

Indian Opinion

No. 50—Vol. XXX. Friday, December 16th, 1932

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.
PRICE FOURPENCE.

INDIAN PRESS ON TRANSVAAL SITUATION

THE *Hindu* (Madras) writes:—According to our South African correspondent, the Executive of the South African Indian Congress has decided not to have anything to do with the Commission on the Land Tenure Act. This course, it is obvious, must necessarily embarrass the Agent who will lead evidence before the Commission on behalf of the Indian community. The reason for non-co-operation, it is said, is that the law is opposed to the interests of Indians and directly violates that part of the Capetown Agreement which refers to the obligation on the part of the Union Government to look upon and treat Indians as members of the permanent population, entitled to the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by the whites. The Indian community apparently feel that by co-operating with the Feetham Commission they would be jeopardising the interests of Indians of this and coming generations. This decision, we take it, however, does not mean that passive resistance to the Act would be begun straightaway. It will be recollected that the Congress Executive have, ever since the special Johannesburg session, been saying that the campaign would not be started till after the report of the Commission is published, and there is nothing in the present decision which is inconsistent with that undertaking. It must, however, be said that not much good is expected from the work of the Commission. The terms of reference to that Commission are, according to information received by the current mail:

(1) to examine each individual case of occupation of proclaimed land by coloured persons in the Transvaal, and to compile a register of—(i) those individuals who are in legal occupation; (ii) those individuals who are in illegal occupation; (2) in the case of coloured persons under (1) (ii), to make proposals as to the exercise by the Minister of the Interior of the power entrusted to him under section one hundred and thirty-one A. of the Precious and Base Metals Act. No. 35 of 1908, the considerations governing the proposals put forward by the commission to be—(a) the character of the occupant, and, in the case of occupation for trade purposes, the nature of the trade carried on; (b) the period during which illegal occupation has continued; (c) the character of the areas occupied, i.e., whether such areas are already largely occupied by coloured persons or are predominantly European; (d) the wishes of the other occupants in those areas; (e) the hardships which the enforcement of the law would involve.

The result of the investigation into the occupation by coloured persons of proclaimed land in the Transvaal, even if it is very favourable, is not likely to benefit more than a few individuals, leaving the bulk of those affected to suffer,

The following contribution is published in the *Bombay Chronicle*:—

Plight Of South African Indians

In the course of a very moderately worded and scrupulously fair statement, Mr. Manilal Gandhi lays bare for the perusal of his countrymen the calculated insults levelled at Indians resident in South Africa and their consequent sufferings at the hands of the Union Government. Ever since the year 1885 the campaign started against Indians has gone on steadily and remorselessly, whichever political party was in power.

As in Great Britain, so in South Africa, there was no difference of opinion as between the politicians about the treatment of Indians. All that the Indians could do was to suffer meekly and patiently under the indignities showered on them, for their appeals to the Indian Government were useless.

The Indian Government themselves were powerless, because India was a dependency. Mr. Manilal Gandhi shows that since the year 1885 a number of Acts have been passed restricting the liberties of Indians in every possible way, all calculated to drive them out of that land. The Government of India's efforts to lighten their burden, or uphold their honour, have resulted in no tangible advantage to South African Indians, and, now, goaded by the Asiatic Land Tenure Act from which neither the Indian Government nor their Agent, have been able to save them, they have definitely decided to resort to passive resistance. To enlist sympathy on behalf of those Indians and their great cause, Mr. Manilal Gandhi has now issued his statement giving a detailed account of the anti-Indian legislation from the very beginning.

Mr. Manilal is of the opinion that the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement arrived at only after considerable sacrifice and suffering by Indians, under the great leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, has been consigned to the scrap-heap and that the Cape Town Agreement too has met with a similar fate. The Asiatic Land Tenure Act has in fact precipitated a crisis and Indians are left with no alternative but to meet the position boldly. The fact is that though the Transvaal Gold Law was passed in the year 1908, it never was put into force by any Government, though its provisions were severe enough in all conscience.

More Restrictions

The presence of Indians was always allowed on proclaimed land, not because of the apathy of the officials to put the law in operation, but because of the declared policy of the Union Government. The main object of this Act was to take away the right of Asiatics to

reside on proclaimed land, it did not interfere with their right to occupy premises on such land. The Asiatic (Land and Trading) Amendment Act of 1919 further tightened the economic opportunities of Indians and it deprived them of the right to acquire ownership of land even through companies though they "continued to create property interests."

Under the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act compulsory segregation is now an accepted fact and Indians are bound to reside and trade in particular areas. As Mr. Gandhi pathetically says the position of Indians will henceforth be no better than that of "aboriginal Negroes." If Indians possess property outside the area they are forced to live in, "they may neither reside nor occupy" it, with the result that they will be financially ruined. This Act brushes aside the rights connected to Indians under the Cape Town Agreement that the Union Government "shall continue to adhere to the policy of affording the fullest opportunities to the permanent section of their Indian population for their upliftment." Thus the Union Government have been treating as "scraps of papers" solemn promises made by them time after time to Indians with a view to drive them out of South Africa.

