

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

THE London correspondent of the *Leader* of Allahabad writes:—The South African situation is becoming so acute that Mr. Montagu is being approached to arrange for the association of the Government of India with the commission to be appointed by the Union Government to examine the Indian position there, from which the local Indian community fear the worst. Mr. Sastri is contemplating the possibility of returning to India by way of South Africa in order to study the situation.

South African Indians would highly appreciate such a visit from Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, the successor to the late Mr. Gokhale as President of the Servants of India Society and one of India's foremost leaders.

"I cannot imagine a greater blow to British prestige for justice in the East (writes Mr. C. F. Andrews in the Indian press) than would be given by the British acquiescence in the dismemberment of Turkey."

Commenting on the death of Mr. Dawad Mahomed, *Young India* says:—

"All India will join Mr. Gandhi in mourning the death of Mr. Dawood Mahomed. His life teaches all of us a lesson we should take to heart but it is a lesson specially for our merchant princes. Mr. Dawad Mahomed was no petty merchant. He enjoyed credit at the banks of Natal to the extent of nearly a lac of pounds sterling. He owned thousands of pounds' worth of property and his fluid resources ran often into six figures. He spent as he earned. He kept a first class establishment and spent money like water in giving his son—a boy of great promise who died a premature death—a liberal education in England. He was thus an able and successful merchant, a staunch patriot and a wise father. No man need aspire after more. We offer to Mr. Dawood Mahomed's family and our countrymen in South Africa our sincere condolences."

Mr. Gandhi has undertaken the editorship of Gujarati weekly *Nava Jivan* (New Life) which is being published without advertisements after the example of this journal which adopted the principle some years ago.

Mr. Devidas Gandhi, youngest son of Mr. M. K. Gandhi, who has for a considerable time been conducting Hindi class at Madras, writes to the press on the quiet but persistent Hindi propaganda going on there. "Our ideal," he says, "is that the people of every province should know a second language which will be a vehicle of social intercourse with the people of all other provinces of India. English, no doubt, seems to serve at present as a common language; but its utility in this respect is only to a limited extent as the number of English knowing people in the various provinces is small, whereas the utility of Hindi is to a far greater extent in as much as more than two-thirds of the population of India use it. It is further a language which enjoys the advantage of being as common between Hindus and Mussalmans, as can be expected. With the addition of a few words to the vocabulary and

omission from it of a few sanskrit words it would be the Hindustani spoken by our Mussalman brethren of Madras or the Urdu of Northern India Mussalmans."

Writing on the proposed Commission of Inquiry on the Indian question in the Union the *Commonweal* writes:—It is not surprising that, with our experience of past Commissions regarding India, the people have but little faith in the outcome of the Commission. But we believe nothing will be lost by the publicity that will be given to India's case during the course of the Commission. But we must see that India's representatives on the Commission are such as will command the confidence of the public. One of the two is going to be a non-official and we cannot think of any other name at present than that of Mr. Gandhi. The struggle of the Indians in the Transvaal has been identified so completely with the name of Mr. Gandhi that nobody else will be better able to represent our case on the Commission than Mr. Gandhi.

In the Report of the Superintendent of Education for Natal, for the year 1918 just published, mention is made of the Higher Education inaugurated in Durban. Inspector Ballance writes:—The institution of a "top" at Carlisle Street School introduces a parallel condition to the Sydenham Indian College. It is yet too early to speak confidently of the change, but appearances seem to suggest that the Government institution will forge ahead and occupy that position which the latter should have filled, but somehow has failed to.

On the same subject, Inspector Murray-Brown says:—A class for secondary work has been started under favourable auspices at the Carlisle Street School, and over 20 pupils are likely to go forward to the University Junior Examination in 1919.

The Government of Fiji has refused to cancel the indentures of Indians working on the sugar estates there. Mr. C. F. Andrews, in an article contributed to *Young India*, quotes the words of the Fiji Medical Report as follows:—"When one indentured Indian woman has to serve three indentured Indian men, as well as various outsiders."

Mr. Andrews points out, by the word "serve" is meant the lusts and passions. He puts the position thus:—"The plain and simple question is whether the men and women of India can allow this state of things to go on for another two years, or whether they will insist on the vileness being brought to an end at once." He suggests December 31st next as the date for cancellation.

