

INDIAN OPINION

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NOTES AND NEWS

Town Council On Indian Housing Scheme

REGARDING the regulations controlling the grant of loans under Indian housing schemes it was decided by the Durban Town Council at its recent meeting:—(a) that applications for loans now before the Council be proceeded with under the present conditions, subject to the Borough Engineer and Town Treasurer being satisfied that the Council's interests in connection with each application and each dwelling are safeguarded from a financial point of view; (b) That no further applications be considered until this Council has determined whether the present procedure in regard to tenders for Indian Housing tends to establish a monopoly and if so, whether the Council should adopt other methods in order to ensure that Indians get the best possible housing and the Corporation secures the best possible value for the money expended."

Definition of "Civilised Labour"

As a result of public discussion as to what may be termed "civilised labour" referred to so much by the Labour Department the latter has now made the following statement:—

"In connection with term "civilised labour" the Department of Labour "is entirely guided by the following definition which is contained in a circular addressed to all Government Departments in 1924 by the Prime Minister's office, viz:—

'Civilised labour is to be considered as the labour rendered by persons whose standard of living conforms to the standard generally recognised as tolerable from the usual European standpoint.'

"It is the Government's policy to extend and encourage as much as possible the use of civilised labour in both public and private avenues of employment, and it is one of the functions of this Department to advance this policy. Generally, native labourers do not come within the definition of civilised labour, but it is certain that there are natives whose standards of living do conform to the standard generally recognised as tolerable from the usual European standpoint, and such persons would be regarded by this Department as civilised."

Even The Name Stinks

THE Durban Town Council has given in to the recent agitation in connection with changing the name of the portion of Grey St. between West St. and the Victoria Embankment owing to it being populated by Europeans who resented the name Grey St. generally known to be an Indian locality. It has now been decided to re-name that portion of the Street "Broad Street"

£5,000 Hospital For Indians

We learn that an application has been made to the Town Council, Durban, for site near the Sastri College building for the erection of another Indian hospital at a cost of £2,000. The first scheme, costing £6,000, which is in the course of fruition, is that sponsored by St. Aidan's Anglican Mission. The £5,000 is a gift from the shipping magnate, Mr. Andrew Weir, who was in Durban about two years ago. The money was given for the purpose of a hospital for Indians. It is contended that the site near Sastri College will be central to the Indian community, both of Durban and the Suburbs. It is the intention of those responsible for the new scheme to place the hospital under the control of the Administration. They claim that it would be more conveniently situated for the use of Indian out-patients than the new non-European hospital, which is now being erected at Congella.

The Community knows nothing more about the proposed hospital than that the sum of £5,000 was given for an Indian hospital by Mr. Andrew Weir. The community is totally unaware as to who is handling this money, or how and when the site came to be chosen and how and when it was decided to hand over the control of the hospital to the Administration. Would it not be wise on the part of "those responsible" to take the public into confidence in a matter vitally affecting their interests, or are they to remain as dumb sheep to be led by their shepherds?

Lack Of Education Facilities In Mooi River.

MESSRS. M. J. Power, M.E.C., F. D. Hugo, Superintendent of Education, and J. McLeod, Inspector of Schools, visited Mooi River and met members of the Town Board recently in connection with inter-alia the education of Indian child-

ren, says the Mooi River Correspondent of the *Natal Mercury*. The Indian community in Mooi River has been agitating for the provision of educational facilities for their children, but the principal difficulty has been the provision of a suitable building for this purpose. The Town Board had been approached and is willing to hand over a building for use as a school, but realised that it was hardly suitable for the large number of children who at present are without means of education. This view was endorsed by the educational authorities and it is pointed out that the Department will only provide grants sufficient to cover the salary of the teacher as no money is available for the building of an Indian School. This decision is to be conveyed to the Indian community with a view to a movement for the raising of funds to defray the cost of a suitable building. At the present time a few of the Indian children travel to Estcourt to attend school and while two Native schools are conducted by religious bodies there is no facility for the Indian and Coloured children in the township.

Indians Contribute To Community Chest

AN indication of the widespread interest in this year's drive for funds for the Community Chest, says the *Natal Mercury* was emphasised on Saturday when an amount of over £12 was received from the Indian Market; £8-15-3d. was received from the Indian stallholders at the Market, and the balance was contributed by Indian shoppers.

Parliament Meets On January 11

BY proclamation in the Union Gazette, Parliament is further prorogued until Friday, January 11, 1935, when the third session of the Seventh Parliament of the Union will meet at Capetown.

Mahatma Gandhi's Services to Indian Womanhood

AT the birthday celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi held at Bombay under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sena and the Girgaum District Congress Committee. Mrs Sarojini Naidu in the course of a spirited address referred in glowing terms to the services of Mahatma Gandhi to Indian Womanhood:—

"In the uplift of Indian women from a position of social tyranny, Mahatma

Gandhi's contribution was of no small measure," said Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. "Mahatmaji had done a [great service in bringing about an awakening among the womanhood of India. But, unless the Hindu community was purged of all its sins it was futile to talk of liberation from their misery. It was the characteristic mission of the fair sex, continued Mrs. Naidu, to spread peace and happiness wherever a woman went. The duty of a woman was to bring about harmony wherever she treaded through love, understanding and enlightenment. The observance of the noble virtue of equity was very difficult, but whatever of that virtue was now retained among the women of India, it was due to the noble efforts of Mahatma Gandhi towards the betterment of the condition of the Indian women. Gandhitji would live through eternity, not the thin frail-looking man that he was to-day, observed Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, but he would live for ages to come, through the new culture, the new ethics, the new national ideals he had put forth for the entire country to emulate and follow. The triumph of the Mahatma was the triumph of Satya and Indian womanhood would no doubt adopt those ideals inculcated by him, as the ideals held and worshipped by the women of India in their adoration of Lakshmi, Parvati and Saraswati."

