was agreed to unanimously.—Reuter.

Sir Benjamin Robertson's Arrival.

The R.I.M.S. Hardinge, which brought Sir Benjamin Robertson, K.C.S.I., from India, arrived in Durban harbour early on Sunday morning. The passage was made in a little over nine days. Sir Benjamin was accompanied by his private secretary, Mr. Slater, and Rai Sahib Sircar, of the Department of Commerce and Industry, which Department is responsible for all matters relating to emigration. Mr. Percy Binns, Chief Magistrate of Durban, paid an early call at the ship; and afterwards Sir Benjamin spent some time in a pleasant informal chat with several leading members of the Indian community, including Messrs. Parsee Rustomjee, M. S. Randaree, Thombi Naidoo, G. H. Miankhan, A. M. Shaikh, P. K. Naidoo, Sorabji Rustomjee, Imam A. K. Bawazeer, Omar H. A. Jhaveri, I. A. H. Moosa, and others, Mr. Polak and Mr. West were also present. Sir Benjamin is staying at the Marine Hotel whilst in Durban.

A Re-indentured Test Case.

A case that may have far-reaching results during the present crisis of the Indian trouble was tried before Mr. Th. MacDonald, assistant magistrate at Verulam, on the 7th inst.

The Tongaat Sugar Company, represented by Mr. Dickinson, charged one of their Indians, Moonsamy Govinden, with contravening Section 35 of Act 25 of 1891, in that he refused to obey the lawful orders of his employer to do his work in the fields.

Mr. E. H. Britter, of Verulam, appeared for the accused, and raised the defence that the accused refused to do field work because he rightly believed that he had been engaged to perform skilled labour in the factory, at a rate of wages of over £3 10s. a month, which work he was still willing to perform, whereas field labour implied a rate of pay of 28s. per month. The contract of re-indenture, on the face of it, showed that the accused was engaged as a field labourer at 28s. per month, but the books of the company, which the manager was called upon to produce, showed that the accused had been paid monthly wages of over £3 10s. from the first day of the period of his re-indenture for work done in the factory, which, Mr. Britter contended, gave colour to the impression the accused was under that he was not a field labourer, and not liable to do field work.

Further, Mr. Britter raised a point of law that the contract of re-indenture was invalid "ab initio," as it was signed before a magistrate, who, under the law, had no authority to attest such a contract.

The Court upheld the latter contention, and found the accused not guilty.

This decision would probably mean that thousands of similar contracts could not be enforced in Courts of Law.

In the above case, the Protector was summoned by Mr. Britter, counsel for the Indian accused, to produce a copy of his original indenture, with a view of proving to the Court that the present contract of re-indenture was invalid, through the formalities of the law not having been complied with. Mr. Burns, from the Protector's office, seemed to have been prepared for the argument put forward by Mr. Britter, and came armed with a circular, which he supplied to Mr. Dickinson, acting for the prosecuting company, in the hope of getting Mr. Britter's contention overruled.

Whether the circular, if accepted, would have altered the decision of the Magistrate, is not the point. That can be decided later, and, no doubt, will be. But what we wish to point out is the anxiety of the Protector to assist the employers, even when he is summoned and his witness fee paid by the accused Indian labourer.

The Hillhead Inquiry.

The inquiry into the deaths of the five Indians killed at Blackburn and Hillhead was resumed by the Acting Magistrate, Mr. Rossler, at Verulam, on the 6th inst. It will be remembered that the inquiry was adjourned from Dec. 23 to allow of post-mortem examinations being made on the bodies, which were exhumed for the purpose.

