

# Indian Opinion

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## NOTES AND NEWS

**P**UBLICITY is given to the following information dealing with Asiatic applicants for general dealers' licences:—

All Asiatics, when making application at the office of the Receiver of Revenue for general dealers' licences for 1929, either for a renewal or new licences, must, in future, conform to the following requirements:—

(1) Applications to be made out in duplicate; (2) when the applicant is unable to write his signature in English script, a thumb impression must be given on the duplicate form; (3) each applicant must produce his domicile certificate, Colonial-born pass, or other document attesting to his domicile in Natal, and the number and description of such document must be quoted on the application form.

Applications made for condonation number about 1,337. Of this number the Cape is responsible for 334 applications, the Transvaal for 431, and Natal for 612. In many instances condonation has been already granted, in terms of the Government's scheme. It is reported that those who have failed to avail themselves of the pardon will be deported forthwith, and that no extenuating circumstances will be considered, since ample time was allowed to all illicit entrants to secure their position.

The appointment of Mr. M. R. Jayakar, a member of the Indian Legislative Assembly, to succeed Mr. Sastri as the next Agent has been suggested by a section of the English Press in India. It is generally believed that Mr. Jayakar's domestic interests would not permit of his leaving the Motherland, and it is unlikely that he would abandon, even temporarily, his political career, and lucrative practice at the Bar in Bombay, where he is one of the leading lights in his profession. According to other reports, other prominent leaders have already declined the appointment and the Government is confronted with such tremendous difficulty in this connection that it is not improbable that strong official representations will be made in favour of Mr. Sastri continuing in office. If that should really happen and should Mr. Sastri agree to accept a second term of office it will be a day of rejoicing for the Indian community of the Union.

The famous Mr. Morgan Evans is still on the war path. But he cannot be called a brave warrior for his actions are tinged with cowardice. He is reported to have moved a resolution protesting against the condonation scheme at a public meeting in the Town Hall of Krugersdorp but having received no seconder the resolution was not put. Mr. Morgan Evans said he had no need to apologise to Mr. Sastri. "I do not regret the incident to this day, and I am out to fight the Indian question to the bitter end," said he. Mr. Sastri, he went on further, had not the right to tour the country and make propaganda in the interest of his people against the interest of the people living in South Africa.

If Mr. Morgan Evans is sure of the case he is pledged to fight to the bitter end being a strong and a just one why need he be afraid of considering it in the light in which it has never before been put? If he is afraid of being converted he must surely be a weakling

himself or his case must be a weak case. If he is afraid of the people whom he wishes to be on his side being converted his case is obviously weak. A brave warrior will always fight a clean fight and with clean weapons. That, however, cannot be said of Mr. Morgan Evans.

## RUTHLESS POLICY OF DIVIDE AND RULE

**T**HE *Natal Mercury* in an editorial on condonation, in its issue of Oct. 11, writes: "European public opinion will strongly demand that those who have no right to be here, and who have declined to ask for permission to remain, shall be energetically sought out and compelled to leave South Africa. The race problems which the Union is legitimately called upon to bear are heavy enough as it is, and friction between European and Asiatic will always tend to increase unless the proportion of the latter to the whole population remains comparatively small. It, therefore, suggests some drastic action to be taken by the Government. "The country will certainly expect it," says the paper. "Indeed the condonees themselves will have reason to ask why they should have been pressed to confess their fault if those who have remained defiant suffer no penalty."

The poison is in the last sentence whereby our contemporary seeks to bring about a split in the community and thus follow the ruthless policy of the British Government of divide and rule.

We had never expected the "Mercury" to view the condonation scheme in a generous spirit. It accuses the Government of abandoning its solemn pledge of reducing the Indian population of the Union. It has swallowed with some difficulty the bitter pill of condonation and now asks for a vigorous policy of weeding out the illicit. Well, we can have nothing against such a policy. A guilty person must be punished. To what extent he must be punished depends on the person imposing the punishment. We have read in ancient history of the uncivilised