Mr. C. F. Andrews has been deputed by public bodies in India interested in the welfare of Indian immigrant labour in Ceylon, and also invited by the Ceylon Workers' Welfare League to visit the estates in the Island and report on the condition under which the labourers live and work. After his work in Ceylon in September, Mr. Andrews hoped to visit the Malay

States this month on a similar mission, the results of which, in each case, will be conveyed to the Madras Government.

The Madras Provincial Conference, at its recent session, passed the following resolution on the South African question:—

(a) That this Conference enters its emphatic protest against the enactments of the Asiatic (Land and Trading) Amendment Act by the Union Parliament of South Africa which is a flagrant violation of the fundamental rights of British Indians in South Africa and would certainly result in a few years in reducing the South African Indians to a state of helotry without status, rights of property or profession, not to speak of the rights and privileges of British citizens, and drive them away from the country of their birth and domicile to seek in India new homes and suffer great hardships.

(b) This Conference is further of opinion that the Act is based upon a gross misreading of the agreement arrived at by the Settlement of 1914. (c) This Conference urges on the Imperial Government to interfere and veto this law which was rushed through when this country was pre-occupied with grave domestic questions of supreme importance, and which is sure to produce the Greatest Indignation throughout the land.

The Andra Conference of Madras also passed a similar resolution.

The sixth Anniversary of the Vidhya Purnarnae Sabha was celebrated at the Vidhya Purnarnae Sabha Hall, at Roori-Koppees, on Saturday, the 27th inst. The Hall was tastefully decorated. It was crowded with a large gathering amongst which were a good many ladies.

The General meeting of Tongaat Andhra Dharma Patasala was held on Sunday, the 23rd inst. A reception was given to Mr. Ponosamy Naidoo Sirdar who is shortly having a trip to India. The financial account shows a balance of Rs. 53. 1d.

RETALIATION—OTHERWISE RECIPROCITY

ITS FUTILITY AS A SOLUTION OF OUR PROBLEM

In the course of a leading article in *Young India*, Mr. Gandhi deals with the South African question thus:—

The Imperial Government to be truly Imperial must have, under certain circumstances, be they ever so rare, powers of effective intervention for the protection of weaker interests. It is therefore not possible for Indian public opinion to accept Mr. Montagu's dictum that an exercise of the veto is politically unfeasible. The veto is not merely a moral check, but in exceptional cases it must prove a very material and tangible check upon excesses and upon injustice. The Empire, to hold together must have some basic principles from which no member dare depart. If Mr. Montagu is convinced, as he apparently is, of the injustice of the Asiatic Act and of its controverting the principles of the British constitution, where is the difficulty about vetoing the Act? The utmost that can happen is that South Africa may secede from the Imperial partnership. Surely, it were a thousand times better that South Africa should cease to be a member of the Empire than that it should corrupt and undermine the whole of the Imperial fabric. It is infinitely better that the Empire has fewer partners than they are, but all working together in the same upward direction than that it should, by coquetting with legalised confiscations and such other immoralities, sow the seeds of its own disruption. And after all selfishness, greed and injustice are handmaids of cowardice. There is no reason to fear that a wholesome and timely exercise of the Royal veto will create any great stir in South Africa. The late Sir

Henry Parker, it my recollection serves me right, did issue a threat of secession or some such thing when the late Mr. Chamberlain dared to veto the Australian Immigration Act containing a racial bar.

But, I am free to confess that so long as mild measures are available, the extreme remedy of veto, ought not to be applied. It is undoubtedly like a strong blister causing great though momentary pain, and therefore to be sparingly used. The proposed Commission, if there is a strong Indian representation upon it, should prove effective enough for the purpose to be attained. The best thing, therefore, for the time being is to concentrate public opinion upon a strong Commission and a proper safe-guarding reference under which it should act.

