

Indian Opinion

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PROPOSED POLITICAL REFORMS IN INDIA

Rt. Hon. SRINIVASA SASTRI'S VIEWS

WE reproduce the following article by the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.O., C.H., L.L.D., from *The Indian Review* on the White Paper issued by the British Government on India:—

It is not safe to judge speeches made in England by the summaries cabled to this country. With this caution one may note a significant feature. Neither the Secretary nor the Under-Secretary of State for India used the phrase 'Dominion Status.' Conservative mentality has no patience with it. A community of Hindus in South India cannot bring themselves to utter the word Narayana lightly. That sacred name, sure bringer of salvation, must be spoken in the ear of a dying person so that it may be the very last thing he hears. So morbid is the care taken in this regard that it is always uttered *after* the last breath has left the body. "Is it time to say *that word?*" is the hushed inquiry that passes round in the room of death. Something of that horror seems to possess the orthodox official of the India Office when the expression 'Dominion Status for India' would occur naturally to the Liberal or Labour politician. Perhaps he fears that it may cause the British Commonwealth to expire. True, too true, it was a Halifax who first let the fatal syllables profane his lips. But was he not then in the service of those enemies of the empire, the blaspheming socialists?

Sir Samuel Hoare warned his hearers solemnly to remember that year after year British statesmen had led India "to believe in the continuous bestowal of new instalments of constitutional progress." Even while stating the demand made by Indians, he would not use their polluting vocabulary. He asked, paraphrasing their language, "Is it a wonder, with all this ferment in Asia, that India should be raising its voice for recognition and demanding a greater share in its own government?" Mr. Butler's turn came much later in the debate when the Conservatives had been fully awakened to the situation. He thought they could stand a slightly stiffer dose of the dread truth. So he ventured to mention "the idea of evolution of self-government towards ultimate political responsibility." But he shrank from saying *that word*. Once more it was these quixotic Labour men that perpetrated the enormity.

No attempt was made during the debate to explain or defend the breach of faith on the subject of safeguards. The Labour Government had promised that they should be in the interests of India. They are now designed largely in the interests of Britain. The fiction that they are in the common interests

of the two countries only aggravates the wrong. Sir Samuel asserts that the Irish treaty broke down for lack of safeguards. The truth probably is that with safeguards no treaty had been made, and that if a treaty had been made, it would have broken down much earlier. Some time ago the people of India were admonished that they need have no misgivings from the existence of safeguards, that the Governor-General and Governors would be exceptional men endowed with an exceptional degree of common sense and goodwill, and that they would use their powers of intervention only on rare occasions. In reassuring the unprogressive majority of the Commons, the Secretary of State declared the other day that the safeguards were not paper safeguards, but, if necessary, could be carried into full effect. Now these positions are not logically irreconcilable; but they tend in opposite directions and indicate, every time a safeguard is invoked, a state of mutual hostility between the agent of the imperial power and the representatives of the people. We must hang down our heads in shame when we remember that our people asked for certain safeguards. The Secretary of State made a damaging use of this circumstance when he told the House: "Indeed one of the most significant facts of the proceedings of the R.T.O. in December was the demand by Indians themselves for safeguards. In the R.T.O., day after day, were Hindus or Sikhs in the Punjab demanding safeguards for their communities, were Moslems demanding safeguards in Hindu provinces, and were depressed classes demanding safeguards in provinces where there were many members of their classes." But there are many safeguards in the proposed constitution other than those for the benefit of minorities, and our complaint is that they eat up a great part of the power transferred to the legislatures and ministries. What shall we say now after the Princes have put forward their demand for eighteen safeguards? Eighteen is the present figure, but an apocryphal demand for twenty-four safeguards has been mentioned, and we should be prepared to see some of these adopted into the canonical list. The men most to be pitied are the ministers of the new regime; they would be hagridden for thought of the numerous and undefined safeguards strewn all along their path and the scores of persons jealously on the watch to invoke the Governor-General's intervention.

Do we frighten ourselves by an exaggerated estimate of the special powers that would be given to the Governor-General and the Governors and by a

corresponding under-estimate of the quantum of responsibility in the transferred sphere? Apart from the statement made by the Secretary of State that no imperial or British interests would be imperilled, we had Lord Reading's assurance to his countrymen that the Governor-General's powers would remain intact. The Viceroy, ex-Viceroy and several Governors whom Sir Samuel Hoare consulted, took the view that on the whole the responsibilities of the Governor-General were and would be less rather than greater in the future. Considering the uncertainty that still surrounds the constitution, this tentative and undecided view of the experts cannot be allowed to supersede our judgment entirely, and even when we have given it full weight, we are justified in our pessimism and must warn our countrymen that there is little substance in the responsibility at the federal centre which the new order purports to devolve in our legislatures and ministers. As regards provincial autonomy, it will no doubt have more reality than at present. But it will not be a matter for unalloyed satisfaction. In the sphere of law and order the scheme of the White Paper will take away with one hand what it gives with the other. The Instrument of Instructions, a more dignified and authoritative document than hitherto, will direct the Governors to bear in mind the intimate connection between the peace and tranquility of their territories and the internal administration and discipline of the police. If this somewhat roundabout expression be translated into the direct language of actuality, it means that the Governor in each province will really hold the power, while the unhappy minister concerned, being outwardly responsible to the legislature, will not know exactly where he stands and will be the object alternately of the pity and contempt of the public. How far the Governors will relish the position is a matter of personal idiosyncrasy. One observation, however, seems called for at this point. The White Paper takes it for granted that twelve admirable men can always be found in Britain to fill the peculiarly difficult posts of Governor-General and Governors. This expectation, however, is too sanguine. Nor can we hope on our side to send our best men to the legislatures and ministries and by that means to mitigate the evils inherent in a badly devised system. The expensiveness of our elections, the unorganized condition of political parties and the illiteracy of the masses cannot conduce to the success in public life of persons of high calibre. Cabinets too cannot acquire coherence or a sense of responsibility so long as their members own allegiance to particular communities, classes, or artificial groups. If on the top of these intrinsic weaknesses the constitution reposes the reality of power in one place and legal responsibility in another, the result will be unseemly wrangles and chronic inefficiency and stagnation of all national work. The fitness of our peoples for maintaining and making use of democratic institutions will be challenged—not altogether without ostensible cause.

