

Indian Opinion

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NOTES AND NEWS

SIR Geoffrey Corbett, one of the members of the Indian Delegation, who is retiring from the Indian Civil Service, will, after his present services, be leaving for England from Cape-town and will not visit the other Provinces, Indians in Natal and in the Transvaal, therefore, will not have the pleasant opportunity of seeing Sir Geoffrey for the last time. Apart from playing a very important part in the Indian Civil Service, Sir Geoffrey Corbett's services in regard to the Indian question in South Africa have been very useful. On three important occasions we have had the good pleasure of having Sir Geoffrey Corbett in our midst, and by his sincerity of purpose he has won the hearts of all those who have had occasion to work with him, and he will, on his retirement, take back with him their good wishes. We wish Sir Geoffrey Corbett good health and a well-deserved rest.

THE Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, we understand, will pay a visit to Kimberley, Johannesburg and Durban before leaving the Union, and the rest of the members of the Delegation will sail from Durban. Preparations are already being made by the Natal Indian Congress to accord them a hearty welcome on their arrival.

A largely attended public meeting held recently under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and several other public bodies protested against the latest Bengal Ordinance. The speakers strongly condemned it and characterised it as "a negative of individual liberty which every country zealously protected." It created a state of things almost similar to those existing under the martial law. The meeting appealed to men and women of Bengal to preserve non-violence despite "the grave provocation offered to them by the Government."

A correspondent from Verulam writes:—

A meeting was held in the Shri Gopallal Hindu Temple Hall recently for the nomination of trustees and officials. After speeches had been made by Messrs. Talwantsingh, Raghavjee Ragnath, Kissoonduth Maharaj, Chundoosing and A. B. Maharaj of Cato Manor, the following were elected as trustees:—Messrs. Talwantsingh, Raghunanan, Raghavjee Ragnath, Madosingh and Doobur; President Mr. Talwantsingh, Hon. Secretary Mr. Raghavjee Ragnath, Treasurer Mr. Raghunanan. A meeting to discuss the formation of a strong working committee is to be held shortly. It is pleasing to note that Messrs. Raghunanan and Son presented to the Temple a building site valued about £155 at Mayville, and the officials of the Temple wish to thank the donor for the magnificent gift. The Temple Committee has lately acquired the property of the late Mr. E. H. Langston of Verulam, and towards payment of same the following gentlemen have kindly donated:—Messrs. Talwantsingh £50, Raghavjee Ragnath and Son £50, Doobur £50, Madhosingh £50, Kissoonduth Maharaj £5.

THE CONFERENCE

THE one thing engaging the minds of the people is the Round Table Conference and what the result of it is going to be. People are anxious to know what the Conference has so far done and how it is progressing. These lines are being penned on Sunday night, the 24th instant, and it is not possible yet to say anything about the work of the Conference. It might be stated that the Conference has not yet begun its real work and that has, unfortunately, been due to the illness of Sir Fazli-Hussain, the leader of the Indian delegation. It is, however, pleasing to note that Sir Fazli-Hussain will be free from the hospital to-morrow (Monday) and that he will be able to attend the Conference. It is hoped, therefore, that the Conference will set to work in right earnest during the coming week and probably reach a finality before the end of it.

In the meantime the Congress delegates are utilising all their time in putting their case before the Indian delegation in no uncertain terms, and it must be acknowledged with profound appreciation that the members of the Indian delegation who, with the exception of Sir D'Arcy Lindsay, are by no means enjoying good health, are very generous in affording every opportunity to the Congress delegates to be in close touch with them.

We have already stated in clear terms, and we would repeat that, what the Indian community desires is a settlement of the burning question, once and for all, in explicit terms, and not an agreement with sweet words and platitudes which will be nice to read on paper but will never be put into effect, as has been done in regard to some of the clauses in the present Agreement.

It will not be long before the community knows its fate.

United Hindu Association

Reception To Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Mrs. Naidu's Eloquent Speech

On Saturday night, January 16, the Capetown United Hindu Association held a reception in honour of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, one of the delegates to the Indo-Union Round Table Conference. The reception was well attended. An address of welcome was presented to Mrs. Naidu and there were many speeches paying tribute to her work on behalf of the Indian community.

Mrs. Naidu, on rising to reply, was greeted with a sustained burst of applause. In the course of her speech she said:—

"I have been sitting here and listening to such nice things being said about myself that when I go home to-night I am going to look in the mirror and see if I am really as nice as all of you think I am. I have had many charges made against me. There are so many poets in the world that it is a dreadful thing to add to the burden and to have a reverend gentleman like Mr. Andrews also indulging in poetry. He says that he has forgotten what he wrote but I have a vivid memory. He told me to wipe the tears from my eyes. He wrote: 'Lady thou hast known sorrow' but he did not know why I knew so much sorrow. Perhaps he may have been prophetic. However, I do not want to be responsible for creating any more in this world.