It was a great relief to find Mr. Montagu not falling into the Reciprocity trap prepared by Sir William Meyer. Let me hope, in a hasty moment, I am sorry Mr. Bannerji so easily fell into it. It is murdering the language to use so good a word as Reciprocity for a bad cause as the one under notice. If we must go in for a bad thing, we must at least recognise it by its correct name which is retaliation. Personally, I do not believe in retaliation at all. It always in the end returns with redoubled force on the retaliation. But as the *Times of India* which is rendering signal service to the cause of our countrymen in South Africa very rightly points out, retaliation mis-called reciprocity can serve no earthly purpose in the present case. "Its main objection is its utter futility," and if we ever embark upon this very unpractical method, it will be hailed with satisfaction by the Anti-Asiatic party in South Africa, and we shall be cursed by the hundred and fifty thousand Indians whose very existence is at stake. One may retaliate when the stake is good. It is terrible to think of it when it is men and women who constitute the stake. What comfort can it be to our countrymen in South Africa, for India to be able to send back a steamer-load of cargo from South Africa, to refuse to send to South Africa a few tons of coal, or to shut the gates of India in the face of a stray South African tourist as against the banishment—for that is virtually the goal of the Anti-Asiatic party—of a hundred and fifty thousand Indian settlers, or at least their reduction to helotry. The issue was stated by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter in clear and unmistakable language in 1896 or 95. Writing on this very question of British Indians in South Africa he said, are they or are they not to enjoy the full status of British citizens in His Majesty's Dominions? It cannot be solved by the make-shift of retaliation or reciprocity by whatever term it is recognised. It can only be solved by correct statesmanship and correct conduct on our part.

TWO GREAT INDIANS

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. GANDHI AND PANDIT MALAVITA

A "Madras Journalist" contributes the following to the "*Bombay Chronicle*."

I was staying at Chhatra a few days ago and hearing that Mahatma Gandhi was in Bombay and staying close by at Chhatra, I thought I could not utilise the morning better than by paying my respects to the Mahatma. Learning that he was in, and free to receive visitors, I went in and found Mr. Gandhi seated cross-legged on his couch, dressed in his usual coarse hand-woven clothes and with his spectacles on, busy writing a letter to some friend of his in Guzerat. The letter paper, pencil and envelope were apparently of the more common Swadeshi type, for I noticed the paper was none too fine, the pencil had to be pressed hard to make an impression, and the envelope would not easily open to the prevailing weather. I noticed also that one of the curls of his spectacles had broken midway and was being held in position by a piece of thread knotted round his head. Well, when Mr. Gandhi looked up

from his writing and saw me, his thin ascetic face lighted up with a charming smile as he recognised me and bade me sit down and excuse him for a few minutes as he finished his letter.

As soon as he finished his letter, he turned round to me again and asked me what had brought me all the way from Madras. I told him I had come to see Mr. R—off on his way to England and then we fell to discussing the general situation. I asked him whether he had any near idea of resuming civil disobedience. He said it all depended on the Government and what they did to relieve the situation in the near future. He did not want to complicate matters by any precipitate action of his as it might easily lend itself to mask real issues. If the Government do not move in the matter pretty soon, relieve the situation in the Punjab and repeal the Rowlett Act, it will be his painful duty to resort to Passive Resistance again. Should this contingency arise, he intends to break his internment order on the Madras border as being much the quieter side, so that there may be no excuse for the Government to set in motion any punitive measures on the plea of disorder or violence.

LEARN SPINNING AND WEAVING

I asked him if he had any special message for the time, for the people in South India and any special duty for the Satyagrahis. Yes, he said, I want every man, woman and child to learn hand spinning and weaving. I want every Satyagrahi to help to propagate this work. Let every man learn to provide for his clothing in his house and many of our current problems will resolve themselves. I am asking you to do nothing new. It is not as though you have to skin over the centuries and go to ancient India for this kind of work. Even a few decades back, every village had its hand looms and the people were wearing only clothes woven therefrom. Spinning was being done normally in every house. It is not *neecha* (mean) work. Ranis in palaces have done this. If this is resumed again we shall have done well by our country. I am quite hopeful of results. I have already set a thousand looms going in Guzerat and leading people like Mrs. Bunker, Mrs. Petit, Mrs. Anasubai have taken up spinning enthusiastically. The mechanism is quite simple and a spinning outfit cost only about Rs. 3-8 to Rs. 4. The work is easily learnt in a couple of days. For example you will find in the next room Mrs. T. A. Chettiar learning to spin. She has been at it only from yesterday and a few more hours practice will make her quite fit for the work and quite competent to put other people in the way as I expect her to do.

