

Indian Opinion

No. 2—Vol. XXXII.

Friday, January 12th, 1934

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

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Notes and News

Refreshment Room Licences

OUR attention was drawn to a form, imposing certain restrictions on Refreshment Room licence holders, which applicants for such licences are required to sign by the Durban Licensing Officer. We are informed by the Licensing Officer in that connection that the form is one which has been in use for many years and that in cases where food and drink is supplied to Natives, for consumption on the premises, an Eating House licence is required.

The Prince's Visit And The Agent

ARRANGEMENTS are being made for the entertainment of His Royal Highness Prince George who is due to reach Durban on March 5. It has been the custom hitherto when such visits of the Royalty have taken place to present addresses of welcome at the Town Hall where representatives of every section of the community are allowed to be present and then public functions have taken place, generally in the nature of sports, where an opportunity is afforded such personages to come in touch with the people. In the present case, however, we find the following stated in a letter received from Mr. W. J. H. Farrell (Under-Secretary to the Prime Minister) by the Durban Town Council:

"A request has been received through Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, the Indian Agent, that His Royal Highness should attend an "At Home" for the purpose of meeting the leaders of the Indian population, and the Prime Minister desires that this should, if possible, be included in your programme. For this purpose will you kindly get into communication with the Natal Indian Congress?"

One would like to know why the Agent has gone out of his way to make a request for an "At Home" for the purpose of meeting the "leaders" of the Indian population when the Prime Minister has clearly stated, that "strictly sectional functions should be avoided as the Prince desires to see and

mix with the people." The Agent surely has more important work to do than to arrange for public functions for a section of the people, and in the present case, with the obvious intention of giving recognition to the Congress whose influence among the people is waning and thus to set up one section of the community against another? We notice also that in the Johannesburg programme a Coloured and Indian function is arranged at the showground. Nothing is known whether Indians will be allowed to present their welcome address to His Royal Highness at the City Hall as in the past.

Mrs. Benson Returned

THE Indian Community will be glad to learn that in the Municipal Elections for Ward V. Greyville, Durban, held on Wednesday, Jan. 10, Mrs. E. A. Benson was returned with a clear majority of 706 votes. Only 2,569 went to the poll. Mrs. E. A. Benson, a former Town Councillor, has always been keenly interested in Indians and is at present actively associated with the Indian Child Welfare Society in Durban. We heartily congratulate Mrs. Benson on her return and we feel sure she will prove a friend of the Indian community even as she has done in the past.

Non-European Conference

AT the fourth non-European conference, at which the Coloured, Malay, Native and Indian communities were represented by over 50 delegates from various parts of the Union and which was held in Port Elizabeth under the chairmanship of Professor D. D. T. Jabavu of Fort Hare, the following was among the resolutions passed:

"That in order to fight the evil of the all-white labour policies of private concerns, this conference resolves to boycott all goods made by such firms, and that a black list be compiled of all goods made by all-white labour firms and circulated among our people." A resolution was also passed urging the Government to introduce legislation to fix a minimum wage for unskilled and farm labour, to abandon the "all-white" policy because it was economically unsound in this country where the overwhelming population was non-white, to grant equal opportunities to non-Europeans for employment and promotion in State services, to grant equal subsidies for whites and non-whites on relief works, and also equal opportunities.

Population Of Johannesburg

THE estimated population of Johannesburg on June 30, 1933 was:—

Whites	...	...	213,220
Natives	...	...	154,600
Eurafricans	...	...	14,000
Asiatics	...	...	10,000

391,820

Official figures hitherto unpublished show, says the *Sunday Times*, that at a very modest estimate, the population, counting all races, should be 402,000 at the end of 1934, including 220,000 Europeans. In the circumstances Europeans should not have any reason to grouse about the Asiatic menace.

Mr. C. S. Ricketts, O.B.E.

Mr. C. S. Ricketts who is the oldest member of the staff of the Government of India Agency in this country and who has won through his amiable nature the affection of all those who have come in contact with him has been made an O.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List. We heartily congratulate Mr. Ricketts on the honour conferred on him.

India Team To Visit Union

Owing to the efforts of Mr. P. B. Singh who is on a short visit to India the Indian Football Association, we understand, has accepted an invitation from the South African Indian Football Association for a representative all-India team to visit the Union and play against teams of South African Indians. The team will leave Bombay in May.

The Executive of the local Football Association is busy arranging a programme to give a right royal time to their would-be guests. The Rev. B. L. E. Sigamoney from Johannesburg and Mr. R. Mooloo from Pretoria were in Durban during the week-end and took part in the discussions.

The Cause Of India's Poverty

The New Asia, an organ of the New Asia Association standing for the complete independence of Asia, published in Tokyo, writes:—

The British Viceroy in India receives a salary of Rs. 21,000 per month besides many other indirect allowances. The British Prime Minister gets £5,000 per year, that is about Rs. 5,400 per month. These figures when worked out make a startling disclosure. The Viceroy receives Rs. 700 per day against India's average income of less than annas (i.e., one-eighth of a rupee) two per day per man, whereas the British Prime Minister gets Rs. 180 per day against Great Britain's average income of nearly Rs. 2 per day. Thus the Viceroy is getting more than 5,000 times India's average income, whilst the Prime Minister is getting only 90 times Britain's average income. Yet there are people who cannot understand the cause of India's poverty under British rule!