age that people have had to suffer tortures for paltry crimes. That was the order of the day and none had anything to say against it. But we are now supposed to be living in a civilised age and we have a right to criticise, if not to complain of, the methods and the degree of punishment. While acknowledging the fact that it was a generous act on the part of the Government to condone the offence of the illicit entrants, we have never lost sight of the fact that the enactment which gave birth to the condonation scheme was in itself harsh and that the "Government" could have quite conveniently been more generous in the terms of condonation. But we were asking for guilty persons to be condoned and we had no right to dictate as to what extent mercy should be shown. We can, however, criticise it. First of all, had the crime of illicit entry been detected at the time it was committed and was dealt with then, one would have said nothing against it. But the crime was not of such a serious nature that, after a person had established himself in the country for ten, twenty or thirty years and during which time had, in some way or other, served the country, he should now be questioned and thrown out of the country bag and baggage. It may be right in the light of justice, no doubt, but justice should always be tempered with mercy, especially in the civilised age which is so much boasted of. Why, even worse crimes are ignored if not detected for a period of twenty years. There is, therefore, no getting out of the fact that the creation of condonation and the treatment of condonees have both been harsh. What would have redounded to the credit of South Africa was to have buried the past entirely and to have taken the severest steps possible for the future. But that was not to be, and the guilty have no grounds for complaint. The condonees are not so narrow-minded as to be guided by the instigation of our contemporary in wishing their own brethren an evil fate. The advocacy of a policy of weeding out does not show any magnanimity on the part of the *Natal Mercury*. It rather shows the utter selfishness and narrow-mindedness of the type of Mr. Morgan Evans. Even more condemnable is the intention behind that policy which is to reduce the Indian population. That the Union cannot absorb a small population of not more than, say, about a hundred and seventy thousand Indians is really amazing.

But it would be unfair to accuse the whole of the Union of entertaining such a belief. It is really the work of propagandists like the *Natal Mercury* and Mr. Morgan Evans who unnecessarily infuriate the unthinking masses.

We may state here that while we may criticise the policy of the Government we have nothing to complain against their taking legitimate steps to reduce the number of Indians in this country. Thus, we have nothing against the assisted emigration scheme which is a purely voluntary one and those who choose to may avail themselves of it. Nor can we have any reason to complain against any illicit entrants being deported. We do not, however, think as our contemporary does that the condonees will either demand the deportation of their brethren or complain if they are left alone.

## Housing Conditions In Durban

### Enquiry To Be Shortly Held

#### By Central Housing Board

The Union Government has now decided not to appoint the proposed Special Committee to carry out the investigation of the housing and other conditions of Indians in and around Durban, such as was contemplated by the agreement reached at the Round Table Conference.

In place of this proposal, the Secretary of Public Health has informed the Durban Town Council that arrangements have been made for the investigation in question to be made by the Central Housing Board.

It will be recalled that when the original Special Committee was proposed, the Town Council declined to appoint a representative upon it for the following reasons, which were communicated to the Union Health Department at the time by the Town Clerk: "As this Council has already carried out investigation, has provided and is arranging for additional accommodation for Indians, and as the findings of the Committee of Investigation referred to may possibly result in my Council being involved in heavy expenditure, it prefers not to be associated so closely with the Committee by having a nominated member thereon. The Council is, however, prepared to give all the assistance possible when the Committee is carrying out its investigations, and I am instructed to take steps to attend the meetings of the Committee with a watching brief over the Council's interests."

It is understood that the board will sit for at least two days in Durban to hear evidence, following which there will be an inspection of the areas covered by the inquiry. Deputations representing the Indian community will meet the board by invitation, as will representatives of the Town Council. A provisional programme only has as yet been drawn up, but it is stated that the first sitting of the board will probably be held on October 23, Sir Edward Thornton presiding.

Recently the board, when advising the Town Council that a loan of £120,000 had been allotted for expenditure over a four years' period, recommended that £50,000 of this amount be earmarked for Indian housing, and that the balance of £70,000 be utilised for providing small dwellings for the poorer European class.

## Mr. Sastri's Visit To Salisbury

### Rhodesia's Boast Of Even-Handed Justice

On Tuesday, Oct. 2, a cordial reception was given in honour of the Rt. Hon. Y. S. Sastri, P.C., at the Duthie Memorial Hall, Salisbury, at which the Premier, the Hon. H. U. Moffat, the Hon. P. D. L. Fynn, the Hon. W. M. Leggate and the Rt. Rev. E. F. Paget, Bishop of Southern Rhodesia, were present.

