

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

A MEETING under the auspices of the Colonial Born Indian Association was held at the Tamil Institute, Durban, on Sunday the 8th instant, to discuss the new Bills introduced in the Union House of Assembly dealing with Asiatics. Advocate B. Gabriel was in the chair and after a prolonged discussion on various points of the Bill, Mr. A. I. Kaje, general Secretary of the S. A. I. C. explained fully the steps taken by the Congress to have a clear meaning of the points in the Bills that were ambiguous.

Keshav Mackan Mistry and Yousuf Ebrahim are two Colonial-born youths who have passed their Matriculation examination at the Marine College, Durban, and have departed for England last week with the intention of taking up medicine. If Indians in South Africa do not wish to remain as mere money-making machines but wish to improve their status and to live up not to the Western standard as it is interpreted in South Africa but to an ideal standard it is high time that they took more interest in the education of their children. We wish these two young men every success in their aspiration and we congratulate their parents for setting a noble example to be followed by all well-to-do Indians.

Messrs. Keshav Mistry and Yusaf Ebrahim were given a farewell reception by the Indian Teachers Society and the Marine College Debating Society.

Sir Richard M. Dane asserts in the *Journal of the East India Association* :—

The abuse of opium is of course, a serious evil but the abuse of alcohol is also a serious evil. The two habits are comparable. Opium appears to have a special attraction for some races and alcohol for others. The abuse of alcohol is a more serious evil for the individual and for the persons with whom he is brought in contact, but opium, even when used in moderation, has an enervating tendency and is, therefore, for a nation a more dangerous thing.

To a reader of his paper Mahatma Gandhi writes in *Young India* on *Purdah* :—I do not propose to publish your letter in defence of the *Purdah*. I am of opinion that the *Purdah* in India is a recent institution and was adopted during the period of Hindu decline. In the age when proud Draupadi and spotless Sita lived there could be no *Purdah*. Gargi could not have held her discourses from behind the *Purdah*. Nor is the *Purdah* universal in India. It is unknown in the Deccan, Gujrat, and the Panjab. It is unknown among the peasantry and one does not hear of any untoward consequences of the comparative freedom which women in these provinces and among peasantry enjoy. Nor will it be just to say that the women or men in the other parts of the world are less moral because of the absence of the *Purdah* system. A reader of *Young India* seeks to defend everything that is ancient. Whilst I hold that the ancients gave us a moral code

which is not to be surpassed, I am unable to subscribe to the doctrine of their infallibility in every detail. And who shall say what is really ancient. Are all the hundred and eight Upanishads of equal sanctity? It seems to me that we must test on the anvil of reason everything that is capable of being tested by it and reject that which does not satisfy it even though it may appear an ancient garb.

THE MINISTER'S REPLY

WE publish elsewhere in this issue the reply of the Minister of the Interior to the memorandum of the South African Indian Congress on the Immigration and Indian Relief (Further Provision) Bill and the Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal Bill. The reply clears some of the ambiguities in the Bill.

One of the points raised was the amendment to paragraph (e) of Section 5 of the Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913. Paragraph (e) in its present reading exempts any person born outside the Union whose parents were at the time of his birth domiciled in any part of the Union. The amendment proposed to be read together with this paragraph is : "provided that such person, if born outside the Union, enters or is brought into the Union within three years from the date of his birth." This would prohibit the entry of all persons born of parents domiciled in the Union who may have exceeded the age limit of three years and still are outside the Union.

The point has been cleared by the Minister with the explanation that the object of the amendment is to limit the time of entry of such persons born outside the Union whose parents may have since the birth of such persons, died or abandoned domicile in the Union, and that paragraph (e) of Section 5 of the principal Act which provides for the entry of the wife and child under the age of sixteen years of any person domiciled in any Province is not affected by paragraph (e).

The second point referred to was in con-

nection with the section in the Bill defining the term "domicile." The definition deems a person to have lost his domicile within the Union if he absents himself from the Union and does not re-enter within three years from the date of departure. It was feared that if this provision were to apply retrospectively many persons who may be absent from the Union and may have already exceeded the time limit would be unfairly affected by it.