The foregoing discussion is based on the assumption that British India and the States are going to federate and be entrusted with a certain amount of responsibility for all-India affairs. This consummation, however, becomes less probable with every week that passes. Not only are we confronted with a staggering schedule of safeguards, but differences in the ranks of Princes are coming into view, and the air is full of rumours of which the general drift is that the Chamber, which has been so far a splendid rallying point for the noble order, may not fulfil that function much longer. If this danger took shape, it would be a first-class disaster and ruin the present political enterprise, which has been gaining painful momentum during the last decade. There are many who fear that no con-

stitution worth having could emerge out of this muddle and that it might be well on the whole to allow the movement to die quietly. This is a pure doctrine of despair. There is a conclusive answer to it. It would take great power of planning, organizing and directing to let the movement die quietly. So many divergent expectations, plans and ambitions have been started and allowed to grow that no authority could command them to be still. If such an authority did come into being, it could just as easily shape a workable constitution and cause the dawn of a bright era.

Though repulsed again and again, we repeat our appeal to Government for the release of Mahatma Gandhi and his colleagues, so that our plans for the future may have the strong foundation of the goodwill of the entire nation. To Congress leaders we turn next and implore them to do their share of the reconstruction of Indian polity. They must remember that in this sphere there is no standing still; if places are not filled by the right men they will be filled by the wrong men; if things are not done well, they will be done badly; if the interests of the nation are neglected, those of the minorities and their allies will be consolidated; and every day lost by us will mean a year lost to our children with less and less chance of repair.

Meanwhile, we must rally our forces, sadly demoralised by the White Paper and the Commons debate, and endeavour at the next stage to gain a hearing for our views. The present juncture is forbidding, still we have to do the best in the circumstances. The defects of the scheme are many; the undermentioned are perhaps among the more important items:

1. DEFENCE: i. Indianisation to be completed within a fixed period; ii. Recruitment to be open to all communities and provinces; iii. Preparation during transition period for responsibility.
2. No Governor-General's Act and no Governor's Acts.
3. No special responsibilities and powers to the Governor-General or Governors in the transferred sphere, except for the protection of the interests of minorities or those of a State;
4. Exercise of power of previous sanction (if kept) in matters of currency and exchange to be declared by the Instrument of Instructions to be only in the interests of India;
5. The Services to be in future under the control of the federal Government;
6. The Constitution Act to be alterable by the Indian legislature except where Imperial interests are involved;
7. The Railway Board as well as the Reserve Bank to be constituted by Indian legislation;
8. The Secretary of State's Council to be abolished.

Transvaal Indian Congress

Provincial Conference

A Provincial Conference of the Transvaal Indian Congress will be held at the Trades Hall, Johannesburg, on the 24th and 25th May, 1933 at 10 a.m.

Affiliated bodies and district organisations are requested to send 3 delegates. The names of the delegates should reach the secretaries not later than 20th May 1933
 Agenda—1. Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act, 2. Licences, 3. Immigration, 4. Railways, 5. Education, 6. General.

D. M. NURSOO

E. M. MALL

Joint hon. Secretaries.

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Notes and News

MAHATMA GANDHI'S fast is causing very great anxiety. While we go to Press we learn that he has passed the third day of his fast in agony. He is unable to move about and has developed jaundice. Doctors are very pessimistic about his life. We can only pray for God's mercy. Other news concerning Mahatma Gandhi's fast will be found elsewhere in this issue. The Government of India has unconditionally released Mrs. Gandhi who was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and was doing her term in the central prison in Ahmedabad.

DESCRIBING Mahatma Gandhi's fast threat as irrational and practically amounting to coercion, says a Calcutta message appearing in the local daily Press, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, the president of the Hindu Mahasabha, an influential all-India political body, and a former Congressman, makes a surprising attack on the Congress leader, with whom he previously sympathised. "If I were a depressed class man I would stoutly protest against Gandhi serving my cause in this manner." His threat was only a slight variation of the highway robber maxim "Your money or your life." It opposed all dictates of religion, ethics and law.