"All of you have exaggerated the qualities in some of us because they are the virtues that you like best. Believe me, whether it be I or the hundreds of thousands in India like me, our virtues are magnified by distance and through your affection and love, but taking all in all, the greatest of us including that great leader that led you to your first victory, are no more than little mites of dust compared to the great cause for which they struggle. It is not only in India but here also that all of you who stand for the cause do not realise that it does not matter how great the suffering may be for everyone of you, man, woman and child, if your suffering results in the vindication of some great principle.

"In the address read to me you referred to the essential qualities of the Hindu faith. You said that it was based on truth. That is not a monopoly of the Hindu faith. It is the common basis of all human religions; and the thing which binds men together, men of all races and creeds in that common struggle for indivisible truth. And you who are members of the United Hindu Association are doing in your way what others are doing in their way to prove that the basis of all Dharma and religions is just this truth which reads, justice, consideration and love of sacrifice.

"You speak of yourselves as poor and helpless. But no man is helpless who believes in the truth. No woman is weak who has courage and devotion because it is not by your wealth, not by your birth, not by your education, not by your status in life that the real measure is taken of human worth and virtue, but in your sincerity, in your unselfishness, in your courage and the reality of your sacrifice. All these qualities have no race and no country. They are the common heritage of all humanity. But if you and I of the Hindu faith have one thing to prove to the world more than another, it is that we cannot isolate ourselves from the common love of humanity. It is not in division but in unity, it is not in separation but in harmonious co-operation,

that we can best fulfil the traditions of our faith and culture.

"I know that you who have come here to better yourselves and your prospects and to earn your livelihood do not represent what is called the wealth or aristocracy of India. It may be that Mr. Sastri may be of pure Brahmin descent and of thousands of years of culture. That may not be the position of some of us. We may be humbler in our birth, more limited in our attainments. But what does it matter? In the end is it not character that is going to be the measure of your worth? Is it not character and the force of character, that will establish for Indians an honoured place in the Commonwealth of South Africa? So do not feel that you have to look for help outside yourselves.

"We are here in your service to-day, but all our service can be of no avail unless you have strength within yourselves, and unity within yourselves, to make your own redemption in the midst of the greatest difficulties.

"If any of us have a message for you, for all of you and not for Hindus only, but for all Indians and the friends of Indians in South Africa, it is a message of united work. We are here in this delegation with a Mussulman as leader and with Hindu and Christian delegates. But we do not stop to think who is a Mussulman, who is a Hindu and who is a European. We are here to identify ourselves with all, Hindu, Parsee, Mussulman and Christian. There is no division of interest and there is no preference in our mind for one section or another, for the colonial or the home-born, rich or poor, Durbanites, the people of Johannesburg or the people of Capetown. They are all equal to us, all are equally distressed. If all of you think a little less of the things that separate you and will realise that you all are the Indian section of the South African people and that in fulfilling your duty to yourselves you are fulfilling your duty to South Africa, and in serving South Africa, truly you are paying back to yourselves something of more than mere value and you will have gone a long way towards solving your difficulties.

"You are thinking of the distress of 200,000 people here but when you compare it with the distress of 330,000,000 in India, does it not pale into insignificance. They are struggling to overcome troubles and difficulties, unparalleled difficulties, with faith and endurance. It is possible for you to overcome your comparatively minor difficulties with the same courage, faith and endurance.

"Mr. Christopher and others have said something about my representing the womanhood of India. Don't you feel proud of your sisters, for it was really an Indian woman in South Africa who first directed Mahatma Gandhi into his great reverence for the womanhood of the world? Don't you feel proud that it was the courage of the Indian women that brought back to the mind of the Mahatma the old story of those days when women were the chief source of inspiration of those poets who created the myths of India? What are these myths? They enshrine the qualities of faith, sacrifice, courage, wisdom and love. What did they do? They took the loveliest virtues of that time embodied in womanhood and manhood and made them immortal in song, legend and story. They could not create out of nothing. When they wrote of these Indian women it was because they had these qualities that inspired the poets and they were able to write of them and make them immortal in the world.

"All of you, women, without education, may be not understanding any language properly, not able to read and write with great ease; but what does it matter. You have in you the same qualities to-day which inspired the writers of the great classics long ago. You have done more than inspired the poets,

you have created a Mahatma. Believe me, the struggle for Indian liberty is more the struggle of Indian women than that of Indian men. I speak as an Indian woman and I speak as one who follows the Mahatma. He has said, 'Look at the women of South Africa; they will inspire us and sustain us in the great struggle.' Therefore, having so great a privilege and so great a reputation, it is your duty to make the women your friends and helpers. They will give you courage, faith, hope and strength. These are there in your midst, in the humble women of the Indian people of South Africa.

