

1. A CONFESSION¹

[1884]

I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.²

An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. VIII

2. SPEECH AT ALFRED HIGH SCHOOL, RAJKOT³

July 4, 1888

I hope that some of you will follow in my footsteps, and after you return from England you will work wholeheartedly for big reforms in India.

[From Gujarati]

Kethiawar Times, 12-7-1888

¹ When Gandhiji was 15, he had removed a bit of gold from his brother's armlet to clear a small debt of the latter. He felt so mortified about his act that he decided to make a confession to his father. Parental forgiveness was granted to him in the form of silent tears. The incident left a lasting mark on his mind. In his own words, it was an object-lesson to him in the power of ahimsa.

The original not being available; his own report of it, as found in *An Autobiography*, is reproduced here.

² According to *Mahatma Gandhi : The Early Phase*, p. 212, one of the sentences in the confession was : "So, father, your son is now, in your eyes, no better than a common thief."

³ Gandhiji was given a send-off by his fellow-students of the Alfred High School, Rajkot, when he was leaving for England to study for the Bar. In *An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XI, he says : "I had written out a few words of thanks. But I could scarcely stammer them out. I remember how my head reeled and how my whole frame shook as I stood up to read them."

3. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS GANDHI

LONDON,
Friday, November 9, 1888

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I am sorry that there has been no letter from you for the last two or three weeks. Your silence is due perhaps to your not having heard from me. But it was impossible for me to post any letters before I reached London. That you should not have written to me on that account is indeed surprising. As I am far from home we can meet only through letters. And if I do not get letters I feel very much worried. Therefore please drop a postcard every week without fail. I would not have been anxious if you did not have my address. But I am sorry that you have stopped writing after having written to me twice. I joined the Inner Temple on Tuesday last. I will write in detail after I hear from you next week. The cold here is now bitter but such bad weather generally does not last long. In spite of the cold I have no need of meat or liquor. This fills my heart with joy and thankfulness. I am now keeping very good health. Please give my respects to mother and sister-in-law.

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat of the Gujarati

4. LONDON DIARY¹

LONDON,
November, 12 1888

What led to the intention of proceeding to London? The scene opens about the end of April. Before the intention of coming to London for the sake of study was actually formed, I had a secret design in my mind of coming here to satisfy my curiosity of knowing what London was. While I was prosecuting my college studies in

¹ When his nephew and co-worker, Chhaganlal Gandhi, was proceeding for the first time to London in 1909, Gandhiji gave him his "London Diary" The diary filled about 120 pages. Chhaganlal Gandhi gave it to Mahadev Desai in 1920. But, before doing so, he copied out in a notebook about 20 pages of the original. The remaining 100 pages were not continuous writing, but merely a chronicle of incidents during his stay in London from 1888 to 1891. The original being untraceable, Chhaganlal's copy is reproduced here with minimum editing. Gandhiji wrote the diary in English when he was 19.

Bhavnagar¹, I had a chat with Jayshankar Buch. During the chat he advised me to apply to the Junagadh² State to give me a scholarship to proceed to London, I being an inhabitant of Sorath³. I do not perfectly remember the answer I made to him that day. I suppose I felt the impossibility of getting the scholarship. From that [time] I had in my mind the intention of visiting the land. I was finding the means to reach that end.

On 13th April, 1888, I left Bhavnagar to enjoy the vacation in Rajkot. After 15 days of vacation, my elder brother and I went to see Patwari. On our return my brother said : “We would go to see Mavji Joshi⁴”, and so we went. Mavji Joshi asked me as usual how I did. Then put some questions about my study in Bhavnagar. I plainly told him that I had hardly any chance of passing my examination first year. I also added that I found the course very difficult. Hearing this, he advised my brother to send me as soon as possible to London for being called to the Bar. He said the expense will be only Rs. 5,000. “Let him take some *urad dal*. There he will cook some food for himself and thereby there will be no objection about religion. Don’t reveal the matter to anybody. Try to get some scholarship. Apply to Junagadh and Porbandar States. See my son Kevalram⁵, and if you fail in getting the pecuniary help and if you have no money, sell your furniture. But anyhow send Mohandas to London. I think that is the only means to keep the reputation of your deceased father.” All of our family members have great faith in what Mavji Joshi says. And my brother who is naturally very credulous made a promise to Mavji Joshi to send me to London. Now was the time for my exertions.

On that very day my brother, notwithstanding his promise to keep the matter secret, told the thing to Khushalbhai⁶. He, of course, approved of it in case I could observe my religion. The very day it was told to Meghji⁷. He quite agreed with the proposal and offered to give me Rs. 5,000. I had some faith in what he said. And when the matter was disclosed to my dear mother, she reproached me

¹ Former princely States in Gujarat

² *ibid*

³ A district in Saurashtra

⁴ Priest family friend and adviser of the Gandhi

⁵ Leading lawyer of Kathiwan.

⁶ Gandhiji’s cousin and father of Chhaganlal and Maganlal both of whom worked ‘with him in South Africa.

⁷ Gandhiji’s cousin

for being so credulous and she said I would never get any money from him when the time comes, which she thought never will come.

On that day I was to (go to) Kevalrambhai. I saw him accordingly. There I had not a satisfactory chat. He no doubt approved of my object but said: "You will have to spend there at least Rs. 10, 000." This was a great blow to me, and again he said: "You will have to set aside all your religious prejudices, if any. You will have to eat meat, you must drink. You cannot live without that. The more you spend, the cleverer you will be. It is a very important thing. I speak to you frankly. Don't be offended; but, look here, you are still very young. There are many temptations in London. You are apt to be entrapped by them." I was partially dejected by this talk. But I am not a man who would, after having formed any intention, leave it easily. He illustrated his statement by giving example of Mr. Gulam Mahomed Munshi. I asked him whether he could help me in any way in getting the scholarship. He answered in the negative. He said he would very gladly do anything except that. I told everything to my brother.

Then I was entrusted with the business of receiving the consent of my dear mother, which I thought was not an arduous task for me. After a day or two, my brother and I went to see Mr. Kevalram; there he saw us though he was very busy at that time. We had a talk of the similar kind that I had with him a day or two earlier. He advised my brother to send me to Porbandar. The proposal was agreed to. Then we returned. I began to introduce the subject to my mother in joke. The joke was turned to reality in no time. Then a day was fixed for my going to Porbandar.

Twice or thrice I prepared to go, but some difficulty came in my way. Once I was to go with Zaverchand, but an hour before the time of my departure a serious accident took place. I was always quarrelling with my friend Sheikh Mehtab¹. On the day of departure I was quite engrossed in thinking about the quarrel. He had a musical party at night. I did not enjoy it very well. At about 10.30 p.m. the party ended and we all went to see Meghjibhai and Rami. On our way I was buried in the madcap thoughts of London on one side and the thoughts of Sheikh Mehtab on the other. Amidst thoughts, I came unconsciously in contact with a carriage. I received some injury. Yet I did not take the help of anybody in walking. I think I was quite dizzy. Then we entered the house of Meghjibhai. There I again came

¹ Boyhood friend of Gandhiji whom he tried for several years to reform, but without success

in contact with a stone unknowingly and received injury. I was quite senseless. From that [time] I did not know what took place, and after that, I am told by them, I fell flat on the ground after some steps. I was not myself for 5 minutes. They considered I was dead. But fortunately for myself the ground on which I fell was quite smooth. I came to my senses at last and all of them were quite joyful. The mother was sent for. She was very sorry for me, and this caused my delay though I told them that I was quite well. But none would allow me to go, though I afterwards came to know that my bold and dearest mother would have allowed me to go. But she feared the calumny of other people. At last with great difficulty I was allowed to leave Rajkot for Porbandar after some days. On my way too I had to encounter some difficulties.

At length I reached Porbandar to the joy of all. Lalbhai¹ and Karsondas² had come to the Khadi bridge to fetch me home. Now what had I to do in Porbandar [was to] exact consent from my uncle, and, secondly apply to Mr. Lely³ to render me some pecuniary help, and last, in case of failure to get the State scholarship, to ask Parmanandbhai⁴ to give me some money. The first thing I did was that I saw uncle and asked him whether he liked my going to London or not. Then, naturally, as I had expected, he asked me to enumerate the advantages of going to London. This I did according to my power. Then he said : “Of course, the people of this generation would like it very much, but, as for myself, I do not like it. Nevertheless we shall consider afterwards.” I was not disappointed by such an answer. At least I had the satisfaction to know that at all events he liked it inwardly and his deed proved what I thought right.