The same paper writes about Africa: "Before the Christians went to Africa, the Africans had lands but no Bibles; now they have the Bibles but no lands! How sublimely true!"

There Should Be No Discrimination On Grounds Of Race

The same paper referring to Indians in South Africa writes:—

The Indians in South Africa are being persecuted by a section of the white population of the country who are obsessed with anti-Asian hatred. In the past, the Indians were used as indentured labourers for the development of that country. But later on these Indians after fulfilling their contract through perseverance succeeded to become economically independent as farmers and traders. Success of these people led to jealousy of the South African whites who want of their superior civilisation. They enacted laws to prohibit immigration of free Asian labour in South Africa. They adopted various measures to check the increase of the Indian population in South Africa by imposing many prejudicial restrictions so that Indian women could not come freely into the country. They resorted to the despicable method of segregation of the Indian population so far as their residence and businesses were concerned. Lately the South African Government endeavoured to reduce Indian population—especially those Indians who were born in South Africa—by inaugurating a so-called "Repatriation Scheme," according to which an Indian would be given a certain sum of money if he left the country for India. This abominable plan which violates the birthright of the South African born Indians and domicile right of other Indians was vehemently opposed by all Indians, though the British Government in India accepted it.

Now a new scheme of "colonisation of British Guiana by South Africans" has been put forward by the South African Government, and a commission has undertaken to investigate the possibility of it. Let us hope that the South African Indians will not become victims of this diabolical policy. If the Indians agree to any such scheme, they will not only betray themselves but establish a precedent which

may serve as prejudicial to the interests of other Asiatic peoples in Africa. We are opposed to policies of special discrimination against Asian peoples owing to their race, in any part of the world. The Indian and other Asian statesmen should make the question of racial equality one of the cardinal points of their international policies.

THE LIMIT!

THE Finance Committee of the Durban Town Council has approved of the Borough Engineer's recommendation of reducing the pay of Indian relief workers from 3s. to 2s. 6d. a day. At present such Indians as are engaged on relief work receive half their pay from a Government subsidy, and the other half from the Borough funds. By cutting the wage down by sixpence a day, the Corporation will save just under a thousand pounds a year. In advocating this economy the Borough Engineer further argues that Indian workers in the Corporation regular employ receive £3 6s. monthly for a working week of five and a half days, while relief workers, at three shillings a day, earn £3 5s. monthly, working only five days a week. The relief worker is therefore, urges Mr. Watson, better off than the regular worker.

The Indian is like the stepchild. He is given bread not out of any love for him but in order not to appear shameless in the public eye, but attempts are made, nevertheless, to snatch it away from him at the first available moment.

Our criticism of the Borough Engineer's recommendation, however mild and reasonable we may attempt to be, is bound to be taken as partial. But that certainly cannot be said of our contemporary the *Natal Advertiser*, which has an editorial on the subject in the issue of January 9, under the caption "The Limit!" We do hope its scathing remarks will go home to the Durban Town Council. "Indian votes or no Indian votes, it is to be hoped that some voices will be raised in the Town Council in opposition to the Borough Engineer's recommendations," says the paper. To the argument that the relief worker is better off than the regular worker, our contemporary says:—"This may be; though it is patent to everyone that with the relief worker the slogan is "no work no pay." The relief worker has no permanence in his toil. If he should be laid off, his money ceases; and circumstances are easily imagined in which his month's wages may be very much lower than that of his compatriot "on the strength." But this is not the gravamen of this protest. We say without hesitation that to cut a daily relief wage of three shillings down by sixpence is an unwarrantable economy that can neither be justified on material or on moral grounds. We know all there is to be said about the "Corporation stroke"; about the fact that Indian labour in the Corporation (like a great deal of European labour) is not conspicuously energetic or profitable; about the fact that a certain amount of community benevolence underlies the provision of work at a time like the present. But how many of the economists who are likely to support this suggestion have looked fairly and squarely at the other sides of the question? People complain about the filth, squalor and degeneration of the Indian in our midst. What escape is there from these things at three shillings a day, and what lesser escape is there at half a crown

a day? It may be argued that native labour can be got for the lesser figure. But do we want the Indian definitely to relinquish all efforts to live other than as the native? Do we want to drive him to primitivism and then complain that his primitive ways are offensive to our delicate Western senses?

From many points of view all relief work is wrong, and most relief scales of wages are wrong. We are not of those who want to see relief wages so high that men will prefer this kind of employment to regular work for non-State or non-public concerns. But more detestable still is the parsimony that would cut by sixpence a day what is virtually an irreducible minimum; and we are frankly sorry for a community or a Town Council that would preen itself on saving a thousand pounds a year by parings of this nature. Worst of all is that logic which argues that a man should have a starvation wage reduced because his rate of starvation is a fraction slower than that of some other poor devil who works for the same communal employer.