India's Honour Involved

One is not surprised, therefore, that as a desperate measure, since all their appeals for justice have gone in vain, they are determined rather to "face extermination than willingly to acquiesce in the deprivation of their right to live as self-respecting human beings." As Mr. Manilal emphasises in this matter the honour of India is equally involved. But South African Indians know it as well as Indians that this country is powerless to help her nationals living in the far-flung British Dominions and Colonies. All that Indians can do is to give their sympathy and their financial aid, which S. A. Indians so urgently require in their struggle against the humiliating conditions now imposed on them by the Whites. The Commission appointed under Mr. Justice Feetham may, in individual cases, be able to lighten their unjust burdens, but as long as the Act is there, there can be no general mitigation of the present unjust conditions. One feels certain that India will give in generous measure her moral and financial support to the cause of her overseas children. Let Indians nobly respond to the call for help from their brethren and help them in their constitutional fight to secure for themselves a self-respecting position in a land to the present economic prosperity of which they contribute so greatly.

Mr. Manilal Gandhi's Activities

Discussion With Indian Leaders

Mr. Manilal Gandhi, son of Mahatma Gandhi, visited Madras on Nov. 4 and was the guest of Sir K. V. Reddi during his stay there. The object of his visit was to discuss questions relating to the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act which was passed recently in the South African Parliament.

Mr. Manilal conferred with Sir K. V. Reddi and Messrs. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. G. A. Natesan. He also went to Bombay where he discussed the question with the Imperial Citizenship Association.

Meeting With Sir Fazl-i-Hussain

Mr. Manilal also paid a visit to New Delhi where, it is understood, he interviewed Sir Fazl-i-Hussain and Mr. G. S. Bajpai. Mr. Manilal is expected to arrive in South Africa early next month.

THE TRANSVAAL COMMISSION'S INSTRUCTIONS

THE Union Government has appointed a Commission in connection with the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act, which, we understand, is sitting in Johannesburg and doing some preliminary work. It has, in the first place, to compile a register of all coloured persons occupying proclaimed land in the Transvaal. Such register will indicate in each individual case whether occupation is legal or illegal. In the second place the Commission is required to make proposals to the Minister of the Interior in regard to the exercise of the power he has under the Gold Law of withdrawing land from the operation of that law in so far as it prohibits occupation by coloured persons, so as to permit coloured persons lawfully to reside upon and occupy such land. In order to enable the Commission to give proper effect to its instructions it requires information as to the existing position of the coloured people residing on proclaimed land. The Government, under this Act, had issued D.I. 29 forms and all the coloured people who reside on and occupy proclaimed land were required to have these forms filled in and sent to the Government before the 30th of September, 1932. The Transvaal Indian Congress very strongly objected to this iniquitous legislation and at a mass meeting it was decided to passively resist this law and to definitely advise the Indian community not to fill in the forms which were issued under the Act. The annual conference of the S.A.I.C. which was held at the Trades Hall in Johannesburg and which was attended by the delegates of the three Provinces, endorsed the action of the Transvaal Indian Congress and recommended to start passive resistance struggle after examining the findings of the Commission. The Commission declares that many coloured persons have indeed already sent in the required information but a large number, however, have failed to send in the necessary forms. The Commission informs that new forms are now being issued for the use of such persons and could be obtained from Magistrates' offices ~~all along the Reef~~ or from the Secretary of the Commission at the Old Fire Station in Jeppe Street, Johannesburg. This means that the Commission has given another opportunity to

fill in the forms to those who did not do so before the 30th of September, 1932. We know that those who did not fill in the forms did so intentionally as they conscientiously object to the Asiatic Land Tenure Act. It is our duty to warn such persons not to be caught in this snare. This Act lays down the definite policy of segregation against which the community has always fought. Even the Government of India have taken strong objection to the policy of segregating Indians. Under this Act the Union Government have the power to eject Indians from proclaimed land and they could be forced to live in segregated areas. It insults the Indian nation. Those Europeans who sit in the Union Parliament and make laws for us are also common men like us. And, therefore, we are not bound to obey laws that humiliate and oppress us as a nation. When the time comes we will resist this Act and suffer the consequences and show to the Europeans of this country that, as Indians, we are men first and subjects of the State afterwards. As Indians we first of all care for our self-respect and honour, and material gain afterwards. This Act lays down that we are undesirable people not fit to live on proclaimed land. It brands us as robbers and thieves. We hope that no Indian will tolerate to live in such a degrading and disgraceful position.

Agent-General In Johannesburg

Welcome By Orient Club

The Kunwar Maharaj Singh, Agent for India, and the Kunwarani, with her two boys and a little girl, were entertained and given a very cordial welcome at the Orient Club, Kransie Street.

The object of the club, Mr. Hazaree explained, was to provide social amenities and encourage sport among the Indian community.