This fear is removed by the Minister's assurance to so amend the section in question at the committee stage of the Bill, that it may apply from the date of the commencement of the Act or whichever period may be the later.

The third point raised was with regard to divorces. It was urged on behalf of the Congress that if a person married a South African born woman and divorced her while in India, and the woman by virtue of her birth in the Union returns thereto with her offspring the person cannot bring into the Union another wife as he is precluded by the definition of the term "wife" as appears in section 3 sub-section 2, paragraph (b) of the Indians Relief Act, No. 22, 1914 which reads: "if such exempted person has in any Province offspring by any other woman who is still living." It was, therefore, suggested that after the word "living" in the above paragraph the words, "other than a woman whose marriage with such exempted person has been dissolved to the satisfaction of the Minister," should be added.

The Minister's reply is that the Round Table Conference has agreed that the definition of wife and child contained in the Indians Relief Act should remain as it is and that no reference to such divorces for the purpose of allowing another wife to enter the Union has been made in the Bill as such cases can be dealt with under the provisions of Section 25 (1) of the principal Act which empowers the Minister to authorise the issue of a temporary permit to any prohibited immigrant to enter and reside in the Union or any particular Province. It is, furthermore, explained by the Minister, that only divorces affected on grounds recognised by the Courts of the Union will be regarded as sufficient for the purpose of permitting another wife to enter the Union, and that in such cases the presence in the Union of children of the divorced wife will not preclude the entry of another wife.

The position in this connection really remains unaltered.

In regard to the Bill dealing with Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal the exception taken was to the definition of the term "Asiatic" which was given as including "a coolie, an Arab and a Malay" and it has been promised that those words will be deleted.

Among other matters referred to the Minister were included the prohibition to Indians domiciled in the Transkeian Territories to bring their wives, and Indian subjects of the Native States of India who are not recognised as British subjects in the Union.

With regard to the former the Minister's reply is that the matter is under consideration and the former that such Indians will be treated as British subjects.

With regard to other minor matters of Immigration such as the filling in the D. I. 90 Form on every occasion a person wants to leave the Union or any Province thereof; the deposit of £10 taken from every person wishing to enter another Province within the Union, irrespective of the educational, commercial, professional or social standing of the Applicant; sittings of the Immigrants Appeal Board in Immigration cases outside the reach of the public notwithstanding the liberty of the subject being involved and other matters which could be given relief to administratively or otherwise, the Minister has replied that these matters will be enquired into and the result communicated at a later date.

We need hardly remind the Union Government that these are matters that have been brought to their notice on frequent occasions in the form of resolutions passed by the South African Indian Congress but the position has not changed even by an iota.

In view of the restrictive measures being passed as a safeguard against the Union being flooded by Asiatics, and if the desire to treat the resident Asiatic population justly, and fairly is at all sincere, it is expected that the existing immigration and other laws will not be administered as harshly as they have been in the past. Let us hope, therefore, that the matters referred to the Minister of the Interior and to which a definite reply has not been given as yet will receive his favourable consideration and that steps will be taken to remove a long standing grievance.

Minister's Reply To Congress Deputation

The following is a copy of the reply given by the Minister of the Interior to the memorandum submitted to him by the South African Indian Congress Deputation relating to the Immigration and Indian Relief (Further Provision) Bill and the Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal Bill:—

No. Cd. 241.

Department of the Interior,
Capetown,

29th April, 1927.