We must confess that we are shocked at the intelligence of Mr. Kelkar. It is indeed shameful that after so many sacrifices by Mahatma Gandhi the orthodox die-hards will yet fling mud at the poor depressed classes and blame them for this last act of Mahatma Gandhi instead of humbly accepting the blame themselves. If anything is opposed to all the dictates of religion, ethics and law it is the creation by the orthodox Hindus of a depressed class in their ranks for which any punishment for them is not too great. It is high time that they came to their senses and hanging their heads in shame for their past deeds gave a fitting burial to untouchability before it is too late.

GENERAL Smuts was garlanded by Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee last Tuesday morning before he flew from the Durban Aerodrome for Port Elizabeth where he reached at 11-30 a.m.

It is reported that 50 Indians will be given employment in Maritzburg under the scheme for the relief of Indian distress, which has been the subject of negotiation between the Indian Agent-General, Kanwar Sir Maharaj Singh, the Maritzburg Indian Unemployment Relief Committee and the City Council. The 50 men will be taken on next week and preference will be given to Maritzburg men with dependants. On the Indian unemployment register, compiled by the relief committee, there are the names of about 200 Indians who are in urgent need of employment. It is not known definitely what the work will be, but it is expected that the men will be engaged on road repairs and tree-planting. The committee hopes to get the number employed increased, for it is stated that there is much poverty and distress among City Indians as a consequence of unemployment.

While Pandit Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi was on his tour on the main line the Glencoe Indian School Society took the opportunity of welcoming him and getting him to perform the opening ceremony of their school which was now Government-aided. Mr. McAllister the Town Clerk of Glencoe who was present at the occasion in the course of his speech paid a high tribute to the work of the school manager and secretary Mr. S. Bhagwandeem and appealed to the public to strongly support him as it was through his effort that they had got an Aided School. Mr. S. Bhagwandeem said that the conversion of the school into a Government-aided

school was an achievement for which they were endeavouring for the last twenty years.

As the sequel to the death of a native named Andries Zaal two European farmers, who are brothers, named Christoffel van Wyk and Petrus Johannes van Wyk, were found guilty of common assault at the Criminal Sessions, Kimberley, at the end of their trial on a charge of culpable homicide. For the defence, Christoffel van Wyk said that the native had been "cheeky" to his wife when she was alone at the house. He had followed the native into the veld to question him about his behaviour. Petrus van Wyk said he threw the native to the ground because the boy had a knobkerrie in his hand. He had no intention of hurting him. Christoffel van Wyk was fined £30 (or three months) and his brother £80 (or four months).

GENERAL SMUTS IN DURBAN

AN outstanding event of the week was the flying visit to Durban of General Smuts, Minister of Justice. He had a warm reception at the Town Hall last Monday and also rather a hot time. But a great statesman as he is he proved equal to his task. We as Indians were more anxious to know what the Coalition Government's policy was to be in regard to the Indian question. Natal being a hot bed of anti-Asiatics and Mr. Heaton Nicolls who has fought on that issue in and outside Parliament was presiding over General Smuts' meeting it was felt that some light on that question will be thrown at least in Durban even if it has been put aside so far in other places. A question as to the Coalition Government's Asiatic policy was actually included in the questionnaire before General Smuts but as he had done many others he very carefully evaded that important question too. However we know it was a dangerous issue for him to tackle where sanity was obscure and roudyism was galore. If he had said it was going to be sympathetic he would have perhaps had rotten eggs thrown at him and if he had said anything to the contrary he might have committed himself to something which perhaps might have been against his conscience. We are not at all disappointed at his silence on the question in view of the circumstances in which he found himself. We however do believe that we can entertain the hope of a more sympathetic and a just policy when a person of exceptionally high culture and ability like Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr is in charge of the Department of Interior and a great statesman like General Smuts whose sympathy with India's aspired goal is well-known is at the head of the Department of Justice. It is for this reason that we favour the Coalition Government. But there is also another reason why Coalition is necessary and that is because there are two rival sections in this country as rulers which have formed themselves into a Union. And if Union is to be maintained and good Government is to be established there is no doubt that there must be a policy of give and take on both sides—the British and the Dutch—and as General Smuts has said very rightly in every speech of his that both should forget the past years of racial strife and look to the future. This applies to both sections and we think both should follow this advice in all sincerity if they wish to see peace and harmony in South Africa.

[Written by Manilal M. Gandhi at Phoshe, Natal.]

Germiston Location

Indians Protest Against Removal

A mass meeting of Indians was held last Sunday at the Germiston location. Many leading Indians from Johannesburg were present, and the Transvaal Indian Congress was represented by its officials, Mr. C. K. T. Naidoo, the president, Mr. D. M. Nursoo, the secretary, Mr. S. B. Medh and Mr. S. M. Nana.

Mr. Goolam Mahomed, one of the conveners, told the story of the location and of their present difficulty. He suggested that a branch of the congress be formed with the object of working with the Transvaal Indian Congress to overcome many difficulties in the Indian location and especially the removal order.

Mr. Naidoo explained that the policy of the congress was against segregation, and that the question at Germiston was totally different. The Indians had been living in the area for at least 23 years without hindrance and verbal assurance had been given by the authorities when they were removed from the other location to the present site that they would never be disturbed.

"We all admit that there is no documentary evidence in that direction, but surely the word of honourable persons does not require to be rendered to writing. The Indians, on that solemn assurance, built up business and erected houses and shops, in the firm belief that they would never be disturbed."