After the singing of the Indian welcome song Mr. J. McClery, Mayor of Salisbury, who presided, was garlanded. He welcomed Mr. Sastri on behalf of the citizens of the town. He referred in glowing terms to Mr. Sastri's work as a representative of the British Empire at the Imperial Conferences, on the League of Nations, and at the Washington Conference for the Limitation of Armaments. Much of what had transpired regarding Indian problems throughout the world and in South Africa, said Mr. McClery, was known, but he was certain that none of the incidents which had taken place in South Africa would be repeated in Rhodesia.

When a member of the Rhodesian deputation to London, proceeded the Mayor, the late Sir Charles Coghlan had declared on every occasion: "There is no colour bar in Rhodesia. All men are equal before the law, and all men have equal opportunity." "And," concluded Mr. McClery, "I have on my right Mr. Moffat, the Premier of Southern Rhodesia, with his assurance to say that this policy is maintained."

### Indian Community Has No Serious Complaints

In welcoming Mr. Sastri on behalf of the members of the British Indian Association in the Colony, Mr. Desai expressed the greatest gratitude for the services rendered by him to India, Indians and the British Empire, not the least in setting a standard which would win for Indians a place in the high regard of their fellow-citizens. Mr. Sastri, said the speaker, had not come to Rhodesia to investigate complaints, but he was sure that he would be grateful that Indians of the Colony had no serious complaints to present to him. Mr. Desai read a formal address of welcome from the Rhodesian British Indian Association, and presented it to Mr. Sastri, who, before speaking, was decorated with a garland of flowers by the Mayor.

### Mr. Sastri's Reply

Mr. Sastri expressed his thanks for the welcome and for the address. "The address," he said, "gratified me exceedingly. During the last 15 months I have travelled a good deal, but never have I heard a representative Indian saying that he had no grievances. (Laughter.) I seem to have come to a happy spot, and I must congratulate my fellow-countrymen that their lot is cast in easy places."

Mr. Sastri referred to the statement of Mr. Desai that the Indian community in their activities would remember not only their interests, but those of their own country, India, and of Southern Rhodesia as well. In course of time, he added, they would recognise that they were of this country.

"And the more, in course of time," said Mr. Sastri, "they realise that they are no more wholly of India, but citizens of Southern Rhodesia, bound not only in order but in duty to His Majesty to further the interests of this Colony, the sooner they will be able to realise their position within the British Commonwealth."

"I have hitherto dealt with the affairs of my countrymen in South Africa," proceeded Mr. Sastri. "Well, ladies and gentlemen, there is no analogy between what I have observed in my sphere of duty,

and what I hear of in this country. The address was really wonderful."

Mr. Desai, he went on, had mentioned small grievances. From this Mr. Sastri saw that there was human nature in Southern Rhodesia. (Laughter.) In all such cases he begged his fellow-countrymen to state their complaints to the authorities in a loyal and frank spirit, and not to go about murmuring and stirring up trouble and agitation. If they adopted such a frank attitude, he went on, exaggeration would be set aside, for only facts would pass muster before an official, and, in seven cases out of ten, if the complaint were couched in proper language, redress would immediately follow. In such instances, however, Mr. Sastri asked the Indian community not to ask officials for an enunciation of policy in dealing with particular instances each in one particular way.

### The English Way

"The Englishman generally," he said, "is averse to laying down general principles. He understands them only partially. He has a keen eye for injustice, and he will put right things that offend that sense of justice. But, if you ask him to lay down a general policy he will think a dozen times and then probably do nothing at all. That is how the Empire has been built up—never broad principles, but always their application in particular instances."

Mr. Sastri addressed himself to the members of the European community present. "The Mayor," he said, "has referred to the noble line of administration adopted in Southern Rhodesia. He used the words: 'Equal opportunities for all'. Well, I knew that before. The great man whose name this Province bears laid it down, and I am very happy to think that in the hands of his successors that policy has remained intact. It is not always easy. The temptations to depart from even-handed justice where many races come together are great. You are able to say that upon the whole those noble words, 'Equal rights for all civilised persons south of the Zambesi' have been maintained."