The Agent, thanking the large gathering for their welcome, said he liked the climate of Johannesburg and hoped to cement many friendships there. He appealed for their forbearance and for their assistance in all matters affecting their interests. He and his secretaries were there to help them, and the best results could only be attained with their cordial and sincere help.

The Kunwarani said it was a great pleasure to her to see how their splendid women had received her that morning. It was also pleasing to hear that they had taken to heart the words of advice she had given them. She wanted to appeal to them to bring their women to these functions. It was very unprofitable, indeed, to keep their greatest assets hidden away in their homes. She was sure they would be surprised at the help along that road they would receive if they followed modern developments and events in India in connection with women. They should allow them to develop and not hide their brightest jewels away.

Mr. A. Jajbhaj, who is the secretary of the Orient Club, thanked the Kunwar Maharaj Singh and the

Kunwarani for their presence, and assured them that the Orient Club and the Indian community in general appreciated very much the interest which is being displayed in the welfare of the Indians.

Unemployed Indians In South Africa

It is understood that the Government of India have made a strong representation to the South African Government with regard to relief to a few thousand Indian unemployed citizens of the Union.

It appears that the Union Parliament recently sanctioned £500,000 for the relief of White unemployed but the Indians were not included in the scheme.

The Government of India contend that the Indian citizens pay taxes like the White citizens and should therefore be entitled to consideration in the matter of unemployed benefits.

The 'Bombay Chronicle's Comments On The Above

The Government's protest to the South African Union authorities is belated and is likely to have little effect on the colour-blind Government there says the *Bombay Chronicle*. South African Indians pay rates and taxes like the Whites, yet they are denied the vote, and refused even a little food in times of distress. And yet the South African Whites are intensively religious! The better placed Indians there have been helping their countrymen, but the number of the unemployed is growing and their misery increasing.

Only State Can Help

Kunwar Maharaj Singh has been doing his best to meet the distress, but it is a problem with which only a Government can cope. The Union Government have shown the utmost callousness in this matter. They have by their White policy—of dismissing Indians and coloured people and filling their places with all kinds of Whites—increased the sufferings of Indians, while they refuse to spend a single pie for the starving. We do not know how to characterise this attitude!

Feeling Against Asiatic Traders In The Transvaal

The recent refusal of the Lichtenburg Town Council to grant two licences applied for by Asiatics has received general support from the Europeans of the town, and the debate in the Town Council next Monday, when Mr. J. P. Conradie will move that the previous resolution on the subject be rescinded and that licences be granted, is awaited with interest.

Meanwhile the case of the white storekeepers has been taken up by the Chamber of Commerce, and at a meeting of the executive of that body, the following resolution was adopted:—

"This meeting of the committee of the Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the action of the Town Council in refusing to grant two licences to general dealers, applied for by Asiatics in Lichtenburg, and hopes that the Council will strenuously adhere to its policy so that the aim of a white South Africa may become an established fact."

Strong exception is taken by business men to the reported remark of one member of the Council that the Asiatics were a Godsend to the poorer sections of the community. Several members of the Chamber of Commerce strongly refute this statement, and assert that when prices were lowered in Lichtenburg

they were lowered by the European trader. It is also maintained that the town is losing revenue, as some business men from other centres, desirous of establishing themselves in Lichtenburg, decided eventually to go elsewhere because of the presence of Asiatics.

Asiatic Invasion

A discussion on the Asiatic Land Tenure Act arose from correspondence at a meeting of the Federation of Ratepayers' Association, Johannesburg.

Mr. S. J. Graham, of Von Brandis, declared that Asiatics were invading every part of Johannesburg. They had besieged even Eloff Street. "It's astonishing," he said. "We must take notice of it or we shall find the town swamped with them."

Scorn was poured on those Europeans who patronised Asiatic tailors, laundries and fruit shops by Mr. J. Maude, of La Rochelle.

Another speaker declared that landlords were responsible.

Mr. Freeman said that the matter was not a local one, but one for the Government.

Mr. Cohn said he did not think the Federation of Ratepayers' Association could do anything about the matter. They were only a local body.

The Fate Of Returned Emigrants

The Servant of India writes:—

The lot of Indian emigrants who return to India after long absence abroad is indeed as pitiable as it is difficult of solution. Their sufferings excite no public notice in India unless something untoward happens, as in the case of the emigrants who returned to India from the West Indies on the 9th inst. by *S.S. Ganges*. Their fate was not more unkind than that of their predecessors, but they did not suffer it with equal resignation. For they invaded the office of the Protector of Immigrants and demanded to be sent back to the Colonies from which they came. Their unruly demonstration necessitated police interference. It is reported that before embarking for India they were warned about the social and economic conditions they would meet with in India and advised not to sail. But various motives, the most natural and commendable, prevailed and they landed in India, only to find their ancestral homes shut against them and the economic and climatic conditions wholly against them. In utter disappointment and intense misery they have congregated at Metiaburuz, in Calcutta, in sight of the ships, in the hope that somehow or other they might sail back to their more hospitable homes abroad.