Chamber of Commerce Securing Control of Trading Licences

AFTER a long discussion at a meeting of the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce arising from a questionnaire which had been issued to all Chambers of Commerce towards the preparation of a scheme devised to secure uniform conditions of issuing trading licences throughout the Union. The following resolutions were adopted:—

"That local and rural authorities should be empowered to endorse a certificate for renewal where a conviction for contravention of the Wage Act has been obtained against a trader, and in the event of a second conviction to refuse to grant a certificate to obtain a licence or renewal thereof;

"When a trader has been found to be trading without a licence the penalty clause of the Licensing Ordinance for contraventions of this nature should be rigidly enforced;

"That consideration should be given to the possibility of securing legislation whereby the issue of trading licence certificates would in some measure be controlled by Chambers of Commerce, and be limited on a population or trade requirement basis."

These resolutions will be brought up at the next congress of the Federated Chambers of Commerce.

Indian Opinion

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH, 1934

DISTORTION OF FACTS

WE read the following from the pen of a correspondent of the *Hindustan Times*:—

"I have received a very interesting communication from Pandit Bhawani Dayal Sannyasi of Durban, South Africa. Panditji is too well known in India to need any introduction here. He is one of the most respected and non-party Indian leader in South Africa. He is looked up by both Indians and Europeans alike and so his views on any subject necessarily carry weight with every one. In the course of a long letter surveying the situation in South Africa he refers to the recent tour of the Indian football team in South Africa. On their return, Mr. Mukerji, the manager of the team, gave an interview which was published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 19th August, 1934. About this interview Pandit Bhawani Dayal says:—

"The tourists declined to play the Cape Town Indian teams and played the Cape Coloured teams instead. The Cape Indians are staunch Congresswallas. Mr. Mukerji refused invitation to a reception organised by the Natal Indian Congress. He also declined an invitation from Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh. He was of course, touring under the guidance of Mr. Christopher who is opposed to the Congress. Mr. Mukerji does not mention in his interview that in spite of his repeated requests the Europeans refused to play his team. It is not a fact, as Mr. Mukerji asserts, that the Selbourne Hall of Johannesburg was lent for the first time for an Indian function. Mr. Sorabjee gave an 'At Home' in the same Hall during December last. . . . Polly's Hotel has been used by Indians on many occasions for the reception of Mr. Sastri and other Indian leaders. Through the efforts of Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh, first class Indian passengers are now allowed to use the Dining Saloon on the railways. Mr. Mukerji says that they had "Reserved" compartments placed at their disposal for travelling in South Africa. The fact is that "Reserved" on the South African Railways means compartments reserved for Indians and Africans."

Panditji closes his letter with the request, "Will you kindly place the real facts before the public and use my name?"

We must confess that Pandit Bhawani Dayal Sannyasi's above statements have

made us none the wiser and we can think they could have made the people of India any wiser. We cannot conceive of Panditji having any other object in making these statements than just to make a bitter complaint against Mr. Mukerji for having ignored the Congress, and that appears here to be entirely out of place. The statements are neither benefitting the Panditji nor the people of this country nor anyone in India, nor are they in any way enhancing the prestige of any one. Silence would perhaps have been golden. But the Panditji was evidently anxious to let the public of India know the "real facts." Well, we don't know that he has succeeded even in "doing" that. Let us examine the Panditji's statements. Panditji wishes to convey to the people of India that Mr. Mukerji refused to play the Capetown Indian team because it was composed of Congressites. He also wishes the people of India to know that Mr. Mukerji refused the invitation of the Congress and of Kunwar Sir Maharaj Singh.

The fact is that the India team came to South Africa at the invitation of the South African Indian Football Association which was purely a sporting body and had nothing to do with politics. Besides the programme of the India team was entirely in the hands of the South African Indian Board and the Indian team had to be guided by their hosts. This should fully explain why Mr. Mukerji did not or rather was not able to accept the above invitations, nor did he accept any invitation from any other political body. Pandit Bhawani Dayal Sannyasi seems to make it a grievance that Mr. Mukerji did not mention in his interview that in spite of his repeated requests the Europeans refused to play his team. It is certainly true that the Europeans refused to play the Indian Team. But is it not also true that the Indian Team was given a rousing reception by the heads of all the European Sporting bodies in this country and the Mayors of all the towns the India Team had visited and even by the Ministers. Is it not also true that the M.C.O. watched the Indian Team play with keen interest and payed a glowing tribute to their high standard of play and expressed their willingness to play with them but that they could not do so because of the decision of the South African Board? Panditji is indeed rather harsh in taking poor Mr. Mukerji to task for having inadvertently stated the Selbourne Hall of Johannesburg was lent for the first time for an Indian function and for having stated that they had "Reserved"

compartments placed at their disposal for travelling in South Africa. Panditji ought to have at least made a little allowance for the very short visit of Mr. Mukerji to this country to know all the ins and outs of it. It is such a grievous crime on the part of Mr. Mukerji in having made a misstatement about the Selbourne Hall when no lesser an authority than the Agent of the Government of India makes a misstatement that E. E. the Governor General had for the first time in the history of South Africa consented to attend an Indian function. And about the Railway authorities the fact is that they had done every thing possible to make the tour of the All India Team as comfortable as possible. Reserved com-

partments are as a rule meant for the use of non-Europeans the Indian Team had their compartments all to themselves.

As for the dining saloons on the railways being open to Indians the readers of the *INDIAN OPINION* now know what kind of a concession that is.