If the Indian relief worker is not worth his salt then give him no salt. In other words, do not employ him. But if Durban decides it is better to keep some hundreds of Amistias at work rather than see them fall dead in their tracks from starvation, do not, for Heaven's sake, let us claim that we can no longer afford one and sixpence a day towards their relief wage, but must clip threepence off this amount, and thus save the borough a grand total of less than two pounds ten shillings a day!"

The Town Council would certainly not be setting a very good example to private individuals to improve the lot of their employees if it begrudges even the niggardly wage of 1s. 6d. a day it gives to its Indian relief workers and that too to a small fraction of a very large number of unemployed.

Community's Protest

In a letter addressed to the Town Clerk, the Colonial Born and Settlers' Indian Association emphatically protests against the proposed cut of 6d. a day in the wages of the Indian relief workers.

The statement reads: "The only ground on which the Borough Engineer appears to base his recommendation is that the relief worker is receiving a wage higher than the municipal worker. Our Association feels very strongly on the matter, for, a casual record of the number of Indian unemployed in Durban showed the figure at over 4,000. The number of unemployed that was given relief work is only 350, which barely touches the fringe of the question. The relief worker has no permanency of employment and your Council has already decided, we learn, not to replace any wastages.

"Our Association recently assisted the Revenue Department in the inquiry of cases of the relief workers for exemption from the payment of personal tax, and nearly every case proved that the wage the relief worker was earning was hardly sufficient to pay for the upkeep of his family.

"We would say that it is extremely cruel to deduct 6d. of the daily wage of a worker who, after having been unemployed for a considerable period, is given a temporary employment. We trust that the Council will not support the recommendation of the Borough Engineer.

Hawkers And Pedlars

Further Areas To Be Prohibited More Unemployment

Messrs. A. Christopher, P.R. Pather and Raghava from the Colonial born Settlers Indian Association waited in deputation on the Natal Provincial Executive on Tuesday last on a Bye-law submitted by the Durban Corporation for the approval of His Honour the Administrator Mr. Watson.

The Bye-law prohibits Hawkers and Pedlars from vending their wares in certain additional streets of Durban. A considerable number of Indians—men and women—from the early days of Durban have been allowed to hawk fruits in the streets of Durban. Some little time back for the first time hawking in certain streets was prohibited notwithstanding protest being made.

The further prohibition will throw quite a number of Indians into the ranks of the Indian unemployed who already run into thousands.

The Provincial Executive gave the Deputation a sympathetic hearing and promised duly to communicate its decision.

Natal Provincial Conference

The Colonial Born And Settlers' Indian Association

The presidential address and the resolutions passed at the first Natal Provincial Conference of the Colonial Born and Settlers' Indian Association held on Dec. 31 and January 1 at the Hindu Tamil Institute appeared in our last week's issue.

Lively discussion took place on all the resolutions but particularly on the resolution referring to the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa which took half a day.

The original resolution moved by Mr. C. N. M. Khan and seconded by Mr. E. M. Chin was as follows:—

"That this Conference in view of the fact that the Agent of the Government India does not represent the majority of the Indians in the Union hereby requests the Government of India to recall the Agent."

Strong views were expressed both for and against the resolution. There was one section which believed that there was nothing to be gained by condemning the Agent and that we should go on with our constructive work unmindful of whether the Agent ignores us or not.

There was another section that felt that the resolution was too strongly worded and that it should be passed in a milder form and there was a third that thought the resolution was not strong enough.

Mr. P. R. Pather moved the following amendment:—

"That this Conference is strongly of the opinion that the present Agent of the Government of India is not working in the best interests of the Indian community as a whole, for in matters vitally affecting our people he is totally ignoring the wishes and aspirations of the majority thus creating a division in the community, and urges that the Indian Government and the people of India should take cognizance of the position created in the Indian community and take such steps as would prevent the Agent from taking sides with and serving a small minority against the majority.

In moving the above amendment Mr. Pather said to ask for the termination of the Agency would mean the termination of the Agreement. The present Agent is not serving the best interests of the community and the first step should be to bring the fact to the notice of the Government and the people of India.

Mr. Manilal Gandhi said this was a subject on which one could let go but it was yet a very delicate one and one had to speak thoughtfully. He did not agree, however, with those who expressed the fear that with the end of the Agency the community would be in a precarious position. The Agency had been established for the last few years but our position was none the worse before it. In fact with the advent of the Agency in this country we are beginning to lose our manhood.

We have become so utterly helpless that we cannot do anything without the help of *Sirkar Ma Bap*. While our people in India are struggling to be independent we in this country are going the opposite direction. We are fast losing our dignity and self-respect and yet we claim to be nationals of South Africa. The Government and the people of this country will certainly not think much of us when they find us always approaching them sheltered under the wings of the Agent.

He did not think, the speaker went on to say, that an Agent in this country would not do good to us. The right type of Agent would certainly be able to do an amount of good to the community but he regretted to say that the present Agent was not so. He (the speaker) was better able to say this because he had tried his best to work in harmony both with the Agent and the Congress but had utterly failed.