It has been almost impossible to persuade returned emigrants of this type to accept work on plantations, railways and on the land secured by the Protector of Immigrants; the wages are too low and the climate too bad. The only escape is to return to the Colonies. Fortunately, there is no prohibition against their doing so from the Governments of the Colonies concerned. But the difficulty has been one of finance. It would be an unwise policy to ask the Government of India to finance the passage back of all Indians who returned to India and found themselves in difficult straits. It is eminently a matter for non-official social service, assisted by grants from the Government. Perhaps it will be wiser if the advice tendered in the Colonies against returning to India was made more effective by the appointment of Agents of the Government of India in the Colonies concerned. It is surprising, however, that the reports of the sufferings of those who returned to India have not effectively deterred others from courting a similar fate.

Relief For Returned Emigrants

The Associated Press understands that the Government of India have sanctioned Rs. 2,000 for the temporary relief of those Indians who have returned from Fiji and elsewhere and who are in distress. In Calcutta the relief will be distributed by the Bengal Government.

The view of the Government of India is that should these returned emigrants proceed to their native places, they would ask the Local Governments to give them assistance to settle down in the manner that is being done in the case of Indians who return to their homeland under the Assisted Emigration Scheme. There is no possibility, of course, of the Government of India conceding the demand of these destitutes to send them back to British Guiana, Fiji or elsewhere, as such a precedent would prove to be very costly, besides involving a new departure in the Government's policy.

In this connection, it has been emphasised that no less than 120,000 Indians have returned to their homeland from various colonies and overseas settlements since the War, and that they have all been absorbed by the countryside. There is no reason why a few hundreds more should not be similarly absorbed provided they proceed to their native places.

It is also feared by the Government that any attempt to send back these men overseas at Government expense, would only lead to many others crowding into the ports and making similar requests to be sent at Government expense. The Government hope that the relief they have sanctioned would relieve immediate distress and enable the emigrants to feel that the best thing in their interest is quietly to proceed to their homes.

Farewell To Sastri College Lecturers

Orient Club Lunch

A farewell reception was arranged on Sunday last at the Orient Club in honour of the Sastri College lecturers who are leaving shortly for India. Mrs. and Mr. Buss, Mrs. Morel, Mr. Juill, Mr. E. M. Parukh and Mr. M. A. Motala were present. Mr. Ebrahim was in the chair.

Three addresses were given to Messrs. Shakoor, Khan and Nair on behalf of the club praising their services to the Indian community and their contributions towards the development of secondary education among their countrymen in South Africa.

The community was asked by Mr. Khan to take over charge of the Sastri College Hostel that he had established during his stay in Durban. Mr. Shakoor feelingly approached the question of social reforms that were badly needed among sections of the Indians.

The pleasant function came to an end when everyone wished the lecturers bon voyage and Mr. Parukh gave them bouquets on behalf of the club.

Messrs. Shakoor and Khan after completing their period of appointment at Sastri College intend leaving for India by the *Luxmi* on December 17.

Indian Ordinance Bill Passed To Check Civil Disobedience

New Delhi, Wednesday.

The Indian Ordinance Bill, which supplements the criminal law by incorporating certain provisions of the existing Ordinance as a further check to civil disobedience, passed the House of Assembly by 56 votes to 31.

The Bill, the operation of which is limited to three years, is principally directed against associations endangering public peace, persons guilty of intimidation and abuses of the Press.—Renter.

Mahatma Gandhi's Statement

Removal Of Untouchability

According to a statement issued by Mahatma Gandhi from Yeravda Jail, the Government has now granted him permission to carry on public propaganda in connection with the removal of untouchability.

The Servants of India Society has issued Mahatma Gandhi's first statement in connection with the campaign to be carried on from Yeravda Jail. The statement runs as follows:—

I.

"For reasons over which I had no control I have not been able to deal with the question of untouchability, as I had fully intended to, after the breaking of the fast. The Government having now granted me permission to carry on public propaganda in connection with the work, I am able to deal with the numerous correspondents who have been writing to me either in criticism of the Yeravda Pact, or to seek guidance, or to know my views about the different questions that arise in the course of the campaign against untouchability. In this preliminary statement I propose to confine myself to the salient questions only, deferring for the time being other questions which do not call for immediate disposal.

"I take up first the question of the possibility of my resuming the fast. Some correspondents contend that the fast savours of coercion and should not have been undertaken at all and that therefore it should never be resumed. Some others have argued that there is no warrant in Hindu religion, or any religion for that matter, for a fast like mine. I do not propose to deal with the religious aspect. Suffice it to say that it was at God's call that I embarked upon the last fast and it would be it His call that it would be resumed, if it ever is. But when it was first undertaken, it was undoubtedly for removal of untouchability, root and branch. That it took the form it did was no choice of mine. The Cabinet decision precipitated the crisis of my life, but I knew that the revocation of the British Cabinet's decision was to be but the beginning of the end. A tremendous force could not be set in motion merely in order to alter a political decision unless it had behind it a much deeper meaning, even unknown to its authors. The people affected instinctively recognised that meaning and responded.