"That is my message to you, my message to the Indian section of the South African nation. Take the women hand in hand, comrades on the path of progress. Let them be to-day, as in the times of stress and struggle, the torch bearers, the beacon and the banner of your achievement of liberty, and in getting equity and opportunity for Indians as an integral part of the South African nation."

The Indo-Union Conference

(BY O. F. ANDREWS)

It is extremely difficult to write anything at all for the public press about the Conference at this present stage, because everything is still very uncertain and whatever has been discussed is confidential. Therefore, it is necessary again to deal rather with the outside news than with speculative conjecture as to what will be the outcome of the discussions.

What has become quite clear is that the Conference is likely to go on for a longer period than was at first anticipated, and each day's discussion gives rise to questions, which can only be solved by the delegates meeting and discussing them apart. Thus the time has become lengthened out by the very necessity of the case.

From the Indian point of view, this has been a benefit, because it has enabled Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, the Head of the Indian Delegation, to recover his strength before the most critical period in the Conference, which will begin next Monday. What then happens will take place after this letter has been posted to Phoenix and therefore nothing can be said about it in this number.

May I, in this brief article, explain that at the last moment it was urgently necessary for me to wait a fortnight longer; and therefore the news, which I had already sent to *INDIAN OPINION*, about arriving in Durban in time to catch the *s.s. Kenya*, was premature. But now it has been decided that, whatever happens, I must return to India by *s.s. Karagola*, and my passage is already taken. It is my hope that I may be able to spend Friday evening and Saturday, Jan. 30th in Kimberley and Sunday, January 31st, in Johannesburg. After that I shall try to stay for one day in Maritzburg on my way to Durban. My last Sunday, Feb. 7th, and one or two days besides, will, if possible, be spent in Durban and Phoenix. Then, at last, I shall get on board at midnight, on Sunday, and sail on the following morning, February 8th.

The Capetown Round Table Conference

Mr. S. A. Waiz, Secretary of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association (Bombay), writes as follows in the *Indian Social Reformer* dated Dec. 26 :—

Among other important questions to be discussed at the forthcoming Indo-South African Conference to be held at Capetown on January, 1932, will be the future policy of the Government of the Union of South Africa towards the Indian population domiciled in that Dominion; the upliftment of the Indian community undertaken by South Africa under the 1927 Agreement and the Transvaal Asiatic Tenure Amendment Bill. In view of the forthcoming Conference further passage of this Bill through the Union Assembly was postponed. The two features of the 1927 Agreement were the assisted emigration scheme and the "Upliftment" clause. The members of the Habibullah Delegation who negotiated the Capetown Agreement of 1927 consented to the assisted emigration scheme because, under the existing circumstances, it was not possible to get more favourable terms for the Indians in South Africa. It was the foresight of a statesman to have included in the Agreement its revision after five years. So far the policy of South Africa has been to reduce its Indian population by every means. From 1895 to 1913 there was compulsory repatriation; from 1914 to 1926 voluntary repatriation and then the assisted emigration scheme of 1927. More than 50,000 Indians had been repatriated from 1895 to 1926 and about 8,000 since the Capetown Agreement of 1927. Under the 1927 scheme every Indian who relinquishes his South African citizen's rights, receives £20 and a free passage to India. The unfortunate and ignorant Indian easily falls victim to this inducement, returns to India and finds himself at sea. To aggregate the situation, underhand and unfair methods are adopted to entrap the unwary Indians. Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, presiding at a recent mass meeting of Indians in Durban, said that they had reports from all parts of Natal that agents of the Commissioner for Asiatic Affairs took advantage of unemployment of Indians in South Africa and spread false rumours which had increased the number of Indians returning to India. The intention of the Indian delegates in 1927 in signing the repatriation scheme was to help the floating Indian population to return to India if they wished, but it has been made a tool to turn out thousands of Indians, who, in the words of Mr. Rustomjee, "by the sweat of their brow had improved South Africa." "It has been the means of deporting," he said, "thousands of South African born children, who, through the folly of their parents, are transplanted into a country where conditions are dissimilar to those in this country. It is inhuman to expect these children to accommodate themselves to strange conditions." The South African Government, on the other hand, are of opinion that not as many Indians have availed themselves of the scheme as they had expected. The Indian population in South Africa is about 170,000. So considering either from the Indian or South African Government's point of view, the repatriation scheme of 1927 has failed. The Indian Delegation at the forthcoming Conference has a very delicate task before them: If there is going to be an abiding settlement between the two countries, South Africa must abandon its policy of getting rid of its Indian population and stand by its upliftment policy of 1927 and devise means to assimilate all sections of its population.

The Indian Delegation to the Conference is led by Sir Fazl-i-Hussain and consists of the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Sir Geoffrey Corbett, Sir D'Arcy Lindsay and Mr. G. S. Bajpai.

