

Indian Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN ENGLISH AND GUJARATI

No. 37—VOL. XIII.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1915.

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper
PRICE ONE PENNY

(AN INDENTURED MAN'S CAREER

THIS is the story told to us by one Munusamy, a poor, broken-down specimen of humanity, who was without hope in the world, and whose only remaining desire was to be able to die in India: I am a native of Arcot in Madras Presidency. I was married and lived with my people. Owing to a succession of quarrels, I left my home and went to an emigration recruiting agent and eventually sailed for Natal. On arrival I was taken to Stanger where I worked for seven months. I do not know the name of my employer, but he was known as 'Fishan,' (meaning short in the Native language). He "sold" me and others to "Long One" coterie (estate) where we stayed a week and were again "sold" to Thompson coterie. Here I finished my first term of indenture. I then re-indentured to "Symbella" where I completed two terms of two years each. I saved £22 during the first five years and £29 in the next four years. This is how the money went: I lent £10 and a further £15 to a man who afterwards became insolvent; £10 I lent to another Indian farmer who was in difficulties—he went away, I was told, to Zululand; and £12 I lent to another man who disappeared. No one paid me anything. Out of £51 saved during these nine years there remained with me only £4. I decided that I would go to India and, with that object in view, I went to the Depôt at Durban. Whilst there I re-indentured to "some European" at Rosetta. I stayed there a month and then, as my master could speak only English and I could not, he sent me back to the person who engaged me in Durban. I was then sent to a house on the Berea where I did garden and house work. After one month my eye became bad and my master gave me some papers and £1 2s. wages and told me to go to the Depôt. The interpreter told me that my master said that they could "sell" me to a sugar planter. I was sent to Mount Edgecombe whence I was taken to Milkwood Kraal. There I finished my two years. Four months before completing my indenture I married a girl named Kullamma, daughter of one Ragavan, of Newlands. The marriage was registered at the Protector's office before the ceremony took place. I spent £30 part of which I borrowed, on the marriage. My wife lived with me for one week and afterwards for a few days, when she finally deserted me. I spent £1 10s, which I borrowed, in trying to get back my wife, but I was unsuccessful. I was then left alone. After the two years was ended I re-indentured for a further term of two years. Then, as I was very sick and my health had become gradually worse, I left the place. Since then I have worked for about eleven months, on and off, at Ottawa, but now I cannot work owing to chronic asthma and I am destitute. I applied for a free passage to India but I was told by the Protector that, unless I could take my wife with me, the Government would not pay my passage. I have no power to compel my wife to accompany me; in fact, I do not know where she is or whether she is still living.

[NOTE: We are not, of course, able to vouch for the truth of the above statement, but the main facts we know to be true. It is not a tale of ill-treatment but just a story of a dull and dreary, drab existence, away from home and friends, in a strange land. This man, like most others, could not tell the names of any of his employers. They were known as the big boss or the little boss, the long one or the short one, the barah sahib or the chhota sahib. How he managed to save so much money is accounted for by the fact that he did not support anyone and, with the life he was leading, he had no occasion to spend his wages. In regard to the refusal of the Government to give this man a free passage unless accompanied by his registered wife, we have nothing to say, as there is justice in saying that a man may not leave his wife behind. Such a story illustrates the moral evil in the indenture system. Family quarrels which would be put right in time are the cause of men leaving their homes in India, and, as Sir Benjamin Robertson said when he was here, they do not care where they go so long as they get away. Such men fall an easy prey to the recruiting agent and, before they have time to repent of their action, they find themselves in a strange land where the ties of home and relationship, even the bond of husband and wife, become loosened and eventually broken. Such a system stands condemned. It is the duty of every man and woman in India to raise their voices in protest against a system which manufactures such tragedies.—Ed. I.O.]

Immigration Appeal Upheld

[BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT]

Pretoria, Monday.

The appeal of Mahomed, son of Ismail Ahmed, against the decision of the Registrar of Asiatics was to-day brought before the Transvaal Immigration Appeal Board.

It was pointed out by the appellant's attorney, Mr. de Beer, that since the application of his client had been refused and an appeal noted, the Registrar had been furnished with affidavits from three leading members of the Indian community, stating that they knew Mahomed to be the son of Ismail Ahmed, and further that they knew him to be of the age of 14 years.

Mr. de Beer said that, in view of what the Board had lately said regarding the completion of D.I.91 forms, he considered that this was a case where sufficient evidence had been put before the Board to dispense with the absolute necessity for completing this form.

Mr. Chamney asked the Board to adjourn the case in order to reconsider his decision.