The result of this examination was given in a report by Dr. R. D. Fisher, deputy district surgeon. The report stated that, under instructions, the doctor proceeded to Blackburn and Hillhead estates on Dec. 23, in company with the District Surgeon, Dr. Hill, and at Blackburn they were joined by Dr. Nanji, who watched the examinations on behalf of the Natal Indian Association. The bodies had been buried 25 days. The first body exhumed was that of Pachappen. In this the doctor found a circular wound an inch in front of the left ear, through the temporal bone, extending directly inwards to the brain. The wound in the bone was large enough to admit the index finger, and from the nature of the wound witness concluded that it was caused by a bullet of large size. Although careful search was made, no bullet could be found. The inside of the skull showed no wound of exit, so witness concluded that the bullet dropped from the skull as the body was being removed from the grave. No other wound was found. The body of Ragavan showed a wound 2½ in. long and 1 in. wide on the temporal bone, and from this a fracture extended round the skull to a second circular wound. A bullet of large size was removed from this second wound. No other wound was found. At Hillhead, the first body removed was that of Selvan. In the front of the body a circular wound in the skin at the root of the neck was found, the bones forming the joint between the breast bone and collar-bone being shattered. The first and eighth ribs were fractured, and at the back of the body was a circular wound of the skin just above the inferior angle of the shoulder-blade. Both skin wounds were caused by some circular instrument, which entered at the front wound, shattered the bones, passed downwards through the left lung, severing some of the large blood vessels, struck the eighth rib, and then turned upwards through the muscles of the back to make its exit at the rear wound. The wound of exit was small, and witness thought that the explanation was that the initial velocity with which the instrument entered the body was practically spent when it made its exit. In his opinion only a bullet of considerable size and high initial velocity would cause such damage, and take a course such as described. No bullet was found, because probably it was spent by the time it made its exit and dropped into the clothing, from which it dropped when the body was removed from the place of death. Death was due to a bullet-wound severing the large blood-vessels, and causing immediately fatal hemorrhage. No other wounds were found on the body. The body of Gurudavu showed a roughly circular wound in the right loin, piercing the abdominal wall, and the bullet was found in the fourth lumbar vertebra. The bullet was of large size, and death was due to the bullet wound. The fifth body examined was that of Soubrayen Gounden, in which there was a circular wound in the middle line of the back, the vertebra being pierced in a direction directly forward. The liver was pierced, and the bullet was found in the abdominal cavity. The bullet was of large size. There was no other wound on the body, death being due to a bullet wound severing the spinal column and piercing the liver. In each case, the bodies were in a state of advanced decomposition, and they were

identified by Indians, witness being in each case able to confirm the identification from his previous examination of the bodies.

In reply to Mr. G. E. Robinson (for the Attorney-General) the witness said that the two bodies where there were no bullets bore wounds of the same size and nature as those where bullets were found.

M. Dickinson (for the Natal Estates) handed the witness a small bore Browning pistol, bullet, and asked if either of the wounds on either of the bodies could have been caused by a bullet of that size.

Witness: No, I should say a large bullet.

Was there any mark of an assegai wound on the man Selvan?

Witness: I did not see any.

Mr. Langston asked if the advanced state of decomposition would have the effect of apparently enlarging the wounds, and the witness replied that the effect would probably be quite the opposite. It was rather difficult to find the skin-wound in bodies of this stage of decomposition.

Mr. Langston also asked as to the nature of the wound made by a Mauser bullet, the doctor replying that the entry was usually small, the exit larger. In the case of Selvan, however, the wound of exit was rather smaller, and he believed this was because the bullet was practically spent before it left the body. The person who fired the shot must have been fairly close, and at a higher level. The bullet struck the bone and turned upwards before exit.

Afterwards Mr. Langton obtained permission to recall Antonimuthu, the son of the dead man Selvan, to repeat his story that his father was stabbed with an assegai. He swore that his story of seeing this was true, and stated that the stabbing happened before any firing had taken place.

Further Indian evidence was then taken. We shall continue the report in our next issue.

English Press Opinions.

The misunderstandings and doubts as to actual words spoken and promises made, which always seem to follow upon interviews between Indian leaders and South African Ministers, are (says "The Times") in the highest degree unfortunate. The most recent of these misunderstandings is particularly regrettable. Mr. Gokhale, the eminent Indian leader who, recently visited South Africa, declares that he received a clear promise from the South African Government that the £3 tax upon Indians brought into South Africa under indenture, who desire to remain as free citizens of the Union at the close of their indenture period, should be repealed. General Smuts, on the other hand, has lately told his constituents that the promise of the repeal of this tax was conditional upon the approval of the Natal members of the Union Parliament; that the Natal members proved to be opposed to the repeal of the tax; and that their opposition necessarily involved the inability of the Government to carry out a promise which was conditional upon the absence of any such opposition. It is obviously futile to speculate upon the rights and wrongs of such a controversy. But it is at least legitimate to say that no one who knows Mr. Gokhale's character will for a moment doubt the bona fides of his statement as to the nature of the promise which he received. . . . It is less easy to excuse certain rigours employed in the administration of the Act of 1913 by the officials of the Immigration Department since the close of the session. Such harshness was no part of the intention of the South African Legislature. It has been condemned by the best European public opinion in South Africa. It has resulted in the present crisis. And for its perpetration the South African Ministry (represented in this connection by General Smuts) is clearly responsible. . . . But the motive for recent harshness in the administration of the Immigration Regulation Act of 1913 is revealed by the tactics of the Hertzog party. General Smuts has tried to counter their attack in advance by making a parade of his determination to enforce the most extreme South African, as contrasted with the Imperial, point of view in his treatment of the Indians. There is doubtless no excuse for such action on his part. It has brought a hornet's nest about his ears. . . . It may be hoped that General Smuts will now do his best, as a Minister of the Empire, to repair the damage which has been done by his late preoccupation with the role of the party tactician. The least that he can do is to initiate a searching inquiry into the effect and administration of the Act of 1913. He will do well if he asks for the co-operation of the Indian Government in such an inquiry, and is prepared to submit the

