

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

A REUTER message last week reported in connection with the non-co-operation movement in India that little public interest is being evinced in the elections for the Indian Legislative Council established under the new Reform Act. In a message dated Nov. 23, from Delhi, Reuter says:—

The elections for the Legislative Council are proceeding quietly. The majority of the moderates were returned in the Central Provinces, while the non-co-operation movement did not gain any ground. Mr. Gandhi, in an interview, declared that he was not satisfied, but was hopeful.

Whilst this is so, Mr. Fisher, on behalf of Mr. Montague, (Secretary of States for India) is reported to have said in the House of Commons on Oct. 27, in answer to Mr. Allen Parkinson that "it is impossible to estimate the result of the boycott of councils with exactness but so far this has been the most successful feature of the programme of non-co-operation." In Bombay Presidency, Mr. Fisher further stated, "many seats are uncontested, and for the two seats in the Indian Legislative Assembly for the Bombay general electorate there were only two nominations. He also said that Pandit M. M. Malaviya of the United Provinces, though avowedly an opponent of Mr. Gandhi's programme, has nevertheless withdrawn his candidature; and he has some imitators.

The whole of Mr. Fisher's statement on the subject, (says *India*), gives the impression of an elaborate attempt to make the most of a very bad job. It is becoming increasingly evident that the Council elections, so far as they could be taken as an indication of popular opinion, will be a lamentable failure. There are no candidates but those of the Moderate Party, while even those are so scarce that, judging by the names of some who appear in the nomination lists, the officials have had to drag their jackals into the fray by the scruff of the neck in order to put up some sort of semblance of reality in the elections.

Philadelphia, Nov. 29—Addressing the Union League Club (says Reuter), Senator Lodge, Republican leader of the Senate, dwelt on the international problems confronting the new Government. He said there was one arrangement he would very much like to see made with Canada and Australasia, namely, in regard to Asiatic immigration. In this connection their danger was the same as the United States. It must be faced. It might as well be understood that it was in no sense hostility to any nation, but there were certain great principles which must be accepted. One was that no nation had a right to demand that her people should migrate to another free country or should find cause for war therein. The first sovereign right was the right to say who should come into the country.

Senator Lodge (according to the *Daily Telegraph's* New York correspondent), states that Harding's Administration will see that Asiatic, and even European

invasions are stopped. He suggests that the United States, Canada, and Australasia will combine to prevent Japanese immigration. The correspondent further says the Republicans are determined to deny the Japanese the rights of citizenship, although the recent census has shown that the Japanese population in the three Pacific coast States is comparatively small, and the talk of Japanese predominance a gross exaggeration.

London, Nov. 26.—The statement of Lord Cave, who recently visited Canada and America that Canada entirely approves of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, has led the Canadian K. C., Mr. V. S. Ewart, to send a letter to *The Times* saying that Lord Cave is mistaken in maintaining that the Dominion statesmen consider the present system of appeals satisfactory. Mr. Ewart writes: "If the Canadian cases are to continue to go for final decision outside Canada, although we have been accustomed to seeing them decided by British judges, we are not at all prepared for the introduction of others from Australia, from New Zealand, from South Africa, from India, and elsewhere."—*Natal Mercury*.

The following telegram has been received by Mr. Charlie Nulliah, President of the Pietermaritzburg Branch of the South African Indian National Congress from the Secretary to the Governor-General in reply to the message of welcome sent on behalf of the Indians of Maritzburg:—

"I am desired to express through you to the Indian community of Maritzburg the best thanks of Prince and Princess Arthur of Connaught for the message of welcome and good wishes conveyed by your telegram of the 20th November which their Royal Highnesses much appreciate."

A message of welcome to H. R. H. the Prince and Princess of Connaught was sent by the Port Elizabeth British Indian Council to which the Prince has sent the following reply:—

"Many thanks for your kind message for which I am deeply grateful."

We understand that Mr. Joseph Royeppen has left for India where he wishes to spend some time. He will attend the Indian National Congress as an independent and unofficial visitor from overseas. We wish Mr. Royeppen a pleasant voyage.

