

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

TO all those who have taken interest in the Khilafat movement in India the names of Ali Brothers and their mother Bi-Amman have become quite familiar. The sad news, therefore, of the death of Bi-Amman which appears in the papers received by the last Indian mail will be received with the deepest regret. The Ali Brothers are known as the two lions but it was a lioness that gave birth to these lions. Bi-Amman was a sterling example of ancient womanhood of India. Notwithstanding her old age she took a very active part in the cause of Khilafat and Swaraj and worked ceaselessly for the Hindu Moslem Unity. May her soul rest in peace and may Ali Brothers have the strength and courage to continue with redoubled zeal the work carried on by their mother.

The following is a tribute paid to the late Bi-Amman by Mahatma Gandhi in *Young India* dated Nov., 20 :—

It is difficult to think of Bi-Amman as dead. Who does not know the stately figure of Bi-Amman or her voice at public gathering? Though old in years, she possessed the energy of youth. She travelled ceaselessly in the cause of the Khilafat and Swaraj. A staunch follower of Islam, she realised that the cause of Islam, in so far as it depended on human effort, depended upon the freedom of India. She realised with equal conviction that freedom of India was impossible without Hind-Muslim unity and khaddar. She therefore ceaselessly preached unity which had become an article of faith with her. She had discarded all her foreign or mill made clothing and taken to khaddar. Maulana Mahomed Ali tells me she had enjoined upon him that on her death she should have nothing but khaddar. Whenever I had the privilege of going to her bedside her inquiry was about Swaraj and Unity. The inquiry was invariably followed by the prayer that God might grant wisdom to Hindus and Musalmans to understand the necessity of unity and that He may in His mercy let her live to see Swaraj established. The best way in which we can treasure the memory of this brave and noble soul is to imitate her in her zeal for the common cause. Hinduism without unity and Swaraj is as much in peril as Islam. Would that Hindus and Musalmans had the commonsense of Bi-Amman to appreciate this elementary fact. God grant her soul peace and the Ali Brothers strength to continue the mission bequeathed to them.

At a meeting held in committee the Town Council discussed its recent resolution which had the effect of removing the flower-sellers from Gardiner Street. It has been submitted to the Council that this has had a somewhat disastrous effect on the sales of European growers. The Council-in-Committee decided to refer the question to the Chief Constable, who will be empowered to use his discretion in making arrangements for stands until the Marketmaster returns. It is understood, however, that no stands will be allotted in Gardiner Street.

The fact to be noted here is that the consideration authorised to be paid to the flower-sellers is not in recognition of the inconvenience or loss suffered by the flower-sellers but in view of the "European" flower-growers having to suffer loss by their flowers being not sold. The interests of Europeans are at stake and they must be protected. Those of others do not count!

An Indian named Appasammy was fined £2 by Mr. H. B. Wallace in the Borough Court for allowing larvae of flies to accumulate on his premises, the "Favourite Laundry."

Moonsamy, of 145, Umbilo Road, received a sentence of £1 for contravening the Public Health by-laws. It was stated that accused used a sewerage lavatory which was out of repair and leaking badly.

Bombay, Dec. 19 (Renter).—The Prince and Princess Arthur of Connaught arrived here to-day, and were welcomed by the Governor of Bombay.

### CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR

JUST yesterday Christians all over the world in common with the Christians in this dark sub-continent, celebrated the birth-day of Christ, the Saviour of the world according to the Christian faith. The significance of this great festivity is lost if the members of the Christian community, be they white or black, yellow or brown, literate or illiterate, rich or poor, do not look at it with the eyes of their faith, understand it and keep it. Have they pondered—do they ever ponder, over what the true meaning of that festivity is and what the central figure of that festivity desired to convey to humanity at large. To our mind there are three things that stand out pre-eminently in this great mystery of the incarnation. The all-important lessons that God-made-man wished to teach mankind in order that they might profit by them and regulate their lives accordingly, are, humility, poverty and charity—humility by condescending to take the form of man and be born of a virgin, poverty by choosing to be born in a manger in the stable of Bethlehem in swaddling clothes, and charity by manifesting His love for men, partaking the nature of man to redeem him from his sin. These lessons He gave to the human race—and particularly His followers so that they might emulate His example. But, alas! to the great majority of them the festivity is only a day of jollification, picnicing and in the midst of all that revelry, the thought of God and the sublime lessons He teaches by His nativity are clean forgotten. He says to them, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." Love thy neighbour as thyself. If only His followers observe one

