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SPEECHES AND WRITINGS
OF
M. K. GANDHI



WITH

AN INTRODUCTION BY
MR. C. F. ANDREWS

A TRIBUTE BY
MR. G. A. NATESAN

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY
MR. H. S. L. POLAK

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RS. THREE
G. A. NATESAN & Co.,
MADRAS



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"He had used his wealth and his power for what he knew both to be worth: he had taken honour when it came in his ways; he had seen men and cities far and near, and men and cities had stood up and honoured him. Now he would let these things go as a man drops the cloak he needs no longer."—
Kipling.

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BEFORE THE COURT IN 1907]

Mr. Gandhi's appeal to Lord Elgin and the efforts of the British Committee in London were successful only to the extent of securing from Lord Elgin a declaration that the ordinance would be hung up until the matter had received the consideration of the Transvaal Parliament that was shortly to come into being. A constitutional Government was soon after formed in the Transvaal and the new measure received the Royal Assent and became Law. The Indian Community in Transvaal seeing that their efforts were all in vain determined to fight and risk the consequences of disobedience in accordance with the resolution passed at a vast mass meeting of some 3,000 British Indians held at the Empire Theatre, Johannesburg.

On the 26th December, 1907, the Royal Assent to the Immigration Act was announced, and simultaneously came the news that a number of the leaders of the two Asiatic communities were warned to appear before the Magistrate to show cause why, having failed to apply for registration, as required by the law, they should not be ordered to leave the Transvaal. They were directed to leave the Colony within a given period, and failing to do so, they were sentenced to simple imprisonment for two months. Mr. Gandhi was one of those arrested and brought to trial.

In Christmas week of 1907 Mr. Gandhi received a telephone message from Mr. H. F. D. Papenfue, acting Commissioner of Police for the Transvaal asking him to call at Marlborough House. Upon arriving there, he was informed that the arrests had been ordered of himself and 25 others.

The following account of the proceedings in Court is taken from the "Indian Opinion."

Mr. Gandhi gave his word that all would appear before the respective magistrates at 10 a.m. next day and the Commissioner accepted this guarantee. Next morning when he attended at the B. Criminal Court he was asked by the Superintendent whether he held duly issued registration certificates under law 2 of 1907, and upon receiving replies in the negative, he was promptly arrested, and charged under section 8 sub-section 2 of Act 2 of 1907, in that he was in the Transvaal without a registra-



tion certificate issued under the act. The Court was crowded to excess, and it seemed as if, at one time, the barrier would be overthrown.

Mr. D. J. Schurman prosecuted on behalf of the Crown.

Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty.

Sup. Vernon gave evidence as to the arrest.

Mr. Gandhi asked no questions, but went into the box prepared to make a statement. He said what he was about to state was not evidence but he hoped the Court would grant him indulgence to make a short explanation, seeing that he was an officer of that Court. He wished to say why he had not submitted to this.

Mr. Jordan (Magistrate): I don't think that has anything to do with it. The law is there, and you have disobeyed it. I do not want any political speeches made.

Mr. Gandhi: I do not want to make any political speeches.

Mr. Jordan: The question is, have you registered or not? If you have not registered there is an end of the case. If you have any explanation to offer as regards the order I am going to make that is another story. There is the law, which has been passed by the Transvaal legislature and sanctioned by the Imperial Government. All I have to do and all I can do is to administer that law as it stands.

Mr. Gandhi: I do not wish to give any evidence in extenuation and I know that legally I cannot give evidence at all.

Mr. Jordan: All I have to deal with is legal evidence. What you want to say, I suppose is that you do not approve of the law and you conscientiously resist it.

Mr. Gandhi: That is perfectly true.



Mr. Jordan : I will take the evidence if you say you conscientiously object.

Mr. Gandhi was proceeding to state when he came to the Transvaal and the fact that he was Secretary to the British Indian Association when Mr. Jordan said he did not see how that affected the case.

Mr. Gandhi : I said that before and I simply asked the indulgence of the Court for five minutes.

Mr. Jordan : I don't think this is a case in which the Court should grant any indulgence ; you have defied the law.

Mr. Gandhi : Very well, sir, then I have nothing more to say.

The Magistrate then ordered Mr. Gandhi to leave the country in 48 hours.

On the 11th January 1908 Mr. Gandhi appeared before the Court, and he pleaded guilty to the charge of disobeying the order of the Court to leave the Colony within 48 hours.

Mr. Gandhi asked leave to make a short statement and having obtained it, he said he thought there should be a distinction made between his case and those who were to follow. He had just received a message from Pretoria stating that his compatriots had been tried there and had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour, and they had been fined a heavy amount in lieu of payment of which they would receive a further period of three months' hard labour. If these men had committed an offence, he had committed a greater offence, and he asked the magistrate to impose upon him the heaviest penalty.

Mr. Jordan : You asked for the heaviest penalty which the law authorised ?

Mr. Gandhi : Yes, Sir.



Mr. Jordan: I must say I do not feel inclined to accede to your request of passing the heaviest sentence which is six months' hard labour with a fine of £500. That appears to me to be totally out of proportion to the offence which you have committed. The offence practically is contempt of Court in having disobeyed the order of December 28, 1907. This is more or less a political offence, and if it had not been for the political defiance set to the law I should have thought it my duty to pass the lowest sentence which I am authorised by the act. Under the circumstance, I think a fair sentence to meet the case would be two months' imprisonment without hard labour.

Mr. Gandhi was then removed in custody.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ASSAILANTS.

As licences to trade or to hawk were refused without the production of the new registration certificates, many men were sentenced to imprisonment for hawking without a licence, until the Johannesburg gaol was uncomfortably crowded. Realising that there was no sign of the passive resistance movement breaking down and impressed by the determination of the Asiatic communities, as well as the increasing pressure of public opinion not only in England and India, but also in South Africa and the Transvaal itself, General Smuts decided to try a truce, and accordingly invited negotiations from the imprisoned Indian leaders. As a result of these negotiations, General Smuts suspended the operation of the Act, and agreed to accept voluntary re-registration, promising at the same time to introduce repealing legislation in the next Session of Parliament, provided that voluntary re-registration had



been satisfactorily effected. True to his promise Mr. Gandhi took to voluntary re-registration and began advising his countrymen to do so.

One morning in February, 1908 when Mr. Gandhi set out to fulfil his pledge to the Transvaal Government that he would undertake voluntary registration, he was attacked by a small section of the Passive Resisters who imagined that Mr. Gandhi was playing the coward and betraying his trust. Though bleeding profusely he refused to seek police protection against his own countrymen and would not permit the Doctor to stitch up his face before completing the form of application for voluntary registration. That same day though tossing with fever he issued the following manifesto from his sick bed:—

Those who have committed the act did not know what they were doing. They thought that I was doing what was wrong. They have had their redress in the only manner they know. I, therefore, request that no steps be taken against them.

Seeing that the assault was committed by a Mahomedan or Mahomedans, the Hindus might probably feel hurt. If so, they would put themselves in the wrong before the world and their Maker. Rather let the blood spilt to-day cement the two communities indissolubly—such is my heartfelt prayer. May God grant it! The spirit of passive resistance rightly understood should make the people fear none and nothing but God—no cowardly fear, therefore, should deter the vast majority of sober-minded Indians from doing their duty. The promise of repeal of the Act, against voluntary registration, having been given, it is the sacred duty of every true Indian to help the Government and the Colony to the uttermost.



