

# Indian Opinion

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## BOROUGHS ORDINANCE 1924 (NATAL)

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THE following proclamation appears in the Union *Government Gazette* dated 19th December 1924:—

Whereas an Ordinance to consolidate and amend the law relating to the constitution of municipalities, boroughs elections and general authority councils and to define the powers of townships was passed by the Natal Provincial Council presented by the Administrator of Natal to the Governor-General-in-Council for assent in accordance with section ninety of the South Africa Act, 1909, on the second day of August, 1924;

And whereas the Governor-General-in-Council in accordance with the said section reserved the said Ordinance for further consideration;

And whereas the Governor-General-in-Council has determined that the said Ordinance shall have effect with his assent;

Now, therefore, under and by virtue of the powers vested in me by section ninety of the South Africa Act, 1909, I do hereby declare, proclaim and give effect to the said Ordinance the short title of which is "The Boroughs Ordinance 1924," presented by the Provincial Council of Natal, and presented to me by the Administrator of Natal, and the said Ordinance, has received the assent of the Governor-General-in-Council.

GOD SAVE THE KING

Given under my Hand and the Great Seal of the Union of South Africa at Pretoria, this Twentieth day of December, One thousand Nine hundred and Twenty-four.

ATHLONE,  
Governor

By Command of His Excellency the  
Governor-General-in-Council.

D. F.

The above Ordinance has been promulgated for general information in a *Gazette Extraordinary* for the Province of Natal dated the 25th December 1924. The Ordinance is known as "The Boroughs Ordinance 1924" and shall come into operation on the first day of August 1925. The Ordinance is divided into 22 chapters.

We reproduce below the sections of the Ordinance directly or indirectly affecting the Indian community:—

### CHAPTER 4. QUALIFICATION OF BURGESS

#### SECTION 13. (1) Every person, male or female,

(a) Who is the owner of rateable property in any ward of the Borough of the assessed value of Fifty Pounds (£50); or

(b) Who has occupied for a continuous period of twelve months immediately prior to the first day of the current year any rateable property in any ward of the Borough of a gross assessed value of Ten Pounds (£10);

and who, being a male, is entitled to be registered as a parliamentary voter, or being a female, would be entitled to be so registered if she were a male, shall be entitled to be enrolled as a burgess and to vote at the election of Councillors for such ward as he or she, being subject to the disqualifications herein stated.

Provided, however, that no person who, at the 1st day of July, 1924, was enrolled as a burgess of any Borough shall be disqualified for or disentitled to such enrolment in that Borough merely by reason of not being a British subject or for non-compliance with the foregoing provision in regard to parliamentary qualifications.

### CHAPTER 13—TRAFFIC

#### Closing Deviation or Restriction of Traffic

SECTION 152. Par. (2)—The Council may, for the safety of the public or the protection of property, close any street, road or way permanently to any particular class of vehicular traffic, or to all vehicular traffic or to pedestrian traffic; but such permanent closing to all vehicular or pedestrian traffic shall not be carried out unless and until the Council shall have given one month's notice of its intention to do so by advertisement published once in the *Provincial Gazette* and four times in a newspaper.

### SALE AND LEASE OF LAND

SECTION 160. The Council may, with the consent of the Administrator—

- Sell any land or building by public auction; provided that the Administrator may authorise the land or building to be sold by private bargain if, in any case, he is satisfied that the interests of the Borough will thus be better served than by a sale at auction;
- Sell any land or building by public auction or private bargain or grant or otherwise alienate land or building for the endowment, erection or maintenance of public institutions or for other uses of a public nature and for the public advantage;
- Exchange any of the town lands or any buildings for other lands or buildings within or without the Borough;
- Sell, exchange or otherwise deal with land or buildings where and so far as it is considered necessary for the suitable adjustment of boundaries.

SECTION 165 sub-sec. (c) The Council shall have the power: To lease plots of land within the Borough for periods not exceeding twelve months to Native or other coloured persons, on such portions of the Town Lands as may be set apart for such purpose, free of rates and assessments, without offering such leases to public auction and without the consent of the Administrator.