millionth part of His noble commandment the world would be all the richer and purer for it and there would be more peace and amity, more concord and happiness, more brotherliness and unity; there would be no class war, race war or colour war, there would be no white superiority dominating over the subject races. We therefore say to our white Christian rulers and citizens it is not even now too late to amend. Be humble as He was humble for He says: "Blessed are they that are meek and humble for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Our morning contemporary in dealing with the Boroughs Ordinance last week said that we were a people "unassimilable" for we "in dress, in religion, in customs, remain in the mass apart from the white population of Natal, and therefore we should not share in their political and social institutions. In any case" it says "it would not be to the advantage of either party in the long run to attempt to assimilate the unassimilables." On the contrary, we say, "Be fair, be just, follow the example of Him whose birthday you just celebrated. Ask His grace and guidance in your treatment of the people of a different colour to yours. Through your government and through your press try to raise them and do not for His sake drag them down. The other day our afternoon contemporary in 'getting to grips with the Asiatic question' said, "if the higher cannot lift the lower, the lower will inevitably drag down the higher." Do not let this happen. Do your plain Christian duty. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and everything else shall be added unto you" says the same Christ. In wishing the compliments of the season to our Christian rulers here and elsewhere and to our Christian white fellow-subjects, not forgetting our own Christian brothers, we pray Almighty God may in His infinite mercy pour down upon them His choicest blessings and give them a happy and prosperous New Year.

### THE BOROUGHS ORDINANCE

#### COMMENTS BY LOCAL ENGLISH PRESS

The *Natal Mercury* writes:—

The announcement that the Government—formally "the Governor-General-in-Council—has assented to the Natal Boroughs Ordinance, 1924, will no doubt occasion some heart-burning among Asiatics in the Province. It will be well for them to face the position frankly and fair-mindedly. The Ordinance is another step in the process of what may be called political segregation. It is the logical development of a policy with which Indians in this country should be already familiar and in the earlier manifestations of which they have acquiesced not, perhaps, willingly but under pressure of the logic of facts. The first step taken in pursuance of this policy was the restriction of immigration to races more or less assimilable to the dominant European races in this country. The second step was the restriction of the Parliamentary franchise to those who share the political traditions and ideas which are common to the British and Dutch in South Africa. The crucial clause in the Boroughs Ordinance assimilates the municipal franchise to the Parliamentary, which is surely a logical proceeding. It is important to remember that there has not been at any stage discrimination against the Indians as such. Doubt-

less there is a good deal of unthinking out-against Indians as such on various more or less untenable grounds. Doubtless also the Provincial legislature and the Union Government were both perfectly well aware that the limitations imposed would chiefly affect Indians because they form the only considerable group in the population, apart from the Natives, which is considered "unassimilable." But public opinion would not tolerate any discrimination against Indians which did not apply also to the Asiatic nations outside the British Empire, at least one of which has a higher general average of education and advancement than prevails among the teeming and heterogeneous millions in India. Neither is any discrimination made on grounds of relative "superiority" and "inferiority." On the contrary a good deal of the loose talk of the Anti-Asiatic agitators about Asiatic encroachment on white spheres of employment means when logically analysed that they consider the Asiatic superior in earning capacity to the white man even if they think him inferior in his spending tastes. As a matter of fact everyone who has considered the question with complete impartiality must recognise that the cheap labour of the Asiatic is an asset to the white community. Yet discrimination there is, and it would be mere camouflage to pretend that it is not in effect and, in a modified sense, in intention, discrimination against the Indian.