action of his own Department to the fullest investigation by an Imperial tribunal containing at least one member who is fully conversant with the conditions of the Indian Empire.

We ("Westminster Gazette") are glad to see that the South African Press . . . is on the whole favourable to the reconsideration of certain points supposed to have been settled in the law of last August. The real point to bear in mind is that the Indians suppose themselves to have come to an understanding with the Government which was not carried out in this legislation. On their side they abandoned the demand for unrestricted immigration, and on the other side they expected a general mitigation of the treatment of Indians already in South Africa. It is true, as a correspondent has reminded us, that the poll tax is a Natal and not a Union law, and that it dates from 1901, but it is plainly incompatible with an undertaking to give fair treatment to Indians already in the country. Compulsory deportation is still for all practical purposes a weapon of the law, when it is possible for the province which contains the great majority of Indians to fine them £3 a head if they remain in the country and are not reindentured. We hope the Union Government will persuade the Natal Government to give way on this point, and will itself amend the law of August so as to remove the grievances—largely sentimental, but none the less real—which the Indians feel at the re-imposition of racial and other restrictions which they supposed were abandoned. . . . The Indian people cannot be expected to understand the subtleties of our Constitution; and if we have to reply to them that the Imperial Government cannot control the Government of South Africa, or that the Government of South Africa cannot control the Government of Natal, they will consider that they are being trifled with.

What is surprising (says the "Daily Graphic") is the courage and persistency with which a comparatively small number of Indians in South Africa have for many years carried on a campaign to secure civil rights for their fellow-countrymen and to defend the honour of the Indian name. They ought not to be left any longer to carry on that struggle alone. For the honour of England as well as the honour of India is involved. Until this South African question arose it was the proud boast of England that her subjects, of whatever race or colour, could rely upon her protection wherever they went. Suddenly we find this principle, which is one of the most valuable of the links of Empire, quietly abandoned by British Ministers as if it were a matter of no account. The excuse given—that it is impossible to interfere with the discretion of a self-governing Dominion—is doubly dangerous. For if that excuse be valid then a British subject might be subjected in a British Colony to outrages which we should never tolerate at the hands of a foreign Government. Again, if this principle is to apply in the case of South Africa, presumably it would also apply if Ireland were to obtain Home Rule; so that all the parade about the Imperial Parliament defending Ulster from injustice is mere talk. The truth is that an Imperial Government cannot shake off its responsibilities in any part of the world by setting up subordinate Governments, and the greatest of Imperial responsibilities is the protection of all British citizens from injustice.

All are agreed (says "India") that the Imperial Government is answerable to India, and that it cannot escape responsibility for what is done in South Africa. On all sides his Majesty's Ministers are told that the people of India do not understand and will not accept the plea that it is unable to persuade the South African Government to accept the Imperial view of the case. In any case, it is plain that the right road is not being taken. Peace and contentment will not be restored unless grievances are redressed. The demands of the Indians are modest. They ask for no political rights; they do not assert the full claims of British subjects; they merely ask for permission to live without oppression in a part of the world to which the Imperial Government helped to bring them or their fathers.

In regard to the £3 tax, the "Morning Post" remarks:—Now that there is no longer immigration of Indian coolies such a penal levy has no longer any reasonable pretext for existence. There may be a case, from the South African point of view, for excluding the Indian coolie from the country; but justice and humanity alike should plead for the British Indian who is actually domiciled in South Africa, and now finds himself deprived of rights which are not denied even to uncivilised natives. . . . We certainly should not ask British South Africans to admit Asiatics to the Union if they regard them as undesirable aliens. Every self-governing country has the right to choose its own immigrants. But what we are entitled to ask is that those immigrants, once admitted, should be treated with some respect to the principles of justice and humanity.