Unfortunately for me, Mr. Lely was not in Porbandar. It is quite true that misfortunes never come single. After his return from the district where he had gone, he was to go at once on leave. My uncle advised me to wait for him till the next Sunday. And if he did not come up during that time, he said, he would send me where he should be. But it gives me much pleasure to write here that he returned from the district on Sunday. Then it was settled that I should see him on Monday. It was done accordingly. For the first time in my life I had an interview with an English gentleman. Formerly I never dared to front them. But thoughts of London made me bold. I had small

¹ Gandhi's cousin

² Gandhi's elder brother

³ British Agent in Porbandhar State during the minority of the Prince

⁴ Gandhiji's Cousin

talk with him in Gujarati. He was quite in a hurry. He saw me when he was ascending the ladder of the upper storey of his bungalow. He said the Porbandar State was very poor and could not give me any pecuniary help. However, he said, I should first graduate in India and then he would see if he could render me any help. Indeed such an answer from him quite disappointed me. I did not expect such a reply from him.

Now what I had to do was to ask Parmanandbhai to give me Rs. 5,000. He said he would very gladly give them if my uncle approved of my going to London. I thought this to be rather a difficult task, yet I was determined upon exacting his consent. I saw him when he was busy doing something, and addressed him thus : “Uncle, now tell me what you really think of my going. My chief aim in coming here is to exact your consent.” Then he replied : “I cannot approve of it. Don’t you know that I am going on a pilgrimage, and is it not disgraceful on my part to say that I like that people should go to London? However, if your mother and brother like it, I do not at all object to it.” “But then,” I said, “you don’t know that you prevent Parmanandbhai from rendering me pecuniary help by refusing to allow my going to London.” Just as I uttered these words, he said in an angry tone: “Is it so? My dear chap, you don’t know why he says so. He knows that I will never approve of your going and so he brings forth this excuse. But the real thing is that he is never to render you any help of the kind. I do not prevent him from doing so.” Thus ended our talk. Then I gaily ran off and saw Parmanandbhai and word by word related what took place between my uncle and myself. He too was quite angry when he heard this and at the same time made a promise to give me Rs. 5,000. I was quite overjoyed when he made a promise, and what pleased me more was that he swore by his son. Now from that day I began to think that I would surely go to London. Then I stayed some days in Porbandar and the more I stayed there the more I was assured of the promise.

Now here is what took place at Rajkot during my absence. My friend Sheikh Mehtab who, I should say, is very full of tricks, reminded Meghji bhai of his promise and forged a letter with my signature in which he wrote that I stood in need of Rs. 5,000 and so on. The letter was shown to him and it actually passed for a letter written by me. Then, of course, he was quite puffed up and made a solemn promise of giving me Rs. 5,000. I was not informed of this until I reached Rajkot.

Now to return again to Porbandar. At length a day was fixed for my departure and I bade farewell to my family members and was set off for Rajkot, with my brother Karsondas and Meghji's father, really an incarnation of miserliness. Before going to Rajkot, I went to Bhavnagar to sell off my furniture, and discontinue the rent of the house. I did it only in one day and was separated from the friends in the neighbourhood, not without tears from them and my kind landlady. I should never forget their kindness and that of Anopram and others. Having done this, I reached Rajkot.

But I was to see Colonel Watson¹ before my departure for three years. He was to come to Rajkot on the 19th June, 1888. Indeed it was a long time for me because I reached Rajkot in the beginning of May. But I could not help. My brother entertained very high hopes of Colonel Watson. These days were indeed hard days. I could not sleep well at night, was always attacked by dreams. Some persons dissuaded me from going to London and some advised me to do so. Sometimes my mother too asked me not to go, and what was very strange that not infrequently my brother also changed his mind. So I was held in suspense. But, as all of them knew that I should not leave off anything having first begun it, they were silent. During the time, I was asked by my brother to sound the mind of Meghajibhai about his promise. The result was quite disappointing, of course, and from that time he always acted the part of an enemy. He spoke ill of me before anybody and everybody. But I was quite able to disregard his taunts. My dearest mother was quite angry with him for this and sometimes uneasy. But I could easily console her, and I have the satisfaction to see that I have very often consoled her with success and have made her laugh heartily when she, my dear, dear mother, should be shedding tears on my account. At last Colonel Watson came. I saw him. He said: "I shall think about it", but I never got any help from him. I am sorry to say that it was with difficulty that I could take a trivial note of introduction which, he said in a peremptory voice, was worth one lac of rupees. Now really it makes me laugh.

Then a day was fixed for my departure. At first it was the fourth of August. The matter was now brought to a crisis. The fact I was to go to England went through the Press. My brother was always asked by some persons about my going. Now was the time when he told me to leave off the intention of going, but I would not do that. Then he

¹ Political Agent of Kathiawar, stationed at Rajkot

saw H. H. the Thakoresaheb¹ of Rajkot and requested him to render me some pecuniary help. But no help was obtained therefrom. Then for the last time I saw Thakoresaheb and Colonel Watson. I received a note of introduction from the latter and a photo from the former. Here I must write that the fulsome flattery which I had to practise about this time had quite made me angry. Had it not been for my credulous and dearest brother, I would never have resorted to such a piece of gross flattery. After all, the 10th August came and my brother, Sheikh Mehtab, Mr. Nathubhai, Khushalbai and I started.

I left Rajkot for Bombay. It was Friday night. I was given an address by my school fellows. I was quite uneasy when I rose up to answer the address.² When I spoke half of what I had to speak, I began to shake. I hope I will not do it again when I return to India. Before proceeding further I must write. Many had come to bid me farewell on the night. Messrs Kevalram, Chhaganlal (Patwari), Vrajlal, Harishankar, Amolakh, Manekchand, Latib, Papat, Bhanji, Khimji, Ramji, Damodar, Meghji, Ramji Kalidas, Naranji, Ranchhoddas, Manilal were among those who came to bid farewell. Jatashankar Vishvanath and others may be added. The first station was Gondal. There we saw Dr. Bhau and took Kapurbhai with us. Nathubhai came as far as Jetpur. At Dhola, Usmanbhai met us and he came as far as Wadhwan. At Dhola, Messrs Narandas, Pranshankar, Narbheram, Anandrai and Vrajlal had come to bid farewell.

Twenty-first was the day on which I was to leave Bombay. But the difficulties which I had to withstand in Bombay are indescribable. My caste fellows tried their best to prevent me from proceeding further. Almost all of them were in opposition. And at length my brother Khushalbai and Patwari himself advised me not to go. But I wouldn't give heed to their advice. Then the sea weather was the excuse which delayed my proceeding. My brother and others then left me. But on a sudden I left Bombay on the 4th September 1888. At this time I was very much obliged to Messrs Jagmohandas, Damodardas and Bechardas. To Shamalji, of course, I owe immense obligation, and what I owe to Ranchhodlal³ I don't know. It is something more than obligation. Messrs Jagmohandas, Manshankar,

¹ Ruler of the State

² *Vide* "Speech at Alfred High School, Rajkot", 4-7-1888.

³ Ranchhodlal Patwari was very close to Gandhiji with whom he was in correspondence. Patwari's father helped him financially to go to England.

Becharadas, Narayandas Patwari, Dwarkadas, Popatlal, Kashidas, Ranchhodlal, Modi, Thakore, Ravi Shankar, Pherozeshah, Ratanshah, Shamalji and some others came to see me off on board the steamer, *Clyde*. Of these, Patwari gave me Rs. 5, Shamalji as many, Modi two, Kashidas one, Narandas two, and some others whom I forget. Mr. Manshankar gave me a silver chain, and then they all of them bade farewell for three years and departed. Before finishing this, I must write that had it been some other man in the same position which I was in, I dare say he would not have been able to see England. The difficulties which I had to withstand have made England dearer to me than she would have been.

SEPTEMBER 4, 1888

The sea voyage. It was about 5 p.m. when the ship weighed anchor. I was very anxious about the voyage but fortunately it agreed with me. Throughout the voyage I was not at all sea-sick and I had no vomiting. It was for the first time in my life that I sailed in a steamship. I enjoyed the voyage very much. At about 6 o'clock the dinner bell was rung. The steward asked me to go to the table. But I did not go and ate what I had brought with me. I was very much surprised at the liberty which Mr. Mazmudar took with me on the first night. He spoke to me in such a manner as if we were very old acquaintances. He had no black coat. So I gave him mine for dinner. He went to the table. From that night I liked him very much. He entrusted his keys to me, and I began to look upon him as my elder brother from that very night. There was one Maratha doctor with us as far as Aden. He, on the whole, looked like a good man. Thus for two days I lived upon the sweetmeat and fruits which I had on board with me. Then Mr. Mazmudar made an agreement with some boys on board to cook us food. I would never have been able to make such an agreement. There was one Abdul Majid who was a first-class passenger while we were saloon passengers. We enjoyed our dinner cooked by the boy.