And now lastly we do not in the least begrudge Pandit Bhawani Dayal Sanjayasi receiving the very high compliment of being a non-party Indian leader whose views on any subject necessarily carry weight with every one. Indeed it should have been so in view of the dignity of his position. But alas! it is not so for Pundit Bhawani Dayal Sanjayasi is a staunch Congressite and therefore a party leader.

SO-CALLED CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM FOR INDIA

THE much-awaited report of the Joint Select Committee of both the Houses of British Parliament on Indian Constitutional reform has been published. The report, except in certain modifications, retains the principles of the White Paper. But the modifications, as was expected by many in India, have been more towards India's disadvantages than anything else and the whole report as briefly reported by Reuter speaks of surrender to the Diehard section of the British Conservatives. As such, we do not consider that the proposed reform is much an advance step towards India's goal of complete independence. From the scanty news that has reached us, we find, in India already there is bitter criticism—not only by the Congressmen but even by the liberals and others. Knowing fairly well the trend of political events of India to-day and being acquainted with the political consciousness and awakening of Nationalist India, we find nothing unusual in the great dissatisfaction expressed by the leaders of India.

As we scan through the report we find that the principle that India should be governed for the benefit of India and her teeming millions is absent in the whole report.

Those who undertook the self-appointed task of deciding the future destiny of India without paying the least attention to the voices of the Indians, are naturally busy with the safeguards. Or in other words all the avenues of draining India of her material resources and suppressing her commercial, industrial and economic development are to be kept by the Whitehall or its representative the Governor-General. India is to have no say in her army, fiscal policy and other vital issues. Even in the Provinces, where autonomy is proposed, the Governors will have powers to take away any portfolio he thinks necessary. Moreover the elected Councils will have no control over the Police, though law and order are sup-

posed to be transferred. Such is the constitutional reform Britain wants to thrust upon India. We know India won't accept such a reform. The Congress, the largest political body, has already expressed the view that it is determined to reject the White Paper and fight out the battle of India's freedom. No country can make any progress unless its nation-building departments such as education, sanitation, public health and industries are well looked after. And the heavy drainage of India's revenue, on Home charges, make India practically bankrupt to spend any decent sum on these departments. So India's millions go unfed, illiterate and fall victim to all kinds of diseases.

We cannot, therefore, see how the proposed reform whether it is provincial autonomy or Federation with all safeguards, can practically help India towards progress. Taking a practical point of view, we think unless India becomes master of her own finance, army and tariff, she can make no real progress. We have no exact statistics in hand to show how little Government of India and the provincial governments spend on education, sanitation, public health and the industries, in comparison to other countries. Those who are acquainted with the affairs in India know them fairly well.

As far as we can see a fresh struggle is ahead in India and prostrate India will have to sacrifice a good deal more before she can hope to acquire her freedom. We say acquire, because we believe that political freedom or freedom of any kind can only come through self-acquisition and self-determination. That which comes as a gift, goes away easily. So India will have to make up her internal differences before she can put up a real fight. And we know the Indian National Congress is out to do away the communal differences. But that is a domestic affair of India and that is no plea for tightening India's fetters.

However, in the proposed reform we find very little solution of the great Indian problem and from such a distant land we can only wish God-speed to India in her struggle and march towards the goal of complete independence.

INDIANS IN FIJI ISLANDS

IN the course of his opening address before the Fiji Legislative Council H. E. the Governor, Sir Murchison Fletcher, K.C.M.G., C.B.E., dealing with the Indian question said:—

The Indian community appear to be generally prosperous and contented, and they are showing a sensible restraint in matters of religious and political controversy. Evidence that they are satisfied with their lot may be adduced from the fact that the number of repatriates to India has been steadily decreasing. Two hundred and twenty went back in 1933 and 117 in 1934, the latter figure being the lowest on record. Immigration from India remains closely restricted, and among those who are admitted the proportion of women has largely increased.

Questions of leases and land tenure continue to exercise the mind of the community, and the matter is still under careful investigation. There are many conflicting interests, and it is not easy to arrive at a policy which will be acceptable to all parties. It is not possible to make any pronouncement at present.

Apart from their successful sugar season the Indians are finding a remunerative market for rice and minor crops such as yagona, dhall, bean, maize and tobacco. Local supplies of dhall are far short of the demand.

Indian youths are taking an increasing interest in sport, and the cricket and football, which have become a regular feature in the more thickly populated areas, must have a salutary effect upon their general physique.

The addition of an Indian platoon to the Defence Force is giving effect to a long cherished wish on the part of the Indian population that they should take their part in the defence of the Colony. Twenty-nine members have been enrolled, and the Commander informs us that they promise well.

Fountain of Wisdom

We still need Nature if our lives are to be wholesome. City life is valuable because the city can add the gifts of civilisation, endeavour, organised religion, pictures, music. But these gifts are of little use to the man deprived of of touch with Nature.—THE BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM.

To-day the future of civilisation is involved in the question of whether humanity can win the peace.—MR. JAN H. HOYMEYER.

DR. G. M. NAICKER

WELCOME RECEPTIONS IN HIS HONOUR

DR. G. M. Naicker, M.B., Ch.B., L.M. who arrived by the mail boat in Durban last Sunday after completing his medical course at the Edinburgh University, was received by a large crowd of Indians at the wharveside. Among the garlands of flowers presented to him were one from the Colonial Born and Settlers Indian Association and one from the Congress through Mr. O. H. A. Jhaveri.

The boat which was due to arrive at about 7 a. m. was considerably late and arrived only at 11 a. m. Dr. Naicker looked bright and happy to be able to be once again among his old friends and relatives. The resident of Mr. and Mrs. P. G. Naicker in Leopold Street where the doctor was taken was filled with visitors throughout the day and there was anything but peace for the doctor, for whom entertainments were galore.