### CHAPTER 14.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD

##### Sanitation

Section 173. sub-sec. (d)—The Council shall have authority to:

Enforce the provision of sufficient pail accommodation on premises where Natives or Asiatics are resident, or employed.

### CHAPTER 15.

#### NUISANCES

Section 185. By-laws may be made *inter alia* for

the purposes mentioned in the Seventh Schedule. [NOTE:—One of the purposes mentioned in the seventh schedule is:—The use by coloured persons of vehicles plying for hire.—ED.]

#### CHAPTER 17.—LICENCES

Section 214. par. (3) The Council may also refuse a licence on any of the following grounds:—

(a) That the Council is not satisfied—

- (1) That the locality of the premises is one in which it is desirable that the trade or business contemplated should be carried on by the applicant or at all; and
- (2) That the premises are in every respect suitable for the purpose of such trade or business, whether as to structure, size, character, sanitation, ventilation, safety from fire, adequacy of fire appliances or emergency exits;
- (3) That the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence or carry on such a business;

(b) In the case of a trade or business wherein articles of food or drink are produced, prepared, used or sold for human consumption, that the applicant is by reason of the uncleanness of his habits or methods unfit to be entrusted with the handling, preparation or sale of such articles of food or drink or is otherwise not a desirable person to hold such licence.

Par. (5). The Council may grant a licence subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be agreed to by any applicant; such conditions and restrictions shall be endorsed on the licence and in the event of a willful failure to comply with all or any thereof the Council may cancel the licence.

#### CHAPTER 19

#### WATER SUPPLY: DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE BY-LAWS

Section 249. By-laws may be made *inter alia* for enforcing the provision of sufficient privy accommodation on premises where Natives or Asiatics are resident or employed.

#### A HEAVY TASK BEFORE US

WITH this issue the New Year has just set in and the Natal Indian community is faced with a heavy task of fighting against the Boroughs Ordinance which was passed by the Provincial Council and having been assented to by the Governor-General-in-Council has now been promulgated in the *Gazette Extraordinary* of the Province of Natal dated, the 25th December, 1924, in the teeth of the strongest opposition from the Indian community. It was, as it were, a Christmas present prepared by the Provincial Council and specially left for H. E. the Governor-General-in-Council to present it to the Indian community on the Christmas day! The Natal Indian Congress cannot be said to have left any step that was constitutional possible for it to take to oppose the Ordinance.

On the 26th of April the Ordinance was first gazetted, the objectionable sections of which were published in the *INDIAN OPINION* of May the 16th. A telegram of protest was immediately sent to the Congress to the Clerk of the Provincial Council and the Administrator and permission was sought to be heard before the bar of the House or a Select Committee. Soon after, a petition was presented to the chairman and members of the Provincial Council and evidence was given by the representatives of the Congress before the Select Committee. Notwithstanding, however, the Or-