Mr. de Beer considered that he was entitled to have the appeal disposed of.

Mr. Chamney raised no objection to this and the appeal was accordingly upheld.

An Inspector of Prisons on Punishment

Lieut.-Col. G. S. Mardall, who has just retired from the position of Inspector of Prisons for Natal, the Orange Free State and Griqualand West, gives some interesting reminiscences in an article contributed to the *Natal Mercury*. He has been connected with Police and Prison work for 36 years. The writer was of the opinion that flogging was no preventive to further crime but rather the reverse.

"On representations made by me to the Government, supported by the Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department (Mr. Barnes), who had agreed to employ a large number of Natal Native Rebellion convicts on public works, the sentences of lashes on 4,000 of the rebels were suspended during good behaviour. I always look back on my action in this matter with satisfaction (says Lieut.-Col. Mardall), as the results fully justified the recommendation; for it was never necessary to inflict the floggings, but 700 of the number had already received their lashes.

"Natal has acquired, and not without cause, an unenviable notoriety for the excessive amount of flogging in gaol, and this reputation has gone far beyond our borders. I have lost no opportunity in expressing my views and experience on the subject. The fear of the lash may be a deterrent, but there is conclusive proof that flogging is no preventive to further crime. The cat hardens and brutalises, and for the first and minor offenders is manifestly unfair, for it will usually brand him for life as a criminal. In cases where corporal punishment has proved a failure as a deterrent to further crime, to go on applying the lash sentence after sentence is merely useless torture, which must in time injure the society that has recourse to it. The primary object of punishment is the protection of society, and what useful purpose is served or benefited from continued application of a form of punishment that has conclusively failed in its object? My attitude in this matter always received the most sympathetic consideration from our Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, and the Minister of Justice in the last Natal Cabinet, Mr. Justice Carter.

"An Habitual Offenders' Act makes provision for the indeterminate imprisonment of recidivists, who can only be released on the recommendation of the Prisons Board. A later Act gives relief to the casual offender, and provides for suspended sentences, the payment of fines by instalments, and other means for keeping the non-criminal out of gaol, for the imprisonment of native and Indian servants on minor charges, debtors, and offenders under the Pass Laws, etc., merely makes criminals of them. Deterioration in gaol for this class is inevitable, and short sentences are valueless. To quote from the annual report of the English Prisons Commissioners for 1913: 'Short sentences served in youth form the most important recruiting factor for the ranks of the adult criminal.'

"It is not necessary to be a student of penology to know that youth now excels in crime, as in many other more respectable vocations. Punishment will not reform the evil doer, and vice breeds rapidly in gaol atmosphere. We shall only cease the manufacture of criminals in gaol when further distinction is made between the real criminal and the artificial substitute that goes so far to swell our prison population to-day.

The convict can only reform by human and sympathetic treatment, but the advocate of reform must be no narrow-minded faddist, and any amelioration in the lot of law-breakers in gaol must be subservient to the ultimate benefit to the community, and all penal methods adopted should have this end in view. Finally, to quote from Sir Robert Anderson's excellent work on the subject: 'Punishment is merely a means to an end, and the infliction of punishment save with some intelligent and beneficial aim, is not only senseless, but barbarous.'

Indian Ambulance Corps

We understand that daily enquiries are being made of the Natal Indian Association for further particulars and, as the communications are still proceeding between the Imperial Government and the Union Authorities, definite information is expected at any moment now. In the meantime it has been ascertained that Imperial Service Regulations will apply to the men going and their dependents. Colonial-born Indians are freely coming forward and the following is a list of those volunteering:—

Chris. L. John, L. Gabriel, M. B. Lazarus, D. C. Andrews, Herbert Nayanah, Gopaul Naidoo, C. Stephens, B. Mahabai Singh, Jacob John, Nynah C. Naidoo, Jacob John, C. B. Stevens, M. P. Gunnie, Vengadalam Pillay, N. Dookie, Marda Singh, V. Arumugam, Moses Francis, M. K. Reddy, S. Narayanan, B. Bughwan, N. Barnabas, H. Roberts, R. Coopooosamy, S. Jamungal, A. J. Peters, C. Nagaper, G. R. George, Aloysius David, C. W. Boulton, S. T. Ramsey, T. Royeppen, R. S. Peter, V. S. Naidoo, S. Jacob, F. Thomas, J. Kistern, J. Alexander, J. C. Moorgas, R. E. P. Reddy and A. Christopher.