How then is it to be justified? The answer is biological rather than economic or even historical. Behind all the loose and often irrational talk of economic competition, behind all the ebullitions of superficial race-prejudice, there is a national instinct, comparatively recently awakened in this country, but profoundly right. It is the same instinct which prompted the Aryan conquerors of India many centuries ago to endeavour to keep their race pure by the elaborate "caste" system of segregation. It is the same instinct which makes the Bantu despise the child of a Bantu woman by a father of the "superior" white race because it "belongs to no kraal." It is the same instinct which has inspired the United States to discriminate in its immigration legislation not merely against Asiatics, but in a lesser degree against Eastern and Southern Europeans. It teaches that the human race is not one great family but several, and that there are boundary lines in the relations of the members of different families which cannot be overstepped without detriment to both. The Americans have discovered that even certain white peoples from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are not "assimilable"; after several generations they remain a foreign element in a population drawn originally from Western Europe and conserving the common traditions of England, France, Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia. So we in Natal hold the Indians to be unassimilable. In dress, in religion, in customs, they remain in the mass apart from the white population of Natal. Many of them, we know, were born in this country, and in some cases their fathers before them—incidentally that only emphasises the evidence of their unassimilability—and the white community as a whole, despite the vapourings of a few hot-heads, recognises that they cannot be extruded from the country. It is ready to accord them equality in the elementary human rights of security for life and property, the rights of conscience, and the right to justice in the Courts; but it is not willing that they should share in its political and social institutions. It is quite willing that they should develop their own political as well as social institutions—the Class Areas Bill made specific provision to that end—but it does not believe that it would be to the advantage of either party in the long run to attempt to assimilate unassimilables. Geographical segregation may or may not be impracticable; but

political and social segregation is, we believe, necessary for the happiness of both communities.

### GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE ASIATIC QUESTION

The *Natal Advertiser* writes as follows under the above heading:—

It is satisfactory to learn that the Indian community in Natal intend to contest the Natal Borough Ordinance, and even carry, if necessary, their objections as far as the Privy Council. These steps are necessary if only to decide, once for all, whether the white people in the Union are or are not masters in their own house. We have little fear of the result. Even should it happen—which is highly improbable—that the action of the Union Government in assenting to the Ordinance was *ultra vires*, the situation would be only temporarily eased so far as the Asiatic was concerned. The Union would have to secure such alteration to its constitution as would empower it to do the things it purposes doing in the measure under dispute; and in the pursuit of those added powers far graver results might ensue than are likely to flow directly from the Ordinance itself. The Indians talk of sending deputations to Europe and to India. Again, it is well that they should. The sooner this vexed question is settled as to how far the Imperial aspect and how far the Union's local aspect of the Asiatic problem are to predominate the better for everyone concerned. It is in the atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty that mischief is bred and trouble assumes its chief proportions.

#### TWO ESSENTIAL FACTS

Two things seem to us should be said anew at this stage. The one is that the Ordinance disfranchises no one. It takes away no municipal vote that is to-day enjoyed by the Asiatic. That it intends henceforth to restrict the municipal franchise to those enjoying the Parliamentary one is equivalent to saying that when the Union Parliament sees fit to put Asiatics on the Parliamentary roll the Province will put them on the municipal roll. This is a fair enough proposition. The Union Government has hitherto shown little enough sympathy with Natal in this matter of our Asiatic population. We are compelled to keep the Indians within our Provincial borders. They are segregated, so far as the Provinces are concerned, in one part of the country; and our burden in carrying them is heavy enough without making it worse by giving franchise rights in this Province that the Union Government never dreams of extending to matters Parliamentary. The welkin will ring shortly with Asiatic protests that political birthrights have been torn away from unresisting fellow-subjects of the Crown. But, as we say, no one's vote has been or is being taken away. That no more will be granted unless the applicant has a Parliamentary franchise is a different matter. That is not a question of rights once conceded being withdrawn. It is rather a question of not allowing a privilege once conceded to become one in perpetuity unless and until those enjoying it show some reciprocal fitness to enjoy it.