Now something about the steamship. I liked the arrangements of the steamer very much. When we sit in the cabins or saloon, we forget that the cabins and the saloons are a part of the ship. We sometimes do not feel the motion at all. The dexterity of the workmen and the sailors was indeed admirable. There were musical instruments in the steamer. I every now and then played upon the piano. There were cards, chessboard and draughts on the board. The European passengers always played some games at night. The decks are a great relief to the passengers. You are generally tired of sitting in the

cabins. On the decks you get fresh air. You can mix with and talk with the fellow-passengers if you are bold and have got that stuff. The scene of the sea when the sky is clear is lovely. On one moonlight night I was watching the sea. I could see the moon reflected in the water. On account of the waves, the moon appeared as if she were moving here and there. One dark night when the sky was clear the stars were reflected in the water. The scene around us was very beautiful at that time. I could not at first imagine what that was. They appeared like so many diamonds. But I knew that a diamond could not float. Then I thought that they must be some insects which can only be seen at night. Amidst these reflections I looked at the sky and at once found that it was nothing but stars reflected in waters. I laughed at my folly. This reflection of the stars gives us the idea of fireworks. Fancy yourself to be standing on the storey of a bungalow watching the fireworks performed before you. I very often enjoyed this scene.

For some days I did not speak a word to the fellow-passengers. I always got up at 8 a.m. in the morning, washed my teeth, then went to the w.c. and took my bath. The arrangement of the English water closets astonished a native passenger. We do not get there water and are obliged to use pieces of paper.

After enjoying the sea voyage for about five days, we reached Aden. During these days not a single piece of land or a mountain was seen by us. All of us were tired of the monotony of the voyage and were eager to see land. At last on the morning of the 6th day we saw land. All looked gay and cheerful. At about 11 a.m. we anchored at Aden. Some boys came with small boats. They were great swimmers. Some Europeans threw some money in the waters. They went deep into the waters and found out the money. I wish I could do so. This was a pretty sight. We, after enjoying this sight for about half an hour, went to see Aden. I must say here that we simply saw the boys finding out the pieces. Ourselves did not throw a single pie. From this day we began to experience the idea of expenses of England. We were three persons and had to pay two rupees for boat hire. The coast was hardly at a mile's distance. We reached the coast in 15 minutes. Then we hired a carriage. We intended to go to see the waterworks which are the only object of interest in Aden. But, unfortunately, the time being up we could not go there. We saw the Camp of Aden. It was good; the buildings were good. They were generally shops. The construction of the buildings was most probably like that of the bungalows in Rajkot and especially the new bungalow of the Political Agent. I could not

see any well or any place of fresh water there. I am afraid that perhaps the tanks are the only place for fresh water. The heat of the sun was excessive. I was quite wet with perspiration. This was because we were not far from the Red Sea. What astonished me more was that I saw not a single tree or a green plant. Men rode on mules or asses. We could hire mules if we liked. The camp is situated on the hill. I heard from the boatman, when we returned, that the boys of whom I wrote above are sometimes injured. The legs of some and arms of others are cut off by sea animals. But still the boys, being very poor, sat each in their small boats in which we dare not sit. Each of us had to pay one rupee for the carriage fare. The anchor was weighed at 12 a.m. and we left Aden. But from this day we always saw some land.

In the evening we entered the Red Sea. We began to feel the heat. But I don't think it was so scorching, as is described by some in Bombay. Indeed it was unbearable in the cabins. You cannot expose yourself to the sun. You will not like to stay even for a few minutes in your cabin. But if you are on the deck you are sure to receive pleasant gales of fresh air. At least I did so. Almost all the passengers slept on the deck and so did I. The heat of the new morning sun, too, you cannot bear. You are always safe when you are on the deck. This heat we generally get for three days. Then we entered the Suez on the fourth night. We could see the lamps in the Suez from a great distance. The Red Sea was sometimes broad and sometimes quite narrow. So narrow that we can see the land on both the sides. Before entering the Suez Canal we passed the Hellsgate. Hellsgate is a strip of water very narrow, bound on both the sides by hills. It is so called because many ships are wrecked at that place. We saw the wreck of a ship in the Red Sea. We stayed at Suez for about half an hour. Now it was said that we shall receive cold. Some said that you will require liquor after leaving Aden. But it was false. Now I had begun to talk a little with the fellow-passengers. They said, after leaving Aden you will require meat: but it was not so. For the first time in my life I saw the electric light in the front of our ship. It appeared like moonlight. The front part of the ship appeared very beautiful. I think it must appear more beautiful to a man seeing it, placed on some other place, just as we cannot enjoy the beauty of our person as others, i.e., we cannot see it to advantage. The construction of the Suez Canal I am not able to understand. It is indeed marvellous. I cannot think of the genius of a man who invented it. I don't know how he would have done it. It is quite right to say that he has competed with nature. It is not an easy

task to join two seas. Only one ship can pass through the Canal at a time. It requires skilful pilotship. The ship sails at a very low motion. We cannot feel its motion. The water of the Canal is quite dirty. I forget its depth. It is as broad as the Aji¹ at Ramnath. You can see men passing by on both the sides. The part near the Canal is barren. The Canal belongs to the French. Another pilot comes from Ismailia to direct the ship. The French take a certain sum of money for every ship that passes through the Canal. The income must be very large. Besides the electric lamp in the ship, there are seen lights at a distance of some 20 feet on both sides. These are the lights of different colours. The ship has to pass these rows of lights. It takes about 24 hours to pass through the Canal. The beauty of the scene is beyond my power to describe. You cannot enjoy it unless you see it. Port Said is the terminus of the Canal. Port Said owes its existence to the Suez Canal. We anchored at Port Said in the evening. The ship was to stay there for an hour, but one hour was quite sufficient to see Port Said. Now the currency was English. Indian money is quite useless here. The boat-fare is six pence each. A penny is worth one anna. The construction of the Port Said building is French. Here we get an idea of the French life. There we saw some coffee restaurants. At the first I thought it was a theatre. But it was nothing but a coffee house. [On] one side we drink coffee or soda or tea or any drink, and on the other we hear music. Some women are playing fiddle bands. A bottle of lemonade in these cafes, as they are called, will cost you 12 pence, which we get for less than a penny in Bombay. Customers are said to hear music gratis. But really it is not so. As soon as the music is finished, a woman, with a plate covered with a handkerchief in her hand comes before every customer. That means that you give her something and we are obliged to give something. We visited the cafe and gave 6 pence to the woman. Port Said is nothing but a seat of luxury. There women and men are very cunning. The interpreter will follow to guide you. But you boldly tell him that you do not want him. Port Said is hardly as big as the proper *para*² of Rajkot. We left Port Said at 7 p.m.

Among our fellow-passengers one Mr. Jeffreys was very kind to me. He always told me to go to the table, and take something there, but I would not go. He said, after leaving Brindisi you will feel cold,

¹ River near Rajkot

² Locality

but it was not so. After 3 days we reached Brindisi at night. The harbour of Brindisi is beautiful. The steamer just touches the coast and you descend to the coast by means of a ladder provided there. It being [dark] I could not see Brindisi much. There everyone speaks Italian. Roads of Brindisi are paved with stones. The streets are sloping. They too are paved. Gas is used for lamps. We saw the station of Brindisi. It was not so beautiful as the stations of the B. B. & C. I. Rly. But the railway carriages were far bigger than ours. The traffic was good. When you land at Brindisi, a man would come and ask you, in case you are a black man: "Sir, there is a beautiful girl of 14, follow me, Sir, and I will take you there, the charge is not high, Sir." You are at once puzzled. But be calm and answer boldly that you don't want her and tell the man to go away and thereby you will be safe. If you are in any difficulty at once refer to a policeman just near you, or at once enter a large building which you will surely see. But before you enter it, read the name on the building and make sure that it is open to all. Thus you will be safe. This you will be able to make out at once. Tell the porter there that you are in a difficulty, and he will at once show you what you should do. If you are bold enough, ask the porter to take you to the Chief Officer and you will refer the matter to him. By a large building I mean that it must be belonging to Thomas Cook or Henry King or some such other agents. They will take care of you. Don't be miserly at that time. Pay the porter something. But this means is to be resorted to when you think yourself to be in any danger. But these buildings you will only see on the coasts. If you are far away from the coast you are to find out a policeman and in case of failure, your conscience is the best dictator. We left Brindisi early in the morning.