C. B. And S. I. A. Reception

The first reception in honour of Dr. G. M. Naicker was held on Sunday afternoon at the Tamil Institute, Cross Street under the auspices of the Colonial Born and Settlers Indian Association. Mr. A. Christopher, who was in the chair garlanded the doctor and presented a bouquet each to his parents Mr. and Mrs. P. G. Naicker.

Dr. M. Mistry, who was a fellow-student at Edinburgh University, with Dr. Naicker, referred to Dr. Naicker's efforts to promote the interests of his fellow Indian Students in the students' Representative Council of the university.

Touching on Indian public support to professional men of their own race, he frankly had to admit, he said, that it was not forthcoming to the extent that it should, though there had been an improvement in this direction in the last two years.

"I appeal to you not to lose confidence in your own men. Give your own a chance, for every community supports its own members," he added.

According to Mr. Sarkari Naidoo, Indians suffered from an inferiority complex and it was this lack of faith in themselves that was responsible for the present position. He commended the American negro spirit of support to their own.

By calling in an Indian practitioner they would be showing confidence in themselves and thus rendering themselves a service.

"Through our whims and fancies our professional men are suffering," declared Mr. S. L. Singh, As South Africans

they knew no other home, and it therefore behoved them to improve their status as a community.

There was an Indian population of 70,000 in and around Durban and they as a community could support dozens of lawyers and doctors, said Mr. P. R. Pather.

Among the other speakers were Mrs. V. R. R. Moodaly, the Rev. J. M. Sundaram, Messrs. A. M. Padayachee, Fakir Yusuf, Abbai Naidoo, M. Subbu Naidoo, C. R. Naidoo, P. B. Singh, L. Gabriel, J. Lutchemen Singh and S. N. Richards.

In the course of a brief reply, Dr. Naicker said that he entrusted his future to his countrymen. He had a lot of plans. He was warned to keep away from politics, for politics and medicine did not mix together. He had been trained as a doctor and he would try to do his best in the profession and serve his countrymen.

Travelling abroad, he had learnt that they had to do much to secure a higher status so that they could travel and live with dignity.

Another function in honour of Dr. Naicker took place at the Parsee Rustomjee Hall under the aegis of the Carlisle Street Old Boys Association. The young doctor was welcomed by his fellow students and the doctor suitably replied.

EAST MEETS WEST

RELIGION FOR A SCIENTIFIC AGE

AT the City Hall, Pretoria last week Dr. Leemann presiding instead of Sir Robert Kotze, who was unable to attend a large audience gathered to hear Swami Adyananda and the Rev. S. T. Pagesmith speak on Religion for a Scientific Age.

The Swami expounded the religion of the mystic as understood in the Vedantist philosophy. He opposed all religious exclusiveness and bigotry, and insisted that religion was a psychological experience which could be gained by those of every race and colour. He recognised that science was exerting a wholesome influence on religion in breaking down the unwarranted claims of ecclesiastical dogmatism.

The Rev. S. S. Pagesmith drew a vivid picture of how science was undermining the theological structure of traditional Christianity, and outlined the new doctrines that would take the place of the old. He declared that the conflict between science and religion was due to the fact that theologians had trespassed beyond their proper field, which was the realm of moral and spiritual principles

and values, and had made dogmatic assertions about matters of fact which belong to the province of science. The searchlight of scientific criticism would not weaken real religion, but would purify it by compelling it to abandon erroneous superstitious doctrines. A Christianity freed from error would be a more powerful influence in its own proper field of moral and spiritual leadership. Mr. Pagesmith thought that the religion of the future would be more humanistic, in that it would approach religious problems from the human end and be primarily concerned about human welfare. It would also be theistic, in that it would recognise that Divine values are revealed in human personality at its highest and best. The speakers gave indications of how religion and science could co-operate in the fields of psycho-therapy, psychological research, sociology and international relations. He spoke of the ultimate faith of the humanistic theism of the future as a reliance upon Love as God, for love creates, sustains, saves and redeems, and is the divinest principle we know.

Dr. Leemann, in summing up, drew attention to the points of contact between the two speeches, and indicated that East and West had met.

RECEPTION TO SWAMI ADYANANDJI

A RECEPTION was held at Dundee in honour of Swami Adyanandji of the Ramkrishna Mission during his recent visit to that town. The Mayor, Mr. H. Hosking, presided. The lecturer defined religion as the response of human personality to greater truth.

"Although we are treading different ways," he said, "we are all making towards the same God, and unless we can spiritualise our outlook there will be no peace, but only hatred and destruction. Throughout the ages India has sung one song—the song of spiritualisation of life. In the world today, and especially the European world, there is less account taken of the finer realities of life; there is less idealism. People are living superficially, and the result is hatred between nation and nation."

The teachings of great teachers were in actuality all the same, and these teachings are all being disregarded. Buddha said: "Hatred can never be conquered by hatred;" Christ, "Love thy neighbour as thyself;" and Confucius, "Do unto others as you would have that they do unto you."

Swamiji was the guest of Mr. V. G. Naidoo.