Sir,—With reference to the Memorandum submitted by you at the interview you had with the Honourable Minister on the 25th instant, I have been directed to reply as follows:—

IMMIGRATION AND INDIAN RELIEF (FURTHER PROVISION) BILL

- (1) The amendment to paragraph (e) of Section 5 of the principal Act will not affect the right of entry of persons falling within the provisions of paragraph (g) of Section 5 of the principal Act. Each sub-section of the said Section refers to a different category of immigrants and must be read by itself. The object of the amendment to paragraph (e) is to limit the time of entry of persons born outside the Union of parents who were domiciled in the Union at the date of birth of the person concerned, but who have since died or abandoned domicile in the Union.
- (2) The question of applying the terms of paragraph 3 of the Reciprocity Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1918 to the Transkeian Territories is at present under consideration and a further communication will be addressed to you at a later date.
- (3) It is not intended to apply the provision dealing with loss of domicile after three years' continuous absence from the Union retrospectively and to make this purpose quite clear the following words will be inserted in Section 10 at the Committee stage of the Bill after therefrom "or from the date of the commencement of this Act, whichever may be the later."
- (4) As regards divorces, it was agreed at the Round Table Conference that the definition of wife and child as contained in the Indians Relief Act No. 22 of 1914 should in no way be amended. You will have observed that the bill makes no reference to recognition of divorces in or outside the Union for the purpose of allowing another wife to enter the Union, as it is held, that such cases can conveniently be dealt with under the provisions of Section 25 (1) of the principal Act. I may add that in accordance with the principle of maintaining Western standards of life, only divorces affected on grounds that are recognised by the Courts of the Union will be regarded as sufficient for the purpose of permitting another wife to enter the Union. In such cases the presence in the Union of children of the divorced wife will not preclude the entry of another wife.
- (5) In the course of the interview you pointed out that only in the case of a marriage according to Christian rites could the wife be the plaintiff in a divorce suit and that consequently cases of this nature would be few and far between. Should such a case arise and the wife be the innocent party and otherwise have the right of entry to the Union, she will be dealt with under the provisions of Section 25 (1) of the principal Act.

(6) The points dealing with Administrative matters will be enquired into and the result communicated to you at a later date. At this stage, however, I can give you the assurance that Indians who are subjects of the Native States of India forming part of the territory generally known as "British India" will not be treated less favourably than Indians who are British subjects in the more restricted sense.

ASIATICS IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF NATAL BILL

- (7) The definition of Asiatic will at the Committee stage be amended by the deletion of the words "includes a coolie, an Arab and a Malay" and the substitution thereof of the words "the islands adjacent thereto." The definition will then read "Asiatics includes any male person belonging to one of the native races of Asia and the islands adjacent thereto but does not include" etc.

In conclusion I am directed to assure you that the Honourable the Minister appreciates the reasonable attitude your Congress has adopted in regard to the above-mentioned bills and hopes that by co-operation the objects of the Bills will be attained to the ultimate advantage of all concerned.

I have to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) "C. S. SCHMIDT."

Secretary for the Interior.

A. I. Kajee Esq.,

Hon. General Secretary,

South African Indian Congress,

175 Grey Street,

Durban.

The Indian Agreement

Some Misunderstandings Removed

(BY C. F. ANDREWS.)

III.

There is one part of the Agreement which stands out so clearly that if only this one Declaration had been made, it would form by itself a Charter for the whole Indian community in South Africa. It reads as follows:—

"The Union Government firmly believe in and adhere to the principle that it is the duty of every civilised government to devise ways and means and to take all possible steps for the uplifting of every section of their permanent population to the full extent of their capacity and opportunities."

It would be difficult to improve on this statement as a Declaration of Ultimate Rights.

Under this formula, the Union Government goes on to "accept the view that in the provision of educational and other facilities the considerable number of Indians who will remain part of the permanent population should not be allowed to lag behind any other section of the people."

This is also supremely satisfactory, because "any other section of the people" definitely refers to European education. At present, as we all know, Indian education is quite hopelessly behind European. But this will not be altered.

At this point, the Agreement contains the following provision:—

"It is difficult for the Union Government to take action, which is considerably in advance of public opinion, or to ignore difficulties arising out of the constitutional system of Union, under which the functions of the Government are distributed between the Central Executive and the provincial and minor local authorities."