THE ISSUE AT STAKE

Undisturbed in any way by the murderous attack on him, Mr. Gandhi was able to secure the voluntary re-registration of his country-men by the middle of May, 1908. It was now time for Gen. Smuts to carry out his promise to repeal the obnoxious act. It was clear however Gen. Smuts was determined to depart from his promise and to "break faith." Immediate protests were made by both the British Indian and Chinese leaders to General Smuts, who, however, failed to satisfy them, constantly evading the issue. Finally he invited Mr. Gandhi to discuss the difficulty with him, and at the interview produced a Draft Bill to repeal the Act, on condition that Mr. Gandhi, on behalf of the British Indian community, would consent to regard certain classes of Indians as prohibited emigrants, including even those who could pass the most severe education test of the Immigration Act. Recognising at once that General Smuts' intention was to substitute for one piece of insulting legislation an even more humiliating law, Mr. Gandhi indignantly refused to contemplate the suggestion, and negotiations were abruptly broken off. The agitation was in full swing; the jails became crowded as usual; a deputation was sent to England to explain to the British public how General Smuts had broken faith and was playing with the liberty and the conscience of the Indian community. The following statement issued by Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Haji Habib on the 5th Nov. 1909 in London gives an account of the abortive negotiation made in England by Mr. Gandhi and the British Committee there for redressing the wrongs of the Transvaal Indians:—



The Transvaal British Indian Deputation arrived in London on the 10th day of July last. The enclosed statement of the British Indian case in that Colony was prepared immediately after the arrival in London of that Deputation, but it was not issued as delicate negotiations with a view to arriving at a quiet settlement were in progress. We have now learnt that these have proved abortive and that the position remains unchanged. It has, therefore, become necessary for us to inform the public as to how the matter stands and what the struggle of the British Indians in the Transvaal means.

The ex-Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, during its administration as a Crown Colony, writing in a magazine in South Africa in the month of February last, thus correctly summed up the question :

The position of the Indian leaders is that they will tolerate no law which does not put them on an equality with Europeans in regard to restriction on immigration. They are willing to see the number of Asiatics limited by administrative action..... They insist on equality in the terms of the law itself.

That is still the position.

Mr. Smuts, the present Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, offers to repeal the Registration Law around which the struggle has been raging for the last three years, and to concede to a limited number of British Indians, *other* than former residents of the Transvaal, certificates of permanent residence. Were the object aimed at by the British Indians the admission into the Colony of a few more of their brethren, this concession would be material, but the object they have had in view in agitating for the repeal of the Law being to secure legal or theoretical equality in respect of immigration, their purpose is by the proposed maintenance of the legal disability not advanced a step. We are not aware whether the above modification of the present law proposed by Mr. Smuts

will take place irrespective of the continuance of the passive resistance at present being offered by the British Indians of the Transvaal, but we are in a position to state that the proposed concession will not satisfy passive resisters. The struggle of the Indian community of that Colony was undertaken in order to obtain the removal of the stigma cast upon the whole of India by this legislation, which imports a racial and colour bar into the Immigration Laws of a British Colony for the first time in the history of Colonial legislation. The principle so laid down that British Indians may not enter the Transvaal because they are British Indians is a radical departure from traditional policy, is un-British and intolerable, and if that principle is accepted even tacitly by British Indians we consider that they will be untrue to themselves, to the land of their birth, and to the Empire to which they belong. Nor is it the passive resisters in the Transvaal who in a matter of this kind have alone to be considered. The whole of India is now awakened to a sense of the insult that the Transvaal legislation offers to her, and we feel that the people here, at the heart of the Empire, cannot remain unmoved by this departure, so unprecedented and so vital, from Imperial traditions. Mr. Smuts' proposal brings out the issue in the clearest manner possible. If we were fighting not for a principle but for loaves and fishes, he would be prepared to throw them at us in the shape of residential permits for the small number of cultured British Indians that may be required for our wants, but because we insist upon the removal of the implied racial taint from the legislation of the Colony, he is not prepared to yield an inch. He would give us the husk without the kernel. He declines to remove the badge of inferiority, but is ready to change



the present rough-looking symbol for a nicely polished one. British Indians, however, decline to be deluded. They may yield everything, occupy any position, but the badge must be removed first. We, therefore, trust that the public will not be misled by the specious concessions that are being offered, into the belief that British Indians because they do not accept them, are unreasonable in their demands, that they are uncompromising, and that, therefore, they do not deserve the sympathy and support of a common sense and practical public. In the final reply received by us from Lord Crewe the following is the position that is taken up :

His Lordship explained to you that Mr. Smuts was unable to accept the claim that Asiatics should be placed in a position of equality with Europeans in respect of right of entry or otherwise.

Herein lies the cruz. Legal equality in respect of the right of entry, even though never a man does enter, is what British Indians have been fighting for, and according to the reports we have received from the Transvaal, is what some of them, at least, will die for. The only possible justification for holding together the different communities of the Empire under the same sovereignty is the fact of elementary equality, and it is because the Transvaal legislation cuts at the very root of this principle that British Indians have offered a stubborn resistance.

It would be contrary to fact to argue that no relief can be had in this matter because the Transvaal is a Self-Governing Colony, and because now South Africa has got its Union. The difficulty of the situation is due to a mistake committed at the centre of the Empire. The Imperial Government are party to the crime against the Imperial Constitution. They sanctioned when they need not have, and when it was their duty not to have sanctioned the legislation in question. They are now undoubtedly

most anxious to settle this troublesome matter. Lord Crewe has endeavoured to bring about a satisfactory result, but he is too late. Mr. Smuts, perhaps, very properly has reminded his Lordship of the fact that the legislation in question had received Imperial sanction, and that he should or could now be called upon to retrace his steps, because the British Indians in the Transvaal had undertaken to disregard the legislation, and to suffer the penalties of such disregard. His position as a politician and as an aspirant to high office "in a white South Africa" is unquestionable, but neither the British public nor the Indian public are interested in his position nor are they party to this crime of the Imperial Government.

We may add that during the last four months arrests and imprisonments have gone on unabated. The leaders of the community continue to go to prison. The severity of the prison regulations is maintained. The prison diet has been altered for the worse. Prominent medical men of Johannesburg have certified that the present dietary scale for Indian prisoners is deficient. The authorities, unlike their action during last year, have ignored the religious scruples of Mahomedan prisoners, and have refused to give facilities for observing the sacred annual fast which millions of Mahomedans scrupulously undergo from year to year. Sixty passive resisters recently came out of the Pretoria gaol emaciated and weak. Their message to us is that, starved as they were, they are ready to be re-arrested as soon as the Government wish to lay their hands on them. The Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association has only just been arrested and sentenced to be imprisoned for three months with hard labour. This is his third term. He is a Mahomedan. A brave Parsee, a well-educated man, was deported to Natal. He re-entered



and is now undergoing six months' imprisonment with hard labour. He is in gaol for the fifth time. A young Indian, an ex-Volunteer Sergeant, has also gone to gaol for the third time on the same terms as the Parsee. Wives of imprisoned British Indians and their children either take up baskets of fruit, hawk about and earn their living in order to support themselves, or are being supported from contributions. Mr. Smuts, when he re-embarked for South Africa, said that he had arrived at an understanding with Lord Crewe that would satisfy the large body of British Indians who were heartily sick of the agitation. His prophecy has been totally disproved by what has happened since.



