

Indian Opinion

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INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT ON THE ASIATIC BILL

[We have devoted the major portion of the present issue to the reproduction of the statement of the Government of India Deputation to the Select Committee on the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill. The report of the Select Committee is a bulky volume containing the most interesting evidences on the Asiatic question. The most important evidence is that given by the members of the Government of India Deputation and Mr. C. F. Andrews. Both these evidences have established the Indian case as strongly as it has never been done and it is only that which has influenced the Select Committee to recommend the postponement of the Bill and the holding of a Round Table Conference.—Ed. I.O.]

THE following is the text of the statement presented by the Government of India Deputation to the Select Committee on the Asiatic Bill:—

The circumstances in which we, the Deputation of the Government of India, have been authorised to give evidence before your Committee are set forth in the correspondence between the Government of India and the Union Government, which was laid on the table of the House of Assembly by the Honourable the Minister of the Interior on the 17th February. We understand that the procedure of referring a Bill to a Select Committee of the House before second reading is unusual, and has been adopted in the case of the *Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill* to "widen the scope of evidence so as to include the principles of the measure." These principles, as we hope to show, have stirred Indian sentiment everywhere to its utmost depths, and vitally affect the contentment and well-being of the Indian community in South Africa. The exceptional procedure of which the Select Committee is the outcome was, we assume, approved by the Government and Parliament of the Union in appreciation of this aspect of the situation. We also feel sure that this step was taken in consequence of an earnest desire on the part of the Government and Parliament of this country to ensure that the proposed legislation should not be placed on the Statute Book without the fullest investigation of its necessity and its implications. We therefore appear before the Committee in the hope that they will give the most earnest and impartial consideration to our representations.

2. In paragraph 3 of their telegram to His Excellency the Governor-General of South Africa, dated the 9th February, 1926, the Government of India intimated that their objections to the *Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill* were fundamental, and that we, their deputation, would be permitted to present the Indian case against it only in respect of general principles. In the following paragraphs, therefore, we have endeavoured to set forth the objections to the measure in the light of broad considerations of imperial solidarity and obligations and of elementary justice.

We have made no attempt to discuss the details of the Bill, since our opposition to its basic principles is radical, and it follows that our objection to the main provisions is no less profound.

3. Our observations, however, are based not only on considerations of equity and imperial exigency, but also on our study in the Union of the "general position and economic condition" of the Indian community in South Africa. That study, though short, has been intensive. It included an inquiry into local conditions at Durban and its suburbs, Stanger, Verulam, Tongaat, Pietermaritzburg, Ladysmith, Dundee, Glencoe and Vryheid in Natal; at Johannesburg, Springs, Benoni, Boksburg, Vrededorp, Germiston, Potchefstroom and Pretoria in the Transvaal, and at Capetown and its suburbs, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Kimberley, in the Province of the Cape of Good Hope. In the course of our investigations we ascertained the intensity of the Indian opposition to the Bill, and the reasons for that opposition. We also endeavoured to visualise the effect of the application to the Indian community of the principle of compulsory segregation for purposes of residence and trade; and to assess the extent and strength of the alleged prejudice against the Indian, and the reasons for that prejudice. Our conclusions, therefore, have been arrived at after careful consideration of the situation in the Union as it presented itself to us.

4. We shall try to describe the historical and psychological background which is necessary for a correct understanding of the Indian attitude. Addressing the Imperial Conference in 1923, Lord Peel, then His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, said that the position of Indians in other parts of the Empire was "a matter of sentiment and feeling." The point requires some elucidation with reference to India's place in history and her present position in the Empire. For racial pride and racial aspirations are the product of tradition. It would be impossible to appreciate fully and correctly the strength of Indian feeling throughout the world on the position of Indians in South Africa, without a brief retrospect of India's past, or reference to her present-day achievements and her legitimate expectations as an integral portion of the British Commonwealth. Since the days of Alexander, the march of events in the great sub-continent has found faithful chroniclers. Its history stretches into a remoter antiquity; but their records bear ample testimony to India's civil splendour and military renown. Before the Christian era Indian colonists penetrated into Java and portions of the Far East; the temples of Borobudur and Nakhon Vat still bear testimony to the impress of their genius on these countries. India gave birth to two of the world's greatest religions, Hinduism and Buddhism. Among her earliest rulers was Asoka, whose temporal power was greater than that of Charlemagne, and whose spiritual fervour firmly established Buddhism in China and Tibet. Among her earliest poets was Kalidasa, whose beautiful lyrical drama, "Sakuntala," won the spontaneous homage of Goethe. Schopenhauer enlogized one of her best-known systems of philosophy in the