#### WHITE MEN OR WHITE STANDARDS?

Which brings us to the second point that needs to be in perpetual remembrance. We do not subscribe to the narrow race doctrine of a purely white franchise in this country. This we have said time and again. But we do maintain that the only franchise granted in South Africa should be given to people conforming to *white standards of civilisation*. This is a far different thing from the former. It does not preclude the non-European bringing himself sufficiently far along the road of civilisation to earn a voice in the government of the country; and though it may be long before any men other than Europeans reach this standard, it nevertheless

must be there for their attainment. The gravamen of the case against the Indian is that, intelligent and capable as he is, he has withstood for seventy years the invitation to adopt the code on which civilisation in this country rests. He has insisted on following Eastern rather than Western ways. His power and wealth have been mainly derived from his exploitation of Asiatic standards of work, wages and living; and he has confidently claimed to live amongst us but not be of us—that is to say, he has rejected every appeal to adopt our economic standards while calmly demanding equal political power with those who are pursuing a far harder course and laying penalising inhibitions on themselves at every turn in the economic conflict. The Asiatic has been given more than a fair deal in Natal. His wealth and influence to-day, equally with his numbers, prove it up to the hilt. But he has made no attempt to earn Western confidence by any adoption of Western standards of living and industry. He has demonstrated to the uttermost his non-assimilability; and he must have known the day would come when the Europeans in Natal would realise it was either their own or the Asiatic civilisation that had to prevail. They cannot both prevail side by side. We doubt if for ever they can even exist side by side. If the higher cannot lift the lower, the lower will inevitably drag down the higher. And this latter is more imminent year by year.

#### NOT BEFORE TIME

Meantime we look for a speedy repercussion of this legislation in Durban. At long last the town seems likely to be freed of the iron grip of an Asiatic municipal franchise. No longer will it be necessary for various spineless Councillors to sacrifice the European well-being because of an increasing Asiatic vote on the municipal roll. It will now be possible to get a point of view across which the menacing brown shadow does not fall with ominous significance, and there will blaze up a renewed hope that, after all, the Durban built up by our European forefathers is destined for something greater than an Asiatic inheritance hereafter. If this Asiatic electoral peril had been toyed about with much longer, the civic initiative might easily have passed from the European for good and all. For the prosperous Asiatic has many allies in this town who are neither of his race nor his colour, and they are not least in intrigue, wire-pulling and the gentle art of "working the oracle" when it is desired that certain affairs shall come to pass.

#### MR. H. H. KEMP

Mr. H. H. Kemp, the anti-Asiatic member of the Durban Town Council, has addressed the following letter to the *Natal Advertiser*:—

Sir,—I am informed officially that the Governor-General-in-Council has now given its assent to the Natal Municipal Ordinance.

As I urged upon the Town Council and the Government in September last, and to the Minister of the Interior later at a personal interview, the Governor-General-in-council had no option in the matter. The assent is quite in accord with the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand precedents. There the view is now fully accepted that each Provincial Legislature, within the sphere of its authority of Jurisdiction, shall be supreme and amenable only to its own constitutional judges—the electors of the Provinces. And in this connection may I refer to a report to the Canadian Minister of Justice, against the suggested disallowance of the Ontario Commission Amendment Act, of 1909, viz:—

"In the opinion of the undersigned, a suggestion of the abuse of power, even so as to amount to practical confiscation of property, or that the exercise of a

power has been unwise or indiscreet, should appeal to your Excellency's Government with no more effect than it does to the ordinary tribunals, and the remedy in such case is, in the words of Lord Herschell, an appeal to those by whom the Legislature is elected."

And as I pointed out to the Government, provided the measure was *intravires* the Provincial Council, it should receive assent. Any other course is to make the Provincial Council of Natal merely a tool to register the views of the Union Government of the day—a position which no self-respecting Council should ever accept.