The Indians' rights, he contended, were not considered, their losses were apparently of no consequence. What mattered was that the ground was required for European settlement.

He appealed to all of them to support the congress. A congress branch was formed and full powers were given to this committee to oppose the removal order.

Indian Technical Education

Record Of Steady Progress

Classes For Men And Women

(By Our Special Correspondent)

In recognition of the fact that, after four or five years of steady growth, the work of Indian Technical Education in Durban can be now regarded as a permanency, the Indian Technical Education Committee have decided to give their work a definite name; hence they have called the various classes which have developed under their control "The Indian Technical Institute." This then marks a definite stage in the advancement of Indian education in Durban.

Indian Technical Institute Classes

At the present time there are three sections of the work, but it is hoped to add to these steadily as the Indian community show their appreciation of the facilities offered them by taking full advantage of them and by demanding more. The three sections are:—

1. The Continuation Classes carried on at Carlisle Street Government Indian School.
2. The Commercial Classes carried on at Sastri College.
3. The Domestic Science Classes carried on partly at Sastri College and partly at the Albert Street School.

So far as the work goes, it is pretty complete at present. Young Indians who have started to earn their living can begin at whatever stage they are fitted for, and not only young men but older men also can and do join up.

If a man or a youth is quite ignorant of reading and writing he can begin by learning his letters in the bottom classes at the Carlisle Street Evening School which commences at "Zero" and goes on through the successive standards from Standard I. to Standard VI.

And even when he passes Standard VI. and gets the Government Standard VI. Certificate he can proceed to Standard VII. at Carlisle Street and get his Preliminary Commercial Certificate from the Union Department of Education.

Now, having completed the course at Carlisle Street, he can proceed to Sastri College for more advanced work. Here he can take the subjects required for the National Commercial Certificates of the Union Department of Education. Subjects at present taught in various stages at Sastri College include English, Afrikaans, Commerce, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Auditing, Shorthand and Typewriting. The senior students in these courses are already looking forward to higher things, and they are finding the way that leads to membership of the Institute of Administration and Commerce of South Africa which will give them a definite recognised status in the world of business and administration in the Union.

Women's Education

A good beginning has been made with the technical education of Indian women. Though it is only beginning at present, it has the promise of leading to much greater things. The Committee has begun definitely with women's work and has provided in its domestic science classes some of those essential subjects which are specially useful to women whatever their race may be, subjects which will be of the greatest use to them in their homes. Practical Needlework and Dressmaking are taught in the afternoons at Sastri College and practical Cookery is taught at Albert Street School. About a dozen students attend each of these classes weekly but many more could be admitted. Other subjects such as Home-nursing and First Aid are proposed.

A Qualified Staff

All this work of the Indian Technical Institute is carried on under the best conditions by the highest qualified teachers obtainable for the various subjects. At the Carlisle Street Evening School the general standard subjects are taught by fully trained and qualified Indian teachers. The Commercial Classes are taught by European experts in the various subjects. The Domestic Science Classes are taught by highly trained and certificated European lady teachers.

The Indian Technical Education Committee have thus provided for their students only the best of each type of instruction required, and it remains for the Indian community to take full advantage of it and to support it by every means in their power. Have they done so?

Small Number Of Students

If we look at the students attending the classes, the answer, so far as they are concerned, is "Yes"; they have taken full advantage of the instruction provided. The teachers with one accord say they have never had better students and the results obtained confirm this opinion. Splendid progress has been made by these Indian students, and doubtless from among them will appear in due time many who will take leading positions in the Indian community in South Africa.

But let us look at the numbers:—150 attend the Carlisle Street Evening School, 40 attend the Commercial Classes at Sastri College, 20 attend the Domestic Science Classes.

How does this compare with the many thousands of young Indian people in Natal who should be helping themselves to better things? Instead of 200 there should be 2,000 students in attendance.

Financial Help Needed

As regards the support given by the Indian community in the way of financial aid to the classes, not much can be recorded, but what has been given the Committee gratefully acknowledge. Indian merchants and others last year contributed in small sums to a fund raised by the Agent General, Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, the amount of nearly £50, and the Rustomjee Trustee gave another £50. These donations just enabled the Committee to come out at the end of the year honourably

by paying all their teachers' salaries, but still with a deficit of £41 on the year's working.

The Union Government now contributes a grant of £250 per annum and the Durban Corporation a grant of £100. These amounts are, however, quite insufficient for the purpose. The large number of qualified teachers who are employed have to be paid, and there are other expenses which have to be met. The revenue, including fees, is approximately £500 per annum, and the expenditure is £600 per annum. Unless this difference is met promptly, the salaries of the teachers cannot be paid and some or all of the classes will have to be discontinued. At the end of May, the Committee will be short of £37 of the amount necessary to meet the month's salaries and other expenses.

Mahatma Gandhi's Fast

Messages And Press Opinion

The *Rand Daily Mail* in the course of a leading article in its issue of May 2, after referring to Mahatma Gandhi's previous fasts, the history attached to them and their results writes as follows:—

"This fast offers a far more difficult problem than the others, for Mr. Gandhi is now protesting not so much against any specific practice but against a whole attitude of mind. The horror aroused by his mere threat is, however, so great as to show that every possible effort will be made to prevent him from embarking on what would in all probability be a fatal enterprise. The caste Hindus will almost certainly be once more stirred to action, and will at any rate go through the motions of giving effect to the Poona Agreement. (It remains to be seen, however, whether they can even now bring themselves to accept the new relationship with the Depressed Classes whole-heartedly.)