I have already explained, that the last part of this sentence does not mean that the Union Government is going to leave licences, education, etc., entirely in the hands of local authorities. On the contrary, it endeavours, as far as possible, to take it out of their hands. But there is a point in the Constitution of the Union, beyond which they cannot go. Therefore they make this provision.

There is a further provision in the earlier part of the same sentence, which is very important to understand.

While the assumption is made that the Union Government ought to go in *advance* of public opinion, it is stated, at the same time, that it cannot be expected to go *considerably* in advance.

This is practical statesmanship. For if the advance were made too rapidly, we all know what would happen. There would be an immediate anti-Asiatic campaign, with money behind it, and the voters of the Union, who are practically all European, would pass new legislation immediately of the harshest possible character against us. In that case, instead of pushing forward our cause, there would be another disastrous defeat.

Let us, then, count up some of our gains under this one head:—

(i) We are promised that, in time, the Union Government will devise ways and means and take all possible steps to uplift the Indian community to the full extent of their capacity and opportunity. This means that there is *nothing* in the long run, that the Indian community may not aspire to and hope to reach, with Government assistance.

(ii) We are promised that Education will be first tackled; and that educational facilities will be given as far as possible. A Commission will be appointed, with an Indian expert adviser, and Fort Hare will be thrown open.

(iii) It pledges the Union Government to carry out this programme, going in *advance* of public opinion, but not *considerably* in advance. Also, while pressing the local provincial governments to take action, the Union Government will only go as far as the constitutional position will allow.

Once, last October, I was asked by a very sympathetic European in Durban, what was my own hope with regard to the Round Table Conference. I answered that my hope was,

(i) The withdrawal of the Asiatic Bill.

(ii) The provision of educational facilities.

He said to me, "That's a very large order. The Indians will never get all that."

I said, that my hope was in God, and not in man; and I believed my hope would not be in vain.

We may thank God that, in these two matters, our hopes are likely now to be fulfilled.

Obituary

The death took place at Prince Edward Street, Durban, on May 11th at 11 P.M. at the age of 44 of Mr. S. Ansarey Raboobe, a young and respected resident of the District. Mr. Ansarey is the well known Mahomedan Butcher, and as the beloved son of the late Raboobe, he was highly respected by every one who came in touch with him, and was well esteemed, for his business and gentlemanly qualities. Mr. Ansarey was colonial born, born in the year of 1883, and fortunately paid a speedy visit to the Motherland about six years ago. He was a committee member of the Anjuman Isha A-Tul Islam.

A large number of mourners attended the funeral, which was held at the Mahomedan Cemetery Durban, on Thursday the 12th inst. at 2 P.M. many travelled down from P. M. Burg, Pine Town, Chakaas Kraal and various other districts to be present to pay their last respects, while the High Priest of the Jumma Masjid of Grey Street, Durban, (Hajee Moulana Moulvi Fatha Mahomed) conducted the service. Numerous floral wreaths and tributes were sent. His good name will be ever green amongst his many friends and relatives.

Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal Bill

The following is the text of the above Bill introduced in the House of Assembly:

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate and the House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa, as follows:—

1. Sub-Section (c) of article *two* of Law No. 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal as amended by Volksraad Resolutions article 1419 of the twelfth day of August, 1886, and article 128 of the sixteenth day of May, 1890, is hereby repealed in so far as it relates to the northern districts of Natal as defined in Law No. 1 of 1903 (Natal) hereinafter referred to as the northern districts.

2. An Asiatic shall be entitled to registration under this Act if he—

(a) was domiciled and actually present in the northern districts at the commencement of this Act; or

(b) was domiciled in the northern districts but temporarily absent therefrom at the commencement of this Act and subject to the provisions of sub-section (2) of section *three* makes application for registration from a place situated in the said districts within three years after the commencement of this Act; or

(c) is the minor child over the age of eight years of an Asiatic who was registered or was entitled to be registered before or after such child's birth.