BEFORE THE COURT IN 1913.

While Mr. Gandhi was leading a deputation to England another deputation led by Mr. Polak came to India to press the question of the repeal of the £ 3 tax. Then followed an agitation in England and India in 1910-1912 which compelled attention of the authorities. Then came the triumphal visit of Mr. Gokhale to South Africa. Mr. Gokhale made special representations to the Union Ministers on this particular question and a definite undertaking was given to him to repeal the tax. For a time it appeared that settlement was possible. But General Smuts again evaded and the tension became more acute. When in 1913 a measure was introduced into the Union Parliament exempting women only from its operation Mr. Gandhi wired to Mr. Gokhale asking whether the promise of repeal was limited to women only. Mr. Gokhale replied that it applied to all who were affected by the tax. Mr. Gandhi reminded the Union Government of the promise and asked for a definite undertaking to repeal it in 1914. The Union Government declined. It was then that Mr. Gandhi organised the great movement advising indentured Indians to suspend work till the tax was repealed. Under his lead the Indian labourers gathered in thousands and they passed mine after mine adding to their numbers. Then commenced the historic March into the Transvaal allowing themselves to be freely arrested. The Government hoping to demoralise the Indians issued a warrant to arrest Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi was on the 11th November 1913 charged on three counts, before the Resident Magistrate, Mr. J. W. Cross, of Dundee, with inducing indentured immigrants to leave the Province. The court was crowded with Indians and Europeans, Mr. W. Dalzell-Turnbull was specially instructed by the Attorney-General to appear for the prosecution, and Mr. Advocate J. W. Godfrey appeared for Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty to the charges.

Mr. Turnbull read the section and left the matter in the hands of the Magistrate.

Mr. Godfrey stated that he was under an obligation to the defendant not to plead in mitigation in any way whatsoever. The circumstances which had brought Mr. Gandhi before the Magistrate were well known to all persons, and he was only expressing the desire of the defendant when he stated that the Magistrate had a duty to perform, and that he was expected to perform that duty fearlessly, and should therefore not hesitate to impose the highest sentence upon the prisoner if he felt that the circumstances in the case justified it.



Mr. Gandhi obtained the permission of the Court, and made the following statement.

As a member of the profession, and being an old resident of Natal, he thought that, in justice to himself and the public, he should state that the counts against him were of such a nature that he took the responsibility imposed upon him, for he believed that the demonstration for which these people were taken out of the Colony was one for a worthy object. He felt that he should say that he had nothing against the employers, and regretted that in this campaign serious losses were being caused to them. He appealed to the employers also, and he felt that the tax was one which was heavily weighing down his countrymen, and should be removed. He also felt that he was in honour bound, in view of the position of things between Mr. Smuts and Professor Gokhale, to produce a striking demonstration. He was aware of the miseries caused to the women and babes in arms. On the whole, he felt he had not gone beyond the principles and honour of the profession of which he was a member. He felt that he had only done his duty in advising his countrymen, and it was his duty to advise them again, that until the tax were removed, to leave work and subsist upon rations obtained by charity. He was certain that without suffering it was not possible for them to get their grievance remedied.

The Magistrate then addressed as follows:—In this case the accused had pleaded guilty to the three counts, and the section of law under which the accused was charged made him liable to a fine of £ 20 for each immigrant he attempted to induce, or induced, to leave the Province. Mr. Gandhi was an educated gentleman, and had the distinction of being a member of the legal profession, and whatever he had done, he had done,

THE INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION

with a full knowledge of the consequences of his act. The Magistrate then referred to the conditions under which Indians were brought into this Province, and the terms they had agreed upon for remaining here after the expiry of their indentures. He also referred to the contention of the Indians regarding Mr. Smuts' alleged promise to the Indians. The Natal members of Parliament had consented to the tax being removed so far as it affected the women and children, but not the men. The Government had, therefore, not broken faith with the Indians and he believed this was the ground upon which Mr. Gandhi had advised the Indians to strike. To strike was to defy the law, and the Government's position was that so long as the Indians were out on strike, it was impossible for them to consider any legislation regarding repeal. The defendant was by his threatening conduct, only bringing ruination to the men and harshness upon themselves. He therefore advised the Indians to stop the passive resistance, and make representations to the Government. He also believed that the Indians were alienating the sympathy of the Europeans who were at one with the Indians in requesting the Government for the repeal of the tax. It was a painful duty to pass sentence upon the conduct of a gentleman like Mr. Gandhi, upon the deliberate contravention of the law, but he had a duty to perform, and Mr. Godfrey, his counsel, had asked him fearlessly to perform that duty. The accused having pleaded guilty, he (the Magistrate) accepted that plea, and passed the following sentences :—Count 1, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour ; Count 2, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, to take effect upon the expiration of the sentence in respect to Count 1 ; Count 3, £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, this to



take effect upon the expiration of the sentence imposed in Count 2.

Mr. Gandhi, in a clear and calm voice, said : " I elect to go to gaol."

A large crowd of friends waited outside to see Mr. Gandhi come out, but for some unaccountable reason the police took the greatest pains to ensure secrecy, and no one knew how he was taken away.

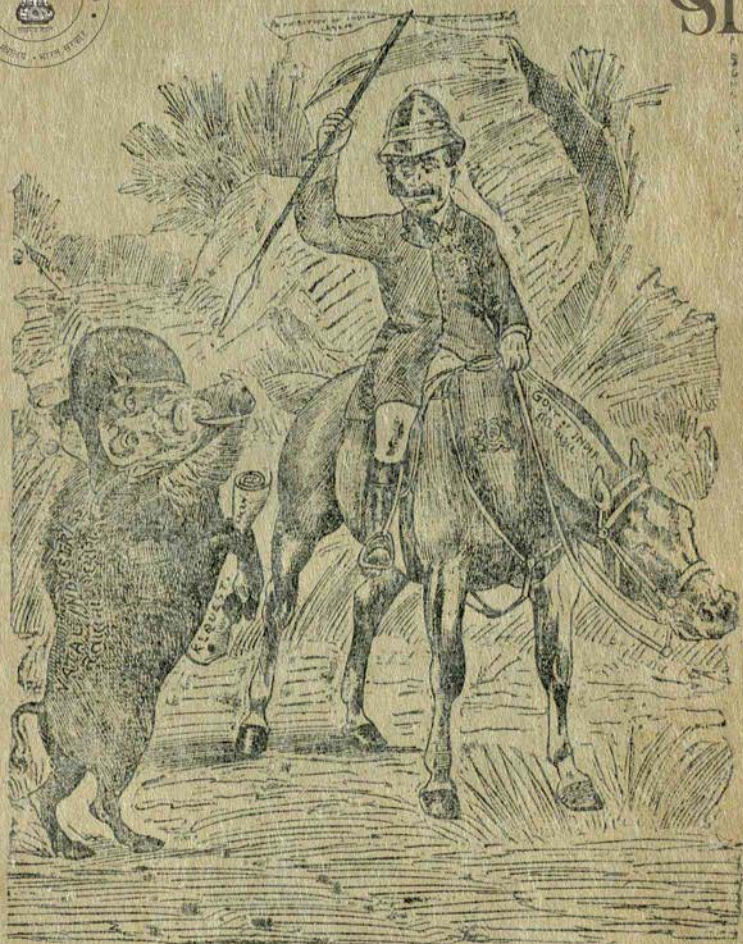
His counsel visited him later, and, through him, desired it to be stated that he was cheerful and confident, and sent as his message to the strikers the following : " No cessation of the strike without the repeal of the £3 tax. The Government, having imprisoned me, can gracefully make a declaration regarding the repeal."