"But, whatever the outcome, the conflict will be remarkable in history not only because of its objects, but because of the means Mr. Gandhi is using in the attack. Rarely has the East seemed so incomprehensible to the Western mind. Mr. Gandhi has set himself a most formidable task, which can fairly be compared to an attempt, in South Africa, to place natives on the same footing as the European population, and, in addition, to induce all the Christian denominations from Roman Catholics to Non-conformists, to share their religious services. It is astonishing that in these circumstances he should, by the simple threat of starving himself, have achieved the measure of success he has already won, and the very possibility that, by the same method, he may yet triumph over the prejudices of three thousand years, must strike European observers as unbelievable. But—though the issue is doubtful—this may happen. It is to be hoped, however, that it will not be necessary for Mr. Gandhi to put his present threat into effect. He could hardly survive another fast."

The *Star* (Johannesburg) writes as follows:—

"General Smuts's message to Mr. Gandhi asking him to desist from risking his life at a time which is critical in the struggle to help the depressed classes in India, will, we hope, not be without effect. Mr. Gandhi has once again threatened to go into starvation, this time for the limited term of three weeks from Monday, and with the specific purpose of a protest against the treatment by the highest castes in India of the lowest. The fact seems to be that he has now set his mind on smashing orthodox Hinduism. He has evolved a new theory that orthodox Hinduism must go if his people are to be saved. He

has, so far as we know, not yet invented a name for this new movement, but his intentions are quite clear, and we should think his prospects of success are slender. There is, admittedly, a good deal in what he says regarding the need of reform, and many learned and thoughtful Indians think with him that the supposed inviolability of Hindu temples and the caste system have done more to retard Indian progress than anything else. Throughout the ages Hinduism has been considerably modified, and as time proceeds it is not too much to say that the ancient superstitions and those somewhat grotesque practices that still form part of this cult will gradually disappear altogether. But to suppose that Mr. Gandhi individually and almost instantaneously will succeed in moulding Hinduism into what he thinks it ought to be would be to overestimate his power.

"The methods he is employing are, like those used in his political campaigns—none of which have been really successful—quite unpractical. He always aims high, not only in principle, but in the sense that the gambler does. It is a question of "neck or nothing" with him, and in every big adventure he has fallen short of being effective, mainly because his theories could not be squared with things as they really are. Unfortunately, with his curious mentality it is possible that he will undertake the ordeal which he has threatened, and in his weak state—though many Eastern ascetics have undergone more without fatal results—the risk is considerable. Here again his impracticability manifests itself, for he must know that Gandhi alive is worth much more to his cause than Gandhi dead, and indeed said so much in his recent message.

"There is always the possibility that he thinks that a supreme sacrifice would have the effect of stirring up those in agreement with him to such action as will realise his object and his ideal. Actually it would be a great pity, for he has contributed much to the world of thought and has virtually created a philosophic or religious system of his own. It is to be hoped that he will live long enough to systematise it and to rid it of those crudities and inconsistencies that have found their way, by force of circumstance perhaps, into a creed where true love of humanity forms a sincere and important part. Incidentally he can play his part in the service of the oppressed classes without continually martyring himself or demanding the dictatorial position which many authoritative Hindus themselves deny him."

Pretoria News has the following peculiar comment to make on Mahatma Gandhi's fast:—

Mahatma Gandhi is an old man at sixty-four years of age. He has begun a fast which can end only one way, and he deliberately courts death to draw world-wide attention to the failure of India to abolish untouchability.....If Gandhi dies, he will have made his most magnificent gesture. The ethics of suicidal behaviour can hardly be reconciled to our ways of thinking. But in India, Gandhi dead will be infinitely more potent, for good or ill, than Gandhi alive and well looked after in Yeravda jail. For in recent years his power has been waning. He has long passed the zenith of his influence. His followers have become critical. What he decides is no longer law to them.....It is not so much untouchability that offends the aged prophet, but the loss of his influence. All through his strange career he has sought to dominate men's minds. He was his own publicity agent, and never has publicity been so well managed. Gandhi would have made millions in the service of commerce. But his aim is to achieve immortality, and to achieve it his whole life

has been elaborately directed. Now the final curtain. India will never forget him if it falls. It is a quarter stroke.

A Spiritual Fast

Mr. L. W. Ritch addressed the following letter to the Editor of the *Rand Daily Mail* :—

"Sir,—While your leading article of this morning displays a breadth of vision and of toleration not always found in press criticisms of India's great son and his conduct, you seemingly experience difficulty in understanding the Mahatma's resolve to undertake a fast which, in all likelihood, will involve his death.

Admittedly, the occidental mind is not infrequently at a loss when seeking to follow the subtleties of oriental psychology. And yet, the idea of vicarious atonement through self-sacrifice should scarcely be so entirely foreign to western thought as to defy comprehension or at least appreciation.

As one who has been privileged to know Mahatma Gandhi intimately, and who recalls other acts of penance done by that saintly man for the misdeeds of those he regarded as "his own," I venture with some confidence, to express the opinion that this contemplated fast is just another sacrificial act to which Gandhi feels moved because of the perversity of his own people, and whereby he hopes to turn their hearts from the sin of unbrotherliness he detects in their conduct towards one another to the virtue of "letting unkindness die."—I am, Yours faithfully.—L. W. RITCH.