The "Birmingham Daily Post" says:—There is clear evidence that the anti-Imperialist party in South Africa is using the Indian question as a weapon. At the South African Party Congress the leading Hertzogite delegate is reported as referring to the Indian agitation as proof of the danger of Imperialism. To satisfy India, he argued, an attempt would be made to interfere in South Africa's treatment of Indians. That, of course, is not a true statement of the position, but it is a statement, unfortunately, which may be expected to appeal to the more ignorant Boers. The truth is that we cannot directly interfere if we would, and probably would not if we could. The matter is one to be settled between South Africa and

India. All we can do is to ask both parties to remember that they are sister States, daughters of a common mother.

The Indians (says the "Aberdeen Free Press") are not in their present temper to be put off, as they have been before, with fair promises; they must have some definite guarantee that their just claims will be conceded. The strikes and accompanying disorders seem to people at a distance to have flashed out suddenly. The Indians nevertheless have not been precipitate; on the contrary, they have shown great restraint. During the strikes on the Rand in July when the Government was at their mercy they forbore exercising any pressure. And it was only after all the resources of peaceful agitation were exhausted that they entered upon a campaign of resistance.

The "Newcastle Daily Journal" has the following editorial: Lord Amphill points out that the Indians in South Africa are not making any unreasonable demands; they are simply asking for the fulfilment of promises which were made to them, and which have been broken. He supports a suggestion made by "The Times," that an official representative of standing should be sent by the Indian Government to negotiate with General Botha and his colleagues. Such a proposal was made to His Majesty's Government some time ago, but nothing was done. It is time for Ministers to reconsider their attitude. If they remain inactive, there will be continued trouble in South Africa and grave unrest in India. Liberals made excited protests against the employment of Chinamen in South Africa, although it was not alleged these people suffered any hardship. Far different is the case of the Indians. They are the victims of legislation of a penalising character. Its object is to force the Indians back to indentured labour or to drive them out of the country. As they are citizens of the Empire, the Imperial Government must take measures to secure them protection against injustice.

Under the heading "A Conflict of Evidence," the "Star" (London) remarks:—Lord Gladstone's dispatches deny the charges of flogging and ill-treatment of the Indian prisoners in South Africa. Thus there is a direct conflict of evidence—for we do not regard the authority for Lord Gladstone's denials as very conclusive. They rest necessarily on the statements of magistrates in the districts from which the complaints come, and on reports from Natal officials charged with the care of the prisoners. On the other hand, Lord Amphill is informed by Mr. Ritch that he has "conclusive evidence of brutal floggings by employers of men captured." Lord Gladstone's denials may, or may not, be well founded as regards the treatment of the prisoners by the public authorities after their arrest; but they do not touch Mr. Ritch's allegation of flogging by employers of men captured. The evidence which we have at present affords no reason why we may dismiss the charges from our minds.

The "Scotsman" (Edinburgh) says that it would be an entire mistake to suppose that with the collapse of the strike the trouble will be over. The disaffection is the growth, not of weeks or months, but of years. The present demonstration is the culmination of a long period of discontent, silent for the most part, but occasionally breaking out as now into open revolt. The Indian population of South Africa complain, and apparently with justice, that they have been denied rights and privileges which as subjects of the British Crown they are entitled to claim. They do not demand equal political privileges. They are not seeking the unrestricted right to vote which, if granted to them, would swamp the white vote in Natal, where the Indian population is very large. Nor do they demand that the restrictions upon immigration should be removed. . . . The situation is both trying and difficult. It seems, on the one hand, impossible for the Imperial authorities to overlook the reflex action of the discontent in South Africa upon the native population in India. On the other hand, it is extremely difficult to warn the Union Government that their attitude to British Indians in South Africa is inadvisable and needing reconsideration. If the Home Government were to take this course, they might lay themselves open to a rebuff, although the question is obviously one that concerns the Home Government as much as South Africa. Something at least ought to be done to ameliorate the position of the Indians in South Africa. A surface calm may be restored without granting concessions, but the unrest will go on until the wrongs of which the Indians complain have been righted. It is easy to understand and sympathise with the Colonial dislike of coloured labour, which cheapens and undersells white labour. But the Indian coolie is necessary to Natal, if not to South Africa as whole, and it is not in the interests of the Union or of the Empire to deny his claim for fair treatment.