All of them are *au fait* with Indian affairs in South Africa and so the Indian interests are in the safest hands. India has complete confidence in the personnel of this delegation. Mr. C. F. Andrews, the infatigable champion of the cause of Indians abroad, is already in South Africa and can be relied upon for rendering, as in the past, valuable services to the Indian Delegation. Mr. Andrews recently expressed his views to the effect that owing to the great desire of the South African Government to establish all-round friendly relations with the neighbouring countries, he regarded the prospect before the Indo-South African Conference as hopeful. The recent talks in London between Mahatma Gandhi and General Smuts are reassuring and will greatly smooth the way to a satisfactory solution of a very difficult problem. Sir Fazli-Hussein, prior to his sailing to South Africa, said "the cause of Indians overseas is the cause of right principles being maintained in the civilised world and it is up to the enlightened press to do all that they can to inculcate right principles in the papers so as to carry conviction to the civilised world." The "Upliftment" clause of the 1927 Agreement is based upon the principle to which Sir Fazli-Hussein refers. It says, "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....." When the two Governments agree to the underlying principle of their conference, a permanent settlement is not only probable but possible.

The Transvaal Asiatic Tenure Amendment Bill threatens 80 per cent. of the Indian population of the city of Johannesburg. If the Bill is not dropped, thirty-six wholesale merchants and about 800 retail general dealers with an aggregate capital of £300,000 and £320,000 respectively will be driven out.

The question of enfranchising Indians in South Africa will probably be discussed at the Conference. Indians have no vote throughout the Union except the Cape Province. It is inhuman and high-handedness to first deprive them of the vote, to render them voiceless and then legislate to turn them out of the country. Further, our countrymen are not permitted to travel freely from one Province to another. These and many other disabilities based on racial discrimination are imposed upon Indians and it is earnestly hoped that the forthcoming Conference will remove this racial stigma on Indians once and for all. The South African-born Indians who have already surrendered their domicile rights by lack of foresight on the part of their parents or guardians, deserve special consideration. There are many pathetic cases of innocent children having been torn away from their natural surroundings in South Africa and brought to India where it is almost impossible to rehabilitate them. They have every right to return to South Africa even if they have overstayed out of South Africa the statutory period of three years.

The entire country stands behind its nationals in South Africa. It will see that no more harm is done to them. In reply to a representation made in 1930 Sir Fazli-Hussein said, "You have referred to the pride felt by the Indian community in the Transvaal in their racial origin and in the civilisation of their ancestors which is several centuries old. This feeling is natural and I can assure you that I yield to no one in the anxiety that no harm will come to India's national self-respect or racial pride..." Lord Willingdon has also expressed his Government's alarm at the trend of events in South Africa. The Imperial Indian Citizenship Association has made it clear that India cannot agree to further reduction of the Indian population by any scheme. No agreement will, therefore, be acceptable to India

which does not undertake the upliftment of the entire Indian community in South Africa and regard it as a permanent section of the South African population.

Some New Impressions Of South Africa

(By C. F. ANDREWS)

Coming back to South Africa after eight months' absence, I find an immense change in the economic situation which now absorbs everyone's attention. At the present time the Hertzog Government is running great risks of losing its majority owing to its persistence in keeping on the gold standard. Everyone is feeling that the country is suffering, and it is natural to put this down to the English exchange having been altered while South Africa is one of the few countries to remain on the gold standard.

Another matter which strikes me at once on coming back is the psychological depression which seems to have grown along with the economic trouble. On previous occasions when I have been here there has always been a great deal of talk about South Africa as the coming country, and about South Africans standing on their own feet as independent and self-supporting. This talk still goes on, now and then, but it is nothing like so common as it was before, and it gets no popular support as it used to do.

A third factor which is now becoming almost paramount is the growing predominance of the Dutch in every respect. Afrikaans is now really making headway, not perhaps so much in literature as in common usage. One hears it spoken in Capetown much more frequently than before. If the numbers were counted there can hardly be a doubt that all the increase in population is on the Dutch side rather than on the English. One sign of this growing Dutch influence is the depressed state of mind which is now prevalent among the British themselves. They constantly say quite frankly; "This is no country for us." Many times over I have heard this remark, and on the present visit I have heard it more emphatically than ever before.