Messages From South Africa

At a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress held at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall last Monday under the presidency of Advocate J. W. Godfrey prayers were offered for Mahatma Gandhi and the following resolution was passed unanimously :—

"This meeting places on record its profound sense of sympathy with Mahatma Gandhi in his fast which he has now commenced, and prays Almighty God to grant him the great courage he now needs." The resolution was conveyed with deep and sincere love to Mahatma Gandhi and his wife.

Our correspondent from Johannesburg states that prayer messages were sent to Mahatma Gandhi by the Transvaal Indian Congress, the Hindu Seva Samaj, the Patidar Society and the Indo-European Council.

The South African Indian Congress sent the following message to General Smuts :

"On behalf of the South African Indian Congress as representing the Indian community, we beg to express our gratitude for your cable to Mahatma Gandhi, in which you have so aptly expressed the sentiments of all well-wishers of India and every Indian wherever he may be.

How Gandhiji Commenced His Fast

Mahatma Gandhi spent Sunday, the day before he commenced his fast, in making final preparations for working off correspondents. At Gandhiji's request the doors of Yeravda gaol were rigidly closed to all visitors.

A Renter's message dated Monday from Poona states :—

Gandhiji's cell in Yeravda Gaol was the centre of an impressive scene to-day when the Mahatma began his three weeks' fast in connection with the untouchability campaign.

Gandhiji, whose head was covered with a wet cloth on account of the intense heat, sat in the centre of a large crowd of visitors, including foreign journalists and women.

After prayers and hymns in which all joined, Gandhiji urged his friends to leave him and not to return while he continued his fast.

One by one, his friends silently departed. As the weeping women went out, Gandhiji touched their feet and laid his hands on the shoulders of all the men.

In a statement issued later, Gandhiji said : "Whether I survive or not is of little moment. Without it I would have been useless for further services to the untouchables."

Gandhi stated his "unconditional and irrevocable" fast at noon. He weighed 99lb. and had every confidence of fulfilling the fast.

Gandhiji's Release

A Renter's message from Poona dated Tuesday states :—

Shortly before 9 p.m. on Monday Major Doyle the Inspector General of Prisons, and Major Martin, the Superintendent of Yeravda gaol, entered the prison and five minutes later Gandhiji was led out accompanied by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

Gandhiji was driven from the gaol to Lady Thackersey's bungalow. Gandhiji after his release announced the suspension for a month of the civil disobedience campaign and is reported by Renter to have said :

"I am certain that civil disobedience cannot be withdrawn finally while so many resistors are still in prison. I will not derive any advantage from my release. If during my fast no productive treatment is reached between Congress and the Government, and if the political atmosphere is still murky when I have survived the ordeal I shall invite the Government to take me back to gaol."

It is revealed that Gandhiji sent a telegram to the Government on May 1 stating that he was fasting for reasons wholly unconnected with the Government and solely connected with the untouchability movement.

A Government communique states :

"In view of the nature of the objects of the fast which Gandhi is undertaking and the attitude of mind which it discloses the Government has decided that he should be released."

Indian Government's Policy Unchanged

The release of Gandhi indicates no change in the Government's general policy regarding the release of Civil Disobedience prisoners, states an official communique issued from Simla, says Renter.

The communique adds that the temporary suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement in no way fulfils the conditions which will satisfy the Government.

There is no intention of negotiating with Congress for the withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience movement or of releasing the leaders with a view to arriving at any settlement regarding unlawful activities.

Gandhiji's Progress

Mahatma Gandhi passed Monday, the first day of his fast and the night in restlessness. He is attended by a male nurse and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Lady Vithaldas Thackersey are constantly with him. His son, Devdas and other friends are within call.

On Tuesday morning Gandhiji rose at his usual early hour and had a glass of water. He was feeling much better and was gazing in an extensive view of beautiful country instead of the drab gaol surroundings.

Dr. Deshmukh, a well-known Bombay physician was summoned to Poona and it was pointed out that

the conditions of the present fast are not aggravated by the political negotiations which marked his last fast, but his powers of resistance are weaker.

According to a special message received by us from Poona Mahatma Gandhi's condition at 5-15 p.m. on Tuesday was satisfactory.

News In Brief

A capacity house presided over by Mr. Heaton Nicolls, heard General Smuts speak in the Durban Town Hall on Monday night the 8th instant. Speaking of the coming General Elections, General Smuts said South Africa was being afforded a God-given opportunity of saying farewell to the past years of racial strife. A quarter of a century ago a firm foundation had been laid by the establishment of Union. Now South Africa had the privilege of moving a step further, if it chose coalition rather than the continuation of bitter racialism, which, no doubt, was the disease crippling South Africa body and soul. General Smuts then went on to quote the National Government in Great Britain as a precedent and showed how Stanley Baldwin forewent the opportunity of becoming Prime Minister in order that his country might benefit. Now he himself had been faced with a similar situation and knowing the benefits to be derived from Coalition, he had staked his all, his reputation as a statesman, on Coalition. He wanted South Africa to follow suit.

