

# Indian Opinion

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## DURBAN MASS MEETING

### CLASS AREAS BILL. GREAT INDIAN PROTEST ASSEMBLY

THE Mass Meeting convened by the Natal Indian Congress was held last Sunday at 3 p. m. in Rawat's Bio Hall. Some 3000 Indians assembled, and amongst those present were Messrs. Amod Bayat, Chairman, Moulana Moulvi Abdool Vahid, E. D. Motala, M. C. Bassa, Charlie Nulliah, Pundit Bhawani Dayal, A. Christopher, S. Emmamally, S. R. Naidoo, G. A. Bassa, P. R. Pather, Satya Dev, B. A. Magrajh, L. Panday, M. D. Barmania, S. Amod, M. Beethasee Maharajh, M. B. Naik, R. B. Maharajh, V. Lawrence, B. M. Patel, Goolab Sing, A. Dookan, A. I. Kajee, M. I. Kajee and others.

Messages of support were read from different centres including Ladysmith, Richmond, Estcourt, Greytown, Isipingo, Dannhauser, Newcastle etc. P. M. Burg Indians were represented by the officials of the Congress Branch.

Before the business of the meeting commenced, a resolution praying for the speedy recovery of the great and revered Indian Leader Mahatma Gandhi, who is lying ill at the hospital in Poona, was proposed from the chair, and was passed with the audience standing; after which the Chairman in his speech said:

Fellow Countrymen.—We are assembled here to-day in our thousands as a first step to protest against the Class Areas Bill which the Government is about to introduce in Parliament now in session.

Let us examine the text of the Bill so that we may understand what the effects would be if it become law.

The principle of segregation in regard to land and trade is being established in the Bill for the whole of the Union.

It creates areas for residential purposes, trading purposes or for both such purposes.

The Minister may appoint a Commission of not more than three persons to investigate and report upon the desirability of declaring an area for any class of persons at the request of an urban local authority. It goes without saying that any such Commission will be constituted of Europeans who would be expected to decide between the interests of their own class and the interests of another class or race of persons and as they are humans, there can be no doubt they would lean towards the interests of their class. In theory, while the Bill is applicable to all classes and they are all subject nominally to the Governor-General, but really to the will of the Minister, can there be any question that the class of persons constituted of Europeans being those who make up the urban authority, that they as such authority and being in possession of the vote can always look after their own particular interest, but not so with the other classes of persons who will be absolutely at the mercy of the White Government.

The Commission is given extensive powers to report upon the nature of any area for a class, the number, dimensions, the nature of sites occupied or available whether they would be afforded by the area proper and adequate facilities for residential or trading sites, whether due and proper provision exist for water, lighting and sanitary and other necessary services and whether it is desirable for the provisions of the Bill to be applied in respect of the area of the particular class.

An assurance from an urban authority for the provision of the necessary services in a class area is not worth

the getting. Is there worse slum than Vrededorp in the World, and segregated areas whether called locations or bazaars in South Africa are no better. It would be an education for any one to visit the locations and bazaars in any of the Provinces and why are these places in such a neglected, undesirable and disgraceful condition. Because the white urban authority under whose control they are, give neither time nor money to the betterment of these places. We have the recent case of Potchefstroom where Indian residents in the Indian Bazaars outside the Town proper, though not receiving the same consideration as the Europeans in regard to the necessary services, are expected to pay the same rates of assessment. Even here in Durban, it is a well-known fact that the Indians receive very little in return for their contribution to the Borough.

It shall not be lawful for any person to acquire immovable property or renewal of lease of immovable property except in his own area and a person of another class cannot live or trade in the area of another than his own class. If a person hold immovable property in an area outside his class area, he may live in it, his children may inherit it, he may carry on a business if he already has a licence. If he does not hold a licence, though he may own business premises outside his own area, he must acquire or tenant a property in his class area and apply for a licence. It does not follow in his own class area he can get a licence for the asking. He is still subject to the discretionary powers of Licensing authority who may or may not issue the licence according to his will or fancy, and we know the Town Council as an Appeal Board on very rare occasions goes against his decisions.