"Perhaps no man with living memory has travelled so often from one end of India to the other or has penetrated so many villages and come in contact with so many millions as I have. They have all known my life. They have known that I have recognised no barriers between "untouchables" and "touchables" or caste and caste. They have heard me speak often in their own tongues denouncing untouchability in unmeasured terms, describing it as a curse and a blot upon Hinduism. With rare exceptions, at hundreds of these mass meetings or at private meetings in all parts of India, there has been no protest against my presentation of the case against untouchability. Crowds have passed resolutions denouncing untouchability and pledging themselves to remove it from their midst and they have on innumerable occasions called God as witness to their pledge and asked for His blessing that He may give them strength to carry out their pledge. It was against these millions that my fast was undertaken and it was their spontaneous love that brought

about a transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. And it will be against them that the fast will be resumed if that Pact is not carried out by them in its fullness. The Government are now practically out of it. Their part of the obligation they fulfilled promptly. The major part of the resolutions of the Yeravda Pact has to be fulfilled by these millions, the so-called caste-Hindus who have flocked to the meetings I have described. It is they who have to embrace the suppressed brethren and sisters as their very own, whom they have to invite to their temples, to their homes, to their schools. The untouchables in the villages should be made to feel that their shackles have been broken, that they are in no way inferior to their fellow-villagers, that they are worshippers of the same God as other villagers and are entitled to the same rights and privileges that the latter enjoy. But if these vital conditions of the Pact are not carried out by caste-Hindus, could I possibly live to face God and man? I ventured even to tell Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Raja and other friends belonging to the suppressed group that they should regard me as a hostage for the due fulfilment by caste-Hindus of the conditions of the Pact. The fast, if it has to come, will not be for the coercion of those who are opponents of the reform, but it will be intended to sting into action those who have been my comrades or who have taken pledges for the removal of untouchability. If they belie their pledges or if they never meant to abide by them and their Hinduism was a mere camouflage, I should have no interest left in life. My fast, therefore, ought not to affect the opponents of reform, nor even fellow-workers and the millions who have led me to believe that they were with me and the Congress in the campaign against untouchability, if the latter have on second thoughts come to the conclusion that untouchability is not after all a crime against God and humanity. In my opinion, fasting for purification of self and others is an age-long institution and it will subsist so long as man believes in God. It is the prayer to the Almighty from an anguished heart. But whether my argument is wise or foolish, I cannot be dislodged from my position so long as I do not see the folly or the error of it. It will be resumed only in obedience to the inner voice, and only if there is a manifest breakdown of the Yeravda Pact, owing to the criminal neglect of caste-Hindus to implement its conditions. Such neglect would mean a betrayal of Hinduism. I should not care to remain its living witness.

"There is another fast which is a near possibility and that is in connection with the opening of the Guruvayyur Temple in Kerala. It was at my urgent request that Sjt. Kelappan suspended his fast for three months, a fast that had well-nigh brought him to death's door. I would be in honour bound to fast with him if on or before the first of January next that temple is not opened to the untouchables precisely on the same terms as the touchables and if it becomes necessary for Sjt. Kelappan to resume his fast. I have been obliged to dwell at some length upon these possible facts because of the receipt of hot correspondence from two or three quarters. Co-workers, however, should not be agitated over the possibility. To become unnerved over a prospect one would not like to face, very often results in its materialising. The best way of averting it is for all affected by it to put forth their whole strength into the work that would render the occurrence impossible.

"Correspondents have asked whether inter-dining and inter-marriage are part of the movement against

untouchability. In my opinion they are not. They touch the castemen equally with the outcastes. It is therefore not obligatory on an anti-untouchability worker to devote himself or herself to inter-dining and intermarriage reform. Personally, I am of opinion that this reform is coming sooner than we expect. Restriction on intercaste dining and intermarriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline, and was then meant perhaps to be a temporary protection against disintegration of Hindu society. To-day these two prohibitions are weakening Hindu society and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth. Wherever, therefore, people voluntarily take part in functions where touchables and untouchables, Hindus and non-Hindus are invited to join dinner parties, I welcome them as a healthy sign. But I should never dream of making this reform, however desirable in itself it may be, part of an all-India reform which has been long overdue. Untouchability in the form we all know it is a canker eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society. I think the distinction is fundamental. It would be unwise in a hurricane campaign to overweight and thus endanger the main issue. It may even amount to a breach of faith with the masses to call upon them suddenly to view the removal of untouchability in a light different from what they have been taught to believe it to be. On the other hand, therefore, whilst inter-dining may go on where the public is itself ready for it, it should not be part of the India-wide campaign.