A meeting of Indians was held in the Court-house, Stanger, on Friday last, when eleven signed themselves as willing to go to Europe with the Ambulance Corps.

The Coloured Battalion

The *Rand Daily Mail's* Capetown correspondent states that, to say that the local coloured community were delighted at the decision officially communicated by the Defence Department to the effect that the Government were at last prepared to accept the services of an infantry battalion of Cape coloured men and two bearer companies of Indians is to put it mildly. "Had the recruiting opened and due notice been given the full complement would have been ready to sail immediately," said a prominent citizen who has identified himself very closely with the efforts to get the Cape coloured men recognised as willing to shed their blood for freedom as any other members of the British Empire.

"There will be such a boom in recruiting," said Dr. Abdurahman, "as will surprise Capetown when the word goes forth. Some time ago we of the A.P.O. sent out circulars throughout the Union asking for men to volunteer for service if required in any capacity in German South-West or elsewhere. The return was staggering, no less than 1,300 names being received within ten days. I have no doubt that these men will still be available. The difficulty will be to keep them from the recruiting depots.

"And the question of officers?" was asked.

"Any amount of men of great experience are only too anxious to be of help." Here the doctor mentioned names. There will be more officers than required unless the Government make up their minds to have more than one battalion. The bearer companies are already in evidence. They were ready months ago, but were told it was a white man's war. That rather soured their temper, but the prevailing feeling is still to serve the Empire, and they will not be lacking in courage or initiative. Letters have poured in from Swaziland, Basutoland and Rhodesia—in fact from all parts of South Africa south of the Zambesi, offering service. You wait and see," concluded the doctor. "The coloured contingent will be a credit to the Union, and after victory will be one of its best assets."

For Service in East Africa

Kimberly, September, 17th (Reuter).—Sir Chas. Crewe met a coloured deputation this afternoon on the question of the coloured contingent for Imperial service. It was ascertained that the contingent would receive Imperial rates of pay. There will be two medical examinations, the first a severe one. The training centre

will be the Cape Peninsula, and unmarried men will be enrolled as far as possible. 'Cape coloured men only will be accepted. Strict discipline will be enforced, and the destination of the regiment will be British East Africa, and afterwards Europe.

Capetown, Sept. 23. (Reuter). — Sir Charles Crewe, to-day met the Provisional Committee in connection with recruiting for the Cape Coloured Battalion. The preliminary arrangements were made for recruiting, and it is expected that actual recruiting will start in ten day's time. The site for the camp will be Green Point Common, Capetown.

From the Editor's Chair

OFFICIAL CHANGES

At the end of this week Mr. M. Chamney, the senior Principal Immigration Officer of the Union and Transvaal Registrar of Asiatics, hands over charge of his department to Mr. C. W. Cousins, lately of Capetown, and retires from the Union Civil Service. We have had many differences of opinion with Mr. Chamney, both as to principle and practice, and we still have some of these, but Mr. Chamney has always had certain saving graces which have not infrequently gone far to soften the asperities of controversy. We will not dip into the past, but we take this opportunity of wishing him well in the future. We cannot honestly say that we welcome his successor in office. Our experience of him, as indicated by our columns from time to time, has shown him to be a narrow minded, cold-blooded and vindictive official, hampered by a strong hostility towards and prejudice against the Indian community. We very much fear that our Transvaal brethren have, if we may say so without offence to Mr. Chamney, exchanged King Log for King Stork. Of course, we may be pleasantly disappointed, and discover that a change of scene and of work may give an officer desirous of doing his duty firmly, a desire to be charitable and sympathetic; but we very much fear that such a disappointment will not be ours. Fortunately, however, Mr. Cousins at the end of a thousand-mile telegraph wire will be far differently placed from Mr. Chamney within hail of Union Buildings, and we trust the change of conditions will have beneficial results upon the conduct of his office.

ON PUNISHMENT

This conclusion come to by Lieut.-Col. Mardall, Inspector of Prisons for Natal, the Free State and Griqualand West, in regard to the effect of punishment upon those unfortunates who find themselves within the power of the law, is an interesting one. It appears from the reminiscences we reproduce elsewhere that the Lieut.-Col. who has now retired from the service, has had a long experience of police and prison work in South Africa. His opinion, therefore, on matters relating to crime and criminals should carry weight. Today rebels, who took part in a movement to overthrow the Government, and caused the loss of many lives and the expenditure of thousands upon thousands of pounds, are allowed to regain their complete freedom after a few months (the latest report from Pretoria being that about 2 000 rebels on parole, who hitherto have had to report monthly to the police, are now released from that obligation). Yesterday, as it were, 4,000 Natives, who took part in the "armed protest" known as the Natal Native Rebellion of 1906, were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment with lashes in addition. Need we point out that the rebels of to-day are white men and that those of yesterday were black? "Yes, we are rebels, and proud to be rebels. Deep down in our hearts is the burning desire to see the day when our own flag shall once more float above