The Minister at the request of an urban authority that a certain class area is inadequate or insufficient may appoint a Commission to report on it and he may then deproclaim the area and the same area on the report of the Commission may be reproclaimed for any class of persons. A new area may be proclaimed for the class of persons whose area has been deproclaimed as insufficient, inadequate or unsuitable. It is true the Minister may without deproclaiming a class area on ground of inadequacy extend such area by proclaiming an area in another part of the Town for the class on the report of the Commission whatever the Governor-General may in his discretion do.

An Advisory Board of three persons of the class for whom the area is proclaimed may be elected and provision made for the qualification of those who may elect and be elected. This in effect means in an urban area, Indians though tax and ratepayers and always conforming to the requirements of the area, would have no say or authority in the urban council. This evidently is the first step to take away the Municipal vote from the Indian and as we know the Provincial Council for the third time, has passed in indecent haste, without giving Indians an opportunity to be heard before a Select Committee, the Township Franchise Ordinance, whereby Indians will be deprived of the Townships' vote, which now awaits the assent of the Governor-General.

The Bill discriminates on racial grounds. It segregate persons with common racial characteristics for is purely and simply a class Bill, trust there in sand general terms, and is beyond have thrown dust over it, and discoloured it by the controversy. Let us now go to Bardoli in

gate Indians. It in practice will differentiate between one class or race of persons against another class or race of persons. The Indian in the proclaimed area will not have the rights of a man in the unproclaimed area. The man in the proclaimed area will have the rights of a man in the unproclaimed area who will constitute the urban authority. If it be argued that an area will be proclaimed for Europeans, how would there exist side by side with the urban authority an Advisory Board. Just imagine the Durban Town Council being advised by an Advisory Board of three Europeans what to do and what not to do. Indians have no representations directly or indirectly in the making of the law or in its administration, and Indians know that any laws may be made against them, and such laws may be administered by the Europeans in any way they may feel inclined to do. In the present Bill whatever may be done to the Indian, he has no right of recourse to law or in his initiative to move the Minister to take action in providing his class with an addition area, if such area become insufficient, but the urban authority may move the Minister on the ground of insufficiency, inadequacy or unsuitability. Indians will be like dumb-driven cattle under the Bill.

Indians have exercised restraint and discretion in not doing many things which under the law they may do. There are amenities provided by the Durban Town Council, such as on the Durban Beach, and though Indians are entitled to the use of them, they refrain in order to prevent any friction between the Europeans and themselves, and so we can multiply instances.

To-day Indians are by force of circumstances segregated. The Licensing Officer has played no inconsiderable part in it, as no Indians can obtain a licence in a European or semi-European locality. Indians realising that they may, if their luck was in, get a licence in an Indian area, made for it and in this way Indians have come to trade and to live together. Those who live in European areas may be counted on the fingers of the one hand. Europeans in growing numbers are inserting anti-Asiatic clause in the Deeds of Transfer. The Durban Land Alienation Ordinance dealing with the unutilised lands has a provision enabling the Town Council to sell lands in particular areas to particular class of persons, and this principle has been extended to the other Boroughs and Townships. In the circumstances, we fail to see how the Europeans, even on selfish grounds, can ask for segregation of Indians, for, the processes now at work on the part of the Europeans, can, if they are in earnest, achieve their objects, without a Union Bill to complement the processes.

The policy of racial segregation is retrogressive and detrimental to the progress of human beings. It restricts the liberty and freedom of the class of persons and does not make for the development to the highest degree. The class of persons segregated become by restriction and inattention demoralised, feeling that because one class is in power, it imposes its will for its own benefit to the subjection of another class. It creates conditions that make for the herding of human beings with undesirable consequences of greater impoverishment, insanitation, ill-health and over-population.

The Bill interferes with private property. Indians are being deprived and are restricted directly or indirectly of their existing inherent rights as British subjects, and also in breach of assurances and undertakings given from time to time by the Government in South Africa, that Indians lawfully resident in the country, will be fairly, and sympathetically treated and the existing rights safeguarded, and this was also the understanding between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts in 1914.

With the stoppage of Immigration, free and restricted and with the departures for India and by the deaths of India born Indians, the Indian population will wholly, the years to come, South African in character, and result of environment and education in the the association of Indians with Europeans. more and more South African in

character. And even as the Jews, than whom no race is more tenacious of its religion, are South Africans identified with its progress and development and proud of the land, so will the Indians be, given opportunity.