...ushed through and passed by the Provincial Council at the end of July. On the 31st of August a telegram was sent to the Union Government against the passing of the Ordinance upon the Governor-General-in-Council and his assent and asking for an opportunity to view. The Minister of the Interior was enough to send a reply stating that full consideration would be given to make representation to the Government in Pretoria after the Parliamentary meeting in Pretoria after the Parliamentary meeting that the decision of the Government was withheld until then. On the 2nd of August a meeting was also held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress protesting against the passing of the Ordinance. A personal interview took place on the 10th of August in Pretoria and responsible members of the Indian community placed our case before the Ministers as elaborately and explicitly as possible. The attitude of the Ministers, however, was not as though they had already made up their minds as to what they would do and the Ministers returned not very cheery about the result. The Indian community was, however, not left long in suspense for soon after the deputation had returned in the death knell of the elementary rights of the Indian community of Natal was sounded, and the Ordinance was placed in our hands on the Holy day of Christmas. A mass meeting was held last Sunday in Durban under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress to express their sense of indignation at the promulgation of this obnoxious Ordinance and to authorise the Natal Indian Congress to take the necessary steps to fight it to the bitter end. It is by no means an easy task to fight against an Ordinance after it has become law. The only remedy is to get the Ordinance repealed, and to do so, it will be required to challenge the legality of the Ordinance which will entail a considerable amount of financial expenditure. And if we failed in that we would have to passively resist the Ordinance by not obeying the Ordinance and accepting without a murmur the penalty, whatever it may be; and this would entail untold physical suffering. Are we prepared for this sacrifice? That is the question. Before we could decide this we will have to go through the process of self-examination. We must ask ourselves whether we wish to live here as self-respecting human beings and place our self-respect above all worldly pleasures or are we unconcerned about whatever our status may be, and putting our self-respect in our pockets, quite happy to remain as animals so long as we can satisfy our animal passions undisturbed. If it is the latter, it would, of course, mean that we have sunk to the depths of degradation. There would then be no hope for us at all and all our past labours in opposing the Ordinance must be considered totally vain and hypocritical. But, on the other hand, if we are in the former state of mind, then there is every hope for us and our task will not be half as difficult as it appears to be. We hope our brethren are in this state of mind. Then and then only will any steps taken by us be of any use.

It is proposed that the legality of the Ordinance must be tested. That will of course be the limit of the constitutional steps taken against the Ordinance

But this step will be worth taking only if we are prepared to fight the Ordinance in any event. It should not be forgotten that this Ordinance is not the first of its kind that strikes a blow at the remnants of our existing rights to live as self-respecting British citizens in this country which were promised by the Union Government not to be interfered with. Several Ordinances have preceded the present one depriving Indians of their rights in some way or other and the legality of which does not require to be tested. This Ordinance embodies practically all the evils of the other Ordinances and in addition takes away the municipal franchise hitherto enjoyed by the Indian community of this Province; and in this respect it is more venomous than the rest. What we wish to point out, however, is that the sins of this Province are sufficient even without this Ordinance to justify the Indian community to adopt Passive Resistance right away. But there is no harm in letting constitutional means be thoroughly exhausted and hence we approve of the step proposed to test the legality of the present Ordinance. For this the only question to be considered at present is firstly that of finance and secondly of unity. We sincerely hope that our brethren will sink all their petty differences if there be any at this hour of trial and that they will use all their energy in showing a united front to our common enemy who is at present threatening our very existence in this country.

#### MASS MEETING OF INDIANS PROTEST AGAINST BOROUGHS ORDINANCE

A very largely attended meeting of the Indian Community was held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress in the Rawat's Bio Hall, Victoria Street, Durban, on Sunday the 28th December 1924, to protest against the Boroughs Ordinance 1924, (Natal), which recently received the assent of the Governor-General-in-Council. Representatives of various districts were present. Mr. V. Lawrence, the Vice-President of the Congress, presided and in a spirited speech condemning the Ordinance and detailing the disabilities it imposes on the Indians said, "only last month we met here to mourn the death of the late Parsee Rustomjee, the friend, guide and father of the community and to-day we meet again under more distressing circumstances during the festive season for the Christian community to mourn the loss of our dignity and self-respect under this iniquitous, un-British and un-Christian Ordinance which deprives us of our long-possessed rights. This right we have enjoyed ever since the establishment of municipal institutions in Natal and now these rights are taken away from us by one stroke of the pen by the rulers of a Province which claims to be the most British and most Christian in the Union. These are the English people who stood aghast at the treatment meted out to us by the South African Republic in 1899 and waged war against that Republic for their misdeeds, which were one of the causes, if not the chief cause for declaring war. Now, these very English people are perpetrating greater misdeeds by taking away from us the most elementary rights of citizenship. You sent a deputation to Pretoria this month to meet the Union Ministers to present your case against the passing of the Ordinance. The Ministers gave us a sympathetic hearing and promised to consider the matter in all its aspects, but they have failed in their duty and recommended the