THE SOLOMON COMMISSION.

While Mr. Gandhi and his compatriots were suffering in jail, his countrymen in India under the guidance of Mr. Gokhale continued to render all possible assistance to keep up the firm attitude of the South African Indians. Money was raised in thousands for the help of the distressed in South Africa. And in December 1913 Lord Hardinge's famous speech in Madras opened the eyes of the Imperial Govt. to the iniquities of the situation created by the Union Government. Soon after a Royal Commission to enquire into the condition of Indians in South Africa was appointed. In view of the forthcoming Commission's enquiry Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues were released from prison. At a meeting held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association Mr. Gandhi sketched the future programme in the following speech. Mr. Gandhi said :—

He would have preferred to speak first in one of the Indian tongues, but in the presence of Messrs. Polak and Kallenbach, his fellow-convicts, feelings of gratitude compelled him to speak first in the tongue they knew. They would notice he had changed his dress from that he had formerly adopted for the last 20 years, and he had decided on the change when he heard of the shooting of their fellow-countrymen. No matter whether the shooting was found to be justified or not, the fact was that they were shot, and those bullets shot him (Mr. Gandhi) through the heart also. He felt how glorious it would have been if one of those bullets had struck him



PIC-STICKING

The announcement of the Government of India to put into force the Act prohibiting the supply of indentured labour to Natal, caused perturbation among the employers of labour there who entered an energetic protest against the decision of the Government.



LORD HARDINGE

Recently your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands, by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust, an opinion which we, who watch their struggles from afar cannot but share. They have violated, as they intended to violate, those laws, with full knowledge of the penalties involved, and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India—deep and burning—and not only of India, but of all those who, like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country. (Speech at Madras, December, 1913).



also, because might he not be a murderer himself, by having participated in that event by having advised Indians to strike? His conscience cleared him from this guilt of murder, but he felt he should adopt mourning for those Indians as a humble example to his fellow-countrymen. He felt that he should go into mourning at least for a period, which should be co-extensive with the end of that struggle, and that he should accept some mourning not only inwardly, but outwardly as well, as a humble example to his fellow-countrymen, so that he could tell them that it was necessary for them to show by their conduct and outward appearance that they were in mourning. He was not prepared himself to accept the European mourning dress for this purpose, and, with some modification, in deference to the feelings of his European friends, he had adopted the dress similar to that of an indentured Indian. He asked his fellow-countrymen to adopt some sign of mourning to show to the world that they were mourning and further to adopt some inward observance also. And perhaps he might tell them what his inward mourning was—to restrict himself to one meal a day. They had been released, he continued, not on any condition, but they knew that they were released on the recommendation of a Commission appointed by the Government, in order that every facility might be given not only to them, but to the Indian community, to bring before the Commission any evidence that community might have in its possession. He thought it a right and proper thing that the Government had appointed a Commission, but he thought the Commission was open to the gravest objection from the Indian standpoint; and he was there to tender his humble advice to them that it was impossible to accept the Commission in a form in which the Indians had



no voice. They were fighting for so many grievances, and the underlying spirit of the struggle was to obtain full recognition on the part of the Government of the right of consultation in anything which appertained to Indian interests. Unless the Government was prepared to condescend to that extent, unless they were prepared to ascertain and respect the Indian sentiments, it was not possible for Indians, as loyal but manly citizens of the Empire to render obedience to their commissions or laws which they might have passed over their heads. This was one of the serious fundamental objection. The other objection was that it was a partisan Commission; therefore the Indians wanted their own partisans on it. This they might not get, but they at least wanted impartial men, who had not expressed opinions hostile to their interests, but gentlemen who would be able to bring to the deliberations of the Commission an open, just, and impartial mind. (Applause.) He considered that Mr. Esslen and Mr. Wylie, honourable gentlemen as they were could not possibly bring open minds to bear on the inquiry, for the simple reason that they had their own human limitations and could not divest themselves of their anti-Asiatic views which they had expressed times without number. If the Government appointed the Indians' nominees, and thus honoured their sentiments, and granted a release for the prisoners now in gaol, he thought it would be possible for them to assist the Government, and therefore the Empire, and bring, perhaps, this crisis to an end without further suffering. But it might be that they might have to undergo further suffering. It might be that their sins were so great that they might have to do still further penance. "Therefore I hope you will hold yourselves in readiness," he proceeded, "to respond to the call the Government may



make by declining our just and reasonable requests, and then to again force the pace by again undergoing still greater purifying suffering, until at last the Government may order the military to riddle us also with their bullets. My friends, are you prepared for this? (Voices: "Yes.") Are you prepared to share the fate of those of our countrymen whom the cold stone is resting upon to-day? Are you prepared to do this (Cries of "Yes.") Then if the Government does not grant our request this is the proposition I wish to place before you this morning: That all of us, on the first day of the New Year should be ready again to suffer battle, again to suffer imprisonment and march out. (Applause.) That is the only process of purification and will be a substantial mourning both inwardly and outwardly which will bear justification before our God. That is the advice we give to our free and indentured countrymen—to strike, and even though this may mean death to them, I am sure it will be justified." But if they accepted the quiet life, he went on, not only would the wrath of God descend upon them, but they would incur the disgrace of the whole of that portion of the European world forming the British Empire. (Applause.) He hoped that every man, woman, and grown-up child would hold themselves in readiness to do this. He hoped they would not consider self, that they would not consider their salaries, trades, or even families, their own bodies in the struggle which was to his mind a struggle for human liberty, and therefore a struggle for the religion to which they might respectively belong. It was essentially a religious struggle—(hear, hear)—as any struggle involving assertion and freedom of their conscience must be a religious struggle. He therefore hoped they would hold themselves in readiness to respond to the call and not



listen to the advice of those who wavered, nor listen to those who asked them to wait, or to those who might ask them to refrain from the battle. The struggle was one involving quite a clear issue, and an incredibly simple one. "Do not listen to any one," he concluded, "but obey your own conscience and go forward without thinking. Now is the time for thinking, and having made up your minds stick to it, even unto death." (Applause.)

A TRUCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

The following letter from Mr. Gandhi to the Government places on record the agreement arrived at as a result of a series of interviews with the Minister at Pretoria. It was dated Pretoria, Jan. 21, 1914:—

Before leaving for Phoenix, I venture to express my thanks to General Smuts for the patient and kind interviews that he has been pleased to grant me during this time of overwhelming pressure. My countrymen will remember with gratitude his great consideration.

"I understand that the Minister is unable to accept (with regard to the Indian Inquiry Commission) either (1) my suggestion that a member representing Indian interests should be co-opted when questions of policy are inquired into, or (2) my suggestion that a second Commission, with Indian representation, should be appointed to deal with those questions only, the present Commission in that case becoming purely judicial. I submitted a third proposal also, which, in view of the Government's decision, I need not state here. Had any of my suggestions been viewed favourably by the Government, it would have been possible for my countrymen to assist the labours of the Com-



mission. But with regard to leading evidence before this Commission, which has a political as well as a judicial character, they have conscientious scruples, and these have taken with them a solemn and religious form. I may state briefly that these scruples were based on the strong feeling that the Indian community should have been either consulted or represented where questions of policy were concerned.