At the conclusion of his address, which was considerably hampered by numerous senseless interruptions, General Smuts proceeded to answer questions. This he did with considerable tact. An important question, as to what the tenets of his Asiatic policy were, was very tactfully shelved. Not even a single remark was made with reference to the Asiatics in South Africa.

Soorajbally, eldest son of Mr. S. Roopnarain of Sydenham, passed away at Dundee on Thursday the 4th inst., and was buried at Sydenham the following afternoon at 4 p.m. Soorajbally for some time was a pupil at Sastri College where he was very popular. Failing health, however, forced his parents to send him to Dundee where he peacefully breathed his last. To the grieved parents, brothers and relatives we extend our heartfelt sympathy. Among those present at the funeral were Messrs. A. Dhooan, P. R. Pather, S. Rustomjee, J. W. Godfrey, L. Panday, P. B. Singh, W. Seethal, B. Woodith, G. Mubgar, N. Gunga, G. Seeraj, G. Sewpaul, O. M. Pillay, K. A. Chin, N. Sullapher. Floral tributes were received from the following:—The father, Mr. S. Roopnarain, Rajpaul and Regnath, V. S. Naidoo, Mr. and Mrs. Keshwar, R. Mahabeer, Poken Bro, the D.D.L.R.A., N. Gunga, Mr. Sullapen and the Natal Indian Football Association.

After over ten months' service, the food kitchen run under the aegis of the Sir Kurma Reddi Unemployment and Relief Fund, is being closed. Over 43,000 meals, it is stated, have been given to families in distress. This decision is the result of the opening of special relief works for Indians.

Indian Child Welfare Society Centre 150, BROOK STREET, DURBAN

Open daily, Monday to Saturday, 8-30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Infants, young children, nursing and expectant mothers.

Lady doctors give free attendance.

Tuesday morning 8-30 o'clock. Friday afternoon 3 o'clock.

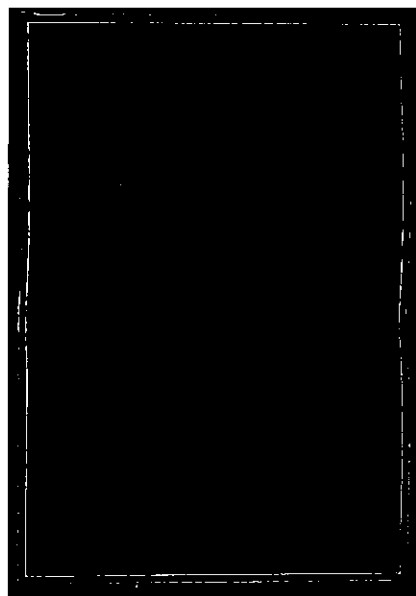
Obituary

Mrs. S. Godfrey

It is with the deepest sense of regret that we record the demise of the late Mrs. Caroline Godfrey, widow of the late Subban Godfrey, who was a well-known pioneer of Indian education in Natal, in its cradle days. Mrs. Godfrey was born in Hazirabagh, India, in 1857 and at an early age went to Mauritius and became an inmate of the Powder Mills Orphanage, where she was educated and later met and married her late husband.

She came out to South Africa as a passenger with 6 children in the sailing vessel "Actea" and at once became the centre of Indian spiritual life. She together with her husband induced the late Dr. Rev. L. P. Booth, to open the St. Aidan's Mission, which still exists to this day. She did all the pioneer work amongst the Indian Christians and all those who came into contact with her would not but admire her kindness of spirit and her sympathetic nature.

Her ministrations did not cease with the Indian Christians, but Hindus and Mahomedans soon learned to respect and honour her and many a person will remember for a long time her good courses and generous acts of charity all done without ostentation and without expectation of reward.



The Late Mrs. S. Godfrey.

For the past 6 years, she was almost a cripple and blind as well, but she bore her afflictions with Christian fortitude. She never complained and set an example of patience and love to all who visited her. She will be missed by many, but her memory will long live as an outstanding Indian lady who gave to South Africa able sons and daughters whose names are known throughout South Africa.

She leaves 3 sons and 5 daughters, numerous grandchildren and several great grandchildren scattered far and wide overseas to mourn their loss. She helped to give her children the best education. Four of her sons have qualified in Europe, two as medical men, two as Barristers, while two of her daughters have gained diplomas in music. Her family may therefore be said to be among the most cultured of the Indian families in Natal.

The general public of all communities attended the funeral in hundreds as a last testimony of their love and esteem to the deceased.

The following were the wreaths tendered:—Sons and daughters, James, Jane and family, Willie, Kitty and Ernest, Samuel, May and family, Jim, Grace and family,