following words: "In the whole world there is no study so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death." The confluence of philosophic subtlety and mysticism characteristic of early mediæval Hindu society, with the artistic energy and political genius of her Muhammadan rulers, further enriched Indian civilization. Numerous travellers and ambassadors from Europe have written of the magnificence and organization of the most illustrious Muslim dynasty that governed India. The fabled peacock throne is a memory of that magnificence; the Ani-i-Akbari an impartial witness to that organization. We shall not enlarge on either at too great length. We shall only mention the two most abiding monuments of Moghul influence: the magic mausoleum of the Taj Mahal at Agra, and the system of land revenue organization, which the British power in India has adopted. When dominion in India passed to the British Crown, the civilization of her people received recognition in the gracious declaration of Her Majesty Queen Victoria that neither their colour nor their creed shall be a bar to their advancement. That promise, which was reaffirmed by His late Majesty King Edward VII and His Majesty King George V, has already been fulfilled in a generous measure, for Indians have been promoted to the British Peerage and His Majesty's Privy Council, have been elected to the British House of Commons, and, with the exception of the Vice-Royalty, have held every high office in India. In the world of literature and science they have vindicated their ready adaptability by the completeness with which they have assimilated western culture. In literature and art, Tagore; in science, Roy, Bose and Raman; in oriental scholarship, Bhandarkar and Shibli; in mathematics, Ramanujan; in educational statesmanship, Sir Syed Ahmad; in politics, Gokhale have worthily upheld India's claim to be included in the world's intellectual aristocracy. In sport, which occupies so important a place in the life of western nations, the pre-eminence of an Indian, Prince Ranjitsinghji is universally acknowledged. Her industrial advance has been no less remarkable. It is submitted, therefore, that by virtue of the antiquity and vitality of their civilization, Indians have established a strong claim to be treated as the equals of any race. Most civilized countries recognize this in their treatment of Indian nationals.

5. This claim is further strengthened by the position which India now occupies in the British Commonwealth as well as the comity of nations. In accordance with the declaration made on behalf of His Majesty's Government on the 20th August, 1917, a substantial measure of self-government was conferred on India in 1921. *Vis à vis* the other Dominions of the Empire, India has already acquired a status of equality. Since 1917 she has participated in every Imperial Conference on the same footing as the Dominions. Her representatives were admitted to the Imperial War Cabinet on terms of equality with those of the autonomous parts of the Empire. Her representatives, like those of the other Dominions, signed the treaties of peace concluded after the Great War. Like the other component States of the Empire, she is an original member of the League of Nations. At every international conference held since the conclusion of the Great War at which the British Empire has been represented by the spokesmen of Great Britain as well as the Dominions, a representative of India has been included in the Imperial delegation. We would refer to the conference on the Reduction of Armaments at Washington as the most notable example. And, in recognition of her position as one of the foremost industrial nations of the world, she occupies a seat on the governing body of the International Labour Office.

6. Apart from her position in the family of

nations, India has established a special claim for considerate and equal treatment from her sister nations within the British Commonwealth on account of the part which she has played in the Empire's development and defence. The following quotations from one of India's most brilliant Viceroy's Lord Curzon, indicates the extent of her contribution to the Empire's defence and development. Addressing a distinguished gathering at the Mansion House, London, in 1904, his Lordship said:—

"If you want to rescue the white men's legations from massacre at Peking, and the matter is urgent, you request the Government of India to despatch an expedition, and they despatch it; if you are fighting the Mad Mullah in Somaliland, you soon discover that Indian troops and an Indian General are best qualified for the task, and you ask the Government of India to send them; if you desire to defend any of your extreme outposts or coaling stations of the Empire, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong-Kong, even Tien-tsin or Shan-hai-Kwan, it is to the Indian Army that you turn; if you want to build a railway to Uganda or in the Sudan, you apply for Indian labour. When the late Mr. Rhodes was engaged in developing your recent acquisition of Rhodesia, he came to me for assistance. It is with Indian coolie labour that you exploit the plantations equally of Demerara and Natal; with Indian-trained officers that you irrigate Egypt and dam the Nile; with Indian forest officers that you tap the resources of Central Africa and Siam; with Indian surveyors that you explore all the hidden places of the earth."