Now that after some 10 years of battling I have got my way with regard to the Asiatic Franchise in Natal municipal elections, I am on the war path again to give effect to the declaration of the late Colonial Secretary (Mr. J. H. Thomas) with regard to the Asiatics in the Union, viz.: that the Indian question was "so wrapped up and part of the Imperial problem that the advice and co-operation in its solution both of the Imperial Parliament and the representatives of India essential."

To the Natal Europeans may I ask one question: will you really help me in this mission or shall I be compelled to fight a lone hand for what you really want—the total repatriation of all Asiatics from the Union? If the Europeans of Natal think it will come about, like the gentle dew from heaven, they make a big mistake. It is only by solid work that achievement will come about. I am working just now in this direction practically on my own. But let me ask my fellow South Africans to think for one moment. Shall it fall to the lot of their children here after to have to ask themselves the question: how can the question be solved except by repatriation? There is no solution except complete repatriation. "Be just before you are generous, be just to all, even to your own."

H. H. KEMP.

#### THE CONGRESS AT WORK

The Natal Indian Congress, we understand, has decided to contest the legality of the Boroughs Ordinance, even to the extent of taking it to the Privy Council. Mr. V. S. C. Pather, the secretary of the congress, is reported to have told a *Mercury* representative that the Congress contends that the Ordinance is *ultra vires*, Section 85 of the South Africa Act, they argue, gives Provincial Councils the power to create Municipal institutions, but does not give them the power to discriminate between one class of burgess and another. This contention was stressed in the statement made by the deputation at Pretoria.

A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress is being held on Sunday to confirm the executive's decision. Meanwhile, the secretary states, several legal luminaries have been consulted. They have not had time to give a considered legal opinion, but have advised the Congress that they have a good case. It was further stated that several Indian merchants have come forward with donations towards the expenses of legal action and the promises total £1,000.

The attitude of the Indians represented by the Congress was defined by the secretary, who stated that the Indian community would strenuously oppose the Ordinance. "We must either stay here as respectable citizens or clear out," he said, "and as we are staying here we will fight the Ordinance."

It was gathered that if the steps which have now been decided upon fail, the Congress proposes to send deputations to the Colonial Secretary and to the Indian Government.

Seen by a representative of the *Natal Advertiser* Mr. V. S. C. Pather, is reported to have stated very

definitely that the matter will be fought to the uttermost.

"We shall first fight a test case on the Ordinance in the South African courts," said Mr. Pather. "Ample funds for the purpose will be forthcoming. I have already interviewed many of our leading men, and I may say with confidence that the community are prepared, if necessary, to carry the matter to the Privy Council, be the the cost in time and money what it may."

"This," he added with emphasis, "is a life or death matter for the Indians of Natal."

A meeting of the council of the Natal Indian Congress has already been convened for Saturday next, whereat a date will be fixed for a mass meeting of all Indians to discuss the position in all its bearings.

Among Europeans (says the *Advertiser*) the general feeling is one of satisfaction that at last one definite blow has been struck against the Indian menace and in defence of European supremacy in South Africa.

Councillor Kemp, who declares himself the happiest man in Durban to-day, has received over a hundred messages of congratulation by telegraph and telephone.

#### INDIANS AND THE FRANCHISE

Capetown, Dec. 21.—Renter's Agency is informed that at an executive meeting of the S. A. Indian Congress, representing Indians of the Natal, Transvaal and the Cape, the following resolutions moved by the Deputy-President (Dr. A. H. Gool), and seconded by the Hon Secretary (Mr. A. Ismail) were passed:

(1) That we protest against the passing of the Natal Borough's Ordinance as a mediæval, reactionary and unjust law, promulgated, against an inoffensive, unprotected and powerless people purely on account of their race. It deliberately robs the rising and future generations of Indians born and bred in South Africa of their sacred rights of municipal franchise and thus leaves them to the mercy of men who will not deal justly with them.

(2) That we endorse and support the action of the Natal Indian Congress, first to test the legality of this law in the highest Courts of the Empire, if for nothing else but to show how the British pioneers of Natal have basely betrayed the great traditions of their motherland home of democracy and free institutions.