London, Nov. 16—His Majesty the King, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and other members of the Royal family, says Reuter, bade farewell to the Duke of Connaught who has left for Nice from where he will proceed to Marseilles *en route* to India on Dec. 18 for the purpose of opening the new Indian Parliament.

The Johannesburg correspondent of the *Natal Mercury* says:—

In a report upon his recent tour of Natal, Mr. J. Hunter, Secretary of the South Africans' League, says

his first impression is that the local Government authorities in Natal are fully alive to the gravity of Asiatic problem and are tackling the position with the means at their disposal. "Natal," he says, "has its own phase on the question, but at the root bottom it is identical with that of the Transvaal. The impression that Natal is prepared to stew in its own juice is quite delusive. There is an overwhelming feeling everywhere. I have been among responsible people that the problem must be faced and solved." Another impression is that the evil is no worse in Natal than it is in the country-towns of Transvaal. He states that although there are about 170,000 Asiatics in Natal against 20,000, in the Transvaal probably 150,000 are coolies or unskilled labourers, leaving approximately the same number of trading Asiatics as there are in the Transvaal. He does not wonder the question is acute.

We regret to state that Mr. Parsee Rustomjee's health has taken a somewhat bad turn during the week and he is still laid up. We sincerely hope that he will soon recover and be restored to his old health and energy once more.

INDIAN REPATRIATION

IN our last week's issue we published a report of Mr. Wynne-Cole's interview with the *Times of Natal* in regard to the Union Government's scheme of repatriation. Mr. Wynne-Cole, (the Repatriation Officer,) has given the information that up to the present over six hundred Indians have availed themselves of the Government's offer, and that a large number of Indians have given notice to their employers to take effect at the end of the year. He also stated that, so far, much has really not been done owing to the fact that the Government decided to give employers ample time to make arrangements to replace their Indian labour. Mr. Wynne-Cole further went on to say that there was a lot of agitation by "unscrupulous agitators," who, he says, are chiefly those that have taken part in strikes in South Africa and been convicted. "They are men of no position or influence possessing in most cases the clothes they stand up in and nothing more." Mr. Wynne-Cole in quoting an example of the methods of these alleged "unscrupulous agitators" said, they had been spreading a story that these Indians are not being sent to India but that when the steamer is two or three days out, they are informed that they are being taken to some other country, where they will be made to work practically under conditions of slavery. This story of the Repatriation Officer is as much believable as is the story that is being heard about his paid recruiters—men, of course, of position and influence and possessing much more than the clothes they stand up in (?)—that if the Indians do not voluntarily leave the country a time will soon come when they will be kicked out of the country compulsorily, etc. If both the stories are to be believed, then, it is indeed doubtful as to who is scrupulous and who is unscrupulous.

Mr. Wynne-Cole is reported to have made another statement that there is a strong suspicion that these "men of straw" are only agents, and that "behind them is the Arab trader who fears that once the Indian worker has left the country it will only be a question of time before the Government finds means to send him packing; that these traders apparently think it is to their advantage to keep to their position unexposed by persuading the labouring classes to remain as a sort of bulwark between the traders and the Government."

This is news to us. We did not know that the mind of the Indian was working in this direction and we do not even now know that it is. But we certainly know how the mind of the Government is working. It would appear that Mr. Wynne-Cole has unconsciously revealed the fact that the Voluntary Repatriation Scheme is nothing else but a clever (?) device on

the part of the Union Government to ultimately rid the country of its Indian population and thus quench the thirst of the Anti-Asiatics.

After what we have heard, seen, and read about the scheme we can come to only one conclusion that the Asiatic Repatriation Scheme is voluntary in name only. The intention of the authorities is to make the conditions in this country such that it would be impossible for the Indians to live and that would in the end force them to voluntarily leave the country. The one fear that is put in the minds of the Indians is that there is no rice to be had here and that there is no likelihood of its coming; whilst in India rice is abundant and is exceedingly cheap. Apart from this tales are told of the rosy conditions in India when in reality no such conditions exist, and a warning is given as to the gloomy conditions they will be placed under in this country. Though so far the scheme has been anything but a success, notwithstanding the efforts of Mr. Wynne-Cole and his recruiters, and though we believe that, while an infinitesimally small number of Indians who may return to India, there will never be a "voluntary" movement on any scale on the part of Indians, we do think that the poor illiterate class of Indians are apt to believe all the above mentioned stories and would readily avail themselves of the opportunity of a free passage to India little knowing or even caring to know that they and their children are losing their domicile in this country. The onus is on the educated Indians to explain to these people the true position. From what we are able to read of the conditions in India and to hear from people coming from India we are by no means prepared to say that they are rosy.