Governor-General to pass it. We cannot understand how a liberty-loving people like the Nationalist party could connive at an injustice like this being inflicted on a section of the South African community. Are we members of that great British Empire over which they say the sun never sets? If we are part and parcel of that British Commonwealth of Nations why are we treated like helots in a portion of that Empire? If our white Christian fellow-citizens and rulers were imbued with Christian principles they will not treat us unjustly. I am a Christian and I must say with all humiliation that there is no Christianity in their actions. To non-Christian their method of treating their fellow-subjects is inexplicable. I fear that they treat us differently, they consider us inferior because of our colour. Colour should be no criterion to any means of qualification. We must test the legality of this Ordinance. Two resolutions will be submitted to you for your consideration and I am confident you will pass them unanimously."

Messrs. M. Beethaseo Maharaj, B. A. Magrajh, J. M. Francis, B. M. Patal, V. S. C. Pather, A. M. Lockhat, Sayed Fakroodeen, K. K. Pillay, and others spoke vehemently denouncing the Ordinance. The following resolutions were then passed:

(1) That this mass meeting of Indians of Natal hereby records its protest against the Boroughs Ordinance No. 18 of 1924, Natal, which has now received the Governor-General's assent, as it not only deprives the Indian community of its long enjoyed municipal franchise, but seeks to restrict the community's rights in regard to licence and land and reduces the status of Indians to that of helotry.

(2) That this mass meeting of Indians heartily approves of any action the Natal Indian Congress may decide upon to test the legality of the Boroughs Ordinance in the highest courts of the British Empire, and hereby promises its moral and financial support in this connection.

#### ASIATIC LICENCE REFUSED LICENSING BOARD AT PINETOWN

##### NOTICE OF APPEAL LODGED

The application of A. E. Desai & Son, of Northdene, for the transfer of a retail and a Native eating-house licence to new premises which was partly heard on Nov. 20, again occupied the attention of the Durban County Rural Licensing Board sitting at Pinetown on Thursday and Friday (18th and 19th Dec). The Board consisted of Messrs. Bernard Hodson (chairman), T. H. Trotter, W. Saville, W. Sweetman and Col. Lewis.

Mr. Eugene Renaud, of Durban, appeared for the applicants, while Mr. W. North and 141 residents, the Matron of St. George's Church, who objected to the transfer of the licence, were represented by Mr. H. F. V. Dymes, of Pinetown.

##### GROUND OF OBJECTION

The objectors maintained that the premises presently occupied by the applicants were not of a clean and sanitary condition, and as the premises had been purchased by a European with a view to the object of abating this nuisance, it was justly for them to assume that in the event of the premises being transferred to other premises of a higher level would be equally unsatisfactory from the same aspect. They also contended that the number of the store was the result of the picketing of the good order and public safety.

A. E. Desai said that the application for the transfer of the premises to new ones,

reason for this was that his lease had expired, and Mr. W. North had purchased the old premises, and which were now delapidated. Applicant submitted a number of references, one from the Manager of the Standard Bank, Durban, and the others from Durban merchants, and said that he had been trading twenty years in the old premises.

In reply to Mr. Dymes, applicant said that he was not interested in any other licence. He had not applied for a licence at Camperdown, but could not say whether his son had done so. He went to Mecca in 1922, and returned to Natal in 1924. During his absence his son had looked after the store. Applicant admitted that there had been a case of assault at his store recently, but he did not remember calling on the police during his residence at Northdene.

Further, in reply to Mr. Dymes, applicant said that he had always conducted his business in a proper manner, but was now doing away with the Native eating house. He had not taken a very active part in the business.

Mahomed Amod Desai, son of A. E. Desai, and a partner of the firm admitted having a retail licence at Umlaas, which he explained had been taken out by him four years ago. He denied threatening to close or freeze Mrs. Taylor out. He did not attempt to undersell her; "in fact," said he, "I do not trade with Europeans."

In reply to Col. Lewis, witness said that the plan submitted was a complete plan of the premises. They did not cook any food in the eating house for the Natives.

This closed the case for the applicants.