"In the Union of South Africa," said Mr. Sastri, "there are very special circumstances which seem almost to depart from these principles of equality and opportunity. You have not to travel far to come upon regions where the avowed policy of public administration is the precise opposite to this. It is, therefore, doubly noble that Southern Rhodesia should observe its high character and reputation. I do not wish to flatter Rhodesia, but I know that influences from another part are continually coming to this Colony which might interfere with this happy state of affairs. After all, to have been called to be the custodians of high principle is a very high privilege under Providence."

Proceeding, Mr. Sastri said that the high mission of the British Empire was to bring the facilities and opportunities of life more and more within the reach of those who had hitherto not enjoyed them. It had repeatedly been declared that this mission was to raise peoples and nations found at the bottom as high as their equipment and capacity permitted. In other Empires and political organisations this principle was not always born in mind. But, without having been embodied, for instance, in an Act of Parliament, the genius of the British Constitution had been such that no people who had come within its range could say, after a certain period, that they were allowed either to stagnate or to go backward. "And that," said Mr. Sastri, "is why, despite a good many quarrels and causes for deep complaint, India on the whole remains loyal to her connection with the British Commonwealth. It would take a great deal to produce in the public consciousness of India a desire to cut herself adrift from this great organisation."

This institution of political benevolence, declared Mr. Sastri, giving full opportunities for development

to other communities and making them as prosperous as they could become, was one which no Britisher could afford to forget if he would be true to the character of British institutions. "To every one of you," he added, "has come this great opportunity in this fair Dominion under responsible institutions to maintain that character of the British Commonwealth. May you never, through distraction of any kind, betray this trust."

Unfortunately, said Mr. Sastri, this view was not taken in some parts of the British Commonwealth, where the idea still persisted that the interests of the white population required that another community should be kept down, deprived of opportunities of economic welfare, denied educational facilities, or, in some way or another branded as inferior people. He believed, however, that the British Empire had advanced beyond that stage, and, if in any corner of Southern Rhodesia there were people who still thought in the old, narrow way, Mr. Sastri hoped that their number would steadily diminish.

He dealt with the position of India in the Empire, and among the nations of the world. India, said Mr. Sastri, had a population of some 300,000,000 people, but mere numbers did not carry very far. What he wished to emphasise was that India had inherited a civilisation and culture of thousands of years, far older than that of many nations now prominent in human affairs. Before its growth was arrested in the middle ages, India had been established in the front rank of civilised nations for the arts and sciences of peace. Hitherto India had been regarded as a subject race, whose people might be drawn upon wherever cheap labour was required and whose traders might be treated roughly. At Imperial Conferences and other assemblies where India was recognised, her representatives, unfortunately, did not yet receive that fullness of respect to which they were entitled. Mr. Sastri said that he made no complaint. He merely wished to bring forward the fact so that, if so inclined, his audience might revise their mental outlook on these matters. "England," he said, "has been slow, painfully slow, to reward Indians and to bestow upon India the position of a self-governing people which, for instance, you enjoy."

### India Contrasted With Rhodesia

"The youngest country, the smallest population, gets Responsible Government after a little trouble. We, because we are of another colour and our loyalty is not always believed, are kept out of the enjoyment of this political self-sufficiency, with the result that in the Councils of this Empire the smallest self-governing Dominion is heard more respectfully than India."

There was a general tendency to say: "Let us wait until India gets self-government, and then we will listen to her." "In spite of non-co-operation and other foolishness about which you read in the newspapers," said Mr. Sastri, "I beg you to remember this—that we are positive that we shall reach Dominion status within the British Commonwealth as surely as the sun rises in the East."

One little matter which Britishers forgot, proceeded Mr. Sastri, was that when they felt pride in the Empire, other people coming into it experienced similar sentiments. But, he asked, were they more likely to feel that pride if they were allowed equal facilities or if they were subjected to degradation and lack of opportunities? Little things like racial feeling, official prestige, etc., came in to prevent them from realising the common bond.

"I urge everyone of you to remember," concluded Mr. Sastri, "that your position is to qualify the British Empire in the only way in which it can be qualified—by extending its facilities, opportunities, and its occasion for pride, to all who dwell with you under the Union Jack as your fellow-subjects."