Some time ago a Repatriation Explanatory Committee was formed in Durban but we have heard mighty little of the activities of that body. Will they not wake up?

BRITISH JUSTICE!

British is no doubt becoming an appropriate term for certain white men who pride themselves in being called British but whose actions are similar to those of demons. British ideals and principles are indeed fast vanishing. Sufficient evidence of this has been shown by the famous General Dyer by his actions in the Punjab and the way he has been dealt with for those actions.

The following story of an ex-army captain, appearing in the *East African Chronicle* will be read with indignation by those who have even a spark of humanity in them:—

"An ex-army captain, named H. M. Harries has been brought before Mr. Justice Sheridan at Nakuru charged with "causing grievous hurt" to a dumb native boy by flogging him so that he had to be carried by his friends to hospital on a stretcher and lay there for five weeks. The captain in his own evidence said:

On June 10 the boy was brought before him, and was told he would get 20 lashes. Kani tied him to a wagon, but after two strokes, he was untied and laid on the ground. He (Harries) then gave him 17 cuts and then noticing the skin was breaking stopped. The boy sat down and afterwards stood up—the whole beating took ten minutes at the most. He had no intention of causing grievous hurt and "the beating was a perfectly normal one." He had never known a beating have such an effect.

The native evidence was that the boy was flogged by Harries all over the head, face, and body with a kibobo; a witness said he counted a hundred lashes. The jury brought in a verdict of "simple, not grievous hurt" and added a rider that Harries received extreme provocation. The Judge, said he could not give effect to the jury's rider as in his opinion the beating was brutal and excessive. He sentenced Harries to three months rigorous imprisonment.

As an example of how justice is meted out to black people in British courts we quote the following report from the Maritzburg correspondent of the *Natal Mercury* of a recent case in the Maritzburg court —

An umfaan employed by a farmer near town this morning was sentenced to seven strokes for desertion. His father then appeared in the dock, charged with assaulting the complainant. From the evidence it appeared that the father accused the complainant of harsh treatment of the umfaan, and refused to leave the premises, finally becoming abusive and drawing a knife. The employer got the man's head in chancery, and took the knife away. The Magistrate said he had no reason to doubt that the umfaan had been fairly treated. He noticed with gravity the increasing insolence and violence of Natives towards Europeans and the increased recourse to the knife, which should not be permitted. Accused was sentenced to three months' hard labour and seven strokes, the Magistrate adding that he hoped this would be at once a lesson to accused and a warning to others.

A native lad gets seven strokes for desertion, and a native gets three months and seven strokes for an alleged assault whilst a European officer for brutally flogging a native boy is punished with a ridiculous sentence of three months imprisonment! What justice!

TRAM STRIKE

The Durban tramwaymen's strike has seen its last on Saturday last though the service was really resumed on Sunday. The Town Council having agreed to rescind all their previous resolutions in regard to the tramwaymen's dispute and accepted to instruct the Joint Advisory Board to consider the position de novo, the tramwaymen agreed to resume work. It cannot therefore be said that the strike is really settled, but it has reached an armistice stage. One thing about the strike was no doubt admirable and that was that it was carried on peacefully from the beginning to the end. The public were indeed pleased to get the tram service back again but, those people who, though being citizens of Durban were not fortunate enough owing to their dark skins, to partake of the facilities provided by the Citizens' League were still more pleased.

THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

REVISED DRAFT CONSTITUTION

NAME

1. That the name of the institution shall be "The Natal Indian Congress" whose headquarters shall be in Durban, Natal Province.