PANDIT MALAVIYA

Even as we were talking thus, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya came in to see Mr. Gandhi and the talk drifted back to the general situation. It was delightful to see two of India's most worthy sons confabulating so earnestly and so enthusiastically for the good of India. Panditji seemed to grow younger with advancing years and in spite of his 58 years of age he looks more virile and robust than his son who accompanied him. May God bless him with long life and health, for India stands in sore need of sons like him and there is none to replace him! There is no ostentation about him. He wears the same style of dress everywhere and every time and you can hardly mistake him in the biggest crowd. With his turban standing stiff and erect, his forehead adorned with the caste mark in sandal and saffron, his moustaches just mellowing to a golden grey and his face wreathed in smiles, who does not remember the Pandit having once seen him and who does not love him knowing his great love of his country. To see him is a pleasure; to speak to him is a privilege; and I was immensely glad of the opportunity I had of seeing him and speaking to him.

He was explaining the situation in the Punjab, the work (he,) Motilal and a few friends were doing there, the steps they had taken to relieve the situation and

address the grievances and the plans they had in view to throw light on the events of the last few months. I am sorry I am not at liberty to disclose details, but Panditji has not finished his task yet and a premature disclosure may not help him in his work. Then he went on to speak of the affairs of the Hindu University, his difficulties in getting competent hands for the work before them and his expectations as regards further funds to open the agricultural and commercial sections.

NO ANXIETY ABOUT FINANCE

Panditji has no anxieties as regards finance. He has only to ask to receive money "you know I am reputed to have the Evil Eye" says the good old patriot "whatever I cast my eyes on I generally get people know me of old and know that I ask for my country and what they give will go to its up-lift. The other day I went to see Mr.—and spoke to him about building a co-operative dairy farm attached to the Agricultural College which would serve the purpose both of demonstration and provision for the boarders. I told him I had been wandering for some time, to whom to offer the virtuous deed of providing a 100 cows for this noble purpose and lo! his name struck me at once and there, I was before him. He smiled and gave me immediately, Rs. 10,000 to buy 2 100 cows for the farm." Then the Panditji went on to speak of the work before him in the coming September Sessions of the Imperial Legislative Council. He said he had heard from various sources though not officially yet that the Government of India are thinking of bringing in a Bill of Indemnity to safeguard officials against any civil liability for any acts of commission or omission in the recent happenings of the Punjab but still he hoped the Government would not embark on a course so foolish, pledged as they are to hold an independent enquiry. Many of the members of the Imperial Council who could be depended on in such a contingency to make a strenuous fight, were now away in England and therefore the work before him would be all the greater. But one thing, should this rumour be true, they have enough men in England now to show up the lolly and the mischief of such a course.

And so the talk went on from subject to subject but I think I have said enough to indicate the general drift.

NEW INDIAN SCHOOL BUILDING

OPENED IN JOHANNESBURG

The splendidly built Indian school at the corner of Bree and Malherbe Streets, Johannesburg, was opened on the 7th instant (says the *Star*), by the Director of Education, Mr. J. E. Adamson, in the presence of a large company. The municipality was represented by Mr. Lourens, the Central School Board by the Rev. Andrew Brown and other members. Mr. Howard Pim, who presided, said that the day marked the fulfilment of the continued efforts of the Indians. The opening of the school showed that they had made up their minds to do all they possibly could to avail themselves of the privilege of citizenship, and to extend that privilege to their children. He said that the gratitude of the community was due to Mr. Essop Mij, to the chairman of the building committee, Mr. Govadia, to the secretary of the school committee, Mr. Habib Motan, to whom principally was due the realisation of the scheme.

Mr. Adamson, at the outset, expressed the pleasure it was to him to see Mr. Pim present. Through an unfortunate series of circumstances the continuity of Mr. Pim's work in connection with public education appeared to have been broken, and he hoped the day was not far distant when he would take up again in an official capacity what he knew he was always carrying on in a private capacity. He wished to add his congratulations to the Indian community that that development had been brought to such a satisfactory point. The day was significant because it represented one of the cardinal

nal principles on which their great Empire was based, the principle of universal justice. The establishment of the school by the Department of Education was a recognition of that principle. It was recognised some twelve years ago in the Act which was introduced in the Transvaal Parliament by the present Prime Minister that it was the duty of the state to provide for every section and every element of the population in respect to education. The claim of the Indians to that privilege was a strong one for three main reasons. In the first place they had the right which all rational human beings had of assistance as regarded education from the State. It was the right of humanity itself, and of course, the Indians shared it. There was another reason. The Indians were the direct representatives of a very old and very ancient civilisation, and had claims on public Education.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPIRE

The third reason was a strong one. People sometimes forgot that for 150 years Indians had shared all the responsibilities and duties of Empire. None of them, he hoped, would forget what the contribution of India had been to those responsibilities. During the last eventful four years Indians had a claim to the recognition that they had established their right from the courage and the generosity they had shown. Their claims had been particularly studied by the Witwatersrand Central School Board, a body, he thought, they could regard as a jealous guardian of the interests of their children. The Education Department was in a much more detached position, but was always anxious to assist those who were willing to help themselves. This the Indian community had shown they were anxious to do. He considered that the legitimate ambitions of the community in the direction of education should be met, and he hoped that in addition to primary education those ambitions should be carried further. He saw no reason why the school should not march forward to a prosperous and successful future. (Applause.) He noticed from Mr. Thompson's report the recurrence of the word "excellent," and he noticed also the satisfactory feature that out of a roll of 164 children there were none of them absent when the day of the test and examination came. That showed him the community had a very lively sense of its responsibilities. He congratulated the Principal of the school, Mr. Nye, and the staff, and wished the school every possible success. (Applause.)

The Chairman of the building Committee (Mr. M. S. Coovadia) and the Chairman of the School Committee (Mr. M. E. Gathco) thanked the Director and Chairman for the interest they had taken in the education of Indians.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. H. O. Ally said that the Indians were taxpayers, directly and indirectly, and he did not see why they should be called upon to erect their school buildings on the pound for pound principle, while Europeans could get them erected by the Government. He appealed to the Education Department to give Indian children in other districts the opportunity to get educated. The reference made by the Director of Education to Indians induced him to refer to the agitation that had recently been started by certain sections of the European community against Indians. Indians were staunch and loyal to the Empire, and they found even legislators in the Union Parliament, and a minister of the Gospel, whose duty it was to teach goodwill to all men, preaching hatred against a people who were loyal to their King and to the Government of the country. It was for the Department to see that higher education was provided for Indian children. They were born in the country and would remain in the country. They were Afrikaners as much as any other children, and their parents came to the country under rights secured to them by the London Convention of 1884. (Applause.)

The Chairman replied that he himself and a large number of people in the country were prepared to do

everything they could to ensure that justice was meted out to the Indian community. There was no question, he said, that the Indian community were in South Africa and were entitled to have justice done to them. (Applause.)

On behalf of the pupils and staff and the committee, the Chairman presented Mr. Nye, the Principal of the school, with magnificent gold watch and a silver fruit stand, and in acknowledging the gifts, Mr. Nye said it was the desire of the staff to turn out men who would be a credit to the country. Illuminated addresses of appreciation for their work were presented to the Chairman of the Committee, to the Secretary, Mr. Motan and to Mr. Nye.

The Rev. Andrew Bhowra also spoke, and the visitors were entertained to tea. A physical drill display by the boys, under the direction of Mr. Collard, was excellently performed.

HOW SOUTH AFRICA WAS WON

NOT BY EUROPEANS ONLY

"Eureka" wrote to the *Times of India* advising Mr. Gandhi not to agitate about British Indian rights in South Africa and argued that Indians had practically nothing to complain as only Europeans had fought for and retained South Africa. The following was the reply to "Eureka," addressed to the *Times of India* by Mr. Gandhi:—

Sir,—I know that it can only be by patient effort that one can hope to remove the ignorance that must necessarily attach to all questions arising a few thousand miles from us. "Eureka's" letter published in your issue of the 28th inst. is a case in point. He has raised many issues. I propose to confine myself only to the South African. The question before the public to-day is not one of emigration but that of the livelihood and status of those who have legally settled in South Africa, and neither Lord Sinha nor H.H. the Maharaja of Bikaner could give away inherent rights of citizens of the Empire, nor did they do any such thing. Indians have settled in South Africa for over 50 years; they are not known to have lowered the standard of living. Will "Eureka" please remember that the first Indian settlers were imported by the Europeans of South Africa? I refer to the introduction of indentured Indians. I said in 1894, as I repeat now, that it was a criminal blunder on the part of the greedy Europeans of Natal to have imported indentured labour from India at miserably low wages when they had 400,000 stalwart Zulus in their midst who would gladly have worked if the employers had not wanted to make enormous profits. Can South Africa with any right on its side starve the descendants of the original settlers and their brethren out of existence?