(3) That if we prove unsuccessful in the Courts of Justice then as self-respecting men there will be no other course open to us but to raise the standard of passive resistance and we shall then call upon 150,000 members of our organisations to prepare themselves for the struggle. We fully realise the seriousness of such a measure, but whereas other races in the past under such an Act of disenfranchisement have resorted to gun and bomb, we shall only be prepared to bring moral force to bear upon our oppressors.

(4) That these resolutions be forwarded to the Governor-General-in-Council, the Colonial Secretary, our president, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi, and Mr. C. R. Dass.

Signed: A. H. Gool, deputy-president; A. Ismail, hon. general secretary; S. Casimally, treasurer.

#### INDIA'S PROTEST

Bombay, Dec. 19 (Renter).—The papers of all views protest against the Natal Boroughs Ordinance, which the *Daily Mail* considers will for ever remain one of the darkest blots on South Africa's reputation, immoral as its attitude towards Indians has always been.

The *Times of India* describes it as a gratuitous attack on already existing Indian rights, and urges the Government of India to again protest in order to secure the repeal of the Ordinance.

The paper hopes that, in so doing, the Government will receive the backing of the Colonial Office.

The *Bombay Chronicle* declares the measure is

an outrage on civilised citizenship, past pledges, and present honour, in a passion of colour prejudice.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The following interesting article by Mr. Gandhi in connection with the recent Bengal Ordinance appears in *Young India* dated Nov. 6:—

The expected has come to pass. The English press had foreshadowed for us the viceregal bomb. It is the Hindu new year's gift to Bengal and through Bengal to India. The step need not surprise us nor terrify us. The Rowlatt Act is dead but the spirit that prompted it is like an evergreen. So long as the interest of Englishmen is antagonistic to that of Indians, so long must there be anarchical crime or the dread of it and an edition of the Rowlatt Act in answer. Non-violent non-co-operation was the way out. But we had not the patience to try it long enough. Let us see how the English interest is antagonistic to the Indian. Lancashire mills are the greatest drag on India's economic progress. It is obviously India's interest not to have a yard of Lancashire or other foreign calico or yarn. But the Lancashire mill-owners will not readily and without a struggle give up the immoral traffic. I call it immoral because it has ruined India's peasantry and brought it to the verge of starvation. India supports (for her) a heavily paid English civil service. It is obviously to her interest that this service, no matter how efficient it may be, is replaced by an indigenous service, no matter how inefficient it may be. Man cannot breathe with borrowed lungs. India supplies the training ground for English soldiers and is therefore taxed to the bleeding point in order to finance a military budget that absorbs more than half her total revenue. It is again clearly India's interest that she should learn to defend herself even though it may be indifferently for the time being. For her to be dependent for her defence external or internal upon outsiders, however capable or well meaning they may be, is to lose three quarters of her manliness.

For doing the right thing the English are at an advantage. For they belong to the governing race. Those who are not in the civil service—the large body of lay Englishmen and Englishwomen—ought to perceive the disastrous results of the British domination. The so-called *Pax Britannica* is no compensation for the deprivation of liberty and the ever-growing pauperism. In spite of the elaborate Viceregal reasoning, I venture to submit that no case has been made out for the arbitrary measures adopted by His Excellency. Let violence be punished by all means. I am no defender of anarchy. I know that it can do no good to the country. But it is one thing to punish crime actually attempted or committed. It is totally another thing to give arbitrary powers to the authority to arrest persons without warrant and that too on mere suspicion. What is happening now is to terrorise suspects. Past experience shows that more innocent people are punished than the guilty, whenever the Government has yielded to panic. Every one knows that by far the largest number of persons punished in the Punjab in 1918 were totally innocent of the crimes imputed to them. Whenever a government resorts to arbitrary powers, it really means that it has no popular opinion behind it.