2. OBJECTS

- (a) To improve the relations between the Indians and Europeans and promote friendliness between those resident in the Province and the Union.
- (b) To guard, protect, and improve by all legitimate means the status of Indians resident in the Province and take all necessary actions against all or any encroachments upon existing rights.
- (c) To educate Indians especially those born in the Colony in Indian history and generally to take an interest in the education of Indians, and, if necessary, to make provision for their education.
- (d) To co-operate as far as possible with Indian and other communities and organisations in matters affecting the interests of Indians resident in the Union or elsewhere.
- (e) And generally to do everything that would tend to place the community on a better footing socially, intellectually, and politically.

3. That every Indian in the Province of Natal over the age of 21 shall be deemed to be, and every person promoting the objects of the Congress may, in the discretion of the Committee become a member of the Natal Indian Congress, subject to the provisions of paragraph 10 hereof. Membership shall not depend upon the payment of an entrance subscription provided, however, such admission of membership shall not exempt any member of the community from the tax that will be levied upon every member of the community, to contribute according to their standings, as will be more fully set out in paragraph 10 hereof.

4. That the affairs of the Congress shall be governed by a committee consisting of a President, 6 vice-presidents, 2 joint hon. secretaries or a secretary and an assistant secretary, two joint treasurers and 24 committee men who shall be elected at the general election of the Congress and shall remain in office until their successors are appointed.

5. The Committee for the time being in office shall have the power to add to its members.

6. That the Committee shall meet at the offices of the Congress at least once a month which shall be on the last Wednesday of the month or on such other date as the hon. secretary may deem fit and shall transact general business. Twelve members, inclusive of at least 3 hon. officers shall form a quorum.

7. That a general meeting of the Congress shall be held once a year in such centre as the Committee may decide, save and except in exceptional circumstances of which the Committee shall be judged, such annual general meeting shall take place in the month of January in each year at a place and date as the Committee may decide.

8. That the hon. secretary or secretaries shall keep a minute book in which shall be recorded all the transactions of the Committee held from time to time, and the same shall, at each subsequent meeting of the Committee, be read and confirmed by the chairman presiding thereat, and, when signed by him shall be conclusive evidence of their contents and of their regularity of the proceedings of such previous meetings.

9. That the hon. secretaries shall correspond with leading Indians resident in other magisterial districts of the Province with a view to forming district sub-committees of the Congress, such sub-committees shall be entitled to affiliate with the Congress on the payment of a subscription of a guinea annually in advance and shall be eligible to send duly accredited delegates to annual or general meetings or to any special committee meetings that may be convened on any matter of emergency affecting the community, provided, however, that this shall not exempt any member of any sub-committee of any magisterial district or otherwise, from the provision of paragraphs 3 & 10 hereof.

10. That as provided in paragraph 3 hereof the committee shall have by virtue of this section the power to levy upon the members of the Indian community in the Province of Natal as follows —

- (a) Upon the holders of wholesale licences — £3 per annum.
- (b) Upon the holders of retail licences — £1-10 per annum.
- (c) Upon all other licences — £1 per annum.
- (d) Upon all Indian males of the age of 20 years and upwards excepting the above, per head — 10s.

11. That the Committee shall be empowered to draft and pass rules for regulation of its work, and shall have all general powers.

12. That the President shall preside at all meetings, or, in his absence one of his vice-presidents, or in their absence, a member of the Committee shall be elected to preside.

13. That no motion or resolution of which a previous notice of at least 48 hours has not been given to the hon. Secretary or Secretaries, shall be considered by the Committee unless it deems otherwise.

14. That the proceedings of the meetings shall be carried on in any, or all of the following languages:—English, Tamil, Gujarati or Hindustani.

15. That any member of the Committee having the proper qualification may be called upon by the chairman to interpret to the meeting the speeches of any other member when such is necessary.

16. That all money of the Congress shall be deposited in a Bank approved of by the Committee.

17. That all cheques of the Congress shall be signed by the president, either of the Treasurers, and countersigned by one of the Hon. Secretaries.

18. That the Sec. or Secs. shall have the power to incur expenditure to the extent of £5 (Five Pounds only). Such expenditure shall be reported at the next Committee meeting for confirmation.