Indians have always been willing to discharge their duties and responsibilities in peace as in war and they in the great war as in the past local wars offered to bear arms or serve in any capacity and they did so, to the fullest extent the Union Government were pleased to allow, and Indians have never given the opportunity to join the Defence Force.

There is no necessity for the Bill and therefore the Indian community suggest no alternative. If it be suggested that at the bottom of Bill it is an economic question, it will not be solved by the segregation, which to us is not only unjust but impracticable. Where there is capital, labour and competition in the world, there is bound to be dissatisfaction somewhere. Standard of living is a serviceable term, but has it the depth, length and breadth. If Indian lives simply he is accused of living cheaply, if he lives luxuriously the European grumbles that the Indian is able to live better than the European. What is the Indian to do? Will the European lay down the rule that make the standard of living which will be acceptable to the European and we will then work with the European on a common basis, and therefore it is necessary for the European and the Indian to agree upon what is the standard of living.

The South African Indian Congress meets in Cape Town in a few days and the Natal Executive Messrs. Amod Bayat, S. Rustamjee and S. N. Naidoo, A. Christopher, with Messrs. Beethasee Maharajee, V. Lawrence and B. A. Meghraj are proceeding immediately to attend the Congress Executive, and thereafter lodge with the Minister the objections of the Indian community in South Africa, with the incidence of the Bill, if it become law in the Provinces.

I foresee worse times in store for us, any laxity and want of co-operation on our part will submerge us in a deep sea of misery, my last words to you in this hour of national crisis are, "Awake, Arise, And Guard Your Honour And Rights."

#### RESOLUTIONS

1. That this Mass Meeting of Natal Indians strongly protests against the Class Areas Bill proposed to be introduced in the Union Parliament on the grounds that it introduces a policy of segregation based upon racial characteristics and is calculated to deprive or otherwise restrict the existing rights enjoyed by the Indians in regard to licences and ownership of lands.

2. That this Mass Meeting of Natal Indians approves of the action taken by the Natal Indian Congress in regard to the Class Area Bill now sought to be introduced by the Union Government in the present session of the Union Parliament, and in regard to the Township Franchise Ordinance and supports the delegation of the Congress now proceeding to Capetown to lay our views before the Minister.

#### NOTES AND NEWS

London, Jan. 25.—The full text of the message from Mr. Ramsay MacDonald to the *Hindu*, a Madras daily paper, is now available. After expressing goodwill, etcetera, towards India, as related in an earlier message, Mr. MacDonald emphasises the conviction that progress, if it is to be well-rooted, can only be carried on constitutionally. He can see no hope in India if it becomes the arena for a struggle between constitutionalism and revolution.—Reuter.

Calcutta, Jan. 25.—Surenranath Banerjee, President of the Indian Association, has sent a cablegram to Mr. MacDonald congratulating him on his appointment as Prime Minister, and expressing the hope that under his guidance "equal status for Indians in all parts of the Empire will be vindicated, and the attainment of full Responsible Government be expected."—Reuter.

(Calcutta, Jan. 29).—In spite of Government opposition, the Bengal Legislature carried by 76 votes to 45 the Swarajist resolution urging the release of the seventeen men detained without trial. Sir Hugh Stephenson, on behalf of the Government, said the existence of a revolutionary conspiracy proved that the ordinary law was of no avail. The Government was aware that the revolutionaries had established centres in various parts of the Province in the list of philanthropic organisations, and that some leaders of the movement were in touch with the agents of the Third Moscow International, who supplied money and arms to the revolutionaries, who were in possession of weapons and ammunition which could not be procured in India. The existence of a definite plot to assassinate police officers was discovered last year, and the Government considered action imperative.—Reuter.

Delhi, Jan. 25.—Mr. Patel, a Swarajist member, has given notice of a series of resolutions in the Assembly urging on the Government to boycott British Empire goods and the imposition of an extra 15 per cent. tariff on Empire goods as a protest against the treatment of Indians overseas.—Reuter.

Nairobi, Jan. 26.—The Indian National Congress finished the session at Mombasa to-day, when numerous strongly-worded resolutions were passed. Mrs. Sarojini Naidoo, a prominent woman leader, presided over the gathering, which was attended by other politicians from India. Mrs. Naidoo's speeches were characterised throughout by their distinctly bitter tone. In fact, this description might also apply to the majority of the speeches throughout the session. Contrary to precedent, the loyal resolution was not put. The main resolution condemned the white paper containing the Government's decision in regard to Kenya and urged the boycott of the elections; it condemned the Immigration Bill and asked for the recall of Sir Robert Coryndon (the Governor), owing to his attitude in regard to the negotiations. Mrs. Naidoo later visited Nairobi, where she addressed mass meetings.—Reuter.