The speaker, however, did not agree with the resolution moved by Mr. C. N. M. Khan but supported Mr. Pather's amendment.

Mr. A. Christopher, the president, spoke of the disadvantages we had to suffer owing to the presence of the Agent in this country. "Because of the presence of the Agent," he said, you cannot educate public opinion in India neither can you protest against any anti-Indian legislation. He instanced the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act and said, we told the Government of India Delegation in Capetown in clear terms that we did not want the rights of those who had properties to be protected but we wanted a common right for all to enjoy. We, however, now find that the Agent is helping in the enforcement of the Act notwithstanding the fact that the community with one voice had condemned it, and we are able to do nothing because of the presence of the Agent. A smoke screen of tea parties is raised, the speaker went on further to say, to show to the outside world what a great change there is in the atmosphere, but how many Europeans have invited Indians to similar tea-parties? he asked. "The present Agent," the speaker said, "belonged to the ruling class of India and has been a Government official all his life, Government men have no feeling. They are not dependent upon the public. The present Agent is not large hearted enough. Officials in India are accustomed to the divide and rule policy and the same is being done here. There is now a rumour that a title is to be conferred on a supporter of the Congress and the Agent. If this method is to be introduced in this country it is going to destroy us." In conclusion Mr. Christopher said, that though within his heart he did not at all feel satisfied he thought it was best for the time being to pass the amendment moved by Mr. Pather.

Among the others who contributed to the discussion were the Rev. Sundram, Messrs. V. Raghavjee, P. M. Pillay, M. B. Maharaj, Roopasingh, Lutchman Singh, G. Singh, S. L. Singh, A. Haffjee, D. S. Ohetty, Nayannah Raj, Bhushan, S. P. Nicholas, Thomas Gabriel, Nathoo Morar and A. B. Naidoo.

The amendment was put the vote and was passed with an overwhelming majority.

All the other resolutions were passed unanimously expecting the one asking for the introduction of Afrikaans in Indian Schools. There was a section that felt that it was taxing the brains of little children who after their English tuition had to undergo private tuition in the vernacular. Their case was different to those whose mother-tongue was English or Afrikaans for

while the latter had to learn only two languages the former had to learn three.

The majority, however, were in favour of the resolution.

The work of the Conference terminated with well-deserved complimentary remarks for the officials of the Association particularly Mr. D. S. Ohetty, who was responsible for cyclostyling the whole of the booklet containing the report of the activities of the Association since its inception and Messrs A. Christopher, S. L. Singh, A. Haffjee, P. R. Pather, P. G. Naicker, Mohan, Mr. Christopher's energetic clerk, Mr. Charles, members of Mr. Christopher's staff and other volunteers who had been working day and night to make the Conference a success.

Asiatic Trading In Lichtenburg A Town Council Protest

A vigorous protest against a proposal to erect a new store for occupation by an Asiatic, on the North side of the Market Square, was lodged at the ordinary meeting of the Town Council of Lichtenburg. The matter rose as a result of an application made by an Asiatic for a general dealer's licence for a building, still to be erected by Mrs. Delarey Morkel. Mr. P. J. Huyser explained that although a new licence was applied for, the premises would be occupied by an Indian who had been trading in Lichtenburg for many years. It was not a new business, but merely the removal of one that already existed.

"The Licences Control Ordinance of 1932 lays down that the Council can in its discretion refuse or grant a licence," declared Mr. A. I. Ludlok. "This gives the Council power to act as they deem fit." A man who was refused a licence on the ground that there were already a sufficient number of such licences could appeal to the Administrator. If the Administrator granted the licence, they as councillors had done their duty to the European business man, who to-day was being driven out of Lichtenburg by Asiatic traders. Even if it cost the Council a few thousands pounds, they must fight for the European business man.

Mr. P. J. Huyser said: "We are refusing licences which, in my opinion, we are not at liberty to refuse." Mr. Ludlok reported that if the store were opened on the Market Square, three of the European business men would have to close their doors.

A proposal that the licence should be refused was made by Mr. O. J. Grove, and seconded by Mr. Ludlok. Mr. Grove said they must at least keep the Indians out of the centre of the town. Mr. Huyser then pointed out that the erection of building had not even been started, and he considered the application should be forwarded to the Building and Health Committee. Mr. Grove then withdrew his motion, and the matter was referred to this Committee.

Earlier in the evening another application made by Mr. M. Moosa for a general dealer's licence in respect of premises known as London House was rejected by six votes to three, the minority consisting of the Mayor (Mr. J. P. J. Conrad), Mr. P. J. Huyser and Mr. O. W. de Klerk.—*The Star*.

[Note.—In connection with the application of Mr. M. Moosa, we learn, that until last year Mr. Moosa was trading under the name of his wife. His wife died in that year and Mr. Moosa applied for a transfer of the licence in his name as successor to Mrs. Moosa but the Council has refused to grant it, without assigning any reason. It is learnt that the application was to be re-considered by the Council. — Ed. I.O.]