After about 3 days we reached Malta. The ship anchored at about 2 p.m. She was to stay there for nearly four hours. Mr. Abdul Majid was to come with us. But somehow or other he was very late. I was quite impatient to go. Mr. Mazmudar said: "Shall we go alone and not wait for Mr. Majid?" I said: "Just as you please. I have no objection." Then, of course, we went alone. On our return Abdul Majid saw us and said he was very sorry that we went away. Then Mr. Mazmudar said: "It was Gandhi who was impatient and told me not to wait for you." I was really very much offended by such behaviour of Mr. Mazmudar. I did not try to wash off the charge but silently accepted it. But I know that the charge would have been washed off, had I only hinted to Abdul Majid: "Had Mr. Mazmudar really wanted to wait for you, he had better not act according to what I said." And I

think this would have been quite sufficient to convince Mr. Abdul Majid of my having no hand in the doing. But at that time I did not mean to do anything of the kind. But from that day I began to entertain very low opinion about Mr. Mazmudar, and from that day I had no real respect for him. Besides there happened two or three things which made me like Mazmudar the less day by day.

Malta is an object of interest. There are many things to see. But the time at our disposal was not sufficient. As I said before, Mr. Mazmudar and myself went to the coast. Here we had received a great rogue. We had to suffer a great loss. We took the number of the boat, and to see the city we hired a carriage. The rogue was with us. After driving for about half an hour, we reached St. Juan Church. The church was beautifully built. There we saw some skeletons of eminent persons. They were very old. We gave a shilling to the friend who showed us over the church. Just opposite the church was a statue of St. Juan. Thence drove to the city. The roads were paved. On both sides of the pavement were paved walks for men. The island is very beautiful. There are many grand buildings. Went to see the Armoury Hall. This hall was beautifully decorated. There we saw very old paintings. They were not really paintings but embroidered in. But a stranger would not perceive that it was embroidered work unless told by somebody. In the hall were the arms of old warriors. All of them [were] worth seeing. Having no record, I do not remember them all. There was a helmet which was 30 lb. in weight. The carriage of Napoleon Bonaparte was very beautiful. Having given a tip of 6d. to the man who showed us over the hall we returned. We were obliged to take off our hats when we saw the church and the Armoury Hall, as a token of respect. Then we went to the shop of the rogue. He tried to force something upon us. But we wouldn't buy anything. At length Mr. Mazmudar bought the views of Malta for 2/6. Here the rogue gave us an interpreter and himself did not come with us. The interpreter was a very good man. He drove us to the orange gardens. We saw the gardens. I did not like the gardens at all. I like our public park of Rajkot better than the gardens. If there was anything worth seeing for me, it was the golden and red fishes in a small enclosure of water. Thence we returned to the town, went to a hotel. Mr. Mazmudar took some potatoes and tea. On our way we met an Indian. Mr. Mazmudar being a very bold man spoke to the Indian. On further talk with him it was understood that he was the brother of a man who had a shop in Malta. We at once went to the shop. Mr. Mazmudar had a

good chat with the shopkeeper. We made some purchases there and spent two hours in the shop. So we could not see much of Malta. We saw another church. That too was very beautiful and worth seeing. We had to see the opera house but we had no time to do that. We took leave of the gentleman who gave Mr. Mazmudar his card to his brother in London. On our return, the rogue again met us and came with us at 6 p.m. We reached the coast and paid the rogue, the good interpreter and the carriageman. We had a quarrel about the fare with the boat-man. The result was, of course, in favour of the boatman. Here we were cheated a good deal.

The steamer *Clyde* left at 7 p.m. After 3 days' voyage we reached Gibraltar at 12 p.m. The ship remained there the whole night. I had a good mind to see Gibraltar, so got up early in the morning and awakened Mazmudar and asked him whether he would come with me to the shore or not. He said he would. Then I went to Mr. Majid and awoke him. We three went to the shore. The time at our disposal was only 1½ hours. It being the dawn of the day all the shops were shut. It is said that Gibraltar being a free port smoking is very cheap. Gibraltar is built upon a rock. On the top is the fortification which to our great sorrow we could not see. The houses are in rows. In order to go from the first row to the second, we are obliged to ascend certain steps. I liked it very much. The construction was beautiful. Roads were paved. Having no time we were soon obliged to return. The ship weighed anchor at 8.30 a.m.

In three days we reached Plymouth at 11 p.m. Now was the proper time for cold. Each and every passenger said that we would die without meat and drink but nothing of the kind happened to us. Indeed it was pretty well cold. We were also told about the storm but could not see the storm. Really I was very anxious to see it but could not. It being night we could see nothing of Plymouth. We had dense fog there. At length the ship left for London. In 24 hours we reached London; left the steamer and reached Victoria Hotel *via* Tilbury Station on the 27th¹ October, 1888, at 4 p.m.

27TH² OCTOBER, 1888, SATURDAY, TO 23RD NOVEMBER, FRIDAY

Mr. Mazmudar, Mr. Abdul Majid and I reached the Victoria Hotel. Mr. Abdul Majid told in a dignified air to the porter of the

¹ The source has "28th" which was a Sunday. Evidently this is a slip. In An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. XIII, Gandhiji says he arrived in London on a Saturday, which fell on October 27.

² *ibid*

Victoria Hotel to give our cabman the proper fare. Mr. Abdul Majid thought very highly of himself, but let me write here that the dress which he had put on was perhaps worse than that of the porter. He did not take care of the luggage too, and as if he had been in London for a long time, stepped into the hotel. I was quite dazzled by the splendour of the hotel. I had never in my life seen such pomp. My business was simply to follow the two friends in silence. There were electric lights all over. We were admitted into a room. There Mr. Majid at once went. The manager at once asked him whether he would choose second floor or not. Mr. Majid thinking it below his dignity to inquire about the daily rent said yes. The manager at once gave us a bill of 6s. each per day and a boy was sent with us. I was all the while smiling within myself. Then we were to go to the second floor by a lift. I did not know what it was. The boy at once touched something which I thought was lock of the door. But as I afterwards came to know it was the bell and he rang in order to tell the waiter to bring the lift. The doors were opened and I thought that was a room in which we were to sit for some time. But to my great surprise we were brought to the second floor.

[Incomplete]

5. DRAFT OF LETTER TO FREDERICK LELY¹

LONDON,
December, 1888

DEAR SIR,

You will know me by looking at the note which, you said, when I had the opportunity of seeing you, you would preserve.

At that time I had requested you to render to me some pecuniary aid as a means to enable me to proceed to England; but unfortunately you were in a hurry to leave; so I had not the sufficient time to say all that I had to say.

I was at that time very impatient to proceed to England. So I left India on the 4th of September, 1888, with what little money I had at that time. What my father left for us three brothers was indeed very little. However, trusting that nearly £666, which was all my brother could with great difficulty spare for me, would be sufficient for my three years' stay in London. I left India for receiving legal education in England. I knew while in India that education and living in London were very expensive. But now from two months' experience in

¹ Gandhiji sent this to his elder brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi.

London, I find that they are more so than they appeared to be in India.

In order to live here comfortably and to receive good education, I shall require an extra help of £400. I am a native of Porbandar and as such that is the only place I can look up to for such help.

During the late rule of H. H. the Rana Saheb, very little encouragement was given to education. But we can naturally expect that education must be encouraged under the English Administration. I am one who can take advantage of such encouragement.

I hope, therefore, that you may please render me some pecuniary help and thereby confer great and much-needed obligation on me.

I have asked my brother Laxmidas Gandhi to receive [it] and am sending him a note to see you in person if necessary.

Trusting you will be induced to grant my request.

With best respects,

*I beg to remain,
yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

I prepared this draft of a letter three weeks ago and have been thinking over it ever since. Believing that a reply to this letter will come in the meantime I am sending you the draft. I have not asked for the whole amount, as it would be unreasonable. Again he may think that if I had been absolutely dependent upon his help, I would not have proceeded to England without making sure of it. But having found on arrival here that I shall need more funds, I have asked for only the additional amount. I have not offered to bind myself in any way, because I did not think it necessary. Nor did I feel that it was proper to bind myself for an amount which will cover only part of my expenses. Besides, if . . .¹

[Incomplete]

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat

¹ This covering note, originally written in Gujarati, was addressed to Lakshmidas Gandhi while forwarding the draft to him.

6. LETTER TO COL. J. W. WATSON

[December, 1888]

COLONEL J. W. WATSON
POLITICAL AGENT
Kathiawa

DEAR SIR,

It is about six or seven weeks since I landed in this country. By this time, I am comfortably settled and have fairly begun my studies. I have joined the Inner Temple for my legal course.