### The Premier's Greeting

The Premier, the Hon. H. U. Moffat, welcomed Mr. Sastri on behalf of the Government and the people of Rhodesia. One of the greatest of Mr. Sastri's achievements, he said, was that which he had accomplished in regard to the position of British Indians in the Union. A few years ago that position was bad and fraught with the gravest possibilities. The problem then seemed almost insoluble. Through Mr. Sastri's efforts, a good understanding had been reached, and although to-day the position was not so happy as in Rhodesia, at any rate, it had visibly improved.

Mr. Sastri's address had reminded them of their responsibilities and the policy laid down by the late Sir Charles Coghlan, of "equal justice to all."

"It has greatly influenced us in carrying out the Government and in laying down the policy of this country," said the Premier. "It is gratifying to us to hear to-night that the British Indians have no real grievances in the country, with the exception of the small differences referred to. If at any time they have grievances they should go to the officials."

"In conclusion," declared Mr. Moffat, "I should like to say that I should support the policy laid down by Sir Charles Coghlan, and of the Government, to carry on that policy enshrined in the dictum of our great founder: 'Equal rights for every civilised man.'"

Mr. S. M. Patel moved a vote of thanks to the Mayor and to Mr. Sastri. Mr. McChlery conveyed the thanks of the town of Salisbury to the Agent-General.—*Rhodesian Herald*.

### New Hindu School At Salisbury

#### Foundation Stone Laid By Mr. Sastri

An interesting function took place on Wednesday, Oct. 3, when the foundation stone of the new Hindoo Religious School and Hostel was laid by the Right Honourable V. S. S. Sastri, P.C., at Salisbury.

The proceedings were opened by the singing of a Hindoo prayer, followed by the opening speech from the President of the Hindoo Society, Mr. L. D. Vashee.

#### Presidential Address

He referred to the kindly relationship existing between the European community and the British Indians of the Colony, and the practical form that this sympathy had taken in the substantial contributions they had received. "We hope to found a school," he said, "in which the tenets of our beliefs, our religion, will be taught to the growing children, who will also be taught their mother tongue, so that in the years to come they will be able to appreciate the beauties of their own language, and the culture which exists in their mother country." He added that he hoped that as a result of the instruction they would receive they would develop an abiding sense of the duties of British citizenship with a love for the country of their adoption.

"We have long felt," he continued, "that the time was rapidly approaching when it would be eminently desirable, in the interests of our religion and scholastic training, that we should have a school of our own. It was decided that the erection of these buildings would involve an expenditure of between £5,000 and £6,000. A donation list was opened and the result was highly gratifying. The Indian community of Southern Rhodesia subscribed a sum of £4,000, and further subscriptions were received from Hindoo and European friends in Portuguese East Africa, South Africa and Rhodesia."

"Our effort has been greatly assisted by the

generosity of the Government in conferring this site upon us as a free gift."

### Laying The Stone

Mr. Sastri then performed the ceremony of laying the foundation stone and declared the stone to be well and truly laid, and expressed his pleasure at being able to assist at so interesting a function. He referred to the time when he had been a teacher, and considered, therefore, that he knew the significance of the ceremony. He added that the idea of giving religious instruction to the young would appeal to all good and pious people, and it was no wonder that, in a strange country, far from home, the Indian community should desire to bring up their children in the traditional faith.

"In a country like this," he continued, "where different races dwell together with different traditions and educational ideals, the Government is in an unenviable position. They have a delicate task to perform in adjusting the mutual claims of the different communities, and in adjusting those claims to their finances.

"Each community goes forward with its own demands, based on theoretical principles, but each should endeavour to regulate those claims and arrive at a compromise."

### Mr. Leggate's Speech

The Colonial Secretary, the Hon. W. M. Leggate, emphasised the added importance of the ceremony due to the presence and the speech of Mr. Sastri. He said that he was sure the aims and objects of the institution would strike a deep chord in the minds of the audience, irrespective of their faith.

He remarked that the ceremony was proof that the Indian community was not disintegrated, but combined.

Mr. S. M. Patel proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Sastri, and the gathering proceeded to Mr. H. N. Patel's new premises for refreshments, where Mr. Sastri thanked his host, Mr. H. N. Patel, for the hospitality he had received.

Before his departure by the South mail, Mr. Sastri paid a visit to Mr. W. M. Leggate.