The prosperity of Malaya and British Guiana, of Ceylon and Fiji bears testimony to the patient and agricultural skill of her children. Of her part in the Great War we would let the tribute paid by General Smuts to her contributions to the Allied cause speak for itself. Replying to an address presented to him by the Indian community at Durban in 1919, he said:—

"I have been proud of the privilege of having had under me in East Africa so large a number of your countrymen . . . Your countrymen fought not only in East Africa, but took part in other theatres of war. The conquering of the Turkish Army was in the main the work of the Indian Army. The burden of the work in Mesopotamia, Turkestan and the Indian Frontier fell almost entirely upon the Indian Army . . . The stupendous part Indians have played in this great struggle had considerable effect on the result of the war."

We would only add to the theatres of war enumerated in this passage Gallipoli, Flanders and France. To help the Committee to appreciate the measure of this assistance, we would also point out that India's contribution in men was 1,302,000, and in treasure well over £200,000,000. In East Africa alone 34,000 Indian combatants and 12,5000 non-combatants shared, along with South African troops, the heat and burden of the conflict.

7. In regard to the treatment of her nationals in Africa, it is submitted that India has special claims to considerate treatment which is normally her due as a valued member of the Commonwealth. Her intercourse with the Continent dates from prehistoric times. Her nationals have traded along the East Coast of Africa for centuries. Until the construction of the Suez Canal, the Cape of Good Hope was in the phrase of the great Indian reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the half-way house between the East and the West. Indians have often shed their blood in defence of Imperial interests in Africa; the part played by Indian troops in defending the Suez Canal and in the conquest of German East Africa are the most recent examples of their devotion. By

their labour and enterprise. Indians have contributed substantially to the prosperity of the various British possessions on this continent. It will be sufficient to tell the story of what Indian labour accomplished for Natal in the words of official commissions appointed at different periods by the Natal Government."

"Emigration from India to Natal commenced in 1860 . . . Immigration continued until 1866 and then totally ceased. From 1866 to 1874, when immigration recommenced, the native labour of the Colony proved more and more unreliable. In 1874 crops were rotting on the ground, and although planters and others competed in endeavouring to obtain assistance from the Chiefs, they could secure no labour at any price . . . This was the culminating point to a long series of protests and complaints, and, in deference to the popular cry for the re-establishment of imported labour, the door was again opened to Indian immigration."

The effect of this, to quote the testimony of Mr. J. R. Saunders, who was one of the members of the Wragg Commission, was that "up went the revenue, wages and salaries, and retrenchment was soon spoken of as a thing of the past." Speaking nearly 35 years afterwards before the Asiatic Inquiry Commission, Colonel Frank Addison, a planter of long experience, said:—

"The Indian has made Natal. Without the Indian on the coast you would not have had any sugar, tea or coffee plantations: coffee, of course, is now out of date, but the whole of the industry on the coast is due to the Indian."

Of the work of the ex-indentured Indians who settled on the land we can do no better than reproduce the verdict of the Wragg Commission:—

"They do remarkably well as cultivators, in the coast districts, of small parcels of land rented on short leases. In such agricultural pursuits they have competed with their former masters, and the quality of maize grown by them has been no unimportant factor in lowering, for some years, the market price of that cereal. In numerous localities, in the upland as well as in the coast districts, they have converted waste and unproductive land into well-kept gardens planted with vegetables, tobacco, maize and fruit trees. Those settled in the vicinity of Durban and Pietermaritzburg have succeeded in winning for themselves, almost entirely, the supplying of the local markets with vegetables."

In April, 1920, Mr. Leon Renaud, who has nearly 30 years' experience of Indians in Natal, made the following remarks on the same subject before the Lang Commission:—

"So far as agriculture is concerned, the Indian has fulfilled his duty to the country. They (the Indians) brought into cultivation and under production land which was otherwise idle. . . "So far as the coast-belt is concerned here," *i.e.*, in Natal, "they have done the same thing as the peasants have done in France. . . I know some parts of the land which at the present time have been reclaimed from nature, and which would never have been occupied by Europeans."

8. Of the Indian trader, commonly but erroneously described as "Arab"—in the course of our inquiry we did not come across a single non-Malaya Mahomedan merchant or trader who was not an Indian—whose alleged competition has for some time been the subject of special complaints, the following remarks made by the Wragg Commission may prove of interest to the Committee:—

"We are content to place on record our strong opinion based on much observation, that

the presence of these Indians has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice."