You are well aware that English life is very expensive and, from what little experience I have had of it, I find that it is more so than I could persuade myself to believe while I was in India. My means as you know are very limited. I don't think I can go through a course of three years satisfactorily without some extraneous help. When I remember that you took a great deal of interest in my father and had extended your hand of friendship to him, I have very little doubt that you will take the same interest in what concerns him and I feel confident that you will try your best to procure me some substantial help which would facilitate my course of study in this country. You will thus confer a great and much-needed obligation upon me.

I saw Dr. Butler a few days ago. He is very kind to me and has promised to give me all assistance he can.

The weather so far has not been very severe. I am doing very well.

With best respects,

*I beg to remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI*

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat

7. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-I

India is inhabited by twenty-five million¹ of people of various castes and creeds. The very common belief among the Englishmen who have not been to India, or who have taken very little interest in

¹ Obviously, a slip for crores

Indian matters, is that all the Indians are born vegetarians. Now this is true only in part. Indian people are divided into three main divisions, viz., the Hindus, the Mohammedans, and the Parsis.

The Hindus are again divided into four chief castes, viz., the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the Sudras. Of all these, in theory, only the Brahmins and the Vaisyas are pure vegetarians. But in practice almost all the Indians are vegetarians. Some are so voluntarily, and others compulsorily. The latter, though always willing to take, are yet too poor to buy meat. This statement will be borne out by the fact that there are thousands in India who have to live on one pice ($1\frac{1}{3}$ d.) a day. These live on bread and salt, a heavily taxed article; for even in a poverty-stricken country like India, it will be very difficult, if not utterly impossible, to get eatable flesh-meat for $1\frac{1}{3}$ d.

The question who are vegetarians in India being disposed of, the natural question will be what is vegetarianism as practised by them? To begin with, Indian vegetarianism does not mean the V.E.M.¹ diet. The Indians, i.e., the Indian vegetarians, decline to take, besides fish, flesh and fowl, eggs, for they argue that to eat an egg is equivalent to killing life; since an egg, if left undisturbed would, *prima facie*, become a fowl. But, unlike some of the vegetarian extremists here, they not only do not abstain from milk and butter, but consider them sacred enough to be used on what are called "fruit-days", which occur every fortnight, and which are generally observed by the high-caste Hindus; because, as they put it, they do not kill the cow in taking milk from her. And certainly the milking of a cow, which, by the way, has been the subject of painting and poetry cannot shock the most delicate feelings as would the slaughtering of her. It may be worth mentioning *en passant* that the cow is an object of worship among the Hindus, and a movement set on foot to prevent the cows from being shipped off for the purposes of slaughter is progressing rapidly.

The Vegetarian, 7-2-1891

8. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-II

Indian vegetarians food generally varies with the parts they live in. Thus in Bengal the staple article of food is rice, while in the Bombay Presidency it is wheat.

¹ V.E.M. probably means vegetables, eggs, milk.

All the Indians generally—and the grown-up persons particularly, and among them the high-caste Hindus—take two meals a day with a glass or two of water between the meals whenever they feel thirsty. The first meal they take at about 10 a.m., which would correspond to the English dinner, and the second meal at about 8 p.m., which would correspond to supper so far as the name goes, though in reality, it is a substantial meal. From the above it will have been seen that there is no breakfast—which, seeing that the Indians generally rise at 6 o'clock, and even as early as four or five o'clock in the morning, they would seem to require—nor the ordinary midday meal. Some of the readers will no doubt wonder how the Indians go about without anything to eat for nine hours after their first meal. This may be explained in two ways, viz., first, the habit is second nature. Their religion commands some, and employment or custom compels others, to take not more than two meals in one day. Secondly, the climate of India, which except in some parts is very hot, will account for the habit. For even in England, it appears that the same quantity of food is not required in summer as in winter. Unlike the English, the Indians do not take each dish separately, but they mix many things together. Among some of the Hindus it is one of the requirements of their religion to mix all their food together. Moreover, every dish is elaborately prepared. In fact they don't believe in plain boiled vegetables, but must have them flavoured with plenty of condiments, e.g., pepper, salt, cloves, turmeric, mustard seed, and various other things for which it would be difficult to find English names unless they be those used in medicine.

The first meal consists generally of bread or rather cakes—of which more hereafter—some pulse, e.g., peas, haricot beans, etc., and two or three green vegetables cooked together, or separately, followed by rice and pulse cooked in water, and flavoured with various spices. After this, some take milk and rice, or simply milk, or curdled milk, or even whey, especially in summer.

The second meal, i.e., the supper, consists of much the same things as the first one, but the quantity is less and the vegetables fewer at this meal. Milk is more liberally used at this meal. The readers should be reminded that this is not the food that the Indians invariably use nor should he think that the above will be the typical dishes all over India and among all classes. Thus, for example, no sweets are mentioned in the specimen meals while they are sure to be used among the well-to-do classes at least once a week. Moreover, while, as

said above, wheat preponderates over rice in the Bombay Presidency, in Bengal rice gets the better of wheat. So also with regard to the third exception which must prove the rule, the food among the labouring class is different from what is given above. To mention all the varieties would be the fill up volumes and to do so would, it is to be feared, divest the article of all interest.

Butter, or if you please, clarified butter, is much more used for culinary purposes than in England or, it may be, even in Europe. And according to a doctor of some authority, if it would do no good, much use of better, in a hot climate like that of India would do no harm such as it might do in a cold climate like that of England.

It will perhaps strike the reader that the fruit, yes, the all-important fruit, is sadly conspicuous by its absence in the above-mentioned specimen dishes. Some, among many of the reasons, are that the Indians do not know the proper value of fruit, that the poor people cannot afford to buy good fruit, and that good fruit is not available all over India, except in large cities. Indeed, there are certain fruits, not to be found here, which are used by all classes in India; but alas, these are used as superficial things, not as food, and no one knows their value chemically, because no one takes the trouble to analyse them.

The Vegetarian, 14-2-1891

9. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-III

In the previous article “more hereafter” was promised about the cakes. These cakes are generally made of wheat-flour. Wheat is first ground in a handmill—a simple contrivance to reduce the wheat to powder—not a mill requiring machinery. This powdered wheat is passed through a sieve with large holes, so that the coarsest bran is left out. Indeed, among the poor classes it is not passed through the sieve at all. Thus the flour, though not the same as that used by the vegetarians here, is far superior to the ordinary flour that is used here for the much-abused white bread. Some clarified butter, i.e., butter boiled and passed through a sieve—sometimes a useless process when the butter is quite pure—and then allowed to become cool—say a teaspoonful to a pound of flour—is mixed with the flour, a sufficient quantity of water is poured on it, and then it is kneaded with the hands until it forms itself into one homogeneous mass. This lump is divided into small equal parts, each as big as a tangerine. These are rolled into thin circular pieces about six inches in diameter with a wooden stick made specially for the purpose. Each piece is separately and

thoroughly baked in a flat dish. It takes from five to seven minutes to bake one cake. This cake is eaten while hot with butter, and has a very nice flavour. It may be, and is, eaten even quite cold. What meat is to the ordinary Englishman, the cake is to the Indian, be he a vegetarian or a meat-eater, for in India a meat-eater does not, in the writer's opinion, regard his meat as an absolute necessity, but takes it rather as a side dish to help him, so to speak, in eating the cakes.

Such in outline, and only in outline, is the ordinary food of a well-to-do Indian vegetarian. Now a question may be asked, "Has not the British Rule effected any change in the habits of the Indian people?" So far as the food and drink are concerned "yes", and "no". No, because ordinary men and women have stuck to their original food and the number of meals. Yes, because those who have learnt a little bit of English have picked up English ideas here and there, but this change too—whether it is for the worse or for the better must be left to the reader to judge—is not very perceptible.

The last-mentioned class have begun to believe in breakfast, which usually consists of a cup or two of tea. Now this brings us to the question of drink. The drinking of tea and coffee by the so-called educated Indians, chiefly due to the British Rule, may be passed over with the briefest notice. The most that tea and coffee can do is to cause a little extra expense, and general debility of health when indulged in to excess, but one of the most greatly-felt evils of the British Rule is the importation of alcohol—that enemy of mankind, that curse of civilization—in some form or another. The measure of the evil wrought by this borrowed habit will be properly gauged by the reader when he is told that the enemy has spread throughout the length and breadth of India, in spite of the religious prohibition; for even the touch of a bottle containing alcohol pollutes the Mohammedan, according to his religion, and the religion of the Hindu strictly prohibits the use of alcohol in any form whatever, and yet, alas! the Government, it seems, instead of stopping, are aiding and abetting the spread of alcohol. The poor there, as everywhere, are the greatest sufferers. It is they who spend what little they earn in buying alcohol instead of buying food and other necessities. It is that wretched poor man who has to starve his family, who has to break the sacred trust of looking after his children, if any, in order to drink himself into misery and premature death. Here be it said to the credit of Mr. Caine¹, the ex-Member for Barrow, that he, undaunted, is still carrying on his admirable crusade against the spread of the evil, but what can the energy of one man, however powerful, do against the inaction of an apathetic and dormant Government?