Lord Gladstone's dispatches make what is no doubt the best case possible for the conversion of mine compounds into "out-stations" to goals in which to detain Indian strikers; and so far as it goes it is satisfactory (says the "Daily News and Leader"). There is no reason to suppose that the Union Government would be so foolish as deliberately to make itself a party to the ill-treatment of Indian prisoners, and we are perfectly prepared to believe that "the whole object of Ministers is the essential restoration of order." When the High Commissioner, however, goes on to say that "force will only be used to put down unprovoked violence by strikers themselves," he is protesting altogether too much. The difficulty and the danger of the situation in Natal and to a lesser extent in the Transvaal is that the Government is not strong

enough to give any such pledge. On November 12, for instance, a meeting at Volksrust determined to "resist by force the efforts of the Indians to enter the Transvaal," and 400 men set off to the border to do it. They did not wait for the Government's permission, and it is highly improbable that they would have waited for "unprovoked violence" before attacking the strikers. Similarly Lord Gladstone denies that any flogging has taken place in the prison compounds, and this may very well be so. But what Mr. Ritch tells Lord Amphill is that he has "conclusive evidence" not of ill-treatment in the compounds, but of "brutal floggings by employers of men captured." These are the "mischievous" stories which are doing such harm in India and England. The harm they do can only be permanent and serious in so far as they are true; but there is nothing in Lord Gladstone's dispatches to disprove them.

The South African Government, through its chief, General Botha, gave a definite promise to remove some of the most oppressive restrictions, and have not kept that promise (says the "Inverness Courier"). In the circumstances we cannot be surprised that the Indians in South Africa have broken out as they have, and that all over India a fierce flame of resentment has been kindled. The situation, it is clear, calls for exceedingly tactful handling, and as it is a matter which concerns, not South Africa alone, but India and the whole of the Empire, it is plainly the duty of the Imperial Government to intervene.

Commenting upon Lord Gladstone's dispatch, in which he contradicts the stories of individual cruelty to Indians in Natal, the "Manchester Guardian" says:—From the figures that he gives for Newcastle and Dundee, it would seem that there have been extensive commitments of unindentured as well as of indentured Indians. The indentured Indians may possibly be under special disabilities, and subject to special penalties for striking. But the unindentured Indians have presumably the same right to stop work if they want as workmen have in England. It appears that in the Newcastle district, for example, 299 Indians have been sentenced, of whom 208 were unindentured, besides another 211 who have to come up for sentence. What were these 208 unindentured Indians sentenced for? For stopping work or for acts of violence? Except in the sugar-growing districts, which are near the coast, the only violence on the part of the strikers, that has been reported here, was at Ladysmith. We are told that no compulsion to work is put on the Indians who are sentenced to confinement in the mine compounds, but that does not tell us of what offence these men were guilty that they should lose their liberty.

Our supremacy in India (says the "Leeds Mercury") depends more upon the confidence which the millions of that great Empire possess in the justice of British rule than the strength of our armed forces, and it will be an incalculable misfortune if by any shortsighted or wrong policy in South Africa we seriously undermine that confidence.

The "Globe" remarks that the Union has not created that Arcadia of peace and harmony that Home Rule orators are so fond of describing. General Hertzog's defection is the outward sign of anti-British spirit which is deplorable and discouraging. More immediately it is unfortunate as tending to increase the difficulty of adjusting the question of the Indians on a basis at once satisfactory to South Africa and to the Empire. It is not an easy question. It threatens to produce serious trouble and unrest in India, and has gravely perturbed the Indian Government. We dare to hope that some settlement may be reached by negotiations between Calcutta and Pretoria; but if they fail, the Radical Government cannot escape much of the responsibility of failure. Considering their solicitude for the Chinese coolies, it is surprising that, when the South African Constitution was in the making, they did not reserve to the Imperial Government some power to protect the interests of the natives and the British Indians. They sinned with their eyes open; for the Indian controversy was one of long standing. It was once said of a sentimentalist that he could weep over a dead donkey and ill-treat his wife. In similar fashion our Radical Government can pump up ecstasies of sympathy for aliens when there are votes to be gained, and ignore their fellow-subjects as creatures of no account.