UNION'S ANTI-INDIAN POLICY

COMMENTS BY 'THE TRIBUNE'

Commenting on the Union Government's anti-Indian policy the *Tribune* (Lahore) writes:—

It appears that nothing will wear the South African Government from the pursuit of the anti-Asiatic policy which is so manifestly unjust to the original builders of modern South Africa. The Indian settlers' contribution to the prosperity of the Dominion is not a whit less—it may be more—than the Europeans' contribution. But in all important matters, the claims of Indians as equals of Europeans are brushed aside and they are invariably relegated to the background. Several attempts have been made—both official and unofficial—on behalf of India to counteract the racial bias of the white settlers and to secure justice for Colonial-born Indians; but no sub-

stantial success has been achieved so far. It was stated that Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, as the Agent to the Government of India in South Africa, had succeeded in partially bridging the gulf yawning between the Indians and the Europeans, but eventually it was found that it was not so. Subsequently, India sent her most tactful and persuasive messenger of peace, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, to South Africa; and though she was enthusiastically received and applauded, the meaning of her message was forgotten whenever the position of Indians in South Africa was adjusted or readjusted by legislation. Nor did Mr. C. F. Andrews's great talent prove of any help to the aggrieved Indians. And now the situation has grown so serious that even a typically restrained Indian Civilian like the present Agent to

the Government of India in South Africa, Sir Maharaj Singh, has been compelled to protest strongly. In the course of his address before the Indo-European Council at Durban he declared the other day that in the event of further anti-Asiatic interference the office of the Agent might be withdrawn from the Union. Let us see how the Union Government reacts to this grave warning. There can, however, be no two opinions about the fact that no question of vital importance to the South African Indians has the Agent been able to obtain justice for them. The anti-Indian policy of the Union Government has not undergone any change for the better; and the principal grievances of the unwanted Indians still remain unredressed.

MY PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY SHRINES

It is a great joy to every Muslim, whether he be a Chinaman, a Turk, Indian, European, or a West Coast African, to visit once in his lifetime the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina. This sacred and glorifying ambition I had in me ever since I attained manhood, and it was in 1932 that my desires were fulfilled.

It is laid down in the Holy Scriptures (the Koran) that every true believer of the Prophet Mahomed, must once in his lifetime seek the purification of his soul.

This 'Haj' or Visitation can only be undertaken provided one can fully satisfy the following conditions:

- (i) The pilgrim must be advanced in intelligence and discernment.
- (ii) He must be free of all cares.
- (iii) He must be in possession of adequate means of transport and subsistence during the journey.
- (iv) He must be in sufficient means for the maintenance of his family during his absence.
- (v) The journey must be both possible and practicable.

The long pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina through the hot sands of the Arabian desert, is made more easy to-day by the use of motor-cars instead of camel transport, the caravan routes are completely safe, whereas not many years ago the journey was attended with considerable risk from bandits.

I left Natal in 1932, together with 10 other pilgrims, in the s.s. *Nykark* of the Holland-Africa line. On arrival at Zanzibar, and after visiting all the East Coast Ports, we set foot on the holy soil of Port Jeddah.

My first surprise in Port Jeddah was the sight of a French vessel lying in the

By

EL-HAJ E. M. ASWAT,

(Ladysmith.)

harbour, on which some three years ago a result of fire aboard 1,000 pilgrims perished. Following my first adventure, still worse was to come; an elderly pilgrim coming into the harbour on the P. and O. liner "Strathaird" had fallen overboard, and he was apparently given up as lost. For three hours, however, he kept above water, passengers on board the "Strathaird" saw and a life buoy was lowered, which he was too weak to catch hold of but after a few attempts by the crew of the liner he was brought to safety. It was not a moment too soon as big sharks could be seen by other passengers rushing towards him. He was a grateful pilgrim. £11 was collected for him by passengers, and in spite of ordeal he insisted on going on to Mecca.

Port Jeddah is a sea-port in the Arabian city, with streets covered from the hot rays of the sun. Just outside Port Jeddah we find the grave of Mother Hava (Eve) which is 100 by 30 feet.

From now on I had a guide and everything was ready for my journey to Medina, which is 250 miles from Port Jeddah. Our provisions consist chiefly of dried fruits such as dates, almonds, prunes, etc., but on the way we are well supplied with tea in very small glasses of oriental colours, also lemons, oranges, mint, milk and fresh fish. These little stations or halts are called "munsils".

After my dawn prayer in Port Jeddah I hired a bus there, for the first of us and before we started we had a caravan of

eighteen buses. The road was clear and we followed in the path that millions of pilgrims before us had travelled for over a thousand years. Our first station after leaving Port Jeddah was Rima Bak. We were met by Government officials, who examined our Pass Orders for the next station. After journeying 30 hours mostly overnight as in the daytime it is too hot, we reached the sacred city Medina. This city is 2850 feet above sea level. My guide took me to his house, and we dined together. Just after midday we were called to prayer. The mosque at Medina where Mahomed the Prophet is buried, has 5 tall minarets and a green tomb. Some 300 yards from here is the house of Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed the Prophet. Near the Prophet's grave lie the graves of Abu Bakr and Omar. At this spot where the Prophet is buried according to the holy rites of the Muslim no person is allowed to worship or pray, but they are allowed to salute. The mosque has five minarets, and in each of them are men calling the "Azzan"—the call of prayer. One man starts the call—(God is greater than all)—then voices join him from the other four minarets, and then the whole city is prostrated in prayer.

The mosque is filled with peoples from every nation in the world, and standing shoulder to shoulder in prayer—Indians, Egyptians, Turks, Africans, Chinese, Bokharans, Nigerians, Malays, Javanese and many others. The city is very quiet, there being no buses, trams or other vehicles.

(To be continued)

GOD or NO GOD

Under the caption "God or no God" Mahatma Gandhi writes in the *Harijan*:—

"DURING my visit to the South I met Harijans and others who pretended not to believe in God. At one place where a conference of Harijans was being held, the Chairman delivered a harangue on atheism under the very shadow of a temple which the Harijans had built for themselves with their own money. But out of the bitterness of his heart for the treatment meted out to fellow Harijans, he had begun to doubt the very existence of a benevolent Power that had allowed such cruelty to flourish. There was, perhaps, some excuse for this disbelief.