Deshbandhu Das, by his work in the Bengal Council, has shown that the Bengal Government has not the popular opinion behind it. The theory that he has set up a system of terrorism must be rejected. There is no evidence to support the charge. You cannot win popular elections by terrorism nor can you hold a large party together by it. There is something inherently commendable to the people to make the Deshbandhu the undisputed master of his

large party in Bengal. The reason is on the surface. He wants power for the people. He does not bend the knee to the rulers. He is impatient to release Bengal and India from the triple burden. Let him sing another tune, let him say he does not want freedom for the people, and he will lose his influence in spite of the terrorism imputed to him. I have my differences with the Deshbandhu, but they cannot blind me to his burning patriotism or his great sacrifice. He loves the country just as much as the best of us. His right-hand men have been torn away from him. They are all men of status. They enjoy the confidence of the people. Why should they not have an open, fair and ordinary trial? The summary arrest of such men under extraordinary powers is the surest condemnation of the existing system of Government. It is wrong, it is uncivilised for a microscopic minority of men to live in the midst of millions under the protection of the bayonet, gunpowder and arbitrary powers. It is no doubt a demonstration of their ability to impose their authority upon a people more numerous than they, but it is also a demonstration of barbarism that lies beneath a thin coating of civilisation.

To the Bengalis who are on their trial, I respectfully say: 'If you are innocent as I believe most of you are, your incarceration can only do good to the country and yourselves, if you will take it in the right spirit. We will not win freedom without suffering.' To those who may be real anarchists and believers in violence I urge: 'Your love of the country commands my admiration, but you will permit me to say that your love is blind. In my opinion India's freedom will not be won by violence but only by the purest suffering without retaliation. It is the surest and the most expeditious method. But if you persist in your faith in the method of violence, I ask you to make a bold confession of your faith and dare to suffer even though it be unto death. Thereby you will prove your courage and honesty and save many innocent persons from involuntary suffering.'

### THE PROBLEM OF MALAYA

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

In an article published some time ago, I tried to describe briefly the external conditions of Malaya, and spoke of it as a very fertile country lying midway between India and China, with abundance of empty spaces. The voyage from Madras occupies only four days; and with better steamers even this time might be shortened. Therefore, as an emigration problem, Malaya is much more akin to Ceylon; it differs greatly from Fiji and British Guiana, where the problem of distance is paramount.

Hindu civilisation flourished in Malaya and Java for more than a thousand years. The Malaya in both countries (who are Mussalmans) have always appeared to me to possess something distinctly 'Hindu' in their character. This is due to the background among them of Hindu civilisation, which still abides and influences life deeply; just as it does among Mussalmans in East and North Bengal. Owing to this vital fact, there appears to be no racial barrier between the Indian immigrants and the Malays.

The earlier conditions of Indian labour immigration into Malaya were bad beyond all description. At the beginning of the twentieth century the indenture system was still in force and all its evils were rampant. In addition to this, nearly every plantation at that time was a hot-bed of malarial fever. Europeans and Indians alike were literally decimated by malaria. Indeed, not infrequently, death rates on the plantations were as high as 250 per thousand per annum. A very full and vivid account was given me concerning those days by a

planter himself, who travelled to India with me. Death was an every-day occurrence and men grew callous and indifferent. Acts of cruelty naturally abounded in such an environment.

Improvements really began from the time that the indenture system was given up. That was a turning point in the history of Indian labour in Malaya. Remarkable improvements were also made with regard to malaria prevention, and these had their wholesome effect. For though the death rates still remained high for some years, the means of preventing the spread of the disease had been found; and money was ungrudgingly spent in order to bring the death-rate down by scientific methods.

The indenture system was abolished by the planters themselves, without any pressure from the Indian Government. Great credit is due for this; and one of the chief workers, in such an important reform, was Dr. H. C. E. Zacharias, who has since joined the Servants of India Society at Poona. It was an immense help, during the final struggle against indenture, to be able to point to the successful experiment of free labour in Malaya. During a visit which I paid to Malaya, on my way back from Fiji, the help I received from Dr. Zacharias in Malaya was of the very greatest service.