19. That the Hon. Sec. or Secs. shall inform the members at least two days previously of their monthly meetings and in case of an emergency meeting immediate intimation shall be given.

20. That the name of any member of the Committee who without just cause being shown, fails to attend any three consecutive meetings of the Committee shall be removed from the list of the members of the Committee, notice having previously been given to such member of the intention of the Committee to so remove his name.

21. That any member who fails to pay his annual subscription shall cease to have a vote or voice in the meetings of the Congress or in its workings, provided, however, such member shall not cease to be a member of the Congress notwithstanding.

22. The Committee for the time being shall have full powers to expend such sum or sums of money as may be necessary for the proper working of the Congress.

23. The hon. officers and members of the Committee shall hold office for a period not longer than 2 years, or until the next annual general meeting thereafter, but they or any of them shall be eligible for re-election.

24. That all moveable and immovable properties of the Congress shall be vested in the names of 9 trustees, representative of the Indian community. Such trustees shall be elected at a general or special general meeting by a two-third majority of those present and eligible to vote.

25. That a Trust Deed shall be drawn clearly defining the duties and powers of Trustees, and that shall provide for their removal, re-election, in case of resignation, death or otherwise.

26. That there shall be a special condition in the Trust Deed that the properties of the Congress shall not be sold, mortgaged, encumbered or otherwise alienated by the Trustees, or their powers substituted without the consent and authority obtained at a Committee meeting of the Congress, thirty days notice of such motion having been given to all Committee members, and such motion shall be carried by a two-third majority of those present, and actually taking part in the vote, and confirmed in a special general meeting convened therefore after due publicity.

27. That the Committee shall have the power to amend, revise, or add, to the foregoing rules at the annual general meeting of the Congress, or at a meeting called for the purpose by a two-third majority of those present thereat, notice of such amendment, revision or addition must be given to the Hon. Secretaries 30 days before such annual or general meeting, and the Hon. Secretaries shall notify members at least one week prior to meeting with a copy of such amendment revision or addition.

28. That the Secretaries shall call a special meeting of the Committee on receipt of a requisition signed by at least 9 members of the Committee.

THE PRINCE OF WALES AND INDIAN LABOUR

[By MR. C. F. ANDREWS IN *India*]

I wish to call immediate attention to the peculiarly mean way in which the Prince of Wales is being utilised by capitalist politicians in order to buttress up an extremely profitable, but altogether degraded and degrading system for supplying cheap Indian labour to the Colonies—the main profits from which swell the dividends of the British shareholders in Sydney and London. The Prince has called at two Crown Colonies hitherto, at both of which Indian indentured labour has, in the past, been exploited with disastrous moral results to the Indians themselves, and not infrequently with fabulous money profits to the sugar companies concerned. The iniquitous system of the indentured "coolie traffic" has now been stopped, but immense subsidised efforts are being made in London and elsewhere to bring about some form of renewal of Indian labour recruiting for these Colonies. No stone is being left unturned; and, with a capitalist Government strongly entrenched at Westminster, there is always the possibility of succeeding. It is peculiarly odious, however, to find the Prince of Wales used as a mouthpiece. In Fiji, there was no opportunity allowed him of meeting the self-respecting Indians who have been disgusted at the racial treatment meted out to them, making them inferior to the Fijians and Polynesians compelling them on all occasions for months together to go about the streets with a ticket of leave. The Prince has been furnished with an altogether one-sided view of what had taken place. He declared (and good care was taken by Reuter to cable his words immediately all over the world) that he was glad to find that there was no racial question involved in the recent Indian disturbances. A glance at the Statute Book of the Fiji Government for the year 1920 would have shown him what a monstrous lie was being put into his mouth.