AID SENT FROM INDIA

It is purposeless for me to go into the question how and by whom South Africa was won; but let me correct "Eureka" by informing him that it was aid sent from India under the late Sir George White which saved Ladysmith and which probably turned the fortunes of war. Let me further inform "Eureka" that the 10,000 troops that Sir George White took with him included many Indian followers who were just as indispensable for the military operations as any soldier. Nor is this all. When the fate of Ladysmith trembled in the balance, when the late Lieut. Roberts fighting against heavy odds lost his guns at the battle of Colenso, I had the honour to be in charge of the ambulance corps of nearly 1,200 Indians, free and indentured, literate and illiterate, drawn from all classes. Some of the men who are now in peril of losing the means of their livelihood had the privilege of bearing the stretcher that carried the dying Lieutenant. The corps served too at the reverse of Spionkop. We were engaged to work without the range fire, not because we had objected but because the authorities would not risk our lives as we

were not trained for military operations. But Col. Galloway sent the message that whilst we were not obliged to work under fire, General Buller would be glad if we could remove the wounded that were lying at the Field Hospital at the base of the hill. There was danger of the Boers descending from the hill. Without the slightest hesitation and indeed with gladness for the opportunity everyone of the men with me responded to the call and remove the wounded to the base hospital at Frere Camp, a distance of 24 miles. The wounded included the late General Woodgate and the brave officers under him. The English newspapers and the politicians were so enthusiastic about this purely voluntary work of the Indians that even laudatory verses were composed, whose refrain was "*we are sons of the Empire after all*." Are these Indians of whom these verses were written now to sing "*We are helots of the Empire after all*," for that is what Indian settlers in South Africa would be totally reduced to if the English and the Indian public of India do not make a great effort to ward off the impending calamity. In my opinion the case for European traders of South Africa is so hopelessly bad that it has only to be persistently, truthfully and calmly exposed to the whole of the Empire and it must fall to pieces.—I am, etc.,

(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI

Laburnum Road, Bombay.
29th August, 1919.

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTATION TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

ON THE POSITION OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

(Continued from page 215)

As to the alleged infringement of the prohibitions against the ownership of fixed property by Indians, by taking advantage of the provision of the Transvaal Company Law, there is a complete answer. It was the Government themselves who, in 1888, or three years after the enactment of the prohibition, shewed Indians how to "evade" Law 3 of 1885. The original practice was to register the property in the name of some official nominee, which establishes beyond question that it was recognised by Government. Afterwards a non-official nominee was chosen. Later still, in order to protect the Indian virtual owner against the insolvency or intestacy of his nominee, the practice of registering mortgage bonds against the property in favour of the Indian owner was developed. All this was known for years by the Government, the mortgage bonds were duly registered by Government officials and the transactions were recognised by the Courts. Attention was specially called to these transactions by the Transvaal British Indian Association in its Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1912, published in white paper No. (Cd. 6037). In 1909 the Company Law was passed, and in the same year its provisions were used for the registration of an Indian company one of whose objects was to acquire fixed property. Though this power was known to Mr. Gandhi in 1914, there is reason to believe that the possibility of using the Company Law to defeat the provisions of Sections 130 and 131 of the Gold Law had not been considered by him. Had he known of them, it is most unlikely that he would ever have addressed his letter of July 7, 1914 to Mr. Gorges.

Mr. Polak, who, after Mr. Gandhi's departure for India had become the spokesman for the Transvaal Indian community, had anticipated leaving South Africa about the middle of 1916, and, taking advantage of an official visit to Capetown he interviewed Colonel Shawe, expressed alarm at the suggestion thrown out in certain quarters that the Company Law should be amended so as to prevent these transactions, told him that any such thing would be bitterly opposed by the Indian community, and urged, on the contrary, that the