In the course of his statement before the Asiatic Inquiry Commission (1920-'21), Sir Benjamin Robertson said:—

"He" (the Indian trader) "has a peculiar economic value to the rural community which may be summed up from the evidence as follows:—

"(i) He plays an important part in the development of isolated districts by establishing small stores in places where the turnover is insufficient to support a European business.

"(ii) He is more considerate than his Jewish rival in his dealings with the farmers, gives longer credit in times of scarcity, and is content to regard trade as an end in itself, and not as a means of foreclosing on his customer's land.

"(iii) He studies the requirements of the native population more carefully than the white trader does."

From the evidence that we received we think that his utility would be willingly acknowledged by the large mass of dispassionate customers, both rural and urban, British and Dutch, to-day.

9. In the light of this short survey of Indian history and tradition, and of the part played by Indians in the development of South Africa, it will, perhaps, be admitted that the Indian's expectation of respect and of the same treatment as is accorded to other classes of his Majesty's subjects is rational and legitimate. Nevertheless, his actual status in South Africa to-day is, in many respects, inferior to that of the European subjects of His Majesty, and he is denied privileges which are extended to those who owe no allegiance to the King-Emperor—in fact, even to ex-enemy subjects. Thus, except in the Cape Province, he is not in enjoyment of the political franchise. The municipal franchise for which, until recently, he was eligible in Natal was taken away from him by the Natal Boroughs Ordinance (No. 19 of 1924) and the Natal Township Franchise Ordinance (No. 3 of 1925). A series of resolutions and laws ending with the Asiatic (Land and Trading) Amendment Act (Act No. 37 of 1919) has completely prohibited the acquisition by him of immovable property in the Transvaal, except in such localities as Government may for sanitary reasons assign to him for purposes of residence. The Durban Borough Lands Alienation Ordinance (No. 14 of 1922) and the Natal Borough and Township Lands Ordinance (No. 5 of 1923) have had the effect of imposing a similar disability on the Indian in respect of purchasing or leasing land belonging to municipalities in Natal.

In the administration of the provincial licensing laws the Indian is treated with peculiar severity almost throughout the Union. In the Orange Free State he may not trade at all, and even in the Cape Province in some municipalities and for certain localities Indians find it difficult to obtain trading licences. As regards the province of Natal, the position is best described in the words used by the principal Licensing Officer of Durban, Colonel Molyneux, who, in giving evidence before the Asiatic Inquiry Commission, said:—

"We do what we can to restrict further Indian licences. A European licence is granted as a matter of course, whereas the Indian licence is refused as a matter of course, if it were a new licence."

This is typical of municipalities in that Province. Durban and other municipalities in Natal have also used their licensing powers to confine Indians to special areas for purposes of trade. The munici-

pality of Pietermaritzburg only last December made use of its authority under the Natal Township and Borough Lands Ordinance to eject a number of old-established Indian merchants from their premises, mainly because the locality adjoined the European trading areas. In the rural areas of the province the same restrictive policy is being pursued under the Natal Rural Dealers Licensing Ordinance (No. 4 of 1923). In the Transvaal Indians cannot get licences to carry on trade "on any of the stands outside townships granted after the Gold Law of 1908 came into force," or on "stands inside townships whether now held under the Gold Law title or under a title converted into freehold under the Townships Act No. 3 of 1908." Elsewhere they are eligible for such licences. But their position has been rendered precarious by the new Transvaal General Dealer's (Control) Ordinance, which makes it obligatory for every applicant for a general dealer's licence to obtain a certificate of eligibility from the local authority if he wishes to carry on business under a municipality, or from a "board" if he wishes to trade within a "declared area." Indians have no representation on municipalities; the elements that are opposed to them have, and can, therefore, influence municipal policy to their disadvantage. An instance is provided by the action of the Balfour municipality, which has already utilised its new powers to refuse licences wholesale to Indians.

Except on suburban lines in the Cape Province, Indians may not travel by rail in compartments other than those specially reserved for non-Europeans; in some places they may use only reserved seats on tramcars, and only reserved taxicabs and rickshaws. Except in the Cape Province, they may, also, not transact the normal business in post and telegraph offices at counters other than those specially set apart for non-Europeans. In the law courts in Durban we saw a notice prominently exhibited in the Registrar's Office requesting lawyers to send only Europeans to take out processes of the Court, as non-Europeans would not be attended to. Popular prejudice is responsible for their exclusion from hotels and places of amusement like theatres and cinemas. It is not suggested that the laws or administrative orders or the racial prejudice of which this differential treatment is the consequence are now in issue. The recital of these disabilities is intended solely to illustrate the contrast between legitimate Indian expectations and the actual status of the Indian community in South Africa.