The Vegetarian, 21-2-1891

10. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-IV

After having known who are vegetarians in India, and what they generally eat, the reader will be able to judge from the following facts how hollow and baseless are the arguments advanced by some people regarding the weak constitutions of the vegetarian Hindus.

One thing often said about the Indian vegetarians is that they are physically very feeble, and that, therefore, vegetarianism is not compatible with bodily strength.

Now, if it can be proved that generally in India the vegetarians are as strong as, if not stronger than, the Indian meat-eaters, and for that matter even Englishmen, and moreover, that where weakness exists it can be ascribed to many other reasons than that of non-flesh diet, the whole structure on which the above argument is based falls to the ground.

It must at the outset be admitted that the Hindus as a rule are notoriously weak; but an unbiased person—a meat-eater—who knows India and her people even superficially will tell you that there are many other causes incessantly at work to account for the proverbial¹ weakness. One of the most important reasons, if not *the* most important one, is the wretched custom of infant marriages and its attendant evils. Generally, children when they reach the great age of nine are burdened with the fetters of married life. In many cases they are married at a still younger age and in some cases they are betrothed while yet unborn. Thus one woman would promise to marry her child, if male, to another's if female, and vice versa. Of course in the two latter cases consummation does not take place before they are ten or eleven years old. Cases are recorded in which a wife of twelve had a child by a husband of sixteen or seventeen. Will not these marriages tell upon the strongest constitutions?

Now fancy how weak the progeny of such marriages must be. Then look at the cares such a couple have to undergo. Suppose a boy of eleven is married to a girl of about the same age. Thus at a time when the boy should be, and is, ignorant of what it is to be a husband, he has a wife forced on him. He is, of course, attending his school. In

¹ William Sproston Caine (1842-1903); four times member of British Parliament; serve on the Indian Parliamentary sub-committee of the British Committee of the Congress; Supported self-government for India. Was keenly interested in South Indian's cause.

addition to the drudgery at school he has his child-wife to look after. He has not actually to maintain her, for in India a son when married does not necessarily separate from his parents unless he be at sixes and sevens¹ with them; but he has to do everything short of that. Then about six years after marriage he has a son, probably he has not yet finished his studies, and he has to think of earning money not only to maintain himself but his wife and child, for he cannot expect to pass his whole life with his father, and even granting that he may, he should certainly be expected to contribute something towards his wife's and his child's maintenance. Will not the mere knowledge of his duty prey upon his mind and thus undermine his health? Can anyone dare to say that this will not shatter the most robust constitution? But one may well argue that if that boy, in the above example, had eaten flesh-meat he would have kept stronger than he did. A reply to such an argument is to be found from those Kshatriya princes who in spite of their meat diet are very weak owing to debauchery.

Then the shepherds in India afford a good example of how strong an Indian vegetarian can be where other opposite agencies are not at work. An Indian shepherd is a finely built man of Herculean constitution. He, with his thick, strong cudgel, would be a match for any ordinary European with his sword. Cases are recorded of shepherds having killed or driven away tigers and lions with their cudgels. "But," said a friend one day, "this is an example of men living in the rude and natural state. In the present highly artificial state of society you require something more than mere cabbage and peas. Your shepherd lacks intelligence, he reads no book, etc. etc". The one and only answer to this was, and is, that the vegetarian shepherd would be equal to, if not more than a match for, a meat-eating shepherd. Thus there is a comparison between vegetarian of one class and a meat-eater of the same class. It is a comparison between strength and strength, and not between strength and strength plus intelligence, for my attempt for the moment is simply to disprove that Indian vegetarians are physically weak on account of their vegetarianism.

Eat what food you will, it is impossible, it seems, to make physical and mental strength go together except, perhaps, in rare cases. The law of compensation will require that what is gained in mental power must be lost in bodily power. A Samson cannot be a

¹ Gandhiji perhaps means 'at variance'.

Gladstone. And granting the argument that a substitute is required for vegetables in the present state of society, is it conclusively proved that flesh or meat is that substitute?

Then take the case of the Kshatriyas, the so-called warlike race in India. They are, of course, meat-eaters and how few of them there are who have wielded a sword! Far be it from me to say that they as a race are very weak. So long as Pruthuraj¹ and Bhim² and all of their type—not to go to the older times—are remembered, he will be a fool who would have it believed that they are a weak race. But now it is a sad fact that they have degenerated. The truly warlike people, among others, are the people of the North-Western provinces, known as Bhayyas³. They subsist on wheat, pulse, and greens. They are the guardians of peace, they are largely employed in the native armies.

From the above facts it is easy to see that vegetarianism is not only not injurious, but on the contrary is conducive to bodily strength and that attributing the Hindu weakness to vegetarianism is simply based on a fallacy.

The Vegetarian, 28-2-1891

11. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-V

We saw in the last article that the bodily weakness of the Hindu vegetarians was attributable to other causes than their diet, and also that the shepherds who were vegetarians were as strong as meat-eaters. This shepherd being a very good specimen of a vegetarian, we may with profit examine his way of living; but before proceeding further, the reader may be told that what follows does not apply to all the Indian shepherds. It applies to the shepherds of a certain part of India. Just as the habits of the people in Scotland would be different from those of the people in England, so also would the habits of the people living in one part of India be different from those of the people living in another part.

The Indian shepherd then gets up generally at five o'clock in the morning. The first thing he does, if he is a pious shepherd, is to offer

¹ Prithviraj Chauhan, 11th-century king claiming descent from the Sun; famed for his physical prowess

² Second of the Pandava Princes, in the *Mahabharata*, reputed for his great stature and strength.

³ The reference is to the *Bhayyas* (literally, brothers), a name originally given to the peasantry of Uttar Pradesh

some prayers to his God. Then he does his toilet which consists of washing his mouth and face. I may be allowed here to digress for a while to acquaint the reader with the brush an Indian uses for his teeth. The brush is nothing more than a branch of a thorny tree called babul; one branch is cut up into pieces about a foot long. Of course, all the thorns are removed. The Indian crushes one end of the stick between his teeth till it is soft enough to brush his teeth. Thus he makes for himself every day a new and home-made brush. When he has well brushed his teeth and made them pearl white he splits the stick into two, and after bending one part into a curve scrapes his tongue. This process of brushing probably accounts for the strong and beautiful teeth of the average Indian. It is perhaps superfluous to add that he uses no tooth powder. Old persons when their teeth are not strong enough to crush the stick use a small hammer. The whole process does not take more than twenty or twenty-five minutes.

To return to the shepherd, he then takes his breakfast consisting of a thick cake made of millet—an Anglo-Indian name for bajari, a kind of corn much used in India instead of, or in addition to, wheat—clarified butter and molasses. At about eight or nine o'clock in the morning he goes to pasture the cattle placed under his superintendence. The place of pasture is generally two or three miles from his town. It is hilly tract of land studded with a green carpet of luxuriant foliage. Thus he has the unique advantage of enjoying the freshest air with natural scenery thrown in. While the cattle are roaming about, he whiles away his time in singing or talking to his companion who may be his wife, brother or some other relation. At about twelve o'clock he takes his lunch, which he always carries with him. It consists of the ever-present cakes, clarified butter, one vegetable, or some pulse, or instead, or in addition, some pickle and fresh milk directly taken from the cow. Then at about two or three o'clock he not infrequently takes a nap for about half an hour under some shady tree. This short sleep gives him relief from the heat of the scorching sun. At six he returns home, at seven he has supper, for which he takes some hot cakes, pulse or vegetables, winds up with rice and milk, or rice and whey. After doing some household business, which often means a pleasant chat with the family members, he goes to bed at ten o'clock. He sleeps either in the open air, or in a hut which is sometimes overcrowded. He resorts to the hut in winter or in the rainy season. It may be worthy of remark that these huts, even though miserable in appearance and often without any windows, are not air

tight. Being constructed in a rude state, their doors are made, not as a protection against draughts of wind, but against burglars. It cannot, however, be denied that there is much room for improvement in the huts.

Such, then, is the living of a well-to-do shepherd. His, in many respects, is an ideal mode of life. He is perforce regular in his habits, is out of doors during the greater part of his time, while out he breathes the purest air, has his due amount of exercise, has good and nourishing food and last but not least, is free from many cares which are frequently productive of weak constitutions.