us. That day has not yet come, but England, is sinking deeper, and deeper into difficulties. Her difficulty is our opportunity, and that day will surely come." These words were uttered only a few days ago by Mr. Everard Fichardt at an electioneering meeting in the Orange Free State. And although General Botha's attention was recently called to these remarks, this man will not be punished because a general election is approaching and it will not pay to offend any of the voters whose sympathies are known to be anti-British. Lieut.-Col. Mardall speaks of "the unenviable notoriety for the excessive amount of flogging in gaol" that Natal has acquired. He informs us that, in the case of the 4,000 Native rebel prisoners, the Government, upon representations made by him, supported by the Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department, agreed to suspend the sentences of lashes during good behaviour, and it was never found necessary to inflict the floggings. "The fear of the lash may be a deterrent he says, but there is conclusive proof that flogging is no preventive to further crime. The 'cat' hardens and brutalises, and for the first and minor offenders is manifestly unfair, for it will usually brand him for life as a criminal." "On the 9th of this month there appeared before the Magistrate in Johannesburg four boys—three white and one coloured—the oldest being twelve years of age, charged with stealing books. Pitiable tales were told by the mothers of the four boys of neglect, trouble and crime. The three white boys were sent, at the request of the mothers, to an industrial school until 18 years of age and the coloured boy was ordered to receive seven cuts with the cane, and the request of the mother that he should be sent to an industrial school was ignored. What is the matter with this country? Is there something in the atmosphere that breeds a kind of cancer in the brain and prevents a magistrate from dealing out justice where colour is concerned? Or may be that there is no provision for coloured boys in industrial schools and so the magistrate had no alternative but to order that the boy should be thrashed and let loose to develop a career of crime. If that is so, then it is high time that some other method than that of hardening and brutalising be adopted in the case of coloured children who stray away through evil environment and example from the path of virtue.

Mr. Chamney Retires

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

Pretoria, Monday.

At the conclusion of the proceedings of the Immigration Appeal Board to-day Mr. Chamney, the Registrar of Asiatics and Principal Immigration Officer, addressed it as follows:

"As this is my last official appearance before the Board I wish to thank you Sir and the members of the Board for the invariable courtesy which you have extended to me. As you know, I am no trained lawyer—in fact I am not a lawyer at all, and that being so, I must often have spoken in a manner which was not exactly in accordance with the rules and procedure of Court. If I had a better knowledge of law court proceedings I would probably have escaped such pitfalls, but I did my best. I am also very much obliged to the side-bar for the courtesy which they have invariably shown to me. We have at times had considerable difficulties and differences of opinion but I have always tried to forget them immediately I left the precincts of the Court. My successor, Mr. Cousins, has arrived in Pretoria and I had hoped to have the pleasure of introducing him to the Board but unfortunately, he has not yet succeeded in finding the humble abode of the Immigration Department. I may, however, have the opportunity of introducing him before I leave. I feel certain that the good relations which have existed between the Board and myself will also be extended to him."

The Chairman, Mr. Rose Innes, in reply said :—

" Mr. Chamney, I desire, on behalf of the members of this Board, to state our extreme regret that you are severing your connection with the Department which you have for such a long time honourably and ably served. This means the official good-bye and we wish to express our high appreciation of the manner in which you have carried out your difficult duties. We know in what a difficult position you have often been placed. There is one thing, however, although we were not always able to agree, we feel that you have always tried to assist us in every possible manner. You have enjoyed the confidence of the Court and I feel sure you have also enjoyed the confidence of the practitioners with whom you have come into contact. This Board has never doubted your sincerity, and I am sure the same can be said of the practitioners. We once more wish to thank you for the able manner in which you have carried out your duties and trust you will enjoy a long and happy life."

Mr. Cousins, the successor of Mr. M. Chamney as Registrar of Asiatics and Principal Immigration Officer at Pretoria, was in town to-day. It is understood that he will take over his new duties immediately and that he will be present on Monday next at the sitting of the Immigration Board.

New Licenses at Maritzburg

A special meeting of the Maritzburg Town Council—presided over by the Mayor—was held (says the *Natal Witness*) to consider several appeals against the decision of the Licensing Officer.