Furthermore, we have just had a second cablegram sent all over the civilised world concerning the condition of Indian labourers in Trinidad. Their treatment has been most carefully and impartially examined by a Commissioner sent from Canada in 1916. This very able inquirer bore out by his investigations most of what I had already discovered in Fiji concerning the indenture system there—though it shall be clearly understood that the evils in Trinidad were not so acute as those in Fiji. Yet the Prince of Wales, on landing at Port of Spain, Trinidad, has put into his mouth what amounts to an advertisement for further Indian labour recruiting. The *Renown*, we read, anchored in the roadstead this morning (September 17) and the Prince of Wales had an enthusiastic reception from a large crowd when he landed. Replying to an address by the Governor at Parliament House, the Prince referred to the fact that Trinidad provided new opportunities for the progress and well-being of a large immigrant population from India, which he hoped to visit ere long.

There is not a word here condemning the iniquities of the indenture system under which this large immigrant population came out or congratulating the Colony on getting rid of it; there is no word about the wretched conditions under which the Indian here lived, such as Mr. Dobbs, the Commissioner from Canada, has described; but, instead of this, an obvious attempt has been made to whitewash the past and prepare the way for fresh immigration of Indian labour in the future.

Mahatma Gandhi has been quite right in refusing to welcome the Prince of Wales in India, until we are able to speak frankly to him what are the true facts, and not merely to hear from his lips the official version. The officials entrenched in office have sufficient power in their own hands without this added power of using the Prince of Wales as their tool.

MR. GANDHI'S OPEN LETTER

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

Dear Friend,—I wish that every Englishman will see this appeal and give thoughtful attention to it.

Let me introduce myself to you. In my humble opinion, no Indian has co-operated with the British Government more than I have for an unbroken period of twenty-nine years of public life in the face of circumstances that might well have turned any other man into a rebel. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that my co-operation was not based with the fear of the punishments provided by your laws or any other selfish motives. It was free and voluntary co-operation based on the belief that the sum total of the activity of the British Government was for the benefit of India. I put my life in peril four times for the sake of the Empire,—at the time of the Boer War when I was in charge of the Ambulance Corps whose work was mentioned in General Buller's dispatches, at the time of the Zulu revolt in Natal when I was in charge of a similar corps, at the time of the commencement of the late war when I raised an Ambulance Corps and as a result of the strenuous training had a severe attack of pleurisy, and lastly, in fulfilment of my promise to Lord Chelmsford at the War Conference in Delhi, I threw myself in such an active recruiting campaign in Kaira District involving long and trying marches, that I had an attack of dysentery which proved almost fatal. I did all this in the full belief that acts such as mine must gain for my country an equal status in the Empire. So late as last December I pleaded hard for a trustful co-operation. I fully believed that Mr. Lloyd George would redeem his promise to the Mussalmans and that the revelations of the official atrocities in the Punjab would secure full reparation for the Punjabis. But the treachery of Mr. Lloyd and its appreciation by you, and the condonation of the Punjab atrocities have completely shattered my faith in the good intentions of the Government and the nation which is supporting it.

But though my faith in your good intentions is gone, I recognise your bravery, and I know that what you will not yield to justice and reason, you will gladly yield to bravery.

See what this Empire means to India:—

Exploitation of India's resources for the benefit of Great Britain.

An ever-increasing military expenditure, and a civil service the most expensive in the world.

Extravagant working of every department in utter disregard of India's poverty.

Disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole nation lest an armed nation might imperil the lives of a handful of you in our midst.

Traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs for purpose of sustaining a top-heavy administration.

Progressively repressive legislation in order to suppress an overwhelming agitation seeking to give expression to the nation's agony.

Degrading treatment of Indians residing in your dominions, and you have shown total disregard of our feelings by glorifying the Punjab administration and flouting the Mussalman sentiment.

I know you would not mind if we could fight and wrest the sceptre from your hands. You know that we are powerless to do that, for you have ensured our incapacity to fight in open and honourable battle. Bravery on the battlefield is thus impossible for us. Bravery of the soul still remains open for us. I know you will respond to that also. I am engaged in evoking that bravery. Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self-sacrifice. Why should we co-operate with you when we know that by your administration of this great country we are being daily enslaved in an increasing degree. This response of the people to my appeal is not due to my personality. I would like you to dismiss me, and for the matter the Ali Brothers too, from your consideration. My

personality will fail to evoke any response to anti-Muslim cry if I were foolish enough to raise it, as the magic name of the Ali Brothers would fail to inspire the Mussalmans with enthusiasm if they were madly to raise an anti-Hindu-cry. People flock in their thousands to listen to us because we to-day represent the voice of a nation groaning under your iron heels. The Ali Brothers were your friends as I was, and still am. My religion forbids me to bear any ill-will towards you. I would not raise my hand against you even if I had the power. I expect to conquer you only by my suffering. The Ali Brothers will certainly draw the sword, if they could, in defence of their religion and their country. But they and I have made common cause with the people of India in their attempt to voice their feelings and to find a remedy for their distress.