11. It is sometimes contended that the Indian's services to one section of the community cannot be allowed to complicate the racial problems of South Africa. This cannot, however, be treated as an excuse for subjecting him to invidious treatment. In the first place, the Indian labourer did not come to Natal of his own accord. In spite of the opposition to Indian immigration which emanated from certain quarters, the movement was, for a considerable period, actively encouraged by the authorities. Though the contract for hire on which the Indian came to the country was originally for a limited number of years, he was assured that he could engage in agricultural or commercial pursuits and move about with the same freedom as other sections of the community. Later, to achieve the same object, he was permitted to commute his right to a free passage to India for the equivalent value in land. In the second place, as the Clayton Commission pointed out in 1909, the employment of Indian labourers was widespread, and not confined to one or two particular industries. General farmers evidently found them as useful as the owners of sugar estates, and Government railways and coal mines employed them by the thousand. And, as has already been indicated in para. 7 of this statement, their activity has been of great benefit to the province as a whole. The trader who came in the wake

of the labourer ministered first to the wants of his own fellow-countrymen and later to the needs of the whole community. As several Europeans, including bankers and large wholesale merchants, told us, their standard of commercial honesty is as high as that of any other race, their dealings with their customers are fair, and they are always considerate and courteous to their clients. In the third place, the bulk of the Indian population in South Africa was born in the country and knows no other home. According to the Census of 1921, the percentage of Indians born in the Union was 67.27 per cent.; many of them are complete strangers to India, her languages and customs. In the fourth place, to quote the words of Mr. W. H. Dawson, a recent writer on South Africa who is not unduly sympathetic to the Indian: "Fair-minded Europeans readily admit that the best of their Indian neighbours are quiet and unassuming in civic and business relationship, keeping themselves to themselves, rendering ready obedience to the laws of the country, so far as they are understood, and maintaining an orderly and exemplary domestic life."

In the circumstances, they can legitimately claim that they are not an alien but an integral part of the community, an element to be nursed, not to be discarded; an asset and not an embarrassment. That, in spite of all the circumstances which we have briefly enumerated, they are, on racial grounds, subjected to disabilities from which new-comers are exempt, naturally cuts them to the quick. To them it is a bitter reflection that treatment from which they would be protected in a foreign country by treaty-rights or by the active intervention of His Majesty's Government is, paradoxically enough, the reward of their services to South Africa, and the recognition of their common allegiance to the same Sovereign.

12. Their attitude of unrest and alarm at their position in the Union, which is scarcely in accord with any principle of equity, is influenced by three other factors. First, the Indian community in South Africa and Indian opinion throughout the world looks upon all fresh restrictions as a breach of the settlement of 1914, popularly known as the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement, which they regard as a guarantee that the status which Indians in South Africa had acquired in 1914 would at least be maintained. Second, they are unable to understand why, even though the white population of South Africa is no longer threatened with an Asiatic influx, the few rights that they still enjoy are being steadily curtailed. Speaking at the Imperial War Conference in 1917, General Smuts said: "Once the white community in South Africa were rid of the fear that they were going to be flooded by unlimited immigration from India, all the other questions would be considered subsidiary, and would become easily and perfectly soluble. That is the position in which we are now—that the fear which formerly obsessed the white settlers has been removed; the great principle of restricting immigration for which they have contended is on our Statute Book with the consent of the Indian population in South Africa and the Indian authorities in India; and that being so, I think that the way is now open for a peaceful and statesmanlike solution of all the minor administrative troubles which occurred and will occur from time to time. Of course, the main improvement has been the calling of India to the Council Chamber of the Empire. Here, if any question prove difficult of treatment, we can discuss it in a friendly way and try to find a solution in consultation, and I am sure we shall ever find it. I for one do not consider that among the multitudinous problems which confront us in our country, the question of India will trouble us much in the future." In 1918, on a similar occasion, Mr. Burton made the following

statement: "As far as we are concerned it is only fair to say—and it is the truth—that the Indians in our midst in South Africa, who form in some parts a very substantial portion of the population, are good, law-abiding quiet citizens, and it is our duty to see . . . that they are treated as human beings with feelings like our own and in a proper manner." Indians find it difficult to reconcile restrictive legislation such as has been enacted in Natal, or is now contemplated in the provisions of the *Colour Bar Bill* and the *Liquor Laws Consolidating Bill* specially affecting Asiatics, with the principles of policy embodied in the pronouncements of two responsible South African statesmen who, at the time the statements were made, spoke on behalf of the Government of the Union. They can still less understand so deep an affront to their self-respect and so drastic a diminution of their present rights as involved in the *Arms Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill*. Third, they feel that the Union Government which, when the Act of Union was passed, was made the sole guardian of their interests owes them special protection, since, except in the Cape Province, they are denied the political franchise which, wherever representative institutions prevail, is the surest safeguard of the rights and interests of any section of the community.