If the Indian population is to make its way in the midst of these difficulties, it seems to me obvious that it must take into serious consideration the learning of the Dutch language wherever that is possible. Again, India herself must appeal to South Africa as a country of trade and commerce, with which important dealings may be conducted. South Africa clearly does not want to be tied by trade and commerce to Great Britain. She is looking for new markets. A golden opportunity is thus offered for India, which is South Africa's next-door neighbour on the East to come into the picture as a friendly neighbour, and a friendly market for South African produce. To develop this side of friendly economic relations would be of far greater value to India in establishing her own rights for her domiciled settlers in South Africa than any amount of deputations. Since Natal is the chief province to feel the impact of Indian settlement and the pressure of the Indian population, it is all to the good that Natal also faces India with its coast lines on the Eastern side of Africa, and its chief port of Durban the nearest South African port to the Indian market. Here, surely, is a golden opportunity for a Trades Commissioner of the right type to be established in Durban and develop mutual trade between India and South Africa. If such a Trades Commissioner were appointed by the Indian Government it is quite certain that the

South African Government would respond to this by appointing their own permanent Trades Commissioner in Bombay.

No one can afford to offend a good customer, and it would be impossible for Natal to be eagerly looking for markets in India and at the same time treating Indians badly in Natal itself. This seems to me so obvious now, that I wonder it escaped my notice for so long; but since I have clearly seen it and also brought this subject forward in the public press, I have been surprised to find what an immediate welcome my articles received by all South African papers, including Afrikaans papers such as *Die Burger*. I have also found that the subject has not been forgotten. For instance, the *Cape Times*, in referring to the coming Conference in Capetown in January, drew attention to my articles which were written nearly ten months ago, and stated that it was on these economic and commercial lines that the Indian question itself could probably best be settled.

Professor Karve Returns To India

Prof. D. K. Karve, founder of the Women's University in Poona, has sent us the following letter from Johannesburg :—

Sir,—On the eve of my departure from South Africa, I would like, through the columns of your paper, to express my feelings of gratitude to all who have been helpful to me in one way or another, during my stay in this country.

In the first place, I tender my hearty thanks to you for conveying to your readers, who are spread all over South Africa, information about me and my cause by publishing reports of my lectures and taking extracts from other papers referring to my work.

Next, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee for the liberal donation of £100 from the Rustomjee Charity Trust, and also to the ladies of the Surat Hindu Mahila Mandal, who went from house to house and collected from the women of Durban £25 for the University which they handed over to me at a reception organised by the Mahila Mandal.

I have also to convey my thanks to the gentlemen who arranged meetings for me in different places and who went round with me to collect subscriptions. I thank all the contributors who have given their mite towards the funds of the Women's University.

And last, but not least, I thank all my hosts who kindly put me up and extended their hospitality to me and looked to my personal comforts and convenience.

The list of all the contributors will be too lengthy to give. I therefore give the amounts collected at different places :—

Durban : £216 15s., Tongaat : £5 6s., Kimberley : £9, Capetown : £56 2s. 6d., Port Elizabeth : £53 1s. 6d., Verulam : £9 15s., Ladysmith : £3 1s., De Aar : £2 8s. 6d., Uitenhage : £33 3s., East London : £19 7s. 9d.—Total—£408—4—9.

The work in Johannesburg is not yet completed. It will certainly top the list. Twenty people have become life-members of the General Electorate of the University by contributing Rs. 100 each. Committees are appointed to carry on the work and the collection may reach the total of all the places in South Africa.

I am quite pleased with the response I have got

especially when the times are so hard. If anyone of your readers wishes to contribute anything, it may be sent direct to the Registrar, Indian Women's University, Poona 4, India.

Which Path?

(By L. W. RITCH)

Following the arrival in the Union of the Delegation to the Round Table Conference, there have been the usual receptions, meetings and speeches. Noting carefully the tone and tenor of the latter, the writer has observed that the dominant note sounded by the various speakers has invariably been what may not inaptly be summed up in the words "Self-help."

Let us frankly recognise that the counsel those words express is good counsel. For, while there is one stage in life whereat wet-nursing is necessary and another at which dry-nursing is permissible, the time inevitably arrives when growth and further progress depend upon the exercise by the individual of his own efforts towards self-preservation.

The community, be it said to their honour and credit, have, in the past, proved that they neither wholly lacked self-reliance nor the capacity to suffer and endure in the cause of righteousness.

More recently, however, and perhaps excusably, they have been prone to rely upon what the Scots term "adventitious aids," i.e. help from without, and to lean somewhat heavily upon the respective Agents-General of the Government of India, depending upon those gentlemen to perform what from the very nature of the case they could not possibly accomplish.

Self-preservation and growth are not matters to be performed vicariously. There is a profound truth underlying the "Gita" statement "From food, creatures become. Food comes from rain, and rain from sacrifice." Not less true is it, that "Within yourselves deliverance must be sought. Each one his own prison makes" (L. of Asia.)

Freedom has never yet been other than *gained*. It has to be *earned* to be *deserved*; to be *won*.