The South African Government (says "Reynold's") is clearly in the wrong in regard to the strike of the Indian labourers who have been introduced into Natal to do the rough work for the white Colonists. The Government has been both tyrannical and unjust. It has tried in the most ruthless manner to exploit the labour of these Indians in the interests of the white caste, and at the same time it has endeavoured by partial and discriminating laws to prevent these Indians from entering into competition with the white man in any sphere which he has marked out for his own. The treatment of these Indians is a blot on the fair fame of the Empire. . . . If the British Empire stands for oppression like this, then its days in India are numbered. The Indians, however, have not yet lost faith in the disinterestedness of the Indian and the Imperial Governments, and their appeal for justice ought not to fall on deaf ears. If the Imperial Government cannot interfere with the internal affairs of a self-governing Colony, it can at least withdraw from the South African Government, the privileges and trading facilities which it at present enjoys in India so long as it continues to resort to such oppressive methods.

For the Indian is not like the Dublin working man. He is hardly likely to suffer, as, no doubt, he is at present suffering, at the dictation of leaders, for a mere ideal. In our opinion (says the "Mining World and Engineering World") it shows there is a saving sense of prudence and restraint operating amongst these Indians, or we should have accounts, not of the destruction of a few solitary acres of cane, but of areas as large as the counties of Sussex and Surrey combined.

Neither the Government of United South Africa nor the authorities in the Province of Natal have dealt well by the immigrant natives of India (says the "Investors' Review") consequently the revolt of Indians in Natal with which they are now disturbed is only one more example of the reaper reaping what he has sown. The Natalese whites are not the most admirable examples to be found in our colonies of the Anglo-Saxon temper and character. We remember many things to their despite, things mean, ignoble, that occurred during the Boer War. We can only deprecatingly advise, and our impotence be thereby proclaimed in India itself. Thus is the unity of this great Empire of ours illustrated.

"The Times," in the course of a leading article, says:— It embraces all classes and communities, and, though it implies no disloyalty, it raises issues about the future status of Indians in the Empire which must in time be far more a cause for anxiety to British statesmen than all the bombs ever made and all the plots ever concocted by Indian anarchists. We wish the Commission which General Botha has very properly appointed to consider the grievances of Indians in South Africa had included men more widely known throughout the Empire. The stories of ill-treatment are unquestionably exaggerated, but it was very desirable that they should be investigated by a Commission whose findings would have been accepted without question in India.

The fact that the Indians in South Africa are not disorderly, though there is plenty of reason for being thankful for it, is very far from making the situation satisfactory, says the "Morning Advertiser." The fact is that, while their conduct is in every way exemplary, they have been treated by the Union Government not only with oppression but with bad faith. We quite appreciate the necessity, if South Africa is to be a white man's country, that the immigration of Asiatics with a lower standard of living should be stopped. We are by no means without sympathy with those who demand its stoppage. But it was stopped on certain conditions, and those conditions have not been observed. The British Indians already domiciled in South Africa were to be fairly treated. They have not been fairly treated. They have been subjected to oppressive restrictions and to severe extra taxes. They have been seeking redress for three years, and cannot get it. Now they have mildly broken out. The fault of course is with the Union Government.

If Indians were Englishmen.

Suppose a hundred thousand Englishmen—labourers mostly—went over to Canada and settled down there. Suppose the Canadians looked at them askance, denied them the right to vote or to play any prominent part in the concerns of the community, trampled on them generally, and made their life just worth living and nothing more. Well, somebody over here would kick, and there would be meetings of protest, and lots of resolutions would be passed, and all that sort of thing.

But suppose, further, that those hundred thousand Englishmen—labourers mostly—were joined by a dozen or so doctors from Harley Street, half-a-dozen suffragan bishops, a good few solid tradesmen, some lawyers with the reputation of, say, Mr. Duke or Mr. Marshall Hall, and a few non-Parliamentary but well-known public men, like Mr. Harold Cox, let us say, or Mr. Belloc. Now, what would be said in England if our hypothetical Canadians put the bishops and the lawyers and the public men on exactly the same level as the labourers, treated them with more or less good-humoured indulgence, but, nevertheless, made them feel that they belonged to a lower order of creation—to the nigger order, in fact?

In that case, who would say what? We can guess, perhaps, remembering that there is a Law Union, an Established Church, a British Medical Association, and a high standard of public conduct.

Well, the unfortunate Indians in South Africa are just in that position. There are men there, Hindus and Moslems, of all grades and callings. They are all equally feared by the South Africans, says "Vanity Fair."

Zanzibar Sympathy.