Walter G. North, the chief objector to the transfer of the licence, said that he had lived at Northdene for the last fifty years. He objected to the transfer of the licence or the continuance of that business. He contended that numerous Natives and Indians congregated at that place. There were generally cricket and football matches going on on the main road opposite, and also horse-racing. He (witness) had personally made complaints to the police on the offensive meat offered for sale by the meat sellers who came to the store and who displayed their meat within fifteen yards of the premises. He felt that Northdene was essentially a European settlement, and applicants were the only Indians holding property in the place.

There were going to be filter beds near Northdene, proceeded the witness, which meant that large numbers of Natives would be employed there, and to abandon the Native eating house would not remedy the matter.

In reply to Mr. Renaud, witness stated that applicants did not sell the meat, but they allowed hawkers across the road to hang it up.

In reply to the Board, witness thought the granting of the new licence would be very prejudicial to European residents in the district.

James Turner, a resident of Northdene, and a member of the Malvern Health Committee, objected to the granting of the licence.

In reply to Mr. Renaud, witness said he had never objected to the renewal of the licence though he had remarked on the existing conditions time and again. He did not know that he could object to the transfer of the licence until six months ago.

Witnesses, including William A. Hines, Walter and Albert Young, also gave evidence against the granting of the licence.

And Mr. Dymes then addressed the

#### BOARD'S DECISION

Mr. Bernard Hodson, in giving his decision on the premises for which renewal of licences are presently being applied for, had become unfit for the premises, and the evidence

went to show that by neglect and allowing the congregation of undesirable Natives and others, a nuisance had developed of which the residents had from time to time complained to the police. Evidence by the objectors showed that Northdene was a distinctly European area, that the number of such residents was rapidly increasing, and that there were no Indian residents for whom the store was necessary. It was contended that as a nuisance existed in the past in connection with this store there was reason to believe it might be continued. It was further contended by the objectors that the previous holding of the store under a lease was to a certain extent precarious, and so favourable to resident who had any reason to object to this licence at any time—but the transfer to freehold premises the property of the applicants and the introduction into the firm of a younger generation, would entrench and secure the position for all time of the applicants who, it was claimed, were responsible for a nuisance affecting the amenities of a district which is now and becoming more so, a purely European area. The Board agreed that in the interest of the public the application be refused.

Notice of appeal was lodged.—*Natal Mercury*.

#### CABLE TO INDIA

The following is a copy of a cable message sent in connection with the Natal Boroughs Ordinance 1924 to H. E. The Viceroy of India.

by the Natal Indian Congress :—

"Boroughs Ordinance No. 18 Natal assented to by Governor General notwithstanding vehement protest from Indian community. Ordinance deprives Indians long-enjoyed municipal franchise and imposes other disabilities reducing Indians to a condition of helotry. Future of Indians in Natal doomed. Earnestly appeal to Government to uphold India's honour and prestige by seeking the King Emperor's disallowance to the Ordinance."

A copy of the above message has been forwarded to Mr. Gandhi and other leaders in India and to Mr. H. S. L. Polak in London.

#### THE 'ADVERTISER' AGAIN ON THE ORDINANCE

"INOFFENSIVE—UNPROTECTED—POWERLESS"

The *Natal advertiser* has the following leading article under the above headline in its issue of Dec. 22 :—

The passing of the Natal Boroughs Ordinance has raised a storm of protest wherever Indians are to be found in the Empire. This was to have been expected. It was also to have been expected that "wild and whirling words" would be used by the protestors, nor has the public had to wait long for these. The South African Indian Congress has passed four resolutions protesting against the Ordinance, and these framed in terms that leave little to be imagined. The Ordinance is described as "mediaeval, reactionary and unjust," and is said to be directed against an "inoffensive, unprotected and powerless people purely on account of their race." The protest goes on to talk about deliberately robbing the rising and future generations of "their sacred rights of municipal franchise," and leaving them "to the mercy of men who will not deal justly with them." It concludes by threatening passive resistance or, as the third resolution euphemistically puts it, "whereas other races in the past under such an act of disfranchisement have resorted to gun and bomb, we shall only be prepared to bring moral force to bear upon our oppressors."