"The Minister, I observe, appreciates these scruples, and regards them as honourable, but is unable to alter his decision. As, however, by granting me the recent interviews, he has been pleased to accept the principle of consultation, it enables me to advise my countrymen not to hamper the labours of the Commission by any active propaganda, and not to render the position of the Government difficult by reviving passive resistance, pending the result of the Commission and the introduction of legislation during the forthcoming session.

"If I am right in my interpretation of the Government's attitude on the principle of consultation it would be further possible for us to assist Sir Benjamin Robertson, whom the Viceroy, with gracious forethought, has deputed to give evidence before the Commission.

"A word is here necessary on the question of allegations as to ill-treatment during the progress of the Indian strike in Natal. For the reasons above stated, the avenue of proving them through the Commission is closed to us. I am personally unwilling to challenge libel proceedings by publishing the authentic evidence in our possession, and would far rather refrain altogether from raking up old sores. I beg to assure the Minister that, as passive resisters, we endeavour to avoid, as far as possible, any resentment of personal wrongs. But



in order that our silence may not be mistaken, may I ask the Minister to recognise our motive and reciprocate by not leading evidence of a negative character before the Commission on the allegations in question?

"Suspension of passive resistance, moreover, carries with it a prayer for the release of the passive resistance prisoners now undergoing imprisonment, either in the ordinary gaols or the mine compounds, which might have been declared as such.

"Finally, it might not be out of place here to recapitulate the points on which relief has been sought. They are as follow :

"(1) Repeal of the £3 tax in such a manner that the Indians relieved will occupy virtually the same status as the indentured Indians discharged under the Natal Law 25 of 1891.

"(2) The marriage question.

(These two are the points, as I have verbally submitted, which require fresh legislation.)

"(3) The Cape entry question. (This requires only administrative relief subject to the clear safeguards explained to the Minister.)

"(4) The Orange Free State question. (This requires merely a verbal alteration in the assurance already given.)

"(5) An assurance that the existing laws especially affecting Indians will be administered justly, with due regard to vested rights.

"I venture to suggest that Nos. 3, 4, and 5. present no special difficulty, and that the needful relief may be now given on these points as an earnest of the good intentions of the Government regarding the resident Indian population.

"If the Minister, as I trust and hope, views my submission with favour, I shall be prepared to advise my countrymen in accordance with the tenour of this letter."



THE SETTLEMENT.

The passing of the Indian Relief Act in July 1914 in the Union Houses of Parliament brought a sigh of relief to the whole Indian population both in South Africa and in India. The abolition of the £3 tax, the legislation on the marriage question and the removal of the racial bar were distinctly to the advantage of the Indians and on the lines recommended by the Commission. But there were certain other administrative matters which were not included in the Relief Bill but which were of equal importance to constitute a complete settlement. Mr. Gandhi submitted a list of reforms in the desired direction which General Smuts discussed in a letter addressed to Mr. Gandhi under date, 30th June. On the same day Mr. Gandhi sent the following reply:—

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of even date herewith setting forth the substance of the interview that General Smuts was pleased, notwithstanding many other pressing calls upon his time, to grant me on Saturday last. I feel deeply grateful for the patience and courtesy which the Minister showed during the discussion of the several points submitted by me.

The passing of the Indians' Relief Bill and this correspondence finally closed the Passive Resistance struggle which commenced in the September of 1906 and which to the Indian community cost much physical suffering and pecuniary loss and to the Government much anxious thought and consideration.

As the Minister is aware, some of my countrymen have wished me to go further. They are dissatisfied that the trade licenses laws of the different Provinces, the Transvaal Gold Law, the Transvaal Townships Act, the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885, have not been altered so as to give them full rights of residence, trade and ownership of

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land. Some of them are dissatisfied that full inter-provincial migration is not permitted, and some are dissatisfied that on the marriage question the Relief Bill goes no further than it does. They have asked me that all the above matters might be included in the Passive Resistance struggle. I have been unable to comply with their wishes. Whilst, therefore, they have not been included in the programme of Passive Resistance, it will not be denied that some day or other these matters will require further and sympathetic consideration by the Government. Complete satisfaction cannot be expected until full civic rights have been conceded to the resident Indian population.

I have told my countrymen that they will have to exercise patience and by all honourable means at their disposal educate public opinion so as to enable the Government of the day to go further than the present correspondence does. I shall hope that when the Europeans of South Africa fully appreciate the fact that now, as the importation of indentured labour from India is prohibited and as the Immigrants' Regulation Act of last year has in practice all but stopped further free Indian immigration and that my countrymen do not aspire to any political ambition, they, the Europeans, will see the justice and indeed the necessity of my countrymen being granted the rights I have just referred to.

Meanwhile, if the generous spirit that the Government have applied to the treatment of the problem during the past few months continues to be applied, as promised in your letter, in the administration of the existing laws, I am quite certain that the Indian community throughout the Union will be able to enjoy some measure of peace and never be a source of trouble to the Government.



FAREWELL SPEECH AT DURBAN.

On the eve of their departure from South Africa Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi were the recipients of innumerable addresses from every class of South African residents, Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsees and Europeans. Mr. Gandhi replied to each one of these touching addresses in suitable terms.

On Wednesday the 8th July 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi were entertained at a great gathering of Indian and European residents at the Town Hall, Durban, which was presided over by the Mayor (Mr. W. Holmes). Telegrams were read from the Bishop of Natal, Gen. Botha, Messrs. Smuts, Merriman, Burton, Hoskin and others. The Mayor and several speakers eulogised the services of Mr. Gandhi.

Referring to the addresses which had been presented to him, he said that, while he valued them, he valued more the love and sympathy which the addresses had expressed. He did not know that he would be able to make adequate compensation. He did not deserve all the praise bestowed upon him. Nor did his wife claim to deserve all that had been said of her. Many an Indian woman had done greater service during the struggle than Mrs. Gandhi. He thanked the community on behalf of Mr. Kallenbach, who was another brother to him, for the addresses presented. The community had done well in recognising Mr. Kallenbach's worth. Mr. Kallenbach would tell them that he came to the struggle to gain. He considered that, by taking up their cause, he gained a great deal in the truest sense. Mr. Kallenbach had done splendid work during the strike at Newcastle and, when the time came, he cheerfully went to prison, again thinking



that he was the gainer and not the loser. Proceeding Mr. Gandhi referred to the time of his arrival in 1897 when his friend Mr. Laughton had stood by him against the mob. He also remembered with gratefulness the action of Mrs. Alexander, the wife of the late Superintendent of Police in Durban, who protected him with her umbrella from the missiles thrown by the excited crowd. Referring to Passive Resistance, he claimed that it was a weapon of the purest type. It was not the weapon of the weak. It needed, in his opinion, far greater courage to be a Passive Resister than a physical resister. It was the courage of a Jesus, a Daniel, a Cranmer, a Latimer and a Ridley who could go calmly to suffering and death, and the courage of a Tolstoy who dared to defy the Czars of Russia, that stood out as the greatest. Mr. Gandhi said he knew the Mayor had received some telegrams stating that the Indians' Relief Bill was not satisfactory. It would be a singular thing if in this world they would be able to get anything that satisfied everybody, but in the condition of things in South Africa at the present time he was certain they could not have had a better measure. "I do not claim the credit for it," Mr. Gandhi remarked. "It is rather due to the women and young people like Nagappan, Narayansamy, and Valliamah who have died for the cause and to those who quickened the conscience of South Africa. Our thanks are due also to the Union Government. General Botha showed the greatest statesmanship when he said his Government would stand or fall by this measure. I followed the whole of that historic debate—historic to me, historic to my countrymen, and possibly historic to South Africa and the world." Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that it was well known to them how the Government had done justice, and how the Oppo-