The credit for the practical abolition of malaria has been chiefly due to Dr. Malcolm Watson. He is one of those men of scientific genius, who are born, in God's providence, from time to time to benefit mankind. It is a low estimate to say, that he has saved more than 100,000 lives already by his wonderful anti-malaria achievements. In the year 1918, it was my great privilege to travel hundreds of miles with him, watching him at work and hearing him describe his experiments, with their successes and their failures. It is not possible to describe his system further than to state, that he relies almost entirely on subsoil drainage, scientifically applied. Quinine prevention is with him but a secondary method. What he has accomplished by scientific drainage, in reducing the death rate and spleen rate, reads almost like a fairy story; but fortunately it is altogether true. The health records, as soon as malaria itself disappears, become nothing less than amazing. To give one instance, the present death rate among Indian labourers, on all estates in Malaya, is only 13 per thousand per annum. Those who have studied the death rates in India will understand how low that figure is. Yet the medical authorities in Malaya are practically certain that the figure will go even lower, when all the necessary engineering is carried out.

The initial cost is very heavy. I went over an estate owned by a Chinese gentleman, where Tamil labour was employed. There were about 2000 labourers on the estate. A sudden out-break of malaria had occurred, owing to defective drainage. The rubber industry was in a bad condition; yet he spent 40,000 dollars (nearly 70,000 rupees) in setting things right. As soon as he did so, the death rate went down from 50 per thousand to 5 per thousand per annum.

As the result, both of the abolition of indentured labour and the greatly improved health conditions, the labour immigration from Southern India to Malaya has become more popular in recent years. When there has been famine, or flood, or destitution in India itself, the emigrants have gone over in large numbers. On this account, the kangani recruiting, which has always led to great abuses, has sensibly diminished. During the year 1923, out of 28,500 labourers, who received assisted passages, 7,400 applied for these passages of their own accord and did not require any recruiting. Among these assisted labourers, 5,500 had already lived in Malaya and were returning to their former occupations. Perhaps an even more striking fact is this that

11,000 labourers from Southern India paid their own passages and came back at their own expense to work on their own small settlements in Malaya. The Chief Secretary, Sir George Maxwell, has asked me to make it widely known in India, that he specially desires to encourage such forms of labour colonisation and is prepared to give free grants of land for this purpose.

✓ If we compare these figures with those of four or five years ago, we see at once what an improvement has been made. Where one in four now comes over without any recruiting, only one in eight used to come over in 1921, 1920, 1919. I am told, on good authority, that to-day, if recruiting were stopped altogether, it is still possible that the labour needed on the plantations would be voluntarily supplied. This may be an optimistic view but if wages and conditions of comfort on the voyage over and on the estates were increased, it would by no means be an impossibility in another five years' time. Therefore my substantive proposition to the planters was that they should prepare to do without any kangani recruiting at the end of the next five years. I did not find the strong opposition to this that I had expected. It did not seem to them to be an impracticable thing at all.

In all that I have written, I do not wish to imply that other things are satisfactory in Malaya. The sea-passage on the immigrant ships is a disgrace to any country that allows it to continue. The sex ratio on the estates is altogether too low, and the natural evils due to the disproportion of men to women are apparent. Again, there is far too much toddy drinking. The schools provided by the estates are, for the most part, miserably inefficient. The kangani system leads inevitably to miserable indebtedness among the labourers and the drink evil increases that misery. There are still, from time to time, cases of unspeakably gross misconduct on the part of Europeans in authority. All these things are apt to make a dark picture, when realised for the first time. Nevertheless, to those who have seen the conditions, as I have done, at different times over a period of years, it is quite evident that great improvements have been made. Furthermore it appears certain that these improvements will go in the future.

Pretoria, Dec. 19 (Reuter).—A notice signed by the Commissioner of Police is gazetted, in which, it is stated that the police have received orders to enforce strictly the provisions of the Native Nigh Passes Ordinance of 1922 in respect of Native women. From and after Feb. next all Native women will be required to carry passes when out between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m. within the areas under the jurisdiction of town councils or health boards.

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