In jungle-life, where survival depends upon brute-strength and cunning, the passport to survival is brute-strength and cunning; the weaker, lacking such qualities, perish. In the competitive struggle in which we humans engage sentiment must not, we are told, be allowed to interfere with "business." It is jungle-war translated on to the human field. Might is still regarded as Right. Just as in the jungle the tiger is not restrained from the destruction of his prey by considerations of pity, mercy or compassion, so in the war of competition which we humans have followed as our way of living, sentiment has logically no place. I must beat my competitor or be beaten by him. If I fail to be a winner, I become a loser. In war, all is regarded as being fair. And, they who subscribe to the legitimacy of war must not squeal because their opponents take full and entirely selfish advantage of their opportunities.

For, war knows no Ethics. War is a selfish conflict of wills, the very antithesis, the very negation of brotherliness, of love, of sacrificial service, of unity, of harmony. The principles and methods of war, applied, as they are, to our politics, to our system of production and distribution, to our scramble for wealth, compel the exclusion of the noble in favour of the ignoble; elevate the gross and material at the expense of the fine and spiritual.

In such a conflict, the poor and lowly if they be also meek, can have no chance. Their cause, if

contested on such lines is as certain of defeat as would be that of an unarmed mob opposed to a trained and well-equipped army. The meek may be destined to inherit the earth, but not along this path.

In this jungle conflict the spoils are to the victors, and the defeated who have engaged in it in the hope of themselves being spoils and not the despoiled, must accept their defeat philosophically. With such heavy odds against them from the start they would perhaps have been better advised to have sought for satisfaction along an entirely different path. Birds of prey in possession are not likely to be persuaded to share their spoils with other and weaker birds of prey however eloquently the latter may plead. "What we have we hold," will be their answer. But while a would-be competitor in the keen struggle for wealth may be carefully watched by the man in possession and in spite of all his pleading, denied all opportunity of becoming a dangerous rival, the holy man who in the name of justice, of mercy, of righteousness, of what touches the chords of the Higher Self in mankind may by an appeal that is selfless finally move the worldly to sacrifice and renunciation.

Mrs. Naidu has reminded us that the mission of the Indian here in South Africa is to leaven the civilisation of South Africa with the truths and beauties of Indian culture, not to adopt the uglinesses the country has not yet out-grown; not to "get into the game" so as to beat the man in possession at it; not to follow the idol-worship that prevails around, but to demonstrate the superiority of worship of the True God, to show as Gandhiji is showing in India that Faith can conquer a whole world's unbelief, that Spirit is more powerful than the flesh of all mankind.

Mahatma Gandhi In London

(BY C. F. ANDREWS)

A small but agile figure—so small in stature as to be hardly visible in a crowd—quietly stepped from the gangway in the midst of the pouring rain on Folkestone Pier in the middle of September 1931, and was welcomed by those who had waited long to meet him. His name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. In weight he is scarcely more than ninety pounds avoirdupois and in appearance he is the frailest of men, but he has an amazing physical strength and endurance, and he has been given by three hundred and fifty million people of his own country the title of Mahatma, which means Great Soul, or Great Spirit. In that tiny frame there is an iron will and a pure conscience, which bows only to what he believes to be the Will of God.

He was seen when he landed in England to be clad in a homespun village dress such as the very poorest peasants wear in his own country. He had declared before the whole world that his vow of absolute poverty, taken nearly thirty years ago, would bind him even in Kings' palaces. The poor people of Great Britain deeply honoured and respected this decision. Invitations poured upon him to speak in every city from the day of his landing onwards.

In the same spirit he had asked to be allowed to live among the poor in London, rather than in the West End. His wish was respected and at Kingsley Hall Settlement, in the East End of London, his wish was fulfilled. He never left this quarter for a single night during the whole of the Round Table Conference while he was present in London no matter how late he was obliged to return. When he went to Lancashire also he lived among the

poor, and the fact that he did so and pleaded for his own poor people in India won the hearts of the Lancashire folk. Probably the greatest success of all his stay in England was this Lancashire visit.

It may be well to describe his life in London as I saw it, lived and shared it with him. He kept intact every one of his daily habits in spite of the rigour of the climate of England in winter. However late Committee work might have to be carried on at night in the neighbourhood of St. James's Palace he would get back to the East End of London and would rise without fail between three and four o'clock for his early morning prayer. These were never omitted in any circumstance whatever. In India I have often joined him at his time of prayer under the brilliant night sky, with the morning star just rising above the horizon. In silence, the work of the coming day is entirely dedicated to God's service. A portion of the Gita is read, or rather chanted. A devotional hymn is sung by all those who are present. Then there is a long silence and meditation and each worshipper quietly departs to his own work for the coming day.

Soon after this morning prayer Gandhi's immense mass of dictated correspondence is taken in hand. Two secretaries are always with him at this arduous work. He is punctilious to the last degree in answering his letters. As a 'business' man he is unrivalled in India in always keeping his appointments to the very minute. He is a man of his word in these matters of punctuality and hates dilatory behaviour.