A general meeting of the Zanzibar Indians was held recently in order to protest against the treatment of Indians in South Africa and to offer their sympathy. Speeches were made, and resolutions passed in keeping with the objects of the meeting. An appeal was made for funds, and a ready response was given. A sum of £20 was subscribed at once, which was sent to the editor of this journal to be forwarded to the proper quarters. (This amount has been received, and we hereby acknowledge receipt of same.)

Cablegrams to Lord Hardinge and Lord Crewe, expressing heartfelt thanks for sympathy and assistance towards the Indians of South Africa were also despatched.

Passive Resisters Sentenced.

On the 2nd inst. 124 men, women and children went from Durban to New Germany, near Pinetown, where a passive resisters camp was formed. The next day 76 indentured men were arrested and sentenced to seven days' hard labour. On their release they were taken to the Protector's offices, where some of them were persuaded to return to their estates. On Saturday thirteen of the men, indentured to Harrison Bros., Avoca, were charged for refusing to return. All pleaded guilty. They complained of being ill-treated at the time of the strike. They asked the Protector to help them, but he did not. The Magistrate (Mr. Gibson) said that he had no sympathy for them. Work must be done and they could not be allowed to strike. One man who had several similar convictions against him was sentenced to 20 days' hard labour, and the others to 14 days. Three men from the Natal Estates were sentenced for the same offence to 14 days' imprisonment, and one to seven days. Two men from the Umhloti Valley Sugar Company went to gaol for 14 days. One man from R. J. Chick's estate, Umgeni, who was sentenced to 14 days' hard labour, said that he would not return even if he was to be hanged.

The Release of Mrs. Mehtab.

The first Mahomedan lady passive resister, Mrs. Sheikh Mehtab, and her mother, Hanifa Bibi, were released from the Maritzburg Gaol on Monday morning at 7.30. A large crowd waited outside to receive them, including Mr. Amod Bhayat and other members of the local community. A party from the Phoenix Settlement, including Mrs. Maganlal Gandhi, Jeeki Bhen, Mrs. Govindoo, Miss West, Miss Fatima, and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, journeyed to the City in order to welcome these brave women. Other ladies present were Mrs. Padamsing, Jethan Bai, Mrs. S. Mhaaraj, Mrs. Ramgoolam, Mrs. Chinsammy Naidoo, Miss Kailas Moodley and others. The ladies were duly honoured with garlands and bouquets from the local Committee and also from the Edendale Indians. The party entrained for Durban in the afternoon, and at Malvern Mr. Rustomjee was first on the field with garlands and flowers from the Zoroastrian Aujuman. At Durban they were met by a great gathering, including a large number of ladies. Miss Schlesin garlanded the ladies on behalf of the Transvaal Indian Women's Association, and Mr. Sorralzi on behalf of the Natal Indian Association. A meeting was afterwards held at 110, Field Street, when speeches were delivered by several speakers, including Miss Molteno. Mr. Akoon, servant and friend of the Mehtab family, who crossed the border and was sentenced with Mrs. Mehtab, was released the same day from the Durban (Point) Gaol. He was looking extremely run down in health, and we understand that he has serious complaints to make regarding the prison treatment.

Support from East Africa.

The following resolutions were unanimously passed at a general meeting of the Indians of Nairobi, British East Africa, on Dec. 14, 1913:—

"That this meeting expresses its great admiration of the intense patriotism, courage, and self-sacrifice of the Indians in South Africa, i.e.; Mr. Gandhi and his brave and faithful associates, who, heroically suffering persecution in the interest of their country, are carrying on their powerful and unselfish struggle for their just rights against heavy and overwhelming odds, and calls upon all Indians to help them to their utmost with funds."

"That this meeting begs earnestly to press upon the Imperial Government and Government of India the absolute and urgent necessity of immediate intervention, and save the Indians in South Africa from further heartless, debasing, and disgraceful persecution, or to deal with the South Africans in the same manner in India in which the latter deal with the Indian interest until such time as they cease to adhere to the selfish and one-sided policy, which they proclaim and practice, of denying to his Majesty's British Indian subjects their just and equitable rights as citizens of the Empire."

"That this meeting views with satisfaction, and expresses its heartfelt gratitude to Lord Hardinge for his straightforwardness and sympathy shown by the very prompt action he has taken in the cause of our brethren in South Africa."

Another Hunger Strike.