Provided that Asiatics introduced at any time into the northern districts for employment on contracts of labour or for domestic service or for any other form of employment not of a permanent nature, shall not be entitled to registration but shall, on the expiration of such contracts, domestic service or other employment depart from the northern districts.

(3) Every Asiatic domiciled and actually present in the northern districts at the commencement of this Act shall be entitled to make application for registration at such times and places and to such persons as the Minister may prescribe by notice in the *Gazette* and in newspapers circulating in the northern districts.

(2) Every Asiatic who enters the northern districts after the commencement of this Act and who has not previously been registered thereunder but is entitled to apply for registration and wishes so to register, shall within eight days after entering the said districts make application for registration to the registrar: Provided that—

(a) application for registration may be made by a parent on behalf of his child is entitled to registration and is eight years of age but under sixteen years of age; and

(b) if the parent has not so made application for registration within one year after he attains the age of sixteen years.

4. The registrar shall consider every application for registration made under section *three* and if he is satisfied that such applicant is lawfully entitled to registration under this Act he shall cause to be issued to such applicant a certificate of registration.

5. (1) A certificate of registration shall until it is cancelled be conclusive evidence that the lawful holder thereof, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any law contained, is entitled to enter and reside in the Transvaal and in the northern districts, so long as he retains his domicile therein.

(2) The lawful holder of such a certificate shall in the Transvaal be deemed to be the holder of a certificate of registration issued under the laws of the Transvaal relating to Asiatics.

(2) Any Asiatic to whom a certificate of registration is issued shall upon such issue surrender to the

registrar all certificates or permits which may have been issued to him in connection with his domicile or residence in Natal, and shall not thereafter be entitled to claim domicile or residence in any part of Natal other than in the said northern districts :

Provided that sub-sections (1) and (2) shall not apply to any person who has under any law been ordered to leave the Union :

Provided further that if any Asiatic is in possession of a certificate of registration which has been obtained by fraudulent representations made by himself or on his behalf a magistrate may order that such certificate be cancelled and that such Asiatic be dealt with in terms of sub-section (3) of section *six*.

6. (1) Whenever the registrar is satisfied that any Asiatic claiming to be entitled to registration under section *two* is not so entitled, he shall refuse to issue to him a certificate of registration, and cause a notice of the refusal to be sent by post to the applicant at the address given upon the form of application.

(2) Against such refusal of the registrar the applicant may, within fourteen days of the date of the notice of refusal, note an appeal by letter addressed to the registrar and the appeal shall be heard by a magistrate having jurisdiction within the northern districts and such magistrate shall be deemed when hearing any such appeal to be an inferior court within the meaning of section *nineteen* of the Administration of Justice Proclamation, 1902 (Transvaal), or any amendment thereof.

(3) A magistrate having jurisdiction within the northern districts shall upon receipt of a written notification from the registrar, or upon ascertaining from proceedings under this Act that any adult Asiatic to whom a certificate of registration has not been issued in terms of this Act is in the said districts, made an order in writing directing such Asiatic to be removed from the northern districts. Provided that no such order shall be made in respect of any Asiatic who has noted an appeal in terms of sub-section (2) or has brought the proceedings before the magistrate in review unless such appeal or review proceedings have been dismissed or discharged or abandoned or struck off the roll for lack of prosecution.

(4) The provisions of section *six* of the Immigrants Regulation Act (Act No. 22 of 1913) or any amendment thereof shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to any order issued under sub-section (3) of this section or sub-section (2) of section *seven*.

7. (1) Every adult Asiatic entering or residing in the northern districts shall upon demand made upon him by any European member of a police force lawfully established in the Union or any other European person authorized thereto by the Minister, produce the certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder and supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation.

(2) Any Asiatic who fails upon lawful demand to produce such certificate may be arrested without warrant and brought before a magistrate and if he fails to satisfy such magistrate that he is the lawful holder of a certificate of registration the magistrate shall make the order prescribed in sub-section (3) of section *six*.

8. (1) Any person who finds or has in his possession any certificate of registration issued under this Act of which he is not the lawful holder shall forthwith deliver or transmit the same by post to the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with the requirements of this section shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding six months.