Differential Treatment In Post Offices

Mr. Justice Gardiner's Judgment In Appellate Division

(Continued from week before last)

To my mind this relegation of Indians to a non-European counter is humiliating treatment. Lord de Villiers C. J., in the passage I have cited above, declined to ignore the colour prepossession or prejudice which exists in South Africa, and I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that the instruction in question is actuated by the circumstances that a large number of Europeans object to being brought into contact in public offices with non-Europeans, and that they regard the latter as being of a lower order of civilisation. It was suggested in due course of argument that the division in the post office might be based upon distinction of language. But the Postmaster-General does not say this and in my mind it would be impossible for him to say it. There is nothing in common between the Bantu language and the language of India. There is only one attendant at the European counter at Pietersburg. It is most unlikely that he would know both a Bantu dialect and also some language of India. But if such a linguist is in attendance at Pietersburg, it is impossible to believe that a person equally gifted will be found at each of the "hundreds of other offices in the Union" to which according to the Postmaster-General the instruction has been issued. An Indian as a rule is more likely to make himself understood at a counter where the attendant has to speak the two official European languages of the Union than at a counter where the attendant speaks Xosa or some other Bantu language. And the same thing will apply in the case of a native, if the attendant at the non-European counter is appointed because of his knowledge of an Indian language. In view of the prevalent feeling as to colour, in view of the numerous statutes treating non-Europeans as belonging to an inferior order of civilisation, any fresh classification on colour lines can, to my mind, be interpreted as a fresh instance of relegation of Asiatics and natives to a lower order, and this I consider humiliating treatment. Such treatment is an impairment of the *dignitas* of the person affected, and it is the legislature only that can cause that impairment.

On these principles the instruction would be invalid as regards the native as well as the Indian. We are, however, not now concerned with the native, and, for all I know, there may be some unrepealed law of the Transvaal Republic which authorises the distinction in his case. But no statutory authority has been cited to us for the impairment of his *dignitas* is, it seems to me, even greater than in the case of the native. For while the Asiatic is treated by our legislation as being below the white man, the native is being treated as being of yet a lower order. The *dignitas* of the Indian would be lowered by excluding him from the European counter. It is still further lowered by relegating him to the counter provided for the native.

I come now to consider some of the cases in which the validity of a colour distinction has been considered. In a number of the cases cited in argument the decision could be justified on the ground that the treatment accorded to black and white was unequal, and with these I shall not deal. But there are cases in which the view was taken that classification on the basis of colour was *per se* invalid. In *Williams & Adepdorff v. Johannesburg Municipality* (1918 T.P.D. 104) the Ordinance which allowed

according to the finding of the Court on appeal, could authorise the bye-law in question, gave the respondent Municipality the right to work trams for public use. The Municipality made a by-law providing for the setting apart of certain trams for the use of Europeans only and of other trams for the use of coloured persons only. It was held that the bye-laws were bad on the ground that it made a colour distinction, and the Court did not enter into the question of equal treatment. In *R. v. Platjes* (1910, E.D.L. 63) a municipal bye-law provided that "no person shall bathe in any public stream except in such places as may be appointed or approved by the said Council." The Council appointed as follows: "The hole at the poplars is only to be used as a swimming place for Europeans; beneath the poplars for coloured people."

It will be seen that not only was a bathing place appointed for Europeans, but also one for coloured people, and so far as the report shows there was no inequality in the treatment of the two races. Nevertheless a conviction of a native bathing at the European pool was set aside, Graham J. holding that the Municipality had no right to discriminate between Europeans and Natives, and to make the character of the set depend upon the colour of the person committing it. In *Ebrahim v. Licensing Officer, Pietermaritzburg* (1925 N.P.D. 222) certain ordinances enabled a borough council to issue a charge for licences for boarding and of lodging houses and/or refreshment rooms, tea rooms, native eating houses, Indian eating houses. The respondent Council made bye-laws defining a refreshment room as a European eating house, and forbade the supply herein of food or drink to non-Europeans. An Indian eating house was defined in one of the Ordinances as a place where food and drink was supplied to Indians, but was not sold to Indians exclusively. The applicant applied for a refreshment room licence, but this was refused him because he intended, primarily and principally, to do business with Indians. The Court held that the municipal bye-laws were *ultra vires* saying that the Municipality had no right to discriminate between different sections of the community. Dove-Wilson J.P. was careful to add: "There is here no question of any higher licence fee being exigible because of Indians being catered for on the premises, because I understand that licences for refreshment rooms and Indian refreshment rooms in the borough are the same." He also pointed out that there was nothing to restrict an Indian eating house to supplying Indians only. For the same fees, therefore, as was charged for a refreshment room licence the applicant could have obtained an Indian eating house licence, and supplied both Indians and Europeans. All that he suffered by the distinction drawn by the Municipality was the stigma attached to the name Indian eating house, just as in the present case all that the applicant has suffered is the stigma attached to the name "non-Europeans." No case has been brought to our notice where a distinction based on race has been upheld, except *George v. Pretoria Municipality* (1916 T.P.D. 501), and there special statutory authority existed for the bye-law in question. We have, therefore, three cases where race distinction *per se* apart from any inequality, has been held invalid, and we have no case to the contrary. This Court is of course not bound by these cases, but it is some satisfaction to me to know that the view I have taken is in accordance with what hitherto has been the trend of judicial opinion in South Africa.