prohibitions of Law 3 of 1885 should be removed and the right of ownership of fixed property should be restored to Indians in the Transvaal. He assured Mr. Polak that the Government had no intention of altering the Law, but asked him to let him have a Memorandum on the subject, as he was not clear as to the exact bearings of the matter. Upon Mr. Polak's return to Johannesburg shortly afterwards, he submitted the Memorandum to Colonel Shawe with a request that it should be placed before the Minister. A few days before Mr. Polak left South Africa, he had an interview with the Minister and especially referred to this Memorandum and briefly discussed the subject, and he also, immediately afterwards discussed it with Lord Buxton, the High Commissioner. It is not true, therefore, to suggest that the Indian Community, in availing themselves of their legal rights under the Company Law, have taken the Government unawares. The new legislation not only takes away the legal right of Indians to acquire fixed property through limited liability companies, but it also prohibits the old practice of acquiring mortgage bonds over property held by Europeans in trust for Indians. Instead, therefore, of the Indian position have been improved, as a result of the War, and the examination of Indian grievances at the request of the Indian community, it has actually been rendered much worse.

In his speech at the Imperial Conference held in 1927, at which the Resolution on Reciprocity of Treatment between India and the Dominions was passed, General Smuts, on behalf of South Africa, said:—

"In South Africa there has been this fundamental trouble, that the white community have been afraid of opening the door too wide to Indian immigration. We are not a homogeneous population. We are a white minority on a black continent, and the settlers in South Africa have for many years been actuated by the fear that to open the door to another non-white race would make the position of the few whites in South Africa very dangerous indeed. It is because of that fear, and not because of any other attitude towards the question of Asia, that they have adopted an attitude which sometimes, I am bound to admit, has assumed the outward form, although not the reality, of intolerance. Luckily we have got over these difficulties. The visit of the late Mr. Gokhale to South Africa did an enormous amount of good. His visit was followed later by the visit of Sir Benjamin Robertson, a distinguished public servant of India, who also assisted the Government to overcome great difficulties on this point some years ago. The result has been the passage of legislation to which both the white and Indian communities agreed. There is still a difference of opinion on administrative matters of detail, some of which are referred to in the Memorandum which is before us, but I feel sure, and I have always felt sure, that once the white community in South Africa were rid of fear that they were going to be flooded by unlimited immigration from India, all the other questions would be considered subsidiary and would become easily and perfectly soluble. That is the position in which we are now—that the fear which formerly obsessed the settlers there has been removed; the great principle of restricting immigration for which they have contended is on our Statute Book with the consent of the Indian population in South Africa and the Indian authorities in India, and, that being so, I think that the door is open now for a peaceful and statesmanlike solution of all the minor administrative troubles which occurred and which will occur from time to time. Of course the main improvement has been the calling of India to the Council Chamber of the Empire. Here, if any question proves difficult of treatment, we can discuss it in a friendly way and try to find in consultation a solution, and I am sure that we shall ever find it. I for one do not consider that, amongst the multitudinous problems which confront us in our country, the question of India will trouble us much in future."

Instead of this, legislative stringency has been substituted for administrative laxity, and rights legally or administratively enjoyed by the Community as a whole, for a number of years, have, by a different Statute, now been diminished or abolished.

In view of the unswerving loyalty of Indians during the war and the valuable assistance rendered by them, it is hoped that they would be recognized as citizens of a common Empire and that their elementary rights at least would be conceded to them. But it must be sorrowfully observed that the establishment of peace, so far from ushering in an era of goodwill and justice towards them, has led to an increase in the burdens which already pressed heavily on them and to a stricter

enforcement of anti-Indian laws. While India has been admitted as an independent member of the League of Nations and a substantial instalment of self-government is proposed to be conferred on her, in one of the Dominions which forms part of the British Empire her children continue to be treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water. We would earnestly press through you on the attention of His Majesty's Government the serious danger with which the anti-Indian policy pursued in South Africa is fraught to the interests of the Empire.

In conclusion, we pray that the Royal Assent should be withheld from the Asiatics Trading and Land Act, and that the Union Government should be advised to undertake legislation to grant the Indian community full rights of citizenship especially as the danger of the European element being swamped with Indians, which was never real, has ceased to exist. The Acting Prime Minister announced the other day that a Commission would be appointed by the Union Government to deal with the Indian question. In order that the Indian point of view may be properly represented it is necessary that responsible Indians should be associated with the enquiry. Finally, we beg to submit that the reciprocity resolution passed at the Imperial Conference should be given effect to. The possession of the power of retaliation by the Government of India will tend to enhance the status of Indians throughout the Empire and to strengthen the hands of the Imperial Government in its efforts to secure just the humane treatment for them in the Dominions.