### SUNDAY'S MASS MEETING

THE mass meeting of Natal Indians held in Durban on Sunday last to protest against the Class Areas Bill was not only representative but was a true index of the feeling which runs throughout the country among the Indians. From the chairman downwards every speaker, who dwelt upon the effects and incidence of the bill severely denounced the policy of segregation, which the Union Government intends to pursue. Thousands attended the meeting, which was held in Rawat's Hall; and there was hardly any standing space left. The dead silence which reigned throughout the proceedings showed the earnestness with which the huge crowd of people followed each speaker. The importance of the occasion and the crisis that face the community were clearly visible in the tone and conduct of the meeting. Mr. Amod Bayat, the President of the Natal Indian Congress, a report of whose speech will be found elsewhere in this issue, after examining the main provisions of the Bill, and expressing the efficacy of same, voiced, as others have voiced, that segregation will not be accepted by the community.

After the Great War, Indians especially in Natal have had to oppose a series of Provincial enactments, which aimed at depriving or otherwise curtailing what little rights they possessed, and it is most unfortunate that we have to face this year the segregation bill, which is far reaching in importance, and deadly, as far as we are concerned, in its effects. This being so, it is a happy

sign that every section of the community, no matter to what school of thought it belonged, is one on the main point of non acceptability of segregation.

It has been rightly said that every blow that is given to us awakens us from inertia, and a state of inactivity, which at times overtake our people. If this is true, the biggest and the heaviest blow is now being aimed, and greater action, unity and co-operation are needed to ward off the blow.

### EXTRAORDINARY BY-LAWS

GELUKSBURG is a Township in Natal, and the Local Board thereof has drafted and published by-laws in the Provincial Gazette of the 21st January relating, among other things, to licenses.

Sec. 13 of the by-laws reads: "No Asiatics or Natives will be allowed to trade within the limits of the Township" and sec. 14 reads: "No person will be allowed to open any business within six miles in the neighbourhood of the Township without a consent in writing first had and obtained from the Board, which consent it shall be optional with the Board to grant or refuse as the Board may see fit.

The first by-law is a clear case of class legislation based upon the nationality of a person, and the second is an attempt, we suppose, to keep out disapproved persons from trading within six miles outside the Township. Although in the opinion of the Board, which must have spent a good deal of energy and time in collecting the points in framing the by-laws that this legislation may help to solve the burning question of Indian trade in far as Geluksburg is concerned, we feel constrained to say that the Board has outstepped its limits of powers, and has been carried away by a zeal of enthusiasm at the expense of common sense, in drafting rank & class by-law and attempting to control matters beyond the limits of its Township.

We understand that the Natal Indian Congress has lodged objections to these by-laws with the Administrator of Natal, and we trust that every effort will be made to appeal to him to disallow them.

### CASTE IN THE WEST

By MR. C. F. ANDREWS IN "YOUNG INDIA"

General Smuts did right in his speech at Maritzburg when he declared that the colour line which the white race is now drawing everywhere is simply a question of caste. We are told frequently that there is no caste outside India, and that the caste system is peculiar to India; but General Smuts has openly declared that it belongs to the West as well, and he is right. The caste system of Kenya and South Africa and elsewhere is rapidly building up a new inhuman barrier between man and man with more stringent rules of untouchability than many of those which existed in India of old. Not only as in India must there be no contact at a furlong's distance, but the "White Australia" policy is such that an ocean of many thousands of miles must be always kept between the white race and Asiatics. Not a must a compound or quarter or street, be a single caste (such as the Brahmin zeal for street in South Indian towns) rust there in sand whole continent must have thrown dust over it,

quarter, in lands like Australia and Canada. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that the new caste system is far more terrible in its inhumanity than the old. It also covers a vastly greater area of humanity.

The missionaries, who came to India, declared emphatically at once against the caste system which they found in India. They declared with vehemence that it must find no place within the Indian Christian Church. So far, so good. But where and when did they make a protest against the new caste system, with its white race idolatry, in the West?