In my opinion the appeal should be dismissed with costs.

Current Topics

(By BHUMASOOR)

Agent For India

If one were to judge from the arguments used by the different speakers at the recent conference re the Agent and his Office one would be inclined to conclude that there are reasons to believe that there is something wrong in the State of Denmark. Time I believe is a good healer for many ills in life and time will only prove to us what's what. Let us wait and see.

Mozambique Bananas

This was a question which was also debated at great length at the recent Conference. It was pointed out during the course of discussion how the Natal farmers are suffering on account of the Mozambique Treaty although they have the right bananas, the right flavour, the right size, yet they could not compete with the other because of the concession they get from the Government. This is a matter where a number of farmers should organise in building up a trade on co-operative basis with depots in different centres of the Union. They should get the taste of Natal bananas. I understand there is a move in that direction.

Afrikaans

I was interested to note a very keen debate for the introduction of Afrikaans at the recent Conference. It was argued that since it is the official language it should be introduced in our schools. On the other hand it was pointed out that it is not the high Dutch but a mixture and as such it is no use in any other country than South Africa. This would be more of a burden to the Indian child when he has to learn his vernacular besides the English. Then also as the present teachers are not bi-lingual it would be difficult for the Government to introduce the taal unless they replace the Indian teachers with bi-lingual teachers which seems impossible, but the House was so convinced that they adopted the resolution. Well, it seems I will have to learn a few words to embody in my next notes.

Personal Tax

This is a tax which hits the poor Indian very hard. An Indian who works in the estates, corporation or as a menial servant earns about £2, and he has in most cases to keep a family on this meagre wage. It is because he is provided with rations and quarters that you still find him there. This tax is the most cruel imposition and a parallel of which is hard to find. To take away 50% of one's monthly wages as a tax is to leave the taxpayer in a very precarious position!

Imagine half of a white man's monthly wages being taken away by the State; the consequences would naturally lead to a bloody revolution.

This is the position in which the Indians are placed in Natal. The Conference passed a resolution the other day, that any Indian who is earning less than £4 a month should be exempted, so that Indians earning above that amount may contribute something towards the Government's coffers. This is as it should be. Will the authorities re-view the position?

That £6000

Reference was made by Advocate Mr. Albert Christopher, D.O.M. in his presidential address that £6,000 was donated by Mr. Andrew Weir of the

India-Africa Line for an Indian hospital. The community would like to know more about this donation, its conditions and to whom it was entrusted. The man in the street hears that it was afterwards unconditionally made over to the local rice importers and because two of the public stalwarts would not sign the deed of acceptance, the matter is hanging fire. We should like to know more about it. It is worth knowing.

British Guiana

This country has not only produced such able men as the Hon. Mr. Veerasamy, Dr. Nunan and Mr. Luckoo, K.C., but also a Mottee Kid Singh, the champion pugilist who has been in our midst, defying all comers with the sleeping draught.

P.S.C. Results

The other day I saw the results of this examination. It was gratifying to find so many children getting over this, the first hurdle in the race to become useful members of the State. I, with the little experience that I have, might state that some of the children who will get their continuation certificates will not be able to continue their education for want of means. There is no provision in the secondary school to admit them as indigent children, so they drop out. It seems to be a pity to allow industrious and intelligent lads to call a halt. I think the leaders ought to make some representation on this very important question. Meanwhile, may I appeal to Kakaji's educational trust to find out such indigent children and provide them with fees or books or both so that they may continue their studies for a few years more. I do not suggest that all indigent children should be taken on but certainly those who are industrious, intelligent and obedient.

The Report

I expect others like myself are anxiously waiting to see the report of the Colonisation Enquiry Committee. It was announced that the report would be out in January. I hope it will be worthy of its authors.

St. Aidan's Jubilee

It is 50 years now since the St. Aidan's Mission was started in Durban. The members, the other day, celebrated its jubilee. Years ago, the Rev. Canon Booth—a particular friend of Mahatma Gandhi—laid its foundation. We, who do not belong to the Church, will remember Dr. Booth's free dispensary, his hospital, his schools and his interest in the first ambulance corps during the Boer War. Subsequently his good work was carried by Canon Smith who established a network of schools in Durban and Greater Durban, as it now called, and also away in the country districts. It was Canon Smith who started the St. Aidan's College at Sydenham under T. H. Strong, the late Mr. Stanley Vine and the graduates who had arrived from Madras. Other missionaries who were directly connected in the uplifting of the Indians generally were Rev. A. Browne, M.A., Canon R. P. Rogers M.A., Rev. A. B. Baillie, M.A., Rev. S. P. Velamathoo and the four graduates who were the late Mr. S. Jewdas, B.A., Rev. D. Kripitlat, B.A., Mr. S. G. Thangarajam, B.A., L.T. and Mr. S. Joseph, F.A. Then came Rev. O. T. Bone who for some reason dispensed with many of the schools and confined himself solely to Church work. And now we have the Rev. Satohall at the head who is increasing the number of schools and enlarging the hospital. I wish more strength to his elbows, and that Heaven's Light shall be his guide.