'UMBLE—VERY 'UMBLE

Now this language deserves analysis, because in some respects it goes to the very core (and a very debatable core) of much wild talk and wilder think-

On suffrage questions. In the first place, when talks about the Ordinance being promulgated against an "inoffensive, unprotected and powerless people purely on account of their race," it indulges in a most delicious begging of the whole issue. Uriah Heep was a very 'umble person: none 'umblor.

"I am very well aware that I am the 'umblest person going, let the other be who he may. My mother is likewise a very 'umble person. We live in an 'umble abode, Master Copperfield, but we have much to be thankful for. My father's former calling was 'umble—he was a sexton."

'Umble—yes. But he came within an ace of bringing about the downfall and ruin of Mr. Wickfield. No less have the "inoffensive, unprotected and powerless people," whose resolution we are discussing, brought grave peril to European civilisation in Natal. Cannot the Indian see that, shorn of all the dialectics of the politicians, what has inspired this Ordinance is *funk*—real and imminent fear that, unless the creeping tide of Asiatic penetration in Natal is withstood, the painfully and laboriously built fabric of Western civilisation must go for naught, and topple a ruin and a reproach to those who called it into being. Does not the Indian understand—of course he *does* understand—that, far from being "inoffensive, unprotected and powerless," he has driven the man who first gave him asylum in their midst to desperate expedients in order to save themselves from extinction at his hands? Metaphor after metaphor surges to the memory as one contemplates the predicament in which the European in Natal finds himself as a result of his too indulgent attitude years ago towards the stranger he invited within his borders. Perhaps the fable of the man who nursed the viper is the most opposite; not because the East has the venom of the serpent, but because it has repaid European sanctuary by defiling the altars of Western civilised standards and threatening in a short time to substitute the lower ones on which it alone is able to survive.

#### THE LAST WEAPON

We do not expect to stem any currents of thought or action by the mere employment of controversial words at this stage of the problem. But this egregious fallacy of the protesting Indian that he is being disfranchised because he is weak, inoffensive and powerless should be scotched wherever it raises its head. Starting with nothing seventy years ago the Asiatic has overtaken the European in nearly every activity of ordinary life. Where he has been given land-owning rights he has shown no desire to keep within areas where his own compatriots abound. Where he has trading rights, he has proved himself a powerful competitor, thriving on the unjust subsidies of Asiatic hours, wages and standard of living. As a landlord he has out-Heroded the Herods of our own slum owners. Each weapon in the European armoury of business competition he has learned to wield with an efficacy more stark and terrible than our own people can display. Are we then, to be blamed if we declare that hereafter the weapon of political conflict shall no longer be held in common; and that the one instrument by which the issue of Eastern versus Western domination in Natal will eventually be decided shall revert to those who first built up the sanctuary where the Asiatic has learned to take his ease in these latter days?

#### WHAT IT MAY COME TO

The resolutions of the South African Indian Congress talk about the injustice of the Ordinance. Well—we admit that, if it can be shown that to withdraw a franchise once given is unjust, the present measure must be classed as such. But because a thing is almost without precedent it does not necessarily follow that it is wrong; and before the Indian can say it is unjust to deprive him of a franchise once given, it must be established that, in the first instance, it was just to give him it. Yet this is

by no means self-evident. We do not think, as a matter of fact, justice has anything to do with the franchise one way or another. Expediency has: and as events have proved, it is palpably inexpedient in the first instance to give the Asiatic any franchise rights at all in this country. He got them from people who were foolish enough to think he would Europeanise himself. Instead he has multiplied amazingly and insisted on building up a little Asia in South Africa. Nothing remains but to correct the inexpediency of a generous and indulgent step taken years ago; and even if the heavens themselves thunder about justice or injustice, the Europeans in Natal must not be moved. There are a dozen ways by which the Indian problem in Natal could be solved with practical advantages to all concerned that would outweigh any sentimental affront done to the doctrinaires or the protestors on one side or the other. But if we listen to abstractions affairs will drift from worse to worse until it will be the European and not the Indian in Natal who will lift his eyes to the Government and beg for repatriation and domicile alongside his own people at the other side of the world.

#### INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

##### KHILAFAT CONFERENCE AND NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION

The following Reuter's messages have been received during the week in connection with the deliberations in India of the National Congress, the Khilafat Conference and the National Liberal Federation:—

Belgaum, Dec. 26.—In his presidential address to the National Congress, Gandhi outlined a rough scheme of Swaraj, embodying the retention of the British connection provided it is on perfectly honourable and equal terms. He declared he would not hesitate to sever the British connection if Britain showed that, despite declarations to the contrary, she meant subjugation. Characterising the assassination of the Sirdar as a detestable crime, the speaker expressed the opinion that the British demands from Egypt were not only a detestable crime, but also an outrage to humanity. Gandhi reiterated his unshaken faith in the efficacy to the spinning-wheel as a means of achieving their aims. He pleaded for Hindu-Moslem unity and the removal of untouchability. Gandhi defended the Pact with the Swarajists, explaining that he advised the suspension of non-co-operation in order to keep the Congress intact.

Belgaum Dec. 25.—The subjects Committee of the National Congress, by 160 votes to 19, has approved of the Pact between Gandhi and the Swarajists, which suspends non-co-operation and allows the Swarajists to represent the Congress in the Legislature. The Committee also adopted a resolution proposing the spinning of 2,000 yards of yarn monthly. Lala Lajpatrai, in opposing the resolutions, described the Pact as a bundle of inconsistencies, and declared that the wearing of handspun cloth only on ceremonial occasions would make them look ridiculous in the eyes of the world.

At a meeting of the Subjects' Committee of the Indian National Congress, Gandhi, in view of the serious controversy which threatened the question of violence, or non-violence, withdrew his resolution condemning the action of the Sirdar, and characterising independence as meant to humiliate Egypt. Gandhi urged all to spin cloth, as the alternative. The Committee rejected the motion for self-Government within the year.

Belgaum, Dec. 26.—The

has adopted a resolution ratifying the pact between Gandhi and the Swarajists, which provides for the suspension of the non-co-operation movement, and allowing the Swarajists to represent the Congress in the Legislatures. The Khilafat Conference passed a resolution permitting the wearing of cloth woven in Indian mills, in the absence of cloth made from hand-spun yarn.

Belgaum, Dec. 27.—A divergence of opinion, in regard to the question of boycotting foreign cloth, and the use of Indian handspun yarn, has found vigorous expression at the Indian National Congress. C. R. Das said that the boycott was in reply to the Government's challenge to Bengal. Mahomed Ali, speaking in support of the boycott, dwelt on the economic value of the Charka (Spinning Wheel) from the standpoint of the poor masses. On the other hand Hazrat Mohani ridiculed the efficacy of the Charka to win Swaraj. He asked what did it matter to the British, who had defeated the Germans and spent crores of rupees daily during the War to lose the cloth trade of India, and warned the delegates and Gandhi against burying the Congress by converting it into a spinners' association. Abhyankar (Swarajist) said that the British came to India despite the presence of the Charkha and they would not be driven out by it.

Belgaum, Dec. 28.—The National Congress concluded its session after passing a resolution regarding *enter alia*, Indians overseas. Mrs. Naidu criticised both the Government and public for their apathy towards settlers abroad. She complained that though she paved the way for a round-table conference in South Africa, there was not sufficient pressure from India to bring about such a conference.

Belgaum, Dec. 26.—The Kilafat Conference has passed a resolution describing British action in Egypt as outrageous, and welcoming the successes off the Riffs in Morocco. The resolution states that British and French support to the Spaniards will be regarded as hostility to Islam.

