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COLOUR BAR VS. SWADESHI

WE reproduce the following interesting article by Mahatma Gandhi from *Young India*:—Thus writes Mr. Spender:—

"Gandhi would keep out European goods; the South Africans would go a step further and keep out the Indians. Swadeshi and Colour Bar Bills are the obverse and reverse of the same idea both from the despairing thought that East and West cannot intermingle without destroying each other's characteristic ways of life. Gandhi, the saint, is full of benevolence, and I listened to him while he earnestly disclaimed all sympathy with violent or anarchical ways of changing any existing order. Yet as he discoursed on the ravages which Western Industrialism had wrought in the Indian village, I had the feeling that if he were Emperor of India invested with plenary powers, the regulations that he would make for the admission of Europeans and their settlement in India might not greatly differ from those which the South Africans are attempting to impose on Indians in South Africa to-day. I have a very real respect for Mr. Gandhi, and I am, of course, aware that the last thing that he desires is to afford excuses for either form of intolerance. It is nevertheless true that 'Swadeshi' and 'Colour Bar' belong to the same spiritual family."

This paragraph from Mr. Spender's article furnishes an extraordinary study in what Tolstoy would call hypnotism. Under the hypnotic influence of the standardized thought of the English official in India, Mr. Spender is unable to see any difference between the Colour Bar Bills of South Africa and the Indian Swadeshi in terms of Khaddar. Mr. Spender is an honest Liberal. He has some sympathy for Indian aspirations. But he cannot escape the influence of his immediate surroundings. What is true of him is no doubt true of every one of us. Hence the necessity for Non-co-operation. When the surroundings are vicious, we must cut ourselves off from contact with those surroundings, in so far at least as our contact is voluntary.

But whether Mr. Spender's extraordinary proposition is an outcome of the hypnotic influence of his surroundings or whether it is really his own original idea, let us examine it. The Colour Bar Bill is aimed at men, not at measures. Swadeshi is aimed at measures only. Colour Bar is indiscriminately against a man's race or colour. Swadeshi knows no such distinction. The upholders of the Colour Bar would carry out their purpose even violently if necessary. Swadeshi eschews all form of violence, even mental. The Colour Bar has no reason behind it. Swadeshi, in the form of Khaddar, is a scientific formula supported by reason all along the line. Under the Colour Bar every Indian, no matter what educational qualifications he may possess, even though he may be thoroughly Westernised, is an undesirable person in the estimation of the Europeans of South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills are violent in purpose, for, they would keep the natives of the soil and the Asiatic settlers for ever as unskilled labourers and will not allow them to rise above that status. The Colour Bar Bills are intended to do, under the name of civilisation and for its protection, perhaps, in a more virulent form, what has been done in the name of Hinduism by Hindus to the so-called untouchables. But it is worthy of note that

untouchability, whatever may be said to the contrary, is fast dying in India. Those who are devoting themselves to the removal of untouchability are also those who are enthusiastically advocating the universalisation of the spinning wheel. Untouchability is admitted to be an evil. The Colour Bar is being raised almost to the status of a religion in South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills would harm, and deprive of their possessions innocent men and women without any just cause. Whereas Swadeshi is intended to harm not one single soul. It seeks to return to the poorest of the land what has been taken away from them almost by force. The Colour Bar Bills are exclusive. Swadeshi is never exclusive in the sense in which the Colour Bar Bills are. Swadeshi has no sympathy with the formula that East and West can never intermingle. Swadeshi does not banish all foreign or European goods, nor all machine-made goods, nor for that matter does Swadeshi tolerate all home-made goods. Swadeshi admits of and welcomes the introduction of all foreign goods that cannot or need not be manufactured in India and that would benefit her people. Thus Swadeshi admits all foreign books containing pure literature, all foreign watches, foreign needles, foreign sewing machines, foreign pins. But Swadeshi excludes all intoxicating drinks and drugs even though they may be manufactured in India. Swadeshi concentrates itself upon the spinning wheel and Khaddar, to the exclusion of all foreign cloth and even cloth manufactured in the mills of India, for the very simple, sufficient, satisfying and moral reason that the destruction of the spinning wheel has meant the destruction of the only supplementary industry of India for the millions of its peasants without furnishing any substitute. Thus Swadeshi in the form of Khaddar and the spinning wheel is a paramount necessity for the very existence of the millions of her paupers. Whereas the Colour Bar Bills are a response to the greed of a handful of Europeans who are after all exploiting the resources of a land which belongs not to them but to the original inhabitants of South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills have therefore no moral foundation whatsoever so far as I can see. The exclusion or the extinction of the Asiatic settlers of South Africa is in no way required, can in no way be proved to be necessary, for the existence of the South African Europeans. Still less can the suppression of the original inhabitants of South Africa be defended on any single moral ground. It is therefore painfully surprising to find a person of Mr. Spender's experience and attainments putting the highly moral Swadeshi in the form of Khaddar in the same category as the Colour Bar Bills. They do not belong to one family, let alone spiritual, but they belong to absolutely different families as different as the North pole is from the South.