India And The Dominions Controversy On India's Rights To Retaliation

Sir Samuel Hoare's Memorandum

The general purpose of proposals in regard to discrimination (paragraphs 122 to 124 of the White Paper) was explained at a meeting of the Select Committee held at London recently when Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India submitted a memorandum.

The memorandum explained that it was proposed that the Constitution Act should contain a general declaration that no British subject (Indian or otherwise) be disabled from holding office or practising any profession trade or calling only by reason of his religion, descent, caste, colour or place of birth.

It was explained that this general declaration would apply to all British subjects including those of Dominions.

This explanation roused the anger of the Indian members of the Committee who uttered rather strong words in the meeting.

On the question of treatment of the Empire subjects resident elsewhere than in the United Kingdom, the memorandum suggested the possibility of India negotiating reciprocal agreements for special protection.

Chaudhry Zafrulla demurred to the grant of general protection when Indians did not admittedly enjoy the same rights in the Dominions.

Sir S. Hoare pointed out that it had been one of the principles of the Indian administration since the Proclamation of 1858. "We feel it will be a retrograde step to go back on it."

Chaudhry Zafrulla asked: Is it consistent with your policy that the British Indian should be ineligible for appointment in the Ceylon Civil Service, whereas a British subject of Ceylon is eligible for the Indian Civil Service?"

Sir S. Hoare indicated that he wished to consider the point, but expressed the general opinion that there should be an opportunity for the Government of India to make reciprocal agreements with Dominions. He pointed out that India had a strong liver in the power to refuse entry.

Chaudhry Zafrulla asked if Sir S. Hoare expected public opinion or the Legislature in India to view with equanimity the provision compelling them to give the Britisher from South Africa equal opportunities for carrying on trade or profession.

Sir S. Hoare again deprecated going back on the established policy.

Sir Harising Gour suggested that it would strengthen India's hand to give her right of retaliation.

Sir S. Hoare expressed the opinion that the proper way was to give India the power to withhold the right of entry.

Consternation In India

Sir Samuel Hoare's statement in the Select Committee has created a sensation in political circles in India.

They feel that it will be a monstrous injustice to India if the Select Committee accepts the suggestions made by the Secretary for India.

Mr. B. Das, the Chief Whip of the Democratic Party has sent in a number of questions of adjournment motion on the subject of Sir Samuel Hoare's evidence relating to India's right of retaliation. In the course of a statement to the press, he says: "Sir Samuel denies to India the right of retaliation against Dominions and would grant to Dominions a right which they have never claimed. In fact, when we are worried about the attitude of the South African Government to Indians settled in the Union, we felt that at any rate we had the right to

retaliate. It might not have caused much injury to the Union but India would have been satisfied that she had recorded her moral protest.

"Sir Samuel Hoare claims that under the Queen's proclamation Dominions have the right of protection. This is surprising as the Proclamation was meant to guarantee rights to Indian subjects. Moreover, the South African War 10 years after Proclamation and the Union did not exist when the Proclamation was made. It was Indian soldiers who fought against Boers. If the Secretary of State's interpretation were to be accepted, we would be deprived of the rights we possess at present,

"I cannot believe that the Government of India can be a party to the theory propounded by the Secretary of State. My questions and adjournment motion will give the Government of India time to put matters right. If they fail to do so and a satisfactory explanation is not forthcoming, then the position of India within the Empire would become definitely subordinate to the Dominions and the new constitution would reduce the status of India in the eyes of the League of Nations and of the world.

"Indians are denied even elementary rights in South Africa even the right to trade is denied to Indians and we cannot accept the position that we should not be able to retaliate in India against Nationals of such Dominions, if the situation demands such a course."

The *Bombay Chronicle* which is the Congress organ in Bombay and voices the nationalist opinion of India, enters a very strong protest against Sir Samuel's interpretation. It details the disabilities of Indians in South Africa and says:

"We are amazed that Sir Samuel Hoare is ignorant of the agitation now going on in India against the insulting treatment meted out to Indians in South Africa, and the many mean attempts made to hound Indians out of the country, though they have as much right to live there as the whites themselves. Any white man is preferred to a coloured British subject. The Joint Committee would be asked whether such treatment is likely to make Indians proud of the Empire or make them anxious to be subjects of it, or remain within it . . ."

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN

New India Assurance Company Opens Office In Johannesburg

The principal representative in South Africa of the New India Assurance Co. Ltd. Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee, celebrated the occasion of the opening of the Company's office in Johannesburg, by a social gathering in the Selbone Hall at which over 500 guests were present, the Agent of the Government of India, Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh taking a leading part.