CASTE AND RACE FEELING COMPARED

MR. C. F. ANDREWS RECALLS HIS SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCES

In the course of a most interesting contribution to the *Bombay Chronicle*, Mr. C. F. Andrews relates the following incidents of his South African tour in 1914:

While I was in Capetown, I was asked to preach at a Church whose presiding clergyman was a liberal-minded Englishman, a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi and their children, and a staunch helper of the Indian indentured labourers in Natal. Mr. Gandhi's son was with me and I felt certain that in this one church at least there would be no race prejudice shown. I was the more assured on this point, because I had been told that a large sum had been contributed by his congregation towards Christian mission work in India, and that the children of the church were very earnest in their support of Indian Christian missions providing money each year for certain Indian orphan children. So I had no hesitation about going to preach there, and I took with me as a matter of course Mr. Gandhi's son, though he warned me as to what might happen. He was received with perfect kindness by my host, the clergyman, in his own house before the service. But when I said that he was going to come to church with me there was at once uneasiness and embarrassment. He *did* actually go; but a corner was found for him at the very back, close to the door. This was evidently the limit that public feeling would allow. The congregation could provide liberal sums for Indian Christian missions and their children were ready to give also. But to accord the son of a most respected Indian gentleman racial equality with themselves, in their own Christian Church, was more than an enlightened Capetown congregation could safely risk. So strong was public sentiment against it.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET IN ORANGE FREE STATE

I will give one other significant incident that came within my own experience. I was very unwell at Ladysmith, after an attack of malarial fever, and made up my mind to go direct to Capetown, instead of returning

to Johannesburg. But the difficulty of such a move was to get Mr. Gandhi's son with me, by rail, through the Orange Free State, a closed territory for Indians. However I determined to run the risk and he actually travelled with me. Very early in the morning, on the bleak Harrismith platform, there was great excitement, and a military officer came up and asked me for an explanation. I told him at once who we were and of what business we were bound. He asked me for a written undertaking, that I would not stop anywhere at all in the Orange Free State, and when I had given it, we were allowed to proceed. I shall never forget the menacing look on the faces of the men on the Harrismith platform on that chilly early morning, nor the way they crowded round our carriage when they heard the news that an Indian was on the train. I was rather amused afterwards to find that my word was not trusted, and that a telegram had proceeded me to the border station, where a railway official entered the compartment to see that I had not left my Indian fellow passenger behind. I have given this example, as it is typical of the extraordinary difficulties Indians have to encounter in South Africa even when they have been born there and have made it their home. The whole province of the Orange Free State has now been made almost entirely free from Indians and every man in it seems determined that not another Indian shall ever be allowed to settle there,—no matter what may be his rank or education. The Transvaal is steadily pursuing the same policy. I cannot obtain the corrected figures, but if my memory serves me, there were 12,000 Indians in the Transvaal only a few years ago and now there are less than five thousand.

CASTE AND RACE FEELING COMPARED

No one except those who have lived in its midst can realise how all-pervading this race problem is. I have sometimes heard it compared with "caste" in India and I myself have often pointed out its similarity of origin and used it as an analogy. But "caste" in India is a factor that is a relic of the past; in many of its worst features it is dying out, and there is a hope that with the advance of modern life, the inhuman social ostracism of caste will disappear. To give one example—when I was in Malabar, a young Indian student, who was highly educated and refined suddenly left me in the middle of a conversation as we were walking down the street; and when I asked the reason, I was told that the street was a Brahmin quarter,—the Brahmins would be defiled by his presence. This was exactly similar to the "locations," at Johannesburg, and no less to be condemned by every one, who loved humanity. But the difference lies here, that practically every educated man in India is thoroughly ashamed of such things as I have just mentioned and regards them as indefensible; while in South Africa, the race antipathy and exclusiveness seems on the increase and public sentiment is in their favour even among highly educated men and women. They have the awful aspects of some new disease, which has yet to run its course, and has all its virulence unabated.

We are informed that the Sydenham Hindu Young Men's Society will hold its Annual Dipawali Children's Sports on Sunday the 24th instant, commencing from 10 o'clock in the forenoon at Sydenham. The parents and guardians are particularly requested to send their children to compete in the above sports. Procession of children with banners etc. will leave Mr. G. D. Lala's store, Overport, at 9 o'clock for the sports ground. Light refreshments will be provided to the children.