Mr. Spender speculates upon what I would do if I was 'Emperor of India invested with plenary powers.' Perhaps I can speculate with greater authority. If I were Emperor of India I would extend the hand of fellowship to the whole of the world irrespective of caste, colour or creed, for, I claim the whole of mankind to be the children of one God, having absolutely the same capacity for self-realisation as the tallest among them. I would disband practically the whole of the army of occupation in India, retaining only such police as may be necessary for the protection of her citizens against thieves

and robbers. I would not bribe the Frontier tribes as they are being bribed to-day. But I would cultivate the friendliest relations with them and to that end send out reformers amongst them in order to find out the ways or means of providing useful occupation for them. I would guarantee the fullest protection for every European living in India and all honest European enterprises. I would impose a prohibitive tariff on all foreign cloth so as to exclude it entirely from India and bring Khadij under State control, so as to enable every villager who chooses to spin, feel that the products of his or her spinning wheel would be taken up. I would prohibit the importation of intoxicating liquors and close down every distillery, confining the manufacture of alcohol and opium for proved medical necessity. I would guarantee full protection to all forms of religious worship, save what is repugnant to the moral sense of mankind. I would throw open to the so-called untouchables every public temple and public school to which all other Hindus have right of admission. I would summon the representatives of both the Hindus and Musalmans, search their pockets and deprive them of all eatables and of all lethal weapons, if they have any, and lock them together in one room and open it only after they have settled their quarrels. There are of course many other things that I would do if I was Emperor of India. But since there is little chance of my being one, the foregoing is enough as a fair sample of what one who is mis-called a visionary, but who considers himself a practical man, understanding the wants of the poorest people, would do if he had the power.

Notes and News

HERE was little interest for Indians in the new Durban Town Council election which took place last Wednesday. In so far as they were concerned it was a case for them to choose the lesser evil. In Ward I Mr. H. H. Kemp was opposed by Mr. P. S. McNamee who advocated separate tram-cars for Indians. The latter was defeated by 80 votes and Mr. Kemp the original candidate was returned. The results of Ward II will be received with dismay by Indians. Mr. Eaton, the arch enemy of Indians, was opposed by Mrs. Crawford and Indians would have liked Mrs. Crawford to have succeeded but she was defeated by 485 votes. In Ward III Mrs. Seidle the original candidate was returned by a majority of 74 votes. Wards IV, V, and VI are represented respectively by Messrs. M. Cornelius, W. F. Johnstone and Rev. A. Lamont who were returned unopposed. In Ward VII Mr. T. Barman succeeded by a majority of 888 votes. In Ward VIII Mr. J. Williamson was returned unopposed and in Ward IX Mrs. Benson, who was opposed by Mr. E. G. O'Flaherty who had much to say against the "Bunyan" traders, was returned by a majority of 648 votes. Thus the new election is satisfactory with but one exception and that is Mr. Eaton. Let us hope that those who have been our friends in the past will remain so in the future.