A strong plea for Indian support to Indian assurance was made by Sir Maharaj Singh. "Please remember," he said, "that the New India is an Indian venture, and deserves our support."

The three directors of the New India Company were also directors of the Central Bank of India. It seemed to him quite possible that if the new venture succeeded in South Africa an Indian banking institution might be started.

Support for Asiatic ventures from Asiatics was urged by the Chinese Vice-Consul, Dr. H. Liang. It was their duty, he declared, to support their own concerns.

After other speakers had wished the Company every success Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee said he hoped

that Transvaal Indians would not be found wanting in their support even as the Natal Indians had not.—Contributed.

News In Brief

It will be remembered that well over a year ago the Durban Town Council at the request of the College Advisory Committee, donated an additional acreage to the College. Although this was effected several months ago the Education Department, after considerable delay have deemed it advisable to extend the boundaries of the college by re-adjusting the fences, which were erected by Mr. C. Lakhi of Greytown to commemorate the Sir Fuzli Hussain Delegation of 1932.

It is also learnt on reliable authority that a new wing costing £5,000 is to be erected on the east of the present wing. This new building will serve as a laboratory and staff-rooms, for the two sections of the staff. The present laboratory, which the Indian members of the staff occupy as a staff-room will be converted either into a class-room or a library.

The Vacation courses in the different subjects for Indian teachers will be held from January 8th to 20th. The venues will be Sastri College and the Carlisle Street School.

Negotiations are, however, being entered into with a view to bringing the course to an end by January 19th so that teachers will be enabled to attend the Bi-ennial Indian Teachers' Conference which in all probability will take place in P.M. Burg over the last week-end of the Vacations.

Teachers desirous of participating in the Conference, which will be the first of its kind, are advised to communicate with Mr. R. Regnath, Hon. General Secretary of the Teachers' Society.

The Orange River has been in spate of late neighbouring farms as well as many main roads were inundated as a result.

There are at present more women votes than men in the Union.

Mr. J. Ramphal, a popular local Indian teacher has, at his own request, been transferred, to Rhodesia. He has been appointed to the staff of the Bulawayo Indian School which was opened in May, 1933. He leaves Durban on January 14.

The Rev. John Dube, was charged recently for 'inciting to violence.' The Crown alleged that Mr. Dube had incited an arrested coloured man, Joe Smith, to attack the police. Mr. Dube pleaded not guilty. On evidence the Magistrate, Mr A. B. Tod said: "What I have to consider is whether the charge is proved. Had Mr. Dube been charged with inciting the crowd to assault a policeman in the execution of his duty, there might be something to be said for the Crown case, but under the charge Mr. Dube will be found not guilty and discharged."

Mr. Mohambry Naicker, son of Mr. P.G. Naicker has passed his final medical examination at the Edinburgh University. We heartily congratulate Mr. Naicker on the success of his son!

According to the report of the Director of Prisons just issued 31,277 persons were sentenced to prison under the liquor laws as against 32,670 in 1931 and 34,385 in 1930. In 1932, the number of inmates included 2,077 Europeans, 11,746 Natives, 119 Asiatics and 3,710 other Coloureds; females, 120 Europeans, 9,622 Natives, 25 Asiatics and 858 other Coloureds.

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of New Year Calenders from the following:— Messrs. The Standard Printing Press, M. Khauderia and Sons, The Mercantile Printing Works, Goshalia's Music Saloon, and Haribhai Ghela.

Sporting News

(BY SPORTSMAN)

Kid Singh To Meet Cupido

A short while ago it was intimated publicly that Kid (Motte) Singh, the famous pugilist, would be leaving for Capetown on January 14th and thence to France. But this report has now been discounted by more recent and authentic information.

It is now learnt authoritatively that Kid Singh will meet Arthur Cupido of the Cape in a return bout on February 10. The venue will be the Durban Town Hall.

Interviewed, Kid Singh also expressed a desire to have it publicly known that he was not in any way injured in a brawl as was rumoured recently.

Kid is looking as fit as a fiddle and has already begun training in earnest. In his last venture with Cupido he won on points. This time he is leaving no stone unturned to consolidate his chances of victory.

After this fight Kid Singh will fight for the last time in this country in March. He will leave then for France whence he will travel to India.

As will be seen the term of his contract has been extended but it is not likely that he will be sanctioned a further extension of the agreement after his fight in March.

Owen Smith

H.G. Owen Smith, the S. African Rhodes Scholar, has been selected to represent England as full-back in the Rugby international against Wales.

Champion Swimmer

Answering a challenge a local Indian, D. Sathigadu, who claims to be the champion swimmer of the Municipal Barracks, swam 400 yds. out to the sea at the Durban beach recently. There was a large crowd to witness this herculean feat.

Fountain Of Wisdom

—“A public servant has no personal feelings to be considered. He must be a cypher. He can have no pride nor power nor prestige except such as service gives him”

MAHATMA GANDHI.

—Peace on earth and goodwill to men are as badly needed to-day as 2000 years ago.

MORRIS ALEXANDER