The Vegetarian, 7-3-1891

12. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-VI

The only flaw that can be found in his mode of living is the paucity of baths. In a hot climate baths are very useful. While a Brahmin would have his bath twice a day, and a Vaisya once a day, a shepherd would have only one bath a week. I shall here again digress to explain the manner in which the Indian takes his baths. Generally, he has his baths in the river flowing near his town, but if he is too idle to go to the river, or is afraid of being drowned, or if there is no river near his town, he has his baths at home. There is no bath into which he can plunge. He takes water from a large vessel, placed near him, with a goblet and pours it over his body, because he believes that the moment you plunge into stagnant water you render it impure and, therefore, unfit for further use. For the same reason he would not even wash his hands in a basin, but have someone to pour it over his hands or do it himself by holding the goblet between his arms.

But to return, the paucity of the baths does not, it seems, materially affect his health; while it is obvious that if the Brahmin were to go without his baths even for a day, he would feel very uncomfortable, and if he were to continue not taking them a little longer, he would very soon become ill.

This is, I suppose, an instance of many things which, otherwise inexplicable, can be accounted for by habit. Thus while a scavenger, in pursuing his employment keeps good health, any ordinary person trying to do the same will be face to face with death. Death would soon be knocking at the door of a delicately nurtured lord trying to

imitate an East End labourer.

I cannot help here giving a fable or anecdote which is exactly to the point. A king fell in love with a female tooth brush seller, who was a very Venus in beauty. As might naturally be expected she was ordered to be placed in the king's palace. She was, in fact, placed in the lap of luxury. She had the best food, the best clothes, in short, everything of the best. And lo! in proportion to the luxury, her health began to fall. Scores of physicians were in attendance, but all the drugs most regularly administered proved of no avail. Meanwhile a shrewd physician found out the real cause of all the illness. He said that she was possessed by evil spirits. Therefore, in order to satisfy them, he ordered some pieces of old cakes to be set, together with fruit in each of her many rooms. They were to disappear in as many days as there were rooms, and with them, he said, the illness would disappear. And it was so. Of course the cakes were consumed by the poor queen.

Now this shows the mastery that habit gets over men. So I think the paucity of baths does not greatly harm the shepherd.

The result of this mode of living was partially noticed in the last article, viz., the vegetarian shepherd is physically strong. He is also long-lived. I know a shepherdess who was more than one hundred years old in 1888. When I last saw her, her eyesight was very good. Her memory was fresh. She could recollect things that she had seen in her childhood. She could walk with a stick to support her. I hope she is still living. Besides, the shepherd's figure is symmetrical. It is very rare to see any deformity in him. Without being fierce like a tiger, he is yet strong and brave and as docile as a lamb. Without being awe-inspiring, his stature is commanding. Altogether, the Indian shepherd is a very fine specimen of a vegetarian, and will compare very favourably with any meat-eater so far as bodily strength goes.

The Vegetarian, 14-3-1891

13. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-I

At this Easter time I should have liked to write something on the holidays which correspond to the Easter in point of time; but these holidays with their painful associations not being the greatest Hindu festival may very properly give way to the *Diwali* holidays which are far superior in importance and grandeur to the former.

Diwali, which may be termed the Hindu Christmas, occurs at the end of the Hindu year, i.e., during the month of November. It is both a social and religious holiday. It spreads over nearly a month. The first day of the month of *Ashwin* (the twelfth month of the Hindu year) heralds the approach of the grand festival when the children let off their first fire-works. The first nine days are called *Nava Ratri* (nine nights). These days are chiefly marked by *garbis*. Some twenty or thirty, and even more people form themselves into a large circle, in the centre is placed a huge lamp-post tastefully constructed and illuminated all round, in the centre also sits a man with his tabors reciting some popular verses. The people forming the circle repeat the verses, keeping time to them with claps of hands. While repeating the verses, they move round the lamp-post, at the same time stooping down in a half-bending posture. It is very often a great treat to hear these *garbis*.

It may be remarked that girls—much less women—never take part in them. Of course they may have their own *garbis* where men would be excluded. In some families the custom of half-fasting prevails. It is sufficient if only one member of the family fasts. The fasting man has only one meal a day, and that, too, in the evening. Moreover, he is not allowed any corn or pulse, but is restricted to fruit, milk and root vegetables such as potatoes, etc.

The tenth day of the month is called *Dashara*, when friends meet and feast one another. It is also customary to make presents of sweets to one's friends and especially patrons or superiors. Except on the *Dashara* holiday all the amusements are carried on at night, while the ordinary daily pursuits are attended to in the daytime. After *Dashara* everything is comparatively quiet for about a fortnight, except that the ladies are making preparations for the approaching grand day, by cooking and baking sweets, cakes, etc., for, in India, women of the highest class would not mind cooking. In fact, it is an accomplishment which every lady is supposed to possess.

Thus, spending the evenings in feasting and singing, we reach the thirteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin*. (In India every month is divided into two parts, the dark half and the bright half, the full-moon day and the new-moon day being starting points; thus, the day following the full-moon day is the first day of the dark half of a month, and so on). The thirteenth day and the three following days are wholly devoted to amusements and enjoyment.

The thirteenth day is called *Dhanteras*, i.e., the thirteenth day set apart for the worship of “Lakshmi”, the goddess of wealth. Rich people collect different kinds of jewels, precious stones, coins, etc., and put them carefully into a box. These they never use for any other purpose than that of worship. Each year an addition is made to this collection. The worship, i.e., the external worship—for who, save a select few, is there who does not at heart covet, or in other words, worship money?—consists in washing the money with water and milk, and then decorating it with flowers and *kumkum*, i.e., red ochre.

The fourteenth day is called *Kali-Chaudash*; but this day people get up before the break of day, and even the laziest person is required to take a good bath; the mother even compels her little children to take a bath, though it is the winter season. On the night of *Kali-Chaudash*, cemeteries are supposed to be visited by a procession of ghosts. Persons affecting to believe in ghosts would go to these places to see their ghost friends. Timid ones would not stir out of their houses lest they should see a ghost.

The Vegetarian, 28-3-1891

14. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-II

But lo! now is the morning of the fifteenth day, *Divali* proper. The greatest fireworks are let off on the *Divali* day. No one is willing to part with his money on this day. He will neither borrow nor lend. All the purchases are supposed to have been finished the previous day.

You are standing near the corner of a public road. Mark the shepherd trotting onward in his milk-white suit, worn for the first time, with his long beard turned up beside his face and fastened under his turban, singing some broken verses. A herd of cows, with their horns painted red and green and mounted with silver, follows him. Soon after you see a crowd of little maids, with small earthen vessels resting on cushions placed on their heads. You wonder what those vessels contain. Your doubt is soon solved by that careless maid spilling some milk from her vessel. Then observe that big man with white whiskers and a big white turban, with a long reed pen thrust into his turban. He has a long scarf wound round his waist with a silver inkstand adjusted in the scarf. He, you must know, is a great banker. Thus you see different sorts of persons leisurely going along, full of joy and mirth.

The night comes. The streets are resplendent with dazzling illumination; dazzling indeed to a person who has never seen Regent Street or Oxford Street, but by no means to be compared with the scale on which illuminations are carried out at the Crystal Palace, except in large towns like Bombay. Men, women and children wear their best costumes, almost all of various colours, and so form a wonderfully bizarre effect, which harmonizes into kaleidoscopic beauty. This is also the night for worshipping Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Merchants start their new ledgers, by making the first entry. The officiating priest, the ubiquitous Brahmin, mutters some prayers and invokes the goddess. At the end of the worship, the children, who are only too impatient, set the fireworks ablaze; and as this worship generally takes place at a fixed time, the streets resound with the popping and fizzing and cracking of fireworks. Pious people then go to the temples, but here too there is nothing to be seen but mirth and glee, dazzling light and splendour.

The following day, i.e., the new year's day, is the day of paying and receiving visits. Kitchen fires are put out on this day, so that people eat the cold food which has been previously prepared. But the glutton by no means starves, for there is such profusion that though he eats and eats again there is yet plenty and to spare. Well-to-do classes buy and cook every sort of vegetables, corn and pulse, and taste them all on the new year's day.

The second day of the new year is comparatively a quiet day. Kitchen fires are now re-lighted. Light food is generally taken after the heavy meals of the previous days. There is no display of fireworks except by some mischievous children. Illumination, too, is on a smaller scale. With the second day the *Divali* holidays are practically over.