One unhappy aspect of the present election is the absence of Mrs. E. L. Knight and Mr. S. J. Smith who, we must acknowledge with gratitude, stood for fairplay and justice for Indians even though at times they found themselves placed in an awkward position.

The pan-Asiatic Conference held at Nagasaki which was attended by 50 delegates from China, Japan, India and the Philippines has closed after the election of a new League of Asiatic Nations. According to a Reuter's message from Tokio the Chinese delegates proposed that the Pan-Asiatic League should assist India and the Philippines to regain their independence but the Japanese delegate deprecated a public discussion of the proposal fearing that the police might break up the meeting if anything injurious to the friendly relations between Britain and Japan or America and Japan was debated. It was finally decided to discuss the proposal in secret

session. It was decided to hold the next Congress at Peking.

The Council of the Parsee Central Association, Bombay, has forwarded a resolution to the Government of India protesting the recently passed Colour Bar Bill which is described as endeavouring to establish a grossly regrettable distinction between the white and the coloured races to serve the selfish ends of the former against all accepted principles on which subsists the fair name of the British Empire of which Indians form an integral part.

"They want us to pray from Monday to Sunday. That is all they want. The whites are working while we pray. The capitalists get hold of all the workers and give you too much religion. If Jesus wanted to help you he would have done so long ago. They will be helped that help themselves. The Ministers are employed to close the eyes of the Black workers." This is taken from a speech delivered by Mr. Clements Kadalle, the Native leader, recently at a meeting of the Pretoria Branch of the I.C.U.

Khadi hawking is the order of the day at present in India. According to a statement made by Mr. B. F. Bharncha to the Press Rs. 28000 worth of Khadi was sold by hawking within three and a half days in Surat 95 per cent. of which was delivered and cash received on the spot. Prominent leaders are taking part in this movement.

As a sequel to the Viceroy's plea for communal peace, the Swarajist leaders, Motilal Nehru and Abdulkalamazad, have inaugurated a movement to form an Indian National Union, non-political in character and open to all communities, with a view to restoring communal goodwill says a Reuter's message from Simla. The leading Hindus and Moslems, including Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Dr. Ansari, have issued a manifesto urging the establishment of a national consciousness in which religious passions are subordinated.

THE LATE MR. MERRIMAN

THE death of John Xavier Merriman comes as no lesser a blow to the Indian community as it has done to the European community. Apart from his outstanding career as one of the builders of South Africa the Indian community knew Mr. Merriman as their dear old friend. His name had become a household one to the Indians. If the past record of the Indian question in South Africa were to be opened John X. Merriman's name would be found almost in every instance as having stood up for justice to the Indians. Many an Indian deputation to the Government was led by Mr. Merriman and inside Parliament and outside Indians were always sure of Mr. Merriman standing by them. He was always against flooding South Africa with Indians but he was strongly opposed to persecuting the Indians that had already been brought to this country. He did not mince matters whenever occasion arose for him to speak in Parliament on any debate on the Indian question and he always advocated justice and fairplay. With the death

of his dear wife to whom he was ardently devoted the long and very successful career of Mr. Merriman came to an abrupt end. In Parliament where he was known as the "Father of the House" he is missed to this day and will be missed for long yet. Had he only been well to take part in the debates on the Colour Bar and the Asiatic Bills the position would no doubt have grown far more interesting. His presence might have influenced the Nationalists who owe a great deal to Mr. Merriman to refrain from passing the Colour Bar Bill. But Providence had willed it otherwise. Mr. Merriman's sympathy with Indians was not because of his love for Indians but because, in the words of an ex-Minister of the Interior Mr. Patrick Duncan, he was "a fearless critic of inefficient and selfish policy; an uncompromising enemy of injustice and oppression, and an upholder of the weak against the strong." Mr. Merriman has directed the path to good government and it is for those who love and respect him to follow in his footsteps. That is the best tribute that one could pay to the departed soul. Peace be to him.