Owing to certain gaol grievances not receiving proper attention at the hands of the authorities in charge of the Durban Gaol, a number of Indian passive resistance prisoners undertook another hunger strike—the third, we believe, since the incarceration—until the grievances were remedied. On the sixth day of the fast, the Natal Indian Association sent the following telegram to the Minister for Justice of the Interior:—"Natal Indian Association learns that certain passive resistance prisoners have been fasting since Saturday in order obtain unadulterated ghee, which necessary for religious reasons; sandals, socks, for reasons health, and to which all accustomed; also self-respecting measure obtain issue instructions native. European warders cease calling them offensively "coolies." Association earnestly begs Minister's intervention prevent tragic consequences prolongation fast which has become necessary because so far redress unobtainable local authorities."

To the above message the following reply was received, dated the 9th inst.:—"Your wire received. The gaol superintendent reports that the Indian prisoners have now ceased fasting. Minister instructs me to inform you that second kind of ghee asked for was authorised for the present. Prior to this fast commencing sandals and socks have been issued as the medical officer thinks fit, and visiting magistrate finds no hardship has been suffered. Minister has inquired and finds that term by which Indian prisoners are addressed is not used offensively."

[Note.—The official reply ignores the fact that the medical officer had apparently neglected his duty until it became necessary for the prisoners to adopt so drastic a means of protest, and the Government apparently cannot grasp the elementary fact that Indians, as a community, resent, have always resented, will always resent, being generally described as "coolies," not because they despise manual labour any more more than Europeans do in this country, but because, by humbling them to the level of the coolie, the lowest possible standard of treatment is thereby fixed. Gaol authorities should be specifically instructed not to use this term towards Indian prisoners.—Ed. "I.O."]

News in Brief.

One of those incidents which confirm one's opinion that indentured labour is in reality slavery occurred recently at Verulam. Mr. Charlie Jackson, a local planter, has amongst his Indians a man and woman, both of whom are indentured. This couple have a son, eleven years of age, whom they wish to send to school. But Mr. Jackson interfered and compelled the boy to work. The parents, being determined to give their boy some education, advised him to refuse to work. Mr. Jackson thereupon prosecuted the boy, claiming that he was indentured. The case was brought before the Magistrate and Mr. Britter appeared for the boy, when the hearing was adjourned so as to allow Mr. Jackson to produce proof of indenture. It appears that Mr. Jackson was relying upon the endorsement of the boy's name on the back of the parents' indenture, which he found to be worthless, and so, when the case was again brought forward, Mr. Jackson did not appear, thus admitting that he had no right to compel the boy to work or to prevent him from attending school.

A farewell reception, to which the leading merchants were invited, was given by Mr. S. R. Sarfudin, at Johannesburg, on the 29th ult., in honour of Mr. M. P. Fancy, who is shortly leaving for India on a visit. Mr. Mujid Siman, secretary to the Ottoman Consul-General in Johannesburg, was also present. Speeches were made eulogising the services of Mr. Fancy to the community, to which Mr. Fancy suitably responded. The usual floral honours were accorded.

The Indian trouble, which has proved such a serious menace recently, and which is yet far from being ended, is a direct result of the vacillating and dishonest policy which has characterised the negotiations of the Government with the Indian leaders from the outset of the trouble, says the "Transvaal Leader."

In Dr. Montessori's scheme of education, liberty is closely connected with discipline. But just as she says, "Liberty is not freedom from restraint," so she says, "Discipline is not a fact, but a path." "Discipline itself must come through liberty." "We do not consider an individual disciplined only when he has been rendered as artificially silent as a mute and as immovable as a paralytic. He is an individual, annihilated, not disciplined. We call an individual disciplined when he is master of himself, and can therefore regulate his own conduct when it shall be necessary to follow some rule of life." "The first dawning of real discipline comes through work." "No one learns self-discipline through hearing another man speak."

Sir Murray Hammick, of the Madras Civil Service, in contributing Rs. 75 to the South African Fund, adds: "Please accept a small token of my real sympathy with the Indians in South Africa; I do hope it may all result in some satisfactory settlement."

INDIAN INQUIRY COMMISSION.

It is notified for general information that the Meeting of the above Commission advertised for the 12th January, 1914, has been postponed till the 19th January, 1914. The Commission will sit on that date in the Library, Law Courts, Durban, at 11 a.m.

FRITZ B. ADLER,
Secretary to the Commission,
c/o Chief Magistrate, Durban.