But there is a specimen of disbelief of another type from another source.

"Don't you think that a preconceived idea of a God, Truth or Reality might colour the whole trend of our search and hence be a great impediment and may defeat the very purpose of our life? For example, you take certain moral truths as fundamental, but we are in search, and as long as we have not found the reality, how can we boast or assert that a certain rule of morality is the truth or it alone is going to help us in our search?"

"No search is possible without some workable assumptions. If we grant no-

thing, we find nothing. Ever since its commencement, the world, the wise and the foolish included, has proceeded upon the assumption that, if we are, God is, and that, if God is not, we are not. And since belief in God is co-existent with the human kind, existence of God is treated as a fact more definite than the fact that the Sun is. This living faith has solved the largest number of puzzles of life. It has alleviated our misery. It sustains us in life, it is our one solace in death. The very search for Truth becomes interesting, worth while, because of this belief. But search for Truth is search for God. Truth is God. God is, because Truth is. We embark upon the search, because we believe that there is Truth and that it can be found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the well-known and well-tried rules of the search. There is no record in history of the failure of such search. Even the atheists who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in Truth. The trick they have performed is that of giving God another, not a new, name, his names are legion. Truth is the crown of them all.

"What is true of God is true, though in a less degree, of the assumption of the truth of some fundamental moralities, as a matter of fact, they are implied in the belief in God or Truth. Departure from

these has landed the truants in endless misery. Difficulty of practice should not be confused with disbelief. A Himalayan expedition has its prescribed conditions of success. Difficulty of fulfilling the conditions does not make the expedition impossible. It only adds interest and zest to the search. Well this expedition in search of God or Truth is infinitely more than numberless Himalayan expeditions and, therefore, much more interesting. If we have no zest for it, it is because of the weakness of our faith. What we see with our physical eyes is more real to us than the only reality. We know that appearance are deceptive. And yet we treat trivialities as realities. To see the trivialities as such is half the battle won. It constitutes more than half the search after Truth or God. Unless we disengage ourselves from trivialities, we have not even the leisure for the great search, or it is to be reserved for our leisure hours?

"Let Harijan workers know that the campaign against untouchability is a part of the great search, whether we know it or not. Untouchability is a big falsehood. We have proved it ourselves, or we should not be devotees of the cause. We can transmit the Truth to others only by diligence and due observance of the conditions of success which have been often enough set forth in these columns.

EXTRACTS FROM CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The following are extracts from the address delivered by Babu Rajendra Prasad from the Presidential Chair, at the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress:—

Sympathy For Behar

COMING as I do from a province which during the last ten months or so, has been particularly selected as the victim of Nature's wrath, I desire to convey my heartfelt thanks to the country, which has shown practical sympathy with the people stricken by phenomenal earthquake followed by huge floods. The response, which has come from all quarters and from all classes of people inhabiting this vast country and from Indians abroad, and from foreigners shows conclusively that if the disaster was unprecedented in its magnitude, the sympathy and fellow-feeling it evoked, was equally unparalleled. There have been disasters in the past, which though not so vast in extent were still some of the greatest recorded in history, and yet the country was never before roused to such a pitch of active sympathy.

As the national feeling has grown, and pervaded the country at large the wail of people in a corner of Northern India, has resounded and re-echoed from one

end to the other and drawn out not only cash but tears and personal service.

As the Bihar Central Relief Committee said in one of its early statements: 'Out of the great tragedy that has overwhelmed Bihar and taken its heavy toll of death and destruction and sorrow, some enduring good has come in the shape of a united nation joined together in common sorrow and common effort to overcome it, having faith in each other and forgetting the petty differences that seemed so trivial in the face of a mighty disaster.'

Strength Of The Moment

The Congress was taken unawares and the Government expected that they would be able to crush the whole movement within a fortnight.

In spite of want of preparation, in spite of sudden removal of all the prominent Congress workers throughout the country within a few days to prison, when they were not able to give instructions to their followers as to how to organise the campaign, it must be said to the credit of the nation that the lead, which had been given by the Working Committee, was faithfully and spontaneously followed.

Thousands again courted imprisonment, lathi charges, frings heavy fines

confiscation of property, and beatings on an extensive scale.

The movement was not crushed and went on for months and months without a break to the bewilderment of officials, who had hoped to crush it in a few days.

Special sessions of the Congress were held at Delhi and at Calcutta amidst arrests and lathi charges and in spite of the vigilance of the police, who had concentrated upon preventing them.

Indians Abroad

The position of our countrymen abroad gives no ground for satisfaction. Their treatment in the colonies of the British Empire has been a long-standing cause of just grievance and has influenced not a little the change in our outlook and opinion in favour of complete independence. One after another, Indians settled in these colonies and protectorates are being deprived of their inherent rights to which they are entitled by virtue of their long association, service and contribution to the prosperity of these colonies. They have in fact, been instrumental in many cases in building up these colonies and many have been born in them and have their homes without any other in the world. One scheme after another is devised to

get rid of them after they are no more needed, and although it is some consolation to know that the scheme of assisted repatriation has been given up, it is also to be noted that no place is found in the vast British Empire where they can live and settle with the same full rights to land and citizenship as others have in India.

Deenabandu's Service

The latest application of this policy of squeezing out Indians is reported from Zanzibar where in spite of the best of relations which Indians have maintained for generations with the Sultan and his subjects, ordinances have been hurriedly passed, which deprive them of the rights of acquiring land. The discrimination against Indians becomes flagrant when to be known that this restriction does not extend to the new arrivals from Arabia. There is nothing surprising in all this when we do not enjoy even elementary rights of citizenship in their own country and which even the proposed constitutional reforms are not going to confer on them. We can only give this assur-

ance to our country men abroad that as our position at home improves their position will also automatically improve. In this connection it is impossible not to mention with gratitude the great name of Dinabandhu C. F. Andrews, who has been frequently going to Africa to render such help as has been possible for him to render.