Furniture Workers Wages

Agreement With Masters Gazetted

In the *Union Gazette* dated July 30, the text of an agreement made by representatives of the Cape Furniture Manufacturers' Association, Transvaal Furniture and Upholstery Manufacturers' Association, Natal Furniture and Upholstery Manufacturers' Association, Border Furniture Manufacturers' Association, Port Elizabeth Furniture Manufacturers' Association, representing the employers of the one part and the Furniture Workers' Union of South Africa, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers (Durban Branch) Furniture Section, representing the employees of the other part, is published.

The wages laid down are as follow:—Throughout the Union, except the Transvaal, for journeyman cabinet-makers, cabinet machinists, polishers, carvers, wood-turners, chairmakers, and upholsterers 2s. 3d. per hour. For these workers the rate in the Transvaal is fixed at 2s. 7½d. per hour.

Throughout the Union the rate for journeymen bedding makers is fixed at 1s. 8d.

A condition laid down in regard to all the above is that all employees who when this agreement comes into operation are receiving £3 a week and over, shall receive increases in four equal instalments, so that at the end of 12 months from the date of the beginning of the agreement no journeyman will be in receipt of less than the minimum laid down of 2s. 3d. and 2s. 7½d. respectively.

It is also provided that throughout the Union of South Africa (1) all semi-skilled or inefficient employees in any trade designated above who at the date of the commencement of this agreement are receiving less than £3 per week shall receive an immediate increase to £3 per week; (2) any employee who at the date of the commencement of this agreement is receiving a higher rate of wages than the minimum set down shall be paid a wage not less than such higher rate.

General Hertzog's Native Policy

[By C. F. ANDREWS]

The following interesting article has been contributed by Mr. C. F. Andrews to the *Modern Review* (Calcutta):

It is impossible to understand the Indian situation in South Africa with any degree of accuracy, unless at the same time the relation of the white population to the indigenous African races is carefully thought out. The Indian problem is part of the perpetual conflict between European and non-European, between East and West.

In South Africa, certain words for different groups of people are in common everyday use among all classes, and it is difficult to avoid them for that very reason. Europeans of all nationalities, including Jews, are called 'whites.' Indians are called 'Asiatics.' Those of mixed European and Bantu origin are called the 'coloured' people. The descendants of those who were brought over from Java by the Dutch in early days are called 'Cape Malays.' They are a small Muslim community living in Cape Town.

The indigenous African people of all tribes—such as Zulus, Xosas, Basutos,—are still called everywhere 'natives.' Up to the present, the word is not resented and even those who spoke English frequently used it when speaking to me about themselves. But no doubt the time will come when these remarkably intelligent and physically strong people, the children of the soil, will object to being called indiscriminately 'natives.' There will be a sense of insult in such a title when applied to them by Europeans. The Dutch word 'nattrel,' used by the Boers, will be equally objectionable. When this day arrives, the name that will become common in South Africa, as distinguishing all tribes alike, will be the word 'Bantu.' For Bantu is originally the generic term used for all the tribes who speak the Bantu languages and form a language group. Practically all the South African languages belong to this Bantu stock, having peculiar inflexions. Therefore, slowly but perceptibly, the word Bantu is gaining ground, and in a few years it is likely to become the word of everyday speech instead of the English word 'native' or the Dutch word 'nattrel.'

It is interesting to trace the origin of the words used in the past. The name Kaffir, meaning 'infidel' is derived from the Arabs. The word Negro, meaning 'black,' is taken from the Portuguese. The time has surely come when these nondescript words should be abandoned, and this indigenous people of Central and South Africa, one of the finest in the world, should no longer be called contemptuously 'nigger,' 'native' and the like, but should have their own name in the family of mankind.

As I have said, it is hardly true to call the word 'native' insulting to-day; at least the insult is not felt, except by a very few. Nevertheless, I could see that it gave some pleasure when I used the word Bantu. Furthermore, after gathering information concerning their vernacular papers, I found that they employed the word 'Bantu' for their races collectively.