If at any time any certificate of registration is lost or destroyed the person who was the lawful holder thereof shall apply forthwith to the registrar to have the same renewed and the registrar shall upon application by that person with the regulations

relating to applications for the renewal of certificate and upon payment of a fee of five shillings ren such certificate.

10. After the commencement of this Act no licence required by any law for the carrying on of any trade or occupation shall be issued to any Asiatic in the northern districts unless such Asiatic produces to the person authorized to issue such licence a certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder and supplies such particulars and furnishes such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation.

11. If in any prosecution or other proceeding under this Act the age of any Asiatic is in issue such Asiatic shall unless and until the contrary is proved be taken to be the age which the registrar in any certificate issued under his hand certifies to be in his opinion the age of such Asiatic.

12. Any sworn declaration or certificate of registration made or issued in pursuance of this Act or the regulations shall be exempt from stamp duty.

13. The provisions of Law 3 of 1885 (Transvaal) and any amendments thereof heretofore enacted which prohibit an Asiatic from being an owner of fixed property in the Transvaal subject to certain exceptions specified in such amendments, shall subject to the same exceptions apply to the northern districts and be construed also as prohibiting any registration of a mortgage over fixed property in favour of an Asiatic other-wise than security for a *bona fide* loan or investment in the ordinary course of business, and also prohibiting the acquisition of ownership of fixed property in the northern districts by any company or other corporate body in which one or more Asiatics having a controlling interest and the registration of such a mortgage in favour of such a company or corporate body otherwise than as security as aforesaid.

14. Any person who—

(a) for the purpose of or in connection with an application for registration or for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of registration commits any fraudulent act or wilfully makes any false statement or false pretence or incites any person to or aids or abets any person in such act, statement or pretence ; or

(b) forges any certificate of registration ; or

(c) uses as his certificate of registration of which he is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate of registration ; or

(d) incites any person to use or aids and abets any person in using as such person's certificate any certificate of registration of which such person is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate of registration ;

shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years, or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

15. Governor-General may from time to time make regulations prescribing the form of certificates of registration, the manner and form in which application shall be made for registration, the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished by any applicant for the purpose of or in connection with such application or for any other purpose and generally for the better carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act.

16. In this Act unless inconsistent with the context "adult" means an Asiatic of the age of sixteen years or over ;

"application for registration" means an application made in the form prescribe by regulation ;

"Asiatic" means any male person belonging to one of the native races of Asia and includes a coolie, an Arab and a Malay but does not include—

(a) any member of the race or class commonly known as Cape Malay ; or

(b) any person who is duly accredited to the Union by or under the authority of His Majesty or any foreign state, or the wife, family, staff or servants of any such person; "certificate of registration" means a certificate of registration issued under this Act in the form prescribed by regulation;

"domicile" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 10 of Act No. 22 of 1913 or any amendment thereof;

"Magistrate" includes an additional or assistant magistrate or any person lawfully acting as such;

"Minister" means the Minister of the Interior or any other Minister to whom the Governor-General may from time to time assign the administration of this Act;

"minor" means an Asiatic under the age of sixteen;

"parent" means the father of an Asiatic child or in his absence from any cause the mother of such child;

"registrar" means the officer appointed by the Minister to keep the register of Asiatics and any person lawfully acting in such capacity;

"regulation" means any regulation made under section fourteen of this Act.

17. This Act may be cited as the Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal Act, 1927, and shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by the Governor-General by Proclamation in the *Gazette*.

The Story of My Experiments With Truth

[BY M. K. GANDHI]

PART II.

Chapter XXIII.

AS A HOUSEHOLDER

To set up a household was no new experience for me. But the establishment in Natal was different from the ones that I had in Bombay and London. This time part of the expense was solely for the sake of prestige. I thought it necessary to have a household in keeping with my position as an Indian barrister in Natal and as a representative. So I had a nice little house in a prominent locality. It was also suitably furnished. Food was simple, but as I used to invite English friends and Indian co-workers the housing bills were always fairly high.