sition had come to their assistance. They had also received handsome help from both the Imperial and Indian Governments, backed by that generous Viceroy, Lord Hardinge. (Cheers.) The manner in which India, led by their great and distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, had responded to the cry which came from the hearts of thousands of their countrymen in South Africa, was one of the results of the Passive Resistance movement, and left, he hoped, no bitter traces or bitter memories. (Applause.) "This assurance," continued Mr. Gandhi, "I wish to give. I go away with no ill-will against a single European. I have received many hard knocks in my life, but here I admit that I have received those most precious gifts from Europeans—love and sympathy." (Cheers.) This settlement, he said, had been achieved after an eight years' struggle. The Indians in South Africa had never aspired to any political ambition, and as regarded the social question, that could never arise in connection with the Indians, "I do not hold for one moment," Mr. Gandhi exclaimed, "that East and West cannot combine. I think the day is coming when East must meet West, or West meet East, but I think the social evolution of the West to-day lies in one channel, and that of the Indian in another channel. The Indians have no wish to-day to encroach on the social institutions of the European in South Africa. (Cheers.) Most Indians are natural traders. There are bound to be trade jealousies and those various things that come from competition. I have never been able to find a solution of this most difficult problem, which will require the broad-mindedness and spirit of justice of the Government of South Africa to hold the balance between conflicting interests." Referring to his stay in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi said that he should retain the most

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sacred memories of this land. He had been fortunate in forming the happiest and most lasting friendships with both Europeans and Indians. He was now returning to India—a holy land, sanctified by the austerities of the ages. In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi hoped that the same love and sympathy which had been given to him in South Africa might be extended to him, no matter in what part of the world he might be. He hoped that the settlement embodied in the Indians' Relief Bill would be carried out in a spirit of broad-mindedness and justice in the administration of the laws lately passed in connection with the affairs of the Indian community. "Then," added Mr. Gandhi, "I think there will be no fear on the part of my countrymen in their social evolution. That is one of the lessons of the settlement."



CSL

ADDRESS TO THE INDENTURED INDIANS.

The following speech is the text of Mr. Gandhi's address to Indentured Indians at Verulam on the 12th July 1914 (reported by the "Natal Mercury" correspondent):—

Please understand, my indentured countrymen, that it is wrong for you to consider that relief has been obtained because I or you have gone to gaol, but because you had the courage to give up your life and sacrifice yourselves and in this instance I have also to tell you that many causes led to this result. I have to specially refer to the valuable assistance rendered by the Hon. Senator Marshall Campbell. I think that your thanks and my thanks are due to him for his work in the Senate while the Bill was passing through it. The relief is of this nature: The tax you will not have to pay, and arrears will be remitted. It does not mean that you are free from your indentures. You are bound to go through your indentures faithfully and honestly, but when you are just as free as any other free Indian under the Act of 1891, and can receive the same protection in that Act. You are not bound to re-indenture or return to India. Discharge certificates will be issued to you free of charge. If you want to go to India and return there from you must first spend three years in Natal as free Indians. If you, being poor, want assistance to enable you to go to India, you can get it on application to the Government; but in that case you would not be allowed to return. If you want to return fight for your own money or borrow from your friends. If you re-



indenture you come under the same law—namely, 25 of 1891. My advice to you is: Do not re-indenture, but by all means serve your present masters under the common law of the country. Now, in the event of any occasion arising (which I hope it will not do), you will know what is necessary. * * * *

Victoria County has not been as free from violence as the Newcastle district was. You retaliated. I do not care whether it was under provocation or not but you retaliated, and have used sticks and stones, and you have burnt sugar-cane. That is not passive resistance. If I had been in your midst I would have repudiated you, and allowed rather my own head to be broken than allow a single stick or stone to be used. Passive resistance is a more powerful weapon than all the sticks, stones, and gunpowder in the world. If imposed upon you must suffer even unto death. That is passive resistance. If, therefore, I was an indentured Indian working for the Hon. Mr. Marshall Campbell, Mr. Saunders or other employer, and if I found my treatment not just, I would not go to the Protector—I would go to my master and ask for justice; and if he would not grant it I would say that I would remain there without food or drink until it was granted. I am quite sure that the stoniest heart will be melted by passive resistance. Let this sink deeply into yourselves. This is a sovereign and most effective remedy. * * *

I shall now say my farewell to Verulam and you all. The scene before me will not fade in my memory, be the distance ever so great. May God help you all in your trouble. May your own conduct be such that God may find it possible to help you.



FAREWELL SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG.

At Johannesburg Mr. Gandhi was the recipient of numerous addresses, from Hindus, Parsees, Mahomedans, Europeans and other important communities. Indeed every class of people, and every important association presented a separate address. Mr. Gandhi made a touching reply to them :

Johannesburg was not a new place to him. He saw many friendly faces there, many who had worked with him in many struggles in Johannesburg. He had gone through much in life. A great deal of depression and sorrow had been his lot, but he had also learnt during all those years to love Johannesburg even though it was a Mining Camp. It was in Johannesburg that he had found his most precious friends. It was in Johannesburg that the foundation for the great struggle of Passive Resistance was laid in the September of 1906. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a friend, a guide, and a biographer in the late Mr. Doke. It was in Johannesburg that he had found in Mrs. Doke a loving sister, who had nursed him back to life when he had been assaulted by a countryman who had misunderstood his mission and who misunderstood what he had done. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a Kallenbach, a Polak, a Miss Schlesin, and many another who had always helped him and had always cheered him and his countrymen. Johannesburg, therefore, had the holiest associations of all the holy associations that Mrs. Gandhi and he would carry back to India, and, as he had already said on many another platform, South Africa, next to India, would be the holiest land to him and to Mrs. Gandhi



and to his children, for, in spite of all the bitternesses, it had given them those life-long companions. It was in Johannesburg again that the European Committee had been formed, when Indians were going through the darkest stage in their history, presided over then, as it still was, by Mr. Hosken. It was last, but not least, Johannesburg that had given Valiamma, that young girl, whose picture rose before him even as he spoke, who had died in the cause of truth. Simple-minded in faith—she had not the knowledge that he had, she did not know what Passive Resistance was, she did not know what it was the community would gain, but she was simply taken up with unbounded enthusiasm for her people—went to goal, came out of it a wreck, and within a few days died. It was Johannesburg again that produced a Nagappan and Naryanasamy, two lovely youths hardly out of their teens, who also died. But both Mrs. Gandhi and he stood living before them. He and Mrs. Gandhi had worked in the lime-light; those others had worked behind the scenes, not knowing where they were going, except this that what they were doing was right and proper, and, if any praise was due anywhere at all, it was due to those three who died. They had had the name of Harbatsingh given to them. He (the speaker) had had the privilege of serving imprisonment with him. Harbatsingh was 75 years old. He was an ex-indentured Indian, and when he (the speaker) asked him why he had come there, that he had gone there to seek his grave, the brave man replied, "What does it matter? I know what you are fighting for. You have not to pay the £3 tax, but my fellow ex-indentured Indians have to pay that tax, and what more glorious death could I meet?" He had met that death in the goal



MRS SHEIK MEHTAB

Mahomedan Indian Woman Passive Resister
who suffered imprisonment.