You are in search of a remedy to suppress this rising ebullition of national feeling. I venture to suggest to you that the only way to suppress it is to remove the causes. You have yet the power. You can repent of the wrongs done to Indians. You can compel Mr. Lloyd George to redeem his promises. I assure you he has kept many escape-doors. You can compel the Viceroy to retire in favour of a better one. You can revise your ideas about Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. You can compel the Government to summon a conference of the recognised leaders of the people, duly elected by them and representing all shades of opinion so as to devise means for granting Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.

But this you cannot do unless you consider every Indian to be in reality your equal and brother. I ask for no patronage, I merely point out to you, as a friend, an honourable solution of a grave problem. The other solution, namely repression, is open to you. I prophesy that it will fail. It has begun already. The Government has already imprisoned two brave men of Panipat for holding and expressing their opinions freely. Another is on his trial in Lahore for having expressed similar opinions. One in the Oudh District is already imprisoned. Another waits judgment. You should know what is going on in your midst. Our propaganda is being carried on in anticipation of repression. I invite you respectfully to choose the better way and make common cause with the people of India whose salt you are eating. To seek to thwart their aspirations is disloyalty to the country.

I am,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI.

THE MOVEMENT IN INDIA

We take the following from the *International*:—

The local press is very careful not to give any information relating to conditions in India, but that great mass movements, both industrial and political, are taking place there is certain. The decision of the great National Congress in favour of non-co-operation has roused the whole country to a sense of unity under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi. Mrs. Besant, the tool of British Imperialism, was hopelessly defeated.

BRITISH LAWS SUPERSEDED

The Congress and country are now determined to obtain the righting of the Khilafat wrong, the Punjab wrong, and a complete breach, if possible, with the British connection. Already the people of Jubalpur have refused to participate in the welcome intended for the Viceroy during his forthcoming visit. Arbitration courts are being started all over the country as well as national schools, and lawyers are giving up their practices.

In this movement Indian Labour is going to play an important part. During the Congress session trade

union organisation of labour was strongly advocated as one of the objects in the policy of non-co-operation. The country is awaiting a strong lead from the adjourned meeting of the first All-India Trades Union Congress on October 31.

INSURGENT LABOUR

Labour unrest is general throughout the country. The postal employees are on strike in Bombay, also some of the mill hands. The great Peninsular Railway staff dispute with the authorities is threatening a railway stoppage. High prices and low wages, and even famine conditions in some parts, are adding to the unrest among the workers.

Moreover, signs of repression are in evidence against the Moslem and Khilafat workers. The community is bracing itself for a struggle against this repression. The Sindh, Punjab, Oudh, and other districts report prosecutions, Zafar Ali Khan, editor of the *Zemindar* is the latest arrest.

If the repression continues it will be difficult to keep the rank and file in check, although the Central Khilafat Committee and Mr. Gandhi's influence are exercising a wholesome restraint. As it is, India threatens rapidly to become another Ireland.

MAULVI ZAFAR ALI KHAN

The following are some interesting extracts from the statement of Maulvi Zafar Ali Khan, Editor, *Zemindar* who has recently been sentenced in Lahore to transportation for five years:—

For the past few years it has been customary with the official class in this country to treat all agitation, however peaceful and orderly, and all criticism, however just and reasonable, as "sedition", while rebellions are manufactured to serve as pretext for the introduction or application of repressive measures for which otherwise there would be no justification. The scandalous treatment meted out to me did not therefore surprise me in the least. I know at once that as a zealous Khilafat worker and as a strong critic of middle eastern policy of the present British Government, I had been singled out in the Punjab as the most convenient "Rebel," on whom exemplary punishment might be inflicted, with a view to suppressing Khilafat movement, checking non-violent non-co-operation, which by common consent, has come to be looked upon as the principal plank in the national platform for united India. Repression has failed before and is doomed to ignominious failure now, as sure as day follows night. But that is another story.