At nine o'clock each morning he breaks off from work to take (after his bath) a very frugal meal of goat's milk and fruit. In the middle of the day he usually snatches an hour of sleep, and thereafter he deftly spins with his own hands his cotton yarn. Not even in England will he give up this habit, which has become an integral portion of his own life. His evening meal consisting once more of fruit and goat's milk, is taken about five o'clock. A walk follows. Then at seven o'clock his evening prayers are said. From that time onward he tries as far as possible to keep quiet till he retires to rest between nine and ten o'clock.

For one whole day in the week,—however pressing public business may be,—he keeps uninterrupted silence for the whole twenty-four hours. Even in the middle of an excited session of the National Congress, while the political world of India is altogether absorbed in discussing momentous issues, Gandhi keeps his day of silence undisturbed. He is a man of method, holding himself fast by rules as rigid as strong bars of steel no power on earth can move. It is this extraordinary strength of his moral will within his tiny frame that makes his followers both revere and love him.

Yet when all that I have written has been fully recognised we are only at the beginning of understanding the remarkable personality of Gandhi. For there is within him the heart and humour of a whimsical child which is always making itself felt in some new and unexpected way. No one enjoys a joke against himself more than he does and with little children he can be brimming over with uproarious fun. Babies come to him instinctively, and he is never so happy as when he is marching along his daily walk with children all around him. Then his iron nature becomes relaxed. He is just as excited as they are, flinging all his cares to the wind. It is at such times as I have watched him again and again that that analogy of St. Francis of Assisi has instinctively risen in my mind and I have seen him as one of those

happy "troubadours of God," who has taken Poverty as his Bride. The man whose slightest wish can sway millions of his fellow countrymen, is laughing and joking as if he had not a single care in the world. Sometimes the transformation is so sudden that it puzzles those who are with him holding him in veneration. His sense of humour makes him groan beneath the worship paid to him, which he abhors. He has vainly tried to throw off even the title "Mahatma" but therein his own countrymen have refused to surrender their own right of giving their unanimously chosen title. Only in his own Ashram has he had power to forbid it. There he is known by young and old alike as "Bapu" which means Daddy.

If it be asked concerning his own religious experience on what special form of religious exercise he places his trust, there is one thing I know for certain. When he had to struggle against evil thoughts he tried to subdue them at first by fasting and the exercise of his own will. He told me how he had found these, however necessary, insufficient. It was only when he discovered his utter helplessness and threw himself entirely upon God for help that success suddenly came. 'God,' he has often said, "is the Helper of the helpless."

On one special point it is necessary to make Mr. Gandhi's position clear; for it has been grievously misunderstood by earnest and good people. The newspapers reported in April 1931 that he had stated in public that as soon as ever India gained self-government he would ask all Christian missionaries to withdraw from India under Indian Rule. This entirely wrong report has caused great distress and confusion in the minds of those who were among Mr. Gandhi's strongest supporters and upholders.

What he really declared was that he was entirely opposed to any proselytising on the part of Christian missionaries who adopted unfair methods such as compulsory Bible teaching in Christian Colleges and Schools, or again compulsory religious instruction in Christianity whenever they attended the hospitals. It may easily be seen in this way that Mr. Gandhi is in no sense hostile to Christianity itself, but against false modes of propaganda which Christ Himself would never allow. Among the fundamental rights which he himself proposed for the new Indian Constitution at the full Session of the National Congress at Karachi in March 1931 he had himself set in the forefront two principles which were to be observed by statute with regard to religion (a) the State shall observe complete religious neutrality in all matters affecting the people of India (b) the State shall grant complete religious freedom to all religions in India which shall keep within the bonds of public morality.

It would clearly be impossible for Mr. Gandhi at one and the same time to propose fundamental rights like these in the new Constitution and at the same time determine to drive out those who were engaged in Christian Mission work in India. Mr. Gandhi has himself again and again repudiated the words he was reported to have said, but still there is such hostility to him abroad that people continue to repeat against him this misinformation.

Now that the London Conference is over and Mahatma Gandhi has gone back to India only to be imprisoned once more for Civil Disobedience, it may be well to consider what was the effect of his visit as a whole upon the British people.

Here it is necessary to distinguish between the poor people who looked to him wherever he went in great numbers and showed their admiration for

him in every possible way, and, on the other hand, the interested people at the head of affairs who wished to use him for their own ends and were unable to break down his defence. The latter had nothing but hard words to say against him when he left England and there was evidently the greatest possible disappointment that he had not complied with the wishes of the British Statesmen. Before his coming it had always appeared to be possible to move Indians, who came to England, towards a compromise of one kind or another. Therefore the difficulty of moving Mahatma Gandhi was felt all the more keenly. In the end, from the newspapers it would appear as though his visit had been a failure; but when the judgment of those who reported him in America and also in European countries is taken into account, an entirely different picture is given. There, on every side, his visit has been regarded as a remarkable success owing to the firmness with which he has withstood the pressure of the forces in Great Britain that were brought to bear against him.