The essential factor in the caste system in India is marriage. Where there is intermarriage, caste, in its true sense, cannot be said to exist. The caste system of the West has proved true to type here also. To the English race, a man is an out-caste, who marries into a non-European race. Even to live, as another race lives, and to adopt their food and dress, is to 'go native' and to incur the danger of being excommunicated from the White race. It is this new caste system, so rapidly covering the world, that is the greatest menace to mankind to-day.

I have just been reading a book, in which a young and generous Englishman, coming out to the British Embassy in China, meets, on the voyage out, a Japanese Lady, belonging to a Samurai family, and marries her. He then breaks the news to his superior, named Mr. Mellingham, and the following excited conversation occurs:—

"But a Japanese! Marry a Japanese", exclaimed Mellingham; "I suppose you know what that means to you at the Embassy. Ruin, my dear Sir, absolute, stark black ruin! If you persist in this monstrous folly, you'll be dismissed from the service like a shot. Did you *kn no* tha'?"

"It certainly occurred to me", said Barrenger, and I am prepared for it. Is there anything else you have to say against my marrying the Japanese lady whom I love?"

"But think of it—the shame and disgrace!" cried Mellingham.

Barrenger laid his hand on the table and leaned forward speaking slowly and quietly. "There will certainly be disgrace", he said, "but it will not be mine. There will certainly be shame, but I have nothing to be ashamed of. The shame and disgrace will belong to you, to you people who will outcaste me...and yet I should not reproach you on that score. You have never sat down to think out the rights and wrongs of the matter. You are simply carrying on a tradition made in the days when your grandfathers came to the East to spread the light of civilisation with opium wars and gunboat policies, a tradition bad and vicious from the start, thoroughly worn out now but still carried on."

"What do you mean?" said Mellingham.

"I mean this. Your grandfathers and mine came frankly to impose themselves on the East by force, and they made no secret of regarding the yellow man, as they called him, as the inferior thing,—about halfway between a European and a wild beast. They were horrified at his barbarous ways forgetting that the blood was hardly dry on their own judicial scourges in Europe. They never troubled to enquire into past history. It was of no interest that the East had produced the most glorious art in the world, when the highest nobles could neither read nor write; that the

great in the future, by its own efforts, *not* by such culture as might be picked up from a swarm of money-grubbing Europeans. It was enough for them that he was the yellow man, eternally inferior to the white man.

"Is that all you have to say?" said Mellingham.

"But you people to-day," continued Barrenger, "you are wiser in your generation. Yours are more liberal ideas. You mix with the yellow man in a certain discreet, non-committal way. You have begun to invite him to your festivities. You have written the invitation cards with formal politeness. That was the way of showing that you regarded them as 'equals'. But now, when one of your number proposes to give further and perhaps more genuine proof of equality, namely by intermarrying with them, what happens? You, personally, Mellingham, are horror-struck. That's because you heard it first. When the rest of the white community hears it too, they will be horrified also. Some will say, 'Poor—fool! Go e native.' Others will say, 'Poor—Idiot! Gone mad.' Some will even wax melodramatic about it and call me a renegade, a traitor to the white race."

"I—I really don't know what else you can expect," said Mellingham. These Japanese, are of course a remarkable people in their way; very cultured, very clever, wonderful history and all that. But to intermarry with them,—no! it isn't done. *It can't* be done. However admirable we may think them, they are not the sort of people to whom we can marry our sons,—or our daughters. *They* realise that!"

"Do they?" replied Barrenger, "and how much longer do you think they will go on realising it? Take heed! You come to the East with your gunboats, and you set up your fetish of the Superior Race. For eighty years you have held it by strength. Now the yellow races grow strong. The younger, Japan, has already grown strong enough to frighten you. Therefore you hate him and hold up his elder brother, China, as an example to the world of how the White man should be received. But now even the big brother, China, grows restless. That is because he is groping for his own lost soul. Soon he will find it.... Your priests in Europe and your missionaries out here are still preaching the religion of the brotherhood of man!"

"H'm, I think the discussion has lasted too long. Then I am to understand, that you are determined to acknowledge this marriage?"

"I was never more determined on anything in my life." Barrenger replied.

"H'm. Then I shall have no alternative, but to report the matter to,—er, to higher authorities. This is monstrous! It's,—it's unheard of!"