Lucknow, Dec. 26.—At the opening of the National Liberal Federation Mr. Parahjpye, the ex-Minister of the Bombay Government, who presided, condemned the non-cooperation and the Swarajists for retarding the progress of the country under the Reform Act. He repeated the demand of the Federation for the appointment of the Royal Commission to inquire into reforms, and demanded that 25 per cent. of the commissions in the army be given to Indians, the proportions increasing annually by three per cent., so that, at the end of the 25th year, all officers would be Indians. After dwelling on the Kenya question, the President declared that the day would come sooner, rather than later, when Indians would look to their trusted and tried leaders for political guidance.

#### THE LATE MR. PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

##### MORE TRIBUTES

The following tribute to the late Mr. Parsee Rustomjee by Mr. M. K. Gandhi appears in a recent issue of *Young India* :—

A letter received from Durban from his son gives me the sad news of the death of Rustomjee Jivanjee Rustomjee. For me it is a personal loss. He was a dear friend and faithful co-worker. He was a Parsi as he was a true Indian. He was a true man. He was an orthodox Brahmin as his vegetarianism was as broad as human-kind. He was friendly to all without distinction. He was friendly towards officials, but he was not friendly when the occasion demanded it. He was true to his bond. He was brave in the face of his enemies. He was brave in making promises, but he was true to his best to keep them.

After he declared himself a satvagrahi, he never swerved even during the darkest hours of the movement, not even when the end seemed never to be coming. When he took the pledge, he was by no means a young man. Nor was he untrammelled by business preoccupations. But he never counted the cost. He suffered losses without a murmur. He gave almost beyond his means and yet never unthinkingly. His charities were most catholic. He gave donations for mosques, madrasas, national schools. Many a young man owes his rise to Parsee Rustomjee, as he was called throughout South Africa. Personally I owe much to him. I have many friends in South Africa. But I have not known a warmer one. He harboured me when I was lynched. His house was a place of refuge for me and mine. People wonder why I am partial to Parsis. I am not partial, but I am thankful that I can hear testimony to their admirable virtues. So long as the memory of Parsee Rustomjee persists with me, so long will that portion of humanity claim my admiration. If we had many Rustomjees in our public life, we should not be long in reaching our cherished goal. May his soul rest in peace, and may God give wisdom and strength to his two sons to follow in the footsteps of their noble father.

[ BY THE REV. A. J. CHOONOO ]

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10.

It is a great privilege to add a brief tribute to the long and passionate list already contributed in memorium of one, whom the hand of death has removed from in the midst of a very useful, devoted and practical life.

No tribute of mine can sufficiently extol or even catalogue the great and ever-abiding services rendered to the Indian community by this great son of the East. And even if I were successful in doing so I am sure it would grieve his Spirit, for his was a silent Soul that ever avoided the platforms and their "foot lights" as he did the praise and aggrandisement of others.

His life was hallmarked, with many outstanding characteristics. He had discovered in his lifetime the essential difference between "talking" and "doing" and while many were engaged in the former his practical and devoted nature preferred the latter and like the unseen and yet all powerful propellers of a mighty ocean liner far below the surface of the water ploughing through heavy waters and pushing forward its heavy encumbrance so did Mr. Rustomjee press forward the causes he so passionately loved and for which he lived. His nature knew no racial barriers and could never conceive his fellow-countrymen in the light of class, caste or creed. His heart was large enough to include in it the claims, and respond to the needs, of all sections of the Indian community. In all his works of charity, whether in the small doles to the poor or in the erection of huge edifices for the use of the community he was prompted solely and entirely by true spirit of humanitarianism and patriotism. He not only magnified the Indian community by such great acts of munificences but he also triumphed over the barriers of class and race in the distribution of such munificence, and his spirit of humbleness and the entire absence of self which characterised his whole life showed how he had conquered "the pride of the eye" and the "lust of the flesh."

To-day his spirit remains where once his body toiled and laboured, and in and through his many monuments of labour and love we still hear his voice silently reminding us more than ever that "time is fleeting—life is transitory—up and be doing while it is still day and this brief life is still ours."

To his soul be peace and to the members of his family my sympathy.