Mr. F. S. Tatham, K.C., assisted by Mr. A. H. Hime, appeared on behalf of Mr. N. B. Naik, in respect of an application made by him (Mr. Naik) for a new retail general dealer's licence in regard to the premises, No. 530, Church Street, which application was refused by the Licensing Officer, on the grounds that there were already too many trading licences held by Asiatics in the borough, and that it was undesirable to increase the number. Also if and when an additional general dealer's licence was to be granted to an Asiatic, preference should be given to a Maritzburg-born, or at least a Natal-born Hindu.

The application was supported by Col. Wales, V.D.; Mr. W. H. Griffin, the Hindu Temple, and a number of prominent Indian merchants in the City. A petition in favour of the applicant contained 131 signatures, all being apparently Englishmen.

Mr. Tatham, for the applicant, maintained that, in refusing the licence, the Council was sweeping away half the value of the property, and the resulting loss to the bondholder—a European—would be very serious. In his (Mr. Tatham's) opinion, it would be a good thing to turn the whole of the premises of the side of Retief Street they were considering—viz. from Retief Street to the Willow Bridge—into shops; for at the present time the locality indicated constituted an eyesore and was often the resort of a very undesirable class of people. It was very much better that the Indians should have their own quarters, just as the Europeans had.

After considering the matter, the Council agreed to reverse the decision of the Licensing Officer, and to grant Mr. Naik the licence.

A similar decision was arrived at in the case of Mr. Charlie Nulliah, who applied for a new retail general dealer's licence for the premises, No. 459, Church Street (corner of Retief Street), the Council granting such licence.

Mr. A. H. Hime appeared for the successful applicant, and stated, amid laughter, that Mr. Nulliah was a Natal-born Indian, and just the right sort of man the Licensing Officer was looking for.

અઠવાડીક પંચાંગ

વાર	ખ્રીસ્તી ૧૯૧૫ સપ્ટે	હિંદુ ૧૯૭૧ ભાદરવા	મુસલમાન ૧૩૩૩ જલકાદ	પારસી ૧૨૮૫	સુર્યોદય	સુર્યાસ્ત
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રવિ	૨૬	"	૩	૧૬	૧૫	૫-૪૫ ૫-૫૫
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મંગળ	૨૮	"	૫	૧૮	૧૭	૫-૪૨ ૫-૫૬
બુધ	૨૯	"	૬	૧૯	૧૮	૫-૪૧ ૫-૫૭
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Indian Opinion

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ગ્રાહકોને વિનંતિ

હવેથી ઇ. ઓપીનીઅનનું લવાજમ દ. આફ્રીકાના યુનીઅનને માટે એક વરસના પોસ્ટેજ સાથે ૦-૫-૬ રાખ્યું છે. યુનીઅન બહારનું લવાજમ પોસ્ટેજ સાથે ૦-૬-૬ છે. જેમનું લવાજમ અમારી પાસે જમા છે તેમને આ નવા લવાજમના દર પ્રમાણે સુદતમાં વધારો કરી આપવામાં આવશે. આ જાહેર પત્રથી અમારા ગ્રાહકો કે જેનું લવાજમ અમારી પાસે જમા હશે તેમણે સમજી લેવું કે અમે તેમને સુદતમાં વધારો કરી આપ્યો છે.

છુટક નકલ એક પેની, પોસ્ટેજ અરધી પેની.

હિંદુસ્તાનની સ્ટીમરો અને ટપાલ

સ્ટી. પાંડુઆ - તા. ૨૩ સપ્ટેમ્બરના અરસામાં જંગલાર રસ્તે મુંબઈ જવા ઉપડશે. તા. ૧૬ મીએ આવવા વકી હતી.

સ્ટી. સુરત - તા. ૬ અક્ટોબરના અરસામાં આવવા વકી છે.

સ્ટીમર કેકોન માર - તા. ૨ અક્ટોબરના અરસામાં આવવા વકી છે.

સ્ટીમર દીલવારા - તા. ૨ અક્ટોબરના અરસામાં જંગલાર રસ્તે મુંબઈ જવા ઉપડશે.

સ્ટીમર ગુજાત - તા. ૪ અક્ટોબરે કોલમ્બો થઈ કલકત્તા માટે ઉપડશે.

સ્ટીમર અમલોદી - તા. ૧૯ સપ્ટેમ્બરે કલકત્તાથી ઉપડી છે.

સ્ટી. અમકુઝી - તા. ૬ અક્ટોબરના અરસામાં કોલમ્બો રસ્તે કલકત્તા જવા ઉપડશે.