HANIFA BIBI

(Mrs. Shaikh 'Mehtab's Mother) who suffered three
months' imprisonment as a Passive Resister.



G. K. GOKHALE IN SOUTH AFRICA



THE BISHOP OF MADRAS



at Durban. No wonder if Passive Resistance had fired and quickened the conscience of South Africa!

But, proceeded Mr. Gandhi, he concurred with Mr. Duncan in an article he wrote some years ago, when he truly analysed the struggle, and said that behind that struggle for concrete rights lay the great spirit which asked for an abstract principle, and the fight which was undertaken in 1906, although it was a fight against a particular law, was a fight undertaken in order to combat the spirit that was seen about to overshadow the whole of South Africa, and to undermine the glorious British Constitution, of which the Chairman had spoken so loftily that evening, and about which he (the speaker) shared his views. It was his knowledge, right or wrong, of the British Constitution which bound him to the Empire. Tear that Constitution to shreds and his loyalty also would be torn to shreds. Keep that Constitution intact, and they held him bound a slave to that Constitution. He had felt that the choice lay for himself and his fellow-countrymen between two courses, when this spirit was brooding over South Africa, either to sunder themselves from the British Constitution, or to fight in order that the ideals of that Constitution might be preserved—but only the ideals. Lord Ampthill had said, in a preface to Mr. Doke's book, that the theory of the British Constitution must be preserved at any cost if the British Empire was to be saved from the mistakes that all the previous Empires had made. Practice might bend to the temporary aberration through which local circumstances might compel them to pass, it might bend before unreasoning or unreasonable prejudice, but theory once recognised could never be departed from, and this principle must be maintained at any cost. And it was that spirit which had been acknowledged.



ed now by the Union Government, and acknowledged how nobly and loftily. The words that General Smuts so often emphasised still rang in his ears. He had said, "Gandhi, this time we want no misunderstanding, we want no mental or other reservations, let all the cards be on the table, and I want you tell me wherever you think that a particular passage or word does not read in accordance with your own reading," and it was so. That was the spirit in which he approached the negotiations. When he remembered General Smuts of a few years ago, when he told Lord Crewe that South Africa would not depart from its policy of racial distinction, that it was bound to retain that distinction, and that, therefore, the sting that lay in this Immigration Law would not be removed, many a friend, including Lord Ampthill, asked whether they could not for the time being suspend their activity. He had said "No." If they did that it would undermine his loyalty, and even though he might be the only person he would still fight on. Lord Ampthill had congratulated him, and that great nobleman had never deserted the cause even when it was at its lowest ebb, and they saw the result that day. They had not by any means to congratulate themselves on a victory gained. There was no question of a victory gained, but the question of the establishment of the principle that, so far as the Union of South Africa at least was concerned, its legislation would never contain the racial taint, would never contain the colour disability. The practice would certainly be different. There was the Immigration Law—it recognised no racial distinctions, but in practice they had arranged, they had given a promise, that there should be no undue influx from India as to immigration. That was a concession to present prejudice. Whether it was right or wrong was not for him to discuss.



then. But it was the establishment of the principle which had made the struggle so important in the British Empire, and the establishment of that principle which had made these sufferings perfectly justifiable and perfectly honourable, and he thought that, when they considered the struggle from that standpoint, it was a perfectly dignified thing for any gathering to congratulate itself upon such a vindication of the principles of the British Constitution. One word of caution he wished to utter regarding the settlement. The settlement was honourable to both parties. He did not think there was any room left for misunderstanding, but whilst it was final in the sense that it closed the great struggle, it was not final in the sense that it gave to Indians all that they were entitled to. There was still the Gold Law which had many a sting in it. There was still the Licensing Laws throughout the Union, which also contained many a sting. There was still a matter which the Colonial-born Indians especially could not understand or appreciate, namely, the water-tight compartments in which they had to live; whilst there was absolutely free inter-communication and inter-migration between the Provinces for Europeans, Indians had to be cooped up in their respective Provinces. Then there was undue restraint on their trading activity. There was the prohibition as to holding landed property in the Transvaal, which was degrading, and all these things took Indians into all kinds of undesirable channels. These restrictions would have to be removed. But for that, he thought, sufficient patience would have to be exercised. Time was now at their disposal, and how wonderfully the tone had been changed! And here he had been told in Capetown, and he believed it implicitly, the spirit of Mr. Andrews had pervaded all those statesmen and leading



men whom he saw. He came and went away after a brief period, but he certainly fired those whom he saw with a sense of their duty to the Empire of which they were members. But, in any case, to whatever circumstances that healthy tone was due, it had not escaped him. He had seen it amongst European friends whom he met at Cape-town; he had seen it more fully in Durban, and this time it had been his privilege to meet many Europeans who were perfect strangers even on board the train, who had come smilingly forward to congratulate him on what they had called a great victory. Everywhere he had noticed that healthy tone. He asked European friends to continue that activity, either through the European Committee or through other channels, and to give his fellow-countrymen their help and extend that fellow-feeling to them also, so that they might be able to work out their own salvation.

To his countrymen he would say that they should wait and nurse the settlement, which he considered was all that they could possibly and reasonably have expected, and that they would now live to see, with the co-operation of their European friends, that what was promised was fulfilled, that the administration of the existing laws was just, and that vested rights were respected in the administration; that after they had nursed these things, if they cultivated European public opinion, making it possible for the Government of the day to grant a restoration of the other rights of which they had been deprived, he did not think that there need be any fear about the future. He thought that, with mutual co-operation, with mutual goodwill, with due response on the part of either party, the Indian community need never be a source of weakness to that Government or to any Government. On the contrary



he had full faith in his countrymen that, if they were well-treated, they would always rise to the occasion and help the Government of the day. If they had insisted on their rights on many an occasion, he hoped that the European friends who were there would remember that they had also discharged the responsibilities which had faced them.

And now it was time for him to close his remarks and say a few words of farewell only. He did not know how he could express those words. The best years of his life had been passed in South Africa. India, as his distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, had reminded him, had become a strange land to him. South Africa he knew, but not India. He did not know what impelled him to go to India, but he did know that the parting from them all, the parting from the European friends who had helped him through thick and thin, was a heavy blow, and one he was least able to bear, yet he knew he had to part from them. He could only say farewell and ask them to give him their blessing, to pray for them that their heads might not be turned by the praise they had received, that they might still know how to do their duty to the best of their ability, that they might still learn that first, second, and last should be the approbation of their own conscience, and that then whatever might be due to them would follow in its own time.—From *"The Souvenir of the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa."*



FAREWELL TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Just before leaving South Africa, Mr. Gandhi handed to Renter's Agent at Capetown the following letter addressed to the Indian and European public of South Africa.