"I have letters, some of them angrily worded, from those who style themselves *Sanatanists*. For them untouchability is the essence of Hinduism. Some of them regard me as a renegade. Some others consider that I have imbibed notions against untouchability and the like from Christianity and Islam. Some again quote scriptures in defence of untouchability. To these I have promised a reply through this statement. I would venture, therefore, to tell these correspondents that I claim myself to be a *Sanatanist*. Their definition of a *Sanatanist* is obviously different from mine. For me *Sanatana-Dharma* is the vital faith handed down from generations belonging even to pre-historic period and based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them. For me the Vedas are as indefinable as God and Hinduism. It would be only partially true to say that the Vedas are the four books which one finds in print. These books are themselves remnants of the discourses left by the unknown seers. Those of later generations added to these original treasures according to their lights. There then arose a great and lofty-minded man, the composer of the Gita. He gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu Religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker. It is the one open book to every Hindu who will care to study it and if all the other scriptures were reduced to ashes, the seven hundred verses of this imperishable booklet are quite enough to tell one what Hinduism is and how one can live up to it. And I claim to be a *Sanatanist* because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book. Whatever is contrary to its main theme I reject as un-Hindu. It excludes no faith and no teacher. It gives me great joy to be able to say that I have studied the Bible, the Koran, Zend Avesta and the other scriptures of the world with the same reverence that I have given to the Gita. This reverent reading has strengthened my

faith in the Gita. They have broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism. Lives of Zoroaster, Jesus and Mohamad, as I have understood them, have illumined many a passage in the Gita. What therefore these Sanatani friends have hurled against me as a taunt has been to me a source of consolation. I take pride in calling myself a Hindu because I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth. I find no warrant for untouchability in this Book of Life. On the contrary it compels me by an appeal to my reason and a more penetrating appeal to my heart in language that has a magnetic touch about it, to believe that all life is one and that it is through God and must return to him. According to *Sanatana Dharma* taught by that venerable Mother, life does not consist in outward rites and ceremonial, but it consists in the uttermost inward purification and merging oneself, body, soul and mind, in the divine essence. I have gone to masses in their millions with this message of the Gita burnt into my life. And they have listened to me, I am quite sure, not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognised me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith. And as days have gone by, my belief has grown stronger and stronger that I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to *Sanatana Dharma* and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death.

(To be continued)

American Tribute To Mahatma Gandhi

The *Christian Science Monitor* writes:—

An amazing drama involving the rights and social welfare of millions and the stability of a great empire has just passed its climax, for the present at least, in India. That drama centres around the wizened little figure of Gandhi, whose hunger strike sent frockcoated diplomats scurrying about, caused the rulers of the British empire to sweat through midnight emergency conferences, and literally stood the British lion on its ear.

We of the Western world may look with small concern on India and the struggling of her teeming millions. But there is being enacted there an object lesson whose profundity deserves our attention and understanding. Western civilisation, we say, with its mighty mass industrial machine and scientific progress leads the world. Yet our civilisation has not progressed so far that we do not depend on force. England, France, Italy, and the other so-called superior Western nations are right in line. Yet there in India a little, sick, scrawny man, weighing less than 90 pounds, without guns, without soldiers, without warships, without force, accomplishes by refusing food for a few days what would cost "civilised" peoples the lives of countless soldiers and billions of dollars. For with all our vaunted progress, we still apply the law of the jungle, the law of force. We still seem to believe with Napoleon's cynical dictum, God is always on the side that has the largest battalions.

Leadership? Power? Definition of these terms must be revised in the light of Gandhi's passive victory against great odds. This queer little man, weak and sick, by the measuring stick of history is a greater leader than all of the captains and generalissimoes of fire and sword that ever lived. And

how does the power of great armies and navies compare with the power of Gandhi whose threat to starve himself to secure just treatment for his lowly followers brought the British empire to its knees? Little Gandhi junks the old concept of power, and proves that there can be a purpose, a moral staunchness, which all the force in the world is simply powerless touch.

Supreme force that encounters resistance can always win. Force that meets no resistance is a loss. A Gandhi leading an army in the field could be crushed overnight. A Gandhi in an Indian prison starving himself to death for an ideal is beyond force, and vastly more powerful.

Gandhi is a disciple of peace, the accomplishment of great deeds and works without the iron heel of force. The Western world can learn much from him.

“India Day” In England

Acting on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Andrews at present stays in Britain, returning to India early in the New Year. He will possibly pay a visit again to South Africa towards the end of 1933.

Mr. Andrews has had a long programme of speeches in Britain in colleges and universities of England and Scotland. He has visited Cambridge, Oxford, Aberystwith, Sheffield and Manchester Universities, where he emphasised the urgency for peace with India.

Arrangements were made by Anglican, Scottish and Free Churches to observe 27th November as a day of prayer for peace and reconciliation with India under the guidance of the Round Table Conference. Twenty-seventh November was described as “India Day.”