If the inquiry is made as to the exact point where negotiations completely broke down, it will be seen to be rather on the subject of Financial Control than on the subject of the Army or Defence. When I was asking Mr. Gandhi some years ago what was his idea of Indian Swaraj, he answered immediately without a moment's hesitation, "Financial Control." It was on this point that he found the British Statesmen adamant. On the other hand, he himself could not give way. For, on this one subject, he believed emphatically that the welfare of the poorest villagers in India depended. He was certain that their interests were being sacrificed, owing to the high rate of the rupee, to the British Financiers who had their vested interests in India and did not wish the value of the rupee to fall. I saw him come back from one meeting with the Secretary of State for India, when certain financial experts had been called in, dejected and despondent, feeling that his whole mission to Great Britain had been in vain.

Here then the crucial difference came and it was on this point more than any other that the Congress and the Government of India were unable any longer to remain in truce with one another so as to continue the Irwin-Gandhi Agreement of March, 1931. This Agreement was ended when Lord Willingdon refused to see Mahatma Gandhi except on humiliating terms. Since that date both he himself and his wife have been put in prison along with most of the Congress leaders.

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The Women Of India

(BY C. F. ANDREWS)

It is well to recall, at this time of crisis, when the national struggle in India has begun all over again and civil resistance has been renewed, the wonderful courage and endurance of the women of India, which sustained the last struggle at a time when the national leaders were imprisoned. At that time, the women of Gujarat led the whole of India forward along new and untried paths of suffering and the women of every province of India responded.

I have collected some of the noblest utterances of these Indian women and am publishing two of these in the hope that they may inspire the women of India, now in South Africa, to carry on the struggle which has to be won by the same pathway of suffering whether in India or in South Africa itself. I trust they will inspire those who read them either in this English version or in Gujarati.

The following is an extract from a letter from the women of Gujarat addressed to the Viceroy on the eve of Mahatma Gandhi's march :—

"We, the undersigned women of Gujarat have come to the conclusion that we may not keep aloof from the great national upheaval that is taking place. We are in full sympathy with the civil disobedience campaign in respect of the Salt Tax. Our sisters in the villages have already begun the manufacture of contraband salt.

"But we feel that we must, as women, find an additional and special field for our activity. We feel the force of Mahatma Gandhi's argument that we are better fitted for dealing with the question of the prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs and boycott of foreign cloth. Drink has desolated many a home and foreign cloth has deprived millions of India's women of their employment during leisure hours which amount in the aggregate to no less than four months in the year.

"These two are, therefore, questions which concern the women more than the men. And, in so far as they can be dealt with by picketing, i.e., an appeal to the hearts of those who traffic in these things, and those who are lured to the drink and the drug or the foreign cloth shops, we feel that we can make a more successful effort than men. And women doing the work must automatically ensure the peaceful nature of the work."

This was the first appeal of the passive resisting women to the Viceroy. It did not have the effect of making the Viceroy pause or agree to see Mahatma Gandhi. For this reason, the struggle had to go on to the bitter end. When the leaders among the Indian men had been put in prison then the women sent forth a new appeal.

The following was the wording of this new 'Appeal to Women' issued by Desh Sevika Sangha (Society for the Service of the Country) :—

"We appeal to all our sisters to come to the aid of the Motherland in this her hour of supreme need. There is none so poor, but she can do some service, however humble she may be or however small the service. This struggle of ours is not a fight. It is a prayer offered by Mahatma Gandhi and our India for all humanity. In no age of the history of our earth; in

no national struggle of any people, has so vast a track been opened out, wherein women may march in their millions to vindicate the sacred rights of freedom side by side with men. Hitherto all struggles of the peoples of the earth have been so moulded that the women have only agonised over the death or destruction of their fathers and husbands, sons and brothers, far from the plains of slaughter. Mahatma Gandhi, with the help of our ancient land, is creating new values for all mankind.

"Let the women of all countries, and above all, our sisters in India, realise that this one act of a 'mind that scales the steep of air' has liberated all womankind for equal service to humanity side by side with men.

"In this non-violent struggle of ours for our country's freedom, this Satyagraha, wherein sacrifice and self-effacement are the only weapons, let women, and especially the women of India, show their age-long tuition in these virtues. Let our India rise above the horizon of the world, not clad in mailed armour, but wrapped in the soft folds of the sari with her burning love for humanity, her only shield."

I know for certain that these two remarkable appeals had great effect in England upon the hearts of those who read them. I hope they may also carry weight in this country.

ઇન્ડરનેશનલ પ્રીટીંગ પ્રેસ તરફથી છપાઇ પ્રસિદ્ધ થએલાં પુસ્તકો.

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