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Osy, Beaty, Sonny and Joyce, Mercia, Leo, Jasper, Kathleen, Faith, Leslie, Reggie, Harry John, Mrs. Louis Joseph, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Paul, M. Felix, S. G. Abrahams, Samuel Sylvia and family, Mrs. Lazarus, Jamal, Gandabhai, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Singh, Lister Lily and family, Arthurs, Ruth and family, Mrs. Naidoo and family, Natal Indian Congress, Staffs of Advocate J. W. Gcdfrey, Wm. Palmer & Son, Kajee Bros., Sorabjee Rustomjee, Mrs. Rowley and family, God-child Francis Ephraim, Mrs. John Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. E. Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. V. Lawrence and family, Mr. and Mrs. Reddy, Zeleka, Mr. Hardaker, Rev. and Mrs. Townsend, Joe and Mary Mayet, Miss Mayet, Dr. K. M. Seedat, S. N. Kara, Advocate and Mrs. B. Gabriel, Advocate and Mrs. A. Christopher, Mr. and Mrs. Dada Osman, Mr. and Mrs. O. H. A. Jhaveria, Mr. Dan Samuel, Mr. and Mrs. S. Warner, Royeppen Bros., Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Pillay, Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Maghraj and family, Mr. and Mrs. J. Singh and family, Mr. and Mrs. L. Panday, Mr. and Mrs. Parmasir and family, Mr. A. I. Kajee, Mr. M. K. Lodia and family, Mr. Dhupelia, Rajcoomar and staff, J. Philogene and many others.

Sporting News

A well contested football match was played at Ermelo on the 30th April between the Ermelo Indian School and the Bethal Indian School. The match was interesting right through. Both teams proved masters of the game. Although Ermelo boys were far better in combination and ought to have scored more goals, their weakness at the goal mouth was a great defect. The whistle was in the hands of Mr. Mahomed Jassat who ably performed the duty of a referee. The match ended in a draw of one goal each. The return match will be played on Bethal ground on the 24th inst. The principal of Ermelo school takes this opportunity of thanking the Indian public of Ermelo who helped him to defray the expenses.

The following is the Senior League Log (D.D.I.F.A.):

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Pts.
Sydenham	6	4	0	2	10
Daffodils	6	3	1	2	8
Sastri College	5	3	2	0	6
Grey Stars	5	3	2	0	6
Blue Bells	4	4	1	0	6
Avondales	6	2	3	0	4
Pirates	5	1	2	2	4
Stamford Hill	4	1	3	0	2
Sydenham	5	0	5	0	0

An unusually large crowd of boxing enthusiasts gathered in the Durban Town Hall, on Saturday night 6th inst., to witness one of the finest and most successful non-European boxing tournaments hitherto staged in Durban. The programme was a bit long-winded and terminated at 11-45 p.m. Boxing fans were thus provided with quantity as well as with quality. The contests were exciting, especial interest having being taken in the two visitors who participated in the bouts of the evening.

In the first bout Tiger Shaik won a decisive victory over David Savarie who threw up the sponge in the 3rd round. Joe Aaron in the next contest also easily overcame his lighter opponent K. S. Thomas, who despite the handicap of weight, Pluckily persisted to the end. Aaron won on points. The 3rd bout was one of hard hitting. Mannie Dixon, in his second professional fight won a well earned victory on points over David Govinder: Dixon seems to possess natural inclinations

towards the ring and with proper tuition, should go far.

In the second star bout of the evening of 12-2 minutes rounds, Bennie Singh (Natal's idol) had a run-away victory on points over Battling Hoskins, the Transvaal light weight champion. Hoskins was continuously on the defensive while Bennie used his aggressive left with force and to advantage. Hoskins made several blind swipes and evidently lacks ring experience. Bennie on the other hand, has improved immensely; he has become more aggressive.

The last and star bout of the evening was one of 12-3 minutes rounds between Bud Gengan, the Natal champion and Sunny Thomas of the Cape. From the outset Sunny showed aggressive qualities but evidently, in the opening rounds, was conserving his forces. After 6th round Sunny took the offensive and thence lead easily till the final gong. Sunny is no doubt a popular fighter and Durban will be pleased to see him in the ring again.

Congratulations are due to the promoters: Messrs. M. Mohamed and J. B. Pandey on the success of the tournament.

It has been intimated that Kid Mothie Singh, who is said to have drawn with all Brown, will be in Durban towards the end of May and will fight in the Durban Town Hall on July 8th. This date, however, is provisional.

Useful Instructions

Mr. S. Roopsingh of Chakas Kraal, who has recently returned from India where he had been on a pilgrimage, says he has gained a great deal of experience. He visited many of the important towns and was surprised to see the enormous population and the very active life led by the people. He found India to be a good market for South African fruits. The following is a copy of useful instruction Mr. Singh saw framed in a place in a state near Karachi.

In the pocket of the Hon. Allen Stephen who was drowned when "The Henry Clay" was burnt on the Hudson several years ago, was found a printed slip apparently cut from a newspaper of which the following is a copy. It is worthy to be engraved on every young man's heart:

1. Make few promises.
2. Always speak the truth.
3. Never speak evil of anyone.
4. Keep good company or none.
5. Live up to your engagements.
6. Never play a game of chance.
7. Drink no kind of intoxicating liquor.
8. Good character is above all things else.
9. Keep your own secrets if any.
10. Never borrow if you can possibly help it.
11. Do not marry until you are able to support a wife.
12. Keep yourself innocent if you (can) would be happy.
13. When you speak to a person look him in the face.
14. Make no haste to be rich if you would prosper.
15. Ever live (misfortunes excepted) within your income.
16. Save what you are going to spend when you are old.
17. Avoid temptation through fear you may not withstand it.
18. Never run into debt until you see a way to get out of it.
19. Small and steady gains give competency with a tranquil mind.
20. Good company and good conversation are the spews of virtue.
21. Your character cannot be essentially injured except by your own acts.