“Sastri Speaks”

The following review of the publication “Sastri Speaks” by Prof. R. Sadasiva Aiyar of Madras, is reproduced from the *Servant of India* :—

“Governments as a rule, and least of all British Governments, do not do inspired things. Yet the choice of Mr. Sastri as the first Agent in the Union was as nearly a stroke of genius as anything may be”—so wrote *The Natal Advertiser* on the eve of Mr. Sastri's departure to India after laying down the office of Agent-General. But if the choice was a stroke of genius the acceptance of the office was an act of self-sacrificing heroism on the part of the recipient. For it was in face of considerations which all but an iron sense of duty would have allowed to prevail that Mr. Sastri, largely the creator of the Cape Town Agreement, agreed to become “its creature” and accept a task bristling with difficulties of an opposing character—shattered health, the prospect of separation from dear ones from whom, ever since the day of his self-dedication to the motherland, he had been schooled to long spells of absence, the brood of misgivings as to the chances of success in a mission of such doubtful promise. Acclaiming the choice with a chorus of approbation, India sent her ambassador forth with myriad voiced blessings, while South Africa received him with an unparalleled ovation. The telegrams of welcome received by the Agent on his arrival in Pretoria included messages from His Excellency the Governor General of South Africa, from the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Union, from the Right Hon'ble General Smuts, from His Grace the Archbishop of Cape Town and from societies representatives of the Indian community throughout the Union. The Union Govern-

ment proposed an amnesty for Indians illegally present in the Union as “an act of grace to mark the appointment of the Right Honourable V. S. Sastri as the first Agent of the Government of India South Africa.” The white population in places notoriously anti-Asiatic flocked to the Agent's meetings to “hear the other side.” More than two thousand Europeans attended a meeting held on the 11th August in the City Hall of Pietermaritzburg to hear the Agent plead the cause of Empire citizenship with special reference to the place of the Indian in the Empire. Educational, literary and social service societies volunteered to place their platforms at the Agent's disposal for addresses and lectures on topics connected with India and Indian thought. In honour of Mr. Sastri's birthday (22nd Sept.) the Natal Administrator announced a commission on Indian Education in 1928. Universities, schools and colleges, literary and Rotary Clubs vied with one another in inviting Mr. Sastri to discourse on aspects of Indian philosophy, literature and culture. The Universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town listened spell-bound to the Agent's expositions of Hindu philosophy and Sanskrit literature, while in the Cathedral in Johannesburg, in response to the Dean's request, he spoke on “Christianity as it impresses an Indian.” By a whirlwind campaign carried on in English and in Tamil, Mr. Sastri sought to promote Indian unity in upholding and carrying out the agreement, to rouse Indians to a better sense of self-help in the matter of education and sanitation and to woo them to a better standard of living; and he disabused the Whites of the lurking fears they had of Indians seeking covertly for equality of political supremacy, while disturbing their self-complacency in respect of what they owed to their Indian fellowmen. In words whose echo will be heard through the corridors of time rang out from him like a reveille, the stirring exhortation:

“If God gave you a feeling of sympathy for the down-trodden, you are betraying God's trust, if you do not straightaway give expression to the idea and get it out in the light; if you do not do something to redress wrong or incur some sacrifice, however small, to put matters right. If you let the Indian community be unjustly traduced and ill-treated, if you allow the natives in this country to be despised and confined to the tasks of hewers of wood and drawers of water, then depend on it the politicians will not save you from the responsibility.”

Mr. Sastri raised India in the estimation of Europeans of South Africa as he had raised her in the estimation of Great Britain and the other Dominions in previous years. And this spiritual orientation effected by him in their attitude towards India and Indians finds magnificent expression in *The Natal Advertiser* :

“He showed us all and first of all that the graces of a scholar, a gentleman and what we are pleased to call a Christian, are not the exclusive prerogative of our own white race. He showed us that India can breed, train and attach to its service men who not only have nothing whatsoever to learn from the Western world, but, on the contrary, can teach the Western world a very great deal that it never expected.”

To promote a better understanding of races and cultures, to afford opportunities for the better and more catholic minds in the two communities, Indian and European, Mr. Sastri founded Indo-European Councils. On the Indian side, Mr. Sastri's all too brief tenure of office is starred with even more brilliant achievements. Touring from town to town, Mr. Sastri appealed for funds in behalf of what is known as the “Sastri College”—a high school and training college in one; and the response of £20,000, and from persons who had not till then realized the importance of endowing modern educational institutions, was but a humble tribute to Mr. Sastri's greatness. The fighting evidence he gave before the Education Commission was responsible for the raising of the grant for Indian education from £29,000 to

£56,000. The Social Service Committee and the Child Welfare Society founded at his instance have since functioned creditably. His exhortations to European trade unionists to cast aside their racial exclusiveness and foster the international solidarity of labour resulted in the Typographical Union of Durban throwing open its doors to Indians. Of these and other achievements of the first Indian Ambassador to Africa the reader will, in face of his all-pervading modesty bordering on self-belittlement, form a clearer picture from the speeches and reports comprised in this volume.