It appeared to me, as I read this passage, that every word in it referred to India, and to the attitude of English society in India towards any one who had 'broken caste'. The stage of sham recognition of 'equality',—which is no equality at all, but mere patronage and condescension, mingled with wholly selfish diplomacy—this also is true of a certain attitude in India to-day. What is needed is reality, not a mere pretence and show; sincerity not hypocrisy.

### LALA LAJPAT RAI ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION

The *Indian Social Reformer* has the following leading article in its issue of December 15:—

For several reasons we are inclined to regard Lala Lajpat Rai as being, perhaps, the most reliable political leader at the present day. His public life extends over a longer period than that of most other Indian leaders. What is more, the range of his public activities has been wider than that of almost any other leader. He began his earliest activities in fields which had nothing to do with politics. He began as a religious and social reformer. He was one of the dynamic personalities of the Arya Samaj for many years, and to him largely belongs the credit of creating the net-work of highly efficient Arya Samaj Schools which are some of the best schools in India. To him belongs the credit of establishing the first orphanages in this country during the famine of 1899-1900. He has been, so to speak, forced into politics by the necessities of his country. Besides, there is no Indian who has suffered more at the hands of Government than Lalaji. During the Partition agitation he was deported to Mandalay. After his release he was constantly under a sort of surveillance, and when the War broke out he was practically forced to quit the country. He lived most of the time in America. When he went to America, the small Indian revolutionary party in that country thought that they had gained an important leader in him, but he repelled their advances and was abused for doing so as a traitor to his country. When he was allowed to return to India after the War, he did not really come into line with the policy or the programme of Mahatma Gandhi. To take one instance, in his important book on National Education published just before he returned to India, he had laid down that it was impossible to establish a national system of education except through the machinery and with the resources of Government. We think that as regards other items of Non-co-operation also he, like other Indian leaders, had his own doubts, but like other Indian leaders he too evidently thought it his patriotic duty to back up Mahatma Gandhi in his confident effort to gain Swaraj within a year. We have it now on the authority of one of Mahatmaji's bitterest opponents that that movement came "within an inch of succeeding." But it did not succeed.

In his presidential address to the Punjab Provincial Conference held at Jaranwalla the other day, Lala Lajpat Rai rapidly reviewed the political movement during the last two years, and indicated with characteristic clearness the duty that lay immediately before us. He declared that he was not ashamed of anything that was done or not done, that he withdrew nothing and had no regrets regarding the past. But he did not wish to throw away the experience gained at much cost and much suffering. "Suffering" he said, "is the badge of our tribe, and we shall be guilty of cowardice if we shirk it at a psychological moment and in the cause of truth. But I must frankly admit that I have little faith in suffering for suffering's sake. It may have its use in the purification of the individual and the development of the race, but for the practical purposes of life and for the immediate problems of life, it is a force which need not be counted upon." We are not quite sure that Lalaji is right in the hard and fast line which he draws between "the purification of the individual and the development of the race" on

the one hand, and on the other what he calls "the practical purposes and immediate problems of life." But he is certainly right in having no faith in suffering for suffering's sake. Mere self-torture does not bring salvation either in religion or in politics. Suffering is too precious a thing to be squandered without purpose. Lala Lajpat Rai spoke in most appreciative terms of the political results such as they were, achieved in the short period of twelve months under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. In the Punjab especially the response to the call was enthusiastic and abundant. Said Lala Lajpat Rai: "If freedom could be won by going to jails in large numbers, we should have won it by this time. If liberty could be achieved by showing contempt to British Courts, British laws and British prisons, we should have been free by now. Never before in the history of British rule in India, was British justice put to the test we forced upon it." Lalaji pointed out that many of those who went to the jails were utterly without training for such a high mission. "Once inside the jails," he said, "we forgot ourselves, committed many follies and were guilty of much pettiness and meanness.... We were guilty of many aberrations, we broke every rule, we spoilt the discipline of jail, we abused the best and kindest of the officials. In short, we left nothing undone to provoke them into an attitude of hostility." Apart from this, the going of so many people to jail had the effect of undoing the good work that had been done. The Hindu-Moslem antagonism which seemed to have been controlled in 1921, burst out in greater vigour in 1922 and engulfed those who remained behind. The Fatwas of the Jamait-ul-Ulema, the verdicts of the Congress and the Khilafat Conference fell on deaf ears both among the Hindus and the Mahomedans of the Punjab. Fast as the numbers increased of Non-co-operationists going to jail, still faster increased the enrolments in the Police and the Army to keep them imprisoned. The boycott of the Public Services failed, the boycott of the law-courts failed. Lala Lajpat Rai did not blame either the public or the lawyers or the students for going back. He pointed out that the Non-co-operation programme at Nagpur of which these were items, was based on the idea of "Swaraj within one year." Lala Lajpat Rai said:

"It was on that basis that Mahatmaji asked lawyers to suspend their practice and schoolboys and college-boys to leave their schools and colleges for one year. The expression "suspend the practice" was significant of the mentality that underlay the whole programme. The one year passed. In fact, it expired before Mahatmaji was imprisoned. Having taken note of that fact, he left Nagpur behind and marched forward to Bardoli. Speaking symbolically, we might say he left us at Bardoli, and there we are still now."

Lalaji, therefore, entirely disagrees with the cry of "Back to Nagpur." "We have," he said, "left Nagpur miles behind and cannot retrace our steps to that unlucky place. We cannot revive the slogan of 'Swaraj within one year.' That slogan is dead." Lala Lajpat Rai, therefore, urged that, what we have got to do now is not to go back to Nagpur but to take a firm hold of Bardoli, the stage where Mahatmaji left the Non-co-operation coach. He said:

"We have so far neglected it in our zeal for Nagpur and have allowed it to rust there in sand and in water. Some have thrown dust over it, others have disfigured and discoloured it by the heat of controversy. Let us now go to Bardoli in

respect and reverence, recover our neglected coach, put it in order and then drive it with all the force which faith and righteousness in our cause and reverence for our leader can put in our arms."

In a few sentences Lalaji gave his reason for his advice to go back to Bardoli. As he put it briefly, the campaign of Swaraj in one year did not give us time and opportunity to put the Congress organisation in perfect order. We have to profit by our experience and must now set ourselves to dig the foundations deep, put in concrete and then build solidly upon them. Lalaji pointed out, as we have several times done, that the Congress which ought to represent the united wisdom, the unified interests and the corporate lives of all the communities, does not do so at present. In this connection he warned his friends in Southern and Western India that, if they did not take a more serious view of the situation created by the Hindu-Muslim problem in Northern India, it might engulf the whole country and might wreck the national movement beyond the possibility of redemption. As regards the solution of this problem, Lalaji said there were two ways of solving it. The first was that of Mahatma Gandhi who "exhorted the Hindus to show complete trust if the Mahomedans adopted an attitude of complete surrender." The Hindus, added Lalaji, have declined to accept this and the matter ended there. The second method, which he himself evidently favours, is to come to a definite and abiding understanding about the positions which the communities have to occupy in the future government of the country, and then to localise the remaining causes of the trouble. With this view a National Pact has been drafted by the Sub-Committee appointed by the Delhi Special Congress which, Lalaji said, would be soon published. It will be time when the draft is in our hands, to attempt an appreciation of it. At the moment, however, we are impelled to ask: "What is to be the sanction for the observance or non-observance of the terms of the Pact except the spontaneous good-will of all communities concerned? If this good-will is not forthcoming, what is the practical value of the Pact on paper? It seems to us that questions of this kind cannot be solved by inventing new formulas. The practical question to which the leaders of all communities have to address themselves is: "How can the good-will necessary to guarantee any understandings that may be come to between them, be created and fostered?" For this purpose we must consider what are the causes which foster ill-will among our communities. Lalaji seems inclined to think that they are the desire for the loaves and fishes of office. "It is certain," he says, "that, as long as Government service and the profession of law continues to be the mainstay of our educated young men, the antagonism between the Hindus and Mahomedans, which is economic in its basis, will not cease." It is a fight for loaves and fishes. There is much truth in this, and Mahatma Gandhi probably had it in view when he urged Indians to give up Government service and the legal profession, and also the schools and colleges which prepare them for both. But they are not willing to do so, and Lala Lajpat Rai does not tell us by what other means in the present circumstances of the country Indians can be induced to give up Government service and the legal profession, or even whether they should do so at all. We are not surprised, because the attempt to clean the slate is bound to fail in the future as in the past. Even Bardoli is far behind,

and while we should not lose sight of the great principle of constructive work they laid down, we cannot implicitly adhere to every word and line of that programme.

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