A few days later, I was informed that I should look upon myself as an under-trial prisoner and that proceedings would be instituted against me in open court in due course. The appointed day came and on the 20th September, I was brought before this court, when I learned for the first time that one Ikram-Ul-Haq, an employee in the C. I. D. branch of the police department, had charged me with certain offence under sections 124 (A) and 153 (a) of I. P. C. So my arrest under the Defence India of Act was after all an official ruse. An ordinary warrant could have been issued under the provision of the Criminal Procedure Code, but in their eagerness to deprive me of my liberty, the officials who knew in their heart of hearts that I would disdain to escape them employed the readiest weapon in their armoury and brought in the Defence of India Act to their aid. It is a thousand pities that the official class so powerful in the country should be reduced to the humiliating necessity of employing such a discreditable subterfuge against a person who all his life has been proclaimed that he is a humble devoted subject of the King Emperor.

After enunciating his political creed and dealing with the character of the prosecution witnesses, Maulvi Zafar Ali proceeded to examine the charges preferred against him. He said: I admit having asked the

people at Hazro to abstain from sending their children to Government schools. I consider this a legitimate means of expressing my disapprobation of the Government measure and I hope that by adopting this and similar means we shall in due course succeed in bringing the Government round to our way of thinking, and in persuading it to redress the great wrongs done to us in the matter of Khilafat and Punjab. I also admit having called upon the audience at Hazro as I have done elsewhere, not to furnish recruits for the Indian Army till the Government fulfills the solemn promises it made to the Mussalmans of India in the King's name in regard to the holy places of Islam and Khilafat. This action, I also regard as perfectly constitutional and I do not think I committed an act unbecoming of a British citizen by inducing my countrymen to refrain from enlisting in an army which is being employed for purposes which were solemnly repudiated by the Government of India on the 2nd November 1914.

After dealing with Lloyd George's pledges of January 1918 and the Turkish Treaty Maulvi Zafar Ali proceeded:—There is no conscription in this country, and military service is voluntary. I therefore fail to see how I committed an unlawful act by asking the audience at a public meeting to abstain from enlisting in the army. I do not deny the substance of the exhortations with which the complaint has charged me in the section. I do approve of Zaildars and Lambardars resigning their posts by way of protest against the manner in which Mr. Lloyd George's Government has treated Turkey and Khilafat, and as long as there is no violence, I do not see people of this country commit any illegal act by refusing to serve a Government which cannot keep its word. When the Government can prosecute their subjects for breach of faith surely the subjects have a right of calling their Governments to account if the latter deliberately break their pledged truth. The Governments have their codes of law which derive their ultimate sanction from physical force. The people have their own law of non-violent non-co-operation which derives its final strength from spiritual forces.

Molvi Zafar Ali then concluded his statement by saying:—

Everything I said at Hazro meeting was based upon my religious convictions and derived its ultimate sanction from the teachings of the Holy Faith of Islam. If the authorities consider my action illegal or offensive there is no help for it. I am bound by my faith to act in the manner and can assure the authorities that no Mussalmah can profess views or act in a manner contrary to what I have done without forfeiting his claim to be regarded as a Mussalmah. I maintain I have excited no disaffection against His Majesty the King and have not excited the people of this country against the Government of India. When tutored police witnesses produced by the complainant admit in their own way that I expected Hazro audience to remain unshakeably loyal to the King Emperor and on no account to commit violence, surely this is not exciting disaffection towards His Majesty or the Government of India. I therefore demand, I came of Islam which is my only shield against official tyranny, that I be restored to full liberty at once. If this act of bare justice be denied to me and I am sentenced ostensibly on a charge of sedition, but really to serve as a convenient sacrifice on a new altar of repression, then I shall have the satisfaction of feeling that I have done some slight service to my faith and to my country.—*Bombay Chronicle*.

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