Extracts from the tributes to Mr. Sastri's work and genius appended to the volume reconstruct for us the image that we have known so well, of the 'internationalist' who thinks and talks in terms of humanity transcending race, colour and creed, the passionate lover of world-peace and brotherhood, the idealist who regards compromise, moderation and commonsense as means of realising the ideal, the portrait of the orator, the statesman, the thinker, the tireless student, the sage whose vision amidst the myriad distractions of the Cave of all the Winds that politics are, is centered on the unseen foundations and the grand verities of life, and more than all, of the kindly, human-hearted friend. "The great tradition, the profound culture, the deep serenity and the unself-conscious dignity of India have all been personified in him"—that is the refrain in these South African papers when they have exhausted others sides of a personality of marvellous richness, range, power and subtlety of grain. They hail him as the greatest of living statesmen and as one of the greatest men of the day, which is but an echo of the estimate that had been already formed of him by statesmen and publicists in other parts of the British Commonwealth.

A word about the character of the speeches themselves. The world has now come to think of Mr. Sastri as the Chrysostom of our age, rousing the nations with tongue of gold to justice and fair-play, to the healing of wounds inflicted on each other, to search for the things that ennoble the life of men on earth. Mr. Sastri's words have been cherished and prized by many as models of faultless phrasing and metaphor, of unsought euphony and other stylistic graces, as patterns of well-forged reasoning and lucid exposition. The more discerning have seen in them the mirror of a fragile grace and delicate purity—as of snow flowns—that are the attributes of a mind, highly sensitized and capable of the finest moral and intellectual perceptions. To our mind the ultimate value of Mr. Sastri's speeches—especially these latter-day ones delivered in South Africa—lies in their being the wonted language of a soul possessing the lordly simplicity of mountain peaks, the native stride of a mind poised and cultured and questing after the things of the Spirit. He does not seek words, they seek him. The most difficult thing—like the Vedanta philosophy—becomes the easiest when expounded by him; and, likewise, the deepest truths shine in their pristine beauty and lustre because they come from one who has meditated them long and made them a vital part of his being. That is why, when flows from his pen the Vedic quotation: "May every one cross the difficult places of life, may every one behold happiness, may every one attain true wisdom, may every one rejoice everywhere," we feel that the words thrill with a power and an alchemy that belongs to original inspiration. Quotations are rare, however, in Mr. Sastri's speeches. They have little need to clog utterances that lift us out of our meaner selves and pour into us the ichor of far-reaching thought, fortify, chasten and befriend men in the dark and difficult places of public endeavour. And for those who would seek, here are sentences scattered that reveal the light beyond the storm and sustain drooping spirits like a far-sought nepenthes, for they emanate from one of the loftiest minds of the modern world.

The publication of these speeches is a great act of patriotism and a fitting offering to the Motherland!

Nylstroom Indian Sporting Club

A meeting of the above club was held at the residence of Mr. Kristnasamy, Principal of the Indian School, on Saturday, 3rd December. All the members were present.

The following officials were elected for the ensuing year:—President: Mr. Mohamed Mossam, Vice-Presidents: Messrs. Peter Ramse, Essop Boodania, Ismail Ravat, Abdul Hay Ravat and Abas Kaloo; Secretary: Mr. P. Kristnasamy, Treasurer: Mr. Seadat Mossam, Committee: Messrs. M. Kaloo, Saley Adams, A. Sacoor, M. Bhamjee, M. Chan, P. Parsoot, Goolam Ameer.—Contributed.

The Secretary of the Vishwaroopa Temple and Dharmashala (Tonga) writes:—

The Pranapratishta and the opening ceremony of the Shivalaya was performed on the 11th inst. by Shrijut Lalkisoon Maharaj and P. G. Desai respectively. Delegates from Verulam, Durban, Overport, Maritzburg, etc., as well as about four hundred members of the community were present. The origin of the idea was a gift of twenty-five pounds by Radha the widow of the late Manfool Maharaj. The Temple cost about £135 in materials. The labour was given free by Messrs. Ramnarain Kasee, Badree Kasee, Sewnarain Kasee and Sidhaye who were presented each with a gold ring as a an appreciation from the Committee. Refreshments were served to all the guests after the ceremony and a dancing performance was arranged for the night. Mr. P. G. Desai donated five guineas for the purpose of Hindi education and Dharmaprachar.

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Prof. Carey is well conversant with Hindustani.

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દવા અને ઓપરેશનથી ક'રાળેલાઓ માટે
ઉત્તમ તક.

પુરૂષ, સ્ત્રી અને બાલકોના તમામ રોગો ઇલેક્ટ્રીક
બાથ, સ્વીડીશ બાથ, મસાજ (વજરેથી સારા કરવા-
માં આવે છે.

સુલાકાત મફત.

પ્રોફેસરની સુલાકાત માટે નીચે મળી અથવા
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૪, પ્રીચર્ડ સ્ટ્રીટ,

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