### Visit To Mosque

Following the foundation-stone laying ceremony at the new school and hostel, the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri, P.C., visited the Islamic Mosque in the Kingsway, being accompanied by members of the Islamic Society and the Hindoo Society. Mr. Sastri expressed his pleasure at the efforts of the members of the Islamic Society to promote their own religious institutions in Salisbury, and hoped that the Society would flourish, and the members find solace in their mosque.

At the conclusion of the visit, Mr. M. Ebrahim, on behalf of the Islamic Society, expressed the thanks of the community to Mr. Sastri for the interest he had shown in the mosque and the endeavours of the community to foster the best traditions of their faith. He also expressed the regret all felt at the shortness of Mr. Sastri's visit to the capital of Southern Rhodesia, as the British Indian community had desired to extend a full measure of hospitality to their distinguished fellow-countryman. He, however, asked Mr. Sastri to accept the will for the deed, and added that they hoped to have the pleasure of another visit from Mr. Sastri before he returned to India.

Among those who were present at the station when Mr. Sastri and his party left were the Premier, the Hon. H. U. Moffat, Mr. W. M. Leggate, the Mayor and Mayoress and Mr. Robertson, the Acting Governor's secretary.

The Acting Governor, Sir Murry Bisset, wrote to

the secretary of the society, regretting his inability to be present at the ceremony.—*Rhodesian Herald.*

## Crematorium Opened In Maritzburg

The City Mayor Mr. D. C. Dick performed the opening ceremony of the crematorium built by the local Hindu community at the Mountain Rise Cemetery on Saturday last.

In the course of his remarks the Mayor said: "It is only recently that the European section of the population have realised the value of this method of disposing of the dead."

This method was an advance, he proceeded, and the fact was being recognised that it would become general. The origin of the custom had its beginning in very ancient times. Cremation was no new thing among the Hindus.

The disposal of the dead was a difficulty which most large towns had to meet, and crematoria had been erected in Capetown, Johannesburg, Durban and now in Maritzburg. Turning to the officials the Mayor said, in conclusion, that they had reason to be proud of their efforts in providing an up-to-date crematorium.

On behalf of the president of the Maritzburg Crematorium Committee, Mr. Ghela Dayaram and Mr. S. R. Naidoo thanked the Mayor and those present for their interest, which they accepted as an indication of their appreciation of public work.

### Early History

In reviewing the events leading up to the building of the crematorium, Mr. Naidoo said:—

"For many years cremation was carried out on the site allotted as the Lazaretto. Owing to the absence of facilities, it was done in a crude way and was open to view. To overcome this difficulty and to provide a modern structure with all possible conveniences, a meeting of various public bodies and all those interested took place early in the year 1924, when the scheme was fully discussed and approved.

"I may at once say," he continued, "that the principle that was adhered to right from the commencement was to place no restriction or limitation as regards the use of the crematorium. It is placed at the disposal of the public irrespective of race, creed or colour, with full rights to observe their religious ceremonies. It was with this view that our City Council was approached, and we here beg to record the magnanimity of the Council in granting us a site.

"The cost of building to date is £929 11s. 3d., of which £612 9s. 3d. has been collected by public donation. The appeal for donations has been met with splendid response. Prominent Europeans have encouraged us with their donations."

### Assistance Acknowledged

Mr. Naidoo acknowledged the assistance rendered by the late Mr. D. Paton, the late Colonel A. T. G. Wales, the late Mr. D. K. Soni, and by Mr. B. Bachoo the contractor, and all those who contributed towards the building.

The Mayor was garlanded and a bouquet was presented to the Mayoress at the commencement of the proceedings. After the speeches Mr. and Mrs. Dick each planted a tree to mark the event.

Among many others present were Lady Steel, Dr. and Mrs. Campbell Watt, Cr. Linscott, Cr. Harwin, Cr. A. Lloyd, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Jones, Mr. Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Stalker, Mr. Sowersby Masou, Captain Fothergill, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Killburn, Mr. C. O. Griffin, Mr. F. O. Stiebel and a representative gathering of Indians.

To meet their experience is like the stern lights of a ship, which illumine only the track it has passed.—*Claridge*

The finest qualities of nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the finest delicate handling.—*The Herald*