Great And Glorious Task

There is lastly the Council programme. The All-India Congress Committee has decided to contest elections to the Legislative Assembly so that the country might pronounce its verdict on the White Paper and the repressive policy of the Government. I hope that the electors will show by unmistakable action that the Congress possesses their full confidence. Let us not, however, be led away by the idea that Swaraj can be achieved by anything we could do in the legislatures. We have to remember that the price for freedom must be paid before we can get it and while we have every reason to be proud of what has been

done and what the country has suffered it is, after all, yet inadequate for the great object we have in view. The task we have taken upon ourselves is great and glorious. It acquires inexhaustible patience, unflinching determination and unending sacrifice. Time and world forces are helping us and above all God is with us in this epic struggle of an unarmed people fighting, with the weapons of Satyagraha of Truth and Non-Violence—a most powerful Government armed cap-a-pie and equipped with the largest engines of destruction devised by science and human ingenuity.

The goal is clear. It is nothing short of Independence. Independence is the natural outcome of all that the freedom movement in India has stood for. It cannot mean isolation particularly when we remember that it has to be achieved by non-violence. It means the end of exploitation of one country by another and of one part of the population of the same country by another part.

MAYVILLE INDIAN YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY

FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

THE Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Mayville Indian Young Men's Society was held at the premises of the Reliance Furniture Works, Gillatts Lane, Mayville, on Sunday the 25th November 1934, at 10.30 a. m. with the president Mr. N. C. Naidoo in the chair, at which the most successful year of the Society came to an end.

Many interesting items were embodied in the reports submitted by the Secretary Mr. V. S. Vadival. It was interesting to note in this report that the Society is giving help to poor and destitute Indian families by way of helping them in their sad plight by meeting their funeral and other expenses etc.

Debates, Lectures and Musical Entertainments were amongst the many items that the Society undertook for the advancement of its members.

An outcome of the Society is the Mayville Indian Youths' Progressive Society, a body by which boys of school going age are trained as Debaters, Lecturers etc.

During the year 2 Public Lectures were given one by Pandit Mehta Jaimini B.A.; L.L.B.; M.R.A.S.; Ph.D.; and the other by Swami Adyanandji, both from India at the A. Y. S. School, Mayville.

The report further stated that although sometimes there were not good quorums, but the members interest in the welfare of the Society was keenly demonstrated at every Meeting.

The chairman in touching upon the activities of the Society moved for the adoption of the reports and Messrs S. P. Pillay, M. R. Devar, B. Reuben, S. R. Devar and M. Monilal also spoke.

The Treasurer Mr. R. Rajkumar submitted his report and financial statement reflecting a credit balance of £3-14-4. The assets of the Society amounting to £24-2-10.

The Librarian Mr. V. S. Vadival submitted his report, which stated that the Library contains 48 interesting books for old and young.

The following election then took place:

Patron; Dr. G. Mohambry Naicker, Hon. Life Vice-presidents; Messrs M. R. Naidoo and N. C. Naidoo, President; Mr. S. P. Pillay, Vice-president; Mr. M. R. Devar, Hon. Secretary; Mr. V. S. Vadival, Asst. Secretary; Mr. M. Monilal, Hon. Treasurer; Mr. Ponon Gengao, Librarian; Mr. R. Rajkumar, Auditor; Mr. V. Moonsamy, Committees; Messrs B. Reuben, S. R. Devar, S. S. Chetty, P. G. Moodley, and M. Gilbert.

Thanks were recorded for the *Indian Opinion*, *Indian Views*, *Natal Advertiser* for giving publicity to the Society's doings, Cato Manor Indian Cemetery Association, Mr. Bob Mahomed, Arya Yuvuk Sabha, and to their retiring president Mr. N. C. Naidoo.

Social and Personal

Mr. Tommy Tandree who came on a short visit to Durban has returned to Mombasa by the *S. S. Karanja*.

Mrs. P. F. Kincaid and members of the Pretoria Indian Women's Association are organising an Indian Christmas party at the Zoological Gardens, Pretoria on December 7 at 3 p.m.

OBITUARY

Death of Chandrabathee Rai

The death of Chandrabathee (daughter of Mr. Anand Rai, Head master Depot Road Government Indian School; and wife of Mr. Ramsunder Singh) took place at her father's residence, 110 Kenilworth Road, Durban, on Tuesday 20 inst. after a short period of illness. The late Mrs. Ramsunder Singh was only 21 years old at the time of her death. She leaves a husband and a very large circle of relatives to mourn their lamentable loss. Her remains were cremated at the Stellawood Crematorium according to Hindu Rites. The cortege consisted of hundreds of people who had gathered to pay their last respects.

Amongst those present were Messrs. B. M. Singh; A. Christopher; P. B. Singh, W. Seethal; R. Bodasingh; Amur Singh; Bhearie Singh; Bhola Singh; S. Bramdaw; P. R. Singh; Munger; Suchitt Maharaj; B. Besausar; Beneisray Maharaj; Sewduth; M. Panday; P. G. Naiker; D. Sathya Dev. Ramelaas; S. L. Singh; Rajcoomar; Nayannah Naidoo; Abdool; W. Baboolal; R. Singh; M. E. Soupen; R. A. Naidoo; N. J. Ebenezer; T. M. Naiker; R. E. Moodley; B. Woodith; R. I Joseph; R. Balram; E. J. Govindswami. T. Tilehun; B. R. Singh; Beharie Maharaj; S. D. Pillay; B. Dowlet; M. A. Pillay, N. S. Chetty; V. S. Pillay, Mansingh; S. P. Singh.