I would like on the eve of my departure for India to say a few words to my countrymen in South Africa, and also to the European community. The kindness with which both European and Indian friends have overwhelmed me sends me to India a debtor to them. It is a debt I shall endeavour to repay by rendering in India what services I am capable of rendering there; and if in speaking about the South African Indian question I am obliged to refer to the injustices which my countrymen have received and may hereafter receive, I promise that I shall never wilfully exaggerate, and shall state the truth and nothing but the truth.

A word about the settlement, and what it means. In my humble opinion it is the Magna Charta of our liberty in this land. I give it the historic name, not because it gives us rights which we have never enjoyed and which are in themselves new or striking, but because it has come to us after eight years' strenuous suffering, that has involved the loss of material possessions and of precious lives. I call it our Magna Charta because it marks a change in the policy of the Government towards us and establishes our right not only to be consulted in matters affecting us, but to have our reasonable wishes respected. It moreover confirms the theory of the British Constitution that there should be no legal racial inequality between different sub-



jects of the Crown, no matter how much practice may vary according to local circumstance. Above all the settlement may well be called our Magna Charta, because it has vindicated Passive Resistance as a lawful clean weapon, and has given in Passive Resistance a new strength to the community; and I consider it an infinitely superior force to that of the vote, which history shows has often been turned against the voters themselves.

The settlement finally disposes of all the points that were the subject matter of Passive Resistance, and in doing so it breathes the spirit of justice and fair play. If the same spirit guides the administration of the existing laws my countrymen will have comparative peace, and South Africa will hear little of the Indian problem in an acute form.

Some of my countrymen have protested against it. The number of these protestants is numerically very small, and in influence not of great importance. They do not object to what has been granted, but they object that it is not enough. It is impossible, therefore, to withhold sympathy from them. I have had an opportunity of speaking to them, and I have endeavoured to show to them that if we had asked for anything more it would have been a breach of submission made on behalf of the British Indians in a letter addressed to the Government by Mr. Cachalia during the latter part of last year and we should have laid ourselves open to the charge of making new demands.

But I have also assured them that the present settlement does not preclude them from agitation (as has been made clear in my letter to the Secretary of the Interior of the 16th ultimo) for the removal of other disabilities which the community will still suffer from under the Gold



Law, the Townships Act, the Law 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal and the Trade Licences Laws of Natal and the Cape. The promise made by General Smuts to administer the existing law justly and with due regard to vested rights gives the community breathing-time, but these laws are in themselves defective, and can be, as they have been, turned into engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the resident Indian population from South Africa. The concession to popular prejudice in that we have reconciled ourselves to almost the total prohibition by administrative methods of a fresh influx of Indian immigrants, and to the deprivation of all political power, is, in my opinion, the utmost that could be reasonably expected from us. These two things being assured, I venture to submit that we are entitled to full rights of trade, inter-provincial migration, and ownership of landed property being restored in the not distant future. I leave South Africa in the hope that the healthy tone that pervades the European community in South Africa to-day will continue, and that it will enable Europeans to recognise the inherent justice of our submission. To my countrymen I have at various meetings that I have addressed during the past fortnight, attended in several cases by thousands, said, "Nurse the settlement; see to it that the promises made are being carried out. Attend to development and progress from within. Zealously remove all causes which we may have given for the rise and growth of anti-Indian prejudice or agitation, and patiently cultivate and inform European opinion so as to enable the Government of the day and legislature to restore to us our rights." It is by mutual co-operation and goodwill that the solution of the balance of the pressing disabilities which were not made points for Passive Resistance may be obtained in the



natural course, and without trouble or agitation in an acute form.

The presence of a large indentured and ex-indentured Indian population in Natal is a grave problem. Compulsory repatriation is a physical and political impossibility, voluntary repatriation by way of granting free passages and similar inducements will not—as my experience teaches me—be availed of to any appreciable extent. The only real and effective remedy for the great State to adopt is to face responsibility fairly and squarely, to do away with the remnant of the system of indenture, and to level up this part of the population and make use of it for the general welfare of the Union. Men and women who can effectively strike in large bodies, who can for a common purpose suffer untold hardships, who can, undisciplined though they are, be martyrs for days without police supervision and yet avoid doing any damage to property or person, and who can in times of need serve their King faithfully and capably, as the ambulance corps raised at the time of the late war (and which had among other classes of Indians nearly 1,500 indentured Indians) bore witness, are surely people who will, if given ordinary opportunities in life, form an honourable part of any nation.

If any class of persons, have special claim to be considered, it is these indentured Indians and their children, to whom South Africa has become either a land of adoption or of birth. They did not enter the Union as ordinary free immigrants, but they came upon invitation, and indeed even after much coaxing, by agents of South African employers of this class of labour. In this letter I have endeavoured as accurately and as fairly as is in my power to set forth the Indian situation, and the extraordinary courtesy, kindness and sympathy that have been shown to me during th

past month by so many European friends. The frankness and generosity with which General Smuts, in interview, that he was pleased to grant me, approached the questions at issue, and the importance that so many distinguished members of both Houses of Parliament attached to the Imperial aspect of the problem, give me ample reason for believing that my countrymen who have made South Africa their homes will receive a fairly full measure of justice and will be enabled to remain in the Union with self-respect and dignity.

Finally, in bidding good-bye to South Africa, I would like to apologise to so many friends on whom I have not been able, through extreme pressure of work, to call personally. I once more state that though I have received many a hard knock in my long stay in this country, it has been my good fortune to receive much personal kindness and consideration from hundreds of European friends, well-wishers and sympathisers. I have formed the closest friendships, which will last for ever, for this reason and for many similar reasons, which I would love to reduce to writing but for fear of trespassing unduly open the courtesy of the press. This sub-continent has become to me a sacred and dear land, next only to my motherland. I leave the shores of South Africa with a heavy heart, and the distance that will now separate me from South Africa will but draw me closer to it, and its welfare will always be a matter of great concern, and the love bestowed upon me by my countrymen and the generous forbearance and kindness extended to me by the Europeans will ever remain a most cherished treasure in my memory.



Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi left South Africa for London in July 1914. On their arrival in England they were welcomed at a great Gathering of British and Indian friends and admirers at the Hotel Cecil on August 8. Letters of apology were received from the Prime Minister, the Marquis of Crewe, Earl Roberts, Lords Gladstone, Curzon, Lamington, Amptill, Harris, the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. The Reception was arranged by the Hon. Mr. Bhupendra-nath Basu, the Rt. Hon. Mr. Ameer Ali and others who spoke on the occasion :

Mr. Gandhi, in returning thanks, referred to the great crisis which at the moment overshadowed the world. He hoped his young friends would "think Imperially" in the best sense of the word, and do their duty. With regard to affairs in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi paid a noble tribute to the devotion of his followers. It was to the rank and file that their victory was due. Those who had suffered and died in the struggle were the real heroes.* * Mr. Gandhi regarded the settlement as the Magna Charta of the South Africa British Indians, not because of the substance but because of the spirit which brought it about. There had been a change in the attitude of the people of South Africa and the settlement had been sealed by the sufferings of the Indian community. It had proved that if Indians were in earnest they were irresistible. There had been no compromise in principles. Some grievances remained unredressed but these were capable of adjustment by pressure from Downing Street, Simla and from South Africa itself. The future rested with themselves. If they proved worthy of better conditions, they would get them.