A good servant is essential in every household. But I have never known to keep any as a servant.

I had a friend as companion and help, and a cook who had become a member of the family. I also had office clerks boarding and lodging with me.

I think I had a fair amount of success in this experiment, but it was not without its modicum of the bitter experiences of life.

The companion was very clever and, I thought, faithful to me. But in this I was deceived. He became jealous of an office clerk who was staying with me and wove such a tangled web that I suspected the clerk. Now, this clerical friend had a temper of his own. Immediately he saw that he had been the object of my suspicion, he left both the house and the office. I was pained. I felt that perhaps I had been unjust to him, and my conscience always stung me.

In the meanwhile the cook needed a few days' leave, or for some other cause I cannot remember, was away. It was necessary to procure another during his absence. Of this man I learnt later that he was a perfect scamp. But for me he proved a godsend. Within two or three days of his arrival he discovered certain irregular things that were going on under my roof without my knowledge, and he made up his mind to warn me. I had the

reputation for being a credulous but straight man. The discovery was to him therefore all the more shocking. "Everyday at 1 o'clock I used to go home from office for lunch. At about 12 o'clock one day the cook came panting to the office and said, 'Please come home at once. There is a surpris for you.'

"Now, what is this?" I asked. "You must tell me what it is. How can I leave the office at this hour to go and see it?"

"You will regret it, if you don't come. That is all I can say."

I felt an appeal in his persistence. I went home accompanied by a clerk and the cook walked ahead of us. He took me straight to the upper floor, pointed at my companion's room, and said, "Open this door and see for yourself."

I saw it all. I knocked at the door. No reply. I knocked heavily so as to make the very walls shake. The door was opened. I saw a prostitute inside. I asked her to leave the house never to return.

To the companion I said, "From this moment I cease to have anything to do with you. I have been thoroughly deceived and have made a fool of myself. This is how you have requited my trust in you?"

Instead of coming to his senses, he threatened to expose me.

"I have nothing to conceal," said I. "Expose whatever I may have done. But you must leave me this moment."

This made him worse. There was no help for it. So I said to the clerk standing downstairs: "Please go and inform the Police Superintendent, with my compliments, that a person living with me has misbehaved himself. I do not want to keep him in my house but he refuses to leave. I shall be much obliged if he can send me help."

This showed him that I was in earnest. His guilt unnerved him. He apologised to me, entreated me not to inform the police and agreed to leave the house immediately, which he did.

The incident came as a timely warning in my life. Only now could I see clearly how thoroughly I had been beguiled by this evil genius. In harbouring him I had chosen a bad means for a good end. I had expected to gather figs of thistles. I had known that the companion was a bad character, and yet I believed in his faithfulness to me. In the attempt to reform him I was near ruining myself. I had disregarded the warnings of kind friends. Infatuation had completely blinded me.

But for the new cook I should never have discovered the truth and being under influence of the companion, I should probably have been unable to lead the life of detachment that I then began. I should always have been wasting time on him. He had the power to keep me in the dark and to mislead me.

But God came to the rescue as before. My intentions were pure, and so I was saved in spite of my mistakes, and this early experience thoroughly forewarned me for the future.

The cook had been almost a messenger sent from Heaven. He did not know cooking and as a cook he could not have remained at my place. But no one else could have opened my eyes. This was not the first time, as I subsequently learnt, that the woman had been brought into my house. She had come often before, but no one had the courage of this cook. For every one knew how blindly I trusted the companion. The cook had, as it were, been sent to me just to do this service for he begged leave of me at every moment.

"I cannot stay in your house," he said. "You easily misled. This is no place for me." I let him go.

I now discovered that the man who had put my ears against the clerk was no other than the companion. I tried very hard to make amends to the clerk for the injustice I had done him, however, been my eternal regret that I could not satisfy him fully. Howsoever you may regard it as a rift.