Wreaths were received from Mr. and Mrs. R. B. (Billy) Singh and family; J. D. Craddock; Adnoy; Ruthie; Rookie; Aruby and Thootie; Benny and Ivy; Mr. and Mrs. K. Singh and family; Staff of Depot Road Government Indian School; and numerous other wreaths and floral tributes without cards. Several telegrams were also received.

OUR INDIA LETTER

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

48th SESSION OF THE CONGRESS

THE Congress week began on the 20th ultimate with the opening of the Khadi Exhibition by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan who by his bravery, sincerity and courage has captured the imagination of the whole of India.

The arrival of the President-elect and the most rousing welcome accorded to him in Bombay will go down in history. The spectacular mass demonstrations in connection with the sessions were the most convincing proof that the Congress is held dear by all classes. The open session continued for three days.

In the opinion of a prominent leader the close of the session not only marked the end of the most splendid session that had yet been witnessed but marked an era of greater usefulness and efficiency for the great national organisation in the service of the nation.

The presidential address disillusioned those who thought that the White Paper Scheme coupled with repression would break the backbone of the National Movement.

Reforms In The Constitution

The proposals formulated by Mahatma Gandhi in respect of reforming the Constitution of the Congress were discussed thread-bare by the two thousand delegates assembled from all parts of the country.

The retirement of Gandhiji from the Congress, Pandit Malaviya's efforts to change the parliamentary policy of the Congress and last but not least the ill-timed enthusiasm of the steadily increasing group of socialists had all to be faced boldly.

Gandhiji slightly modified his proposals for reform in the constitution after discussion with his colleagues. These were placed before the delegates who approved them by an overwhelming

majority. As a result of these changes the Congress will be a compact body of two thousand delegates chosen by an electorate of primary members. No province will go unrepresented. But to earn a full quota of delegates each province will have to enlist a minimum number of primary members. Rural areas have been allotted a preponderant share of the total strength. The proposal to abolish the All India Congress Committee has been banished. But the Committee's size will be reduced. It will continue as the governing body of the Congress and initiate its policies. The provincial committees have also been similarly modified.

Gandhiji's suggestion for change of creed has been left for consideration by provincial committees.

The franchise now accepted has no parallel in the annals any other great political organisation. The khadi class, the spinning franchise and the alternative labour franchise will enable the Congress to represent truly the toiling millions of India. The organisation will cease to be dominated by mere intellectuals. The dignity of labour is properly recognised. Those who do not turn out any sort of manual labour on behalf of the Congress will henceforth have no place in that organisation.

The adoption of these proposals has a special significance as they were accepted with the full knowledge that this retirement was inevitable and however they might decide his decision to retire would be unaffected.

Parliamentary Work

The attitude of neutrality towards the British Government's decision on the Communal problem was reaffirmed and Malaviya's attempts to change this fell flat. He could not get even a handful of supporters in that vast assembly.

Revival Of Village Industries

The appointment of a board for the revival of village industries under Gandhiji's supervision has more than satisfied the socialists.

Confidence In Gandhiji's Leadership

The following resolution was adopted unanimously:

"This Congress reiterates its confidence in the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and is emphatically of opinion that he should reconsider his decision to retire from the Congress, but inasmuch as all efforts to persuade him in that behalf have failed, this Congress while reluctantly accepting his decision, places on record its deep sense of gratitude to him for the unique services rendered by him to the nation and notes with satisfaction his assurance that his advice and guidance will be available to the Congress whenever necessary."

Next Session

The next session will be held in the United Provinces and probably in the City of Lucknow.

New Cabinet

The new Working Committee consists of the following members:

President: Babu Rajendra Prasad, Secretaries: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahommed and Acharya Kripalani. Treasurer: Seth Jammalal Bajaj. Members: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Mrs. Naidu, Sardar Sardul Singh, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Sri. Rajagopalachari, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Jairamdas Doulatram and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

During the absence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. K. F. Nariman will act for him.

FAREWELL

A large representative gathering of Indians assembled at the wharveside, Durban, on Wednesday Nov. 21 to bid farewell to Dr. Maurice R. Peters of Maritzburg, and to Mr. and Mrs. E. Thomas, of Durban, who sailed by the *Kathiswar* for India on a holiday tour. They will be away for about four months. Those present included the following representatives of the Colonial Born and Settlers Indian Association: Messrs A. Christopher, P. B. Singh, E. G. Nair, S. P. Nicholas and Rev. Sundaram, together with the representative of the Maritzburg branch, Messrs K. Soobramoney, S. Ahmed and M. Rungathan Naidoo.

QUIET WEDDING IN DURBAN

Nandan—Amaravathie

A quiet wedding took place on Sunday the 18th November, at the Umbilo Umbalavan Temple, South Coast Junction when Sachida Nandan eldest son of Mrs. Amratham Pather and the late Mr. V. N. Pather of Maritzburg, was married to Amaravathie, youngest daughter of Mrs. Achiammal Pather and the late Mr. A. A. Pather of Durban. Mr. R. S. Nadar performed the nuptial ceremony. A Reception was held at the Bridegroom's residence—32 Sydenham Road, Durban.

South African Indian Congress

All constituent Bodies please take notice that the Annual Conference of the South African Indian Congress will be held at Durban on the 19th and 20th days of January 1935.

Agenda—

1. Transvaal Land Tenure Act.
2. Colonisation Enquiry Report.
3. Slaves Act—Housing.
4. Entry of Coloured wives and children.
5. Labour Legislation.
6. Election of Officials.
7. General.

A. T. KAZEE & S. R. NAIDOO.
Joint Hon. Secretaries.