13. The Bill appears to be incompatible with these assurances. It is a deep affront to the sentiment of an ancient and civilized people and inherently unjust. Its three basic principles are:—

- (i) Compulsory commercial and residential segregation;
- (ii) Restriction of rights of acquisition of immovable property; and
- (iii) Further restriction of rights of immigration and inter-provincial migration.

We shall deal with these *serialism* in the light of information which we have collected and impressions which we have been able to form as a result of our inquiries.

(To be Continued)

OUR LONDON LETTER

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

20th May, 1926.

The general strike has come and gone. For years the coming of such a strike was contemplated with dread by all those who had a love for their country. The dread was accentuated by the happenings in Russia under a Soviet Government drawn from the Trade Unions of that country. But there will no longer be a dread in the British Empire that a general strike will ever be a success and that it at any time would introduce, or be a party to the introduction of the Soviet form of Government to supersede the constitutional form of Government it enjoys. The general strike bears many implications, but only a passing reference can be made, for considerations of space, to some of them. It has proved that in practice it is unworkable and that the number of people represented in it are comparatively small to the overwhelmingly large portion of the citizens of the country who are opposed to such a strike. The mentality of the people will never submit to any violent changes in matters that vitally affect them, and in this country it is only by the steady growth of opinion that any object may be achieved.

The workers on strike, everything considered, behaved in a very orderly manner; there were very few acts of wrong doing on their part, but as a body they were unyielding to the attraction of the British

were prolonged there was a possibility of their getting out of hand, either by becoming disorderly or by returning in numbers to work. As it was there were numbers returning and this it appeared was one of the causes for the general strike being recalled.

The general public rallied peacefully but strongly in support of the Government to uphold constitutional Government and to maintain essential services. There was no thought on their part of what in normal times they were in life, and it was no uncommon sight to see the highest in the land, and students of time honoured Universities, doing cheerfully lowly work so as to keep things going in the country.

But in the midst of it all the ubiquitous and indispensable policeman ruled. He is an institution in himself and to him is largely due the result that on the whole there was such excellent behaviour by the strikers and non-strikers alike. His tact and his knowledge of human nature and his wonderful temperament are proverbial. *The Times* to mark the public appreciation of his qualities has within the last few days opened a list to create a police fund and the appeal of *The Times* has been so well responded that contributions already run into six figures.

The unconditional surrender of the Trades Union Council has left the strikers in a worse position than they were in before the strike. The employers are taking them back according to their needs reserving the right of action for breaches of contract, and refusing to take back such men as were convicted of violence, but without any reduction of wages or alteration in hours, and in other cases there are variations in the conditions of service except on wages and hours. The miners are still out on strike and negotiations are proceeding between the mine-owners and miners with the Government mediating for a settlement of the questions in issue.

Sir Herbert Samuel as the chairman of the Coal Commission has contributed no small service in the cause of peace in this industrial question.

The strike was not without its humours to mention but one. Transport was next to food the chief question vehicles of all sorts from the luxurious limousine of the rich to the one horse dray cart of the fruit and vegetable vendor was in use and the crowds clinging to the sides of huge lorries, tiny dray carts and the like was as amusing to the passengers as to the onlookers.

There were several prosecutions under the Emergency Act, and among them Mr. S. Saklatwala M.P., for South Battersea was prosecuted for having delivered a speech in Hyde Park. And he was ordered to find two sureties and to be bound over not to deliver any more speeches during the Emergency Act was in operation or to go to gaol for two months. Mr. Saklatwala elected to go to gaol.

After the lapse of some fifteen years I met Dr. John T. Godfrey in London. He is in practice in this country and has made good. In outlook he is as youthful as ever and hopes some day to practice in Harley Street. It is a pleasure to meet a South African Indian in this country.

Mr. Bernard L. E. Sigamoney was in London during the Easter vacation but was busy as usual in doing church work in different parts of the country.

Our readers will notice from the advertisement appearing in another column that the date on which the Congress will be held has not been definitely decided upon. We are informed, however, that it will be held some time in July.