During this transition stage, it is very nearly impossible in every-day speech to avoid using the word 'native'; but it would be well if we could do so as sparingly as possible and also make ourselves more accustomed to the fine and simple word Bantu, pronouncing the first syllable long. For these primitive peoples, who speak the Bantu languages, are rapidly being welded into a Nation by their common suffering and their sense of common oppression. They are destined to become one of the most important members of human society in the near future. Those among them, who have read books and thought out their own problems, are beginning to look wistfully towards the East to help them in overcoming the political oppression of the West. It was a pathetically significant thing to me, that

they came in large numbers to the Indian meetings and approached me privately afterwards asking me to take up their cause.

It may be asked, why the word 'African' itself may not be employed to describe these indigenous races. The reason is obvious. The European settlers, who have been occupying South Africa for more than three hundred years and were in occupation before the Bantu races came down from Central Africa, call themselves 'Afrikanders'; and the Dutch languages which they speak is called 'Afrikaans.' Thus, the word, 'Africans,' without any qualifying adjective, would be ambiguous. Therefore the word 'Bantu,' if only it can be made current coin in common speech, is preferable.

This introduction to my subject will help, perhaps, better than anything else to explain the complexity of the South African political problem.

(To be Continued)

Messenger of Peace And Harmony

Calcutta's Tribute to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

During her visit to Calcutta an address of welcome was presented to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu by the Calcutta Corporation. After welcoming Mrs. Naidu as the President of the Indian National Congress the address stated that she had for many years past occupied a unique position in the world of literature and had filled with melody pages of immortal work and referred to her poetry and "silvery eloquence."

Continuing the address said that the insult and oppression of her countrymen in far off South Africa awakened in her heart the tender instincts of motherhood and she hastened to their aid as an ambassador and fostered the spirit of good-will in foreign people. It further stated that the people, for her service had bestowed on her the highest honour by choosing her as their leader during the last session of the Indian National Congress.

Concluding it said that she was the messenger of peace and harmony and was seeking to reconcile the conflicting interests of several communities for the higher aim, namely, the attainment of Swaraj.

Hindu Muslem Tension In India

In the course of a speech at a public meeting at Barisal (Bengal) Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, referring to the inter-communal tension, is reported to have said:—"I have championed the Mussalman cause in many non-Muslim countries. I hope they will not be angry with me if I say that they should acknowledge the milk-debt and blood debt of Mother India." Proceeding she said: "God is free and He cannot be God unless he is free and He wants that His worshippers must be free. Will Mussalmans not agree to this? I have fought for them in other countries, but I will fight again for them here. India must be free for India and Islam."

Speaking at the same meeting Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta said, if the people were to agitate for Swaraj some sort of unity must be brought about between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He appealed for loyalty to the Congress and in conclusion said: "Why is your faith in Hindu-Muslim unity so small? Feel within yourselves whether the relationship between the two communities is really so strained. Go to the villages and see thousands and thousands of Hindus and Muslims living in amity. Somebody when asked had said these riots would go on uptill November. These are elec-

tioning tricks. At places people are being sent with money with a definite purpose. At Feni, a Mahomedan was caught red-handed desecrating a mosque as well as a temple.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

VI. A Tragedy

I have said before that I had few intimate friends at the High School. Friends who could be called intimate I had two, at different times. One of these friendships did not last long, though I never forsook the friend. He forsook me because I made friends with the other. The latter friendship I regard as a tragedy in my life. It lasted long. I formed in it a spirit of a reformer. This companion was originally my elder brother's friend who and he were classmates. I knew his weaknesses, but I regarded him as a faithful friend. My mother, my eldest brother, and my wife warned me that I was in bad company. I was too proud a husband to heed the wife's warning. I dare not go against my mother's though, and was bound to respect the elder brother's. But I pleaded with them: 'I know he has the weaknesses you attribute to him, but you know not his virtues. He cannot lead me astray, as my company with him is meant to reform him. For I am sure that if he reforms his ways, he will be a splendid man. I beg you not to be anxious on my score.' I do not think that this satisfied them, but they accepted my explanation and let me go my way.

I have seen since that I had calculated wrongly. A reformer must not go into deep waters. He cannot afford to have intimacy with him whom he seeks to reform. True friendship is an identity of souls rarely to be found in the world. Only between like natures can friendship be proper and enduring. But friends react on one another. Hence in friendship there is very little scope for reform. I am of opinion that all intimacies are to be avoided, for man easily takes in vice, not virtue. And he who would be friends with God must remain alone, or make the whole world his friend. I may be wrong, but my effort to cultivate an intimate friendship proved a failure.

When I came across this friend, a wave of 'reform' was sweeping over Rajkot. The friend informed me that so many of our teachers were secretly taking meat and wine. He also named many other well-known people of Rajkot as belonging to the company. There were I was told some high-school boys also among them. I was surprised and pained. I asked my friend the reason, and he thus explained it: 'We are a weak people, as we do not eat meat. The English rule over us, as they are meateaters. Meateaters never have boils or tumours, and if they chance to have them they heal quickly. Our teachers and other distinguished people who eat meat are no fools. They know its virtues. You should also do likewise. And there is nothing like trying. Try and find what strength it gives.' All this argument was not advanced at a single sitting. It represents the substance of a long and elaborate argument the friend was trying to hammer into me from time to time. My elder brother had already fallen. He therefore supported the friend's argument. I certainly looked feeble-bodied by the side of my brother and this friend. They were both hardier, physically stronger, and more daring. This friend's exploits

cast a spell over me. He could run long distances and extraordinarily fast. He was an adept in high and long jumps. He could put up with any amount of corporal punishment. He would often display his exploits to me and as man is always dazzled when he sees in others the qualities that he lacks I was also dazzled by this friend's exploits. This was followed by a strong desire to be like him. I could hardly jump or run. Why should not I also be as strong as this friend?

Again I was a coward. I used to be haunted by the fear of thieves, ghosts, and serpents. I dared not therefore stir out of doors at night. Darkness simply scared me away. It was almost impossible to sleep in the dark, as I would imagine ghosts coming from one direction, thieves from another, and serpents from a third. I could not therefore bear to sleep without a light in the room. How could I disclose my fears to the wife sleeping by the side, now at the threshold of youth? I knew that she had more courage than I and I felt ashamed of myself. She knew no fear of serpents and ghosts. She could go out anywhere in the dark. The friend knew all these weaknesses of mine. He would tell me that he could hold in his hand live serpents, could defy thieves and did not believe in ghosts. And all this was of course the result of eating meat.

A doggerel of Narmad's to the following effect was very much in vogue amongst us schoolboys:

Behold the mighty Englishman
Rules over the Native small,
Because being a meat-eater
He is five cubits tall.

All this had its due effect on me. I was beaten. It began to grow on me that meat-eating was good, that it would make me strong and daring, and that if the whole country took to meat-eating the English could be beaten.

A day was thereupon fixed for beginning meat-eating. It will be difficult for many to see why a day had to be fixed for the beginning of the new reform. The Gandhis were Vaishnavas. My parents were particularly staunch Vaishnavas. They would regularly visit the *Haveli* (the chief Vaishnava temple). The family had even its own temples. Jainism is also strong in Gujerat, and its influence is felt everywhere and on all occasions. The opposition to and abhorrence for meat-eating that is to be seen in Gujerat among the Jains and Vaisnavas is to be seen nowhere in India or outside. These were the traditions in which I was born and bred up. And I was extremely devoted to my parents. I knew that the moment they came to know of my having eaten meat, they would be shocked to death. I was also knowingly or unknowingly a servant of truth. I cannot say that I did not know then that I would have to deceive my parents if I began eating meat. But my mind was bent on the reform. It was not a question of pleasing the palate. I did not know that it had a particularly good relish. I wanted to be strong and daring and wanted my countrymen also to be such, so that we might defeat the English and make India free—the word 'Swaraj' I had not yet heard. The frenzy of the reform blinded me: so completely I forgot myself:

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