Let us see how these holidays affect society, and how many desirable things people do unwittingly. Generally, all the family members try to meet together for the holidays at their chief place of residence. The husband always tries to get home to his wife again, even though his business may have taken him away the whole of the previous year. The father travels a great distance to meet his children. The son, if abroad, comes back from his school and so a general reunion always takes place. Then all who can afford it have new sets of clothes. Among the richer classes ornaments, too, are ordered especially for the occasion. Even old family quarrels are patched up.

At any rate a serious attempt is made to do so. Houses are repaired and whitewashed. Old furniture, which was lying packed up in a wooden case, is taken out, cleaned, and used for decorating the rooms for the time being. Old debts, if any, are paid up wherever possible. Everyone is supposed to buy some new thing, which almost always takes the form of a metallic vessel, or some such thing, for the new year's day. Alms are freely given. Persons not very careful about offering prayers or visiting temples are now doing both.

On holidays no one is to quarrel with or swear at any other—a pernicious habit very much in vogue, particularly among the lower classes. In a word, everything is quiet and joyful. Life, instead of being burdensome, is perfectly enjoyable. It will be easily seen that good and far-reaching consequences cannot fail to flow from such holidays, which some cry down as a relic of superstition and tomfoolery, though in reality they are a boon to mankind, and tend to relieve a great deal the dull monotony of life among the toiling millions. Though the *Divali* holidays are common to the whole of India, the mode of observing them varies in point of details in different parts. Moreover, this is but an imperfect description of the greatest festival of the Hindus. And it must not be supposed that there is no abusing of the holidays. Like every other thing, this festival, too, may have, and probably has, its black side, but that had better be left alone. Certainly the good that it does far outweighs the evil.

The Vegetarian, 4-4-1891

15. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-III

Next in importance to the *Divali* holidays are the *Holi* holidays, which were alluded to in *The Vegetarian* of the 28th March.

Holi holidays, as will be remembered, correspond to Easter in point of time. *Holi* takes place on the full-moon day of the fifth month, *Falgun*, of the Hindu year. This is just the springtime. Trees are budding forth. Warm clothes are put off. Light clothes are the fashion. That the spring has come is even more manifest when we have a peep at one of the temples. The moment you enter a temple (and you must be a Hindu in order to gain admittance thereinto), you smell nothing but sweet flowers. Pious persons are sitting on the steps, making garlands for Thakorji (God). Among the flowers you see beautiful roses, *chameli*, *moghra*, etc. When the doors are flung open

for *darshan* (literally, seeing), you observe the fountains in full play. You enjoy soft and fragrant breezes. Thakorji has worn light costumes of delicate shades. Piles of flowers before him, and garlands round his neck, almost hide him from your view. He is swung to and fro. The swing, too, is covered with green leaves sprinkled with fragrant waters.

Outside the temple the sight is not edifying. You here meet with nothing but obscene language during the fortnight preceding the *Holi*. In small villages, it is difficult for ladies to appear without being bespattered with mud. They are the subject of obscene remarks. The same treatment is meted out to men without distinction. People form themselves into small parties. Then one party competes with another in using obscene language and singing obscene songs. All persons—men and children, but not women—take part in these revolting contests.

Indeed, it is not considered bad taste to use obscene words during this season. In places where people are steeped in ignorance they even pelt one another. They paint obscene words on your clothes, and if you wear a white garment and go out, you are sure to return home with plenty of mud about you. This reaches its climax on the *Holi* day. Whether you are in the house or out of it, obscene words are jarring on your ears. If you happen to visit a friend, you are sure to be bathed in foul water, or in fragrant water, as the case may be.

In the evening, a big pile of wood or dried cow-dung is made and set on fire. These piles are often as high as twenty feet or more. And the pieces of wood used are so thick that the fire is not extinguished for seven or eight days. On the day following, people heat water on these fires and bathe with it.

So far I have spoken of the way in which the *Holi* holidays are abused. It is a relief to be able to say that with the progress of education and civilization such scenes are slowly, though surely, dying out. But the richer and refined classes use these holidays in a very decent way. Coloured water and fragrant waters take the place of mud. Throwing pails of water is replaced here by a little sprinkling only. Orange coloured water is most used during these days. It is made by boiling dried flowers, called *kesuda*, which have the colour of an orange. Rose water, too, is used where people can afford it. Friends and relations meet and feast one another, and thus enjoy the spring in merriment.

In many respects, the *Divali* holidays present a beautiful contrast

to the, for the most part, unholy *Holi* holidays. *Divali* holidays begin soon after the monsoon season which is also the time of fasting. So the feasting during the *Divali* holidays is all the more enjoyable. While the *Holi* holiday follow the winter which is the time for taking concentrated foods of all sorts, such foods are left off during the *Holi* holidays. Obscene language of *Holi* follows the most sacred songs of the *Divali*. Then again people begin to wear winter clothes in the *Divali*, while they put these off in the *Holi*. The *Divali* proper takes place on the fifteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin* and consequently there is much illumination; while on account of the *Holi* taking place on the full-moon day, illumination would be out of place.

The Vegetarian, 25-4-1891

16. THE FOODS OF INDIA¹

Before I proceed to the subject of my address I should like to tell you what are my qualifications for undertaking the task. When Mill wrote the *History of India*, he, in his most interesting preface, pointed out how he was qualified to write the book, though he had never been to India, and was ignorant of the Indian languages. So I think that in following his example, I shall be doing just what I ought to do. Of course, the very idea of referring to one's qualifications for any task argues some sort of unfitness on the part of the speaker or writer, and I confess that I am not *the* person to speak upon the "Foods of India". I have undertaken the task not because I am thoroughly competent to speak on the subject but because I thought I would thereby be doing a service to the cause that both you and I have at heart. My remarks are chiefly derived from my experience of the Bombay Presidency. Now, as you know, India is a vast peninsula populated by two hundred and eighty-five million souls. It is as large as Europe less Russia. In such a country, the customs and manners in different parts must be necessarily different. So, if in future you hear anything different from what I am going to say, I request you to bear in mind the above fact. As a general rule, my remarks will apply to the whole of India.

I shall divide the subject into three parts. In the first place I shall say something, by way of preliminary, about the people who live upon the foods; secondly, I shall describe the foods; and thirdly, their uses, etc.

It is commonly believed that all the inhabitants of India are vegetarians, but this is not true; and for that matter even all the Hindus are not vegetarians. But it is quite true to say that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are vegetarians¹. Some of them are so because of their religion, while others are compelled to live on vegetable foods because they cannot afford to pay for meat. This will be quite clear to you when I tell you that there are millions in India who live upon one pice-i.e., one-third of a penny-a day, and even in a poverty-stricken country like India you cannot get eatable meat for that sum. These poor people have only one meal per day, and that consists of stale bread and salt, a heavily taxed article. But Indian vegetarians and meat-eaters are quite different from English vegetarians and meat-eaters. Indian meat-eaters, unlike English meat-eaters, do not believe that they will die without meat. So far as my knowledge goes, they (the Indian meat-eaters) do not consider meat a necessity of life but a mere luxury. If they can get their *roti*, as bread is generally called there, they get on very well without their meat. But look at our English meat-eater; he thinks that he *must* have his meat. Bread simply helps him to eat meat, while the Indian meat-eater thinks that meat will help him to eat his bread.

I was talking the other day to an English lady on the ethics of diet, and she exclaimed, while I was telling her how even she could easily become a vegetarian, "Say what you will, I must have my meat, I am so fond of it, and am positively sure I cannot live without it." "But, madam," I said, "suppose that you were *compelled* to live on a strictly vegetable diet, how would you manage then?" "Oh," she said, "don't talk of that. I know I could not be compelled to do so, and if I were I should feel very uncomfortable." Of course, no one can blame the lady for so saying. Society is in such a position for the present that it is impossible for any meat-eater to leave off eating meat without much difficulty.

In the same manner, an Indian vegetarian is quite different from an English one. The former simply abstains from anything that

¹ *The Vegetarian*, 6-5-1891, reported : "Saturday May 2nd, Bloomsbury Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury. . . Mrs. Harrison was followed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi. . . After congratulating the previous speaker and apologizing for his paper, which was entitled 'The Foods on India', he began to read it. He was rather nervous in the beginning." The text given here is of the paper read at the Portsmouth meeting of the Vegetarian Society.

involves the destroying of a life, or a would-be life, and he goes no further. Therefore he does not take eggs, because he thinks that in taking an egg he would kill a would-be life. (I am sorry to say I have been taking eggs for about a month and half.) But he does not hesitate to use milk and butter. He even uses these animal products, as they are called here, on fruit days, which occur every fortnight. On these days he is forbidden wheat, rice, etc., but he can use as much butter and milk as he likes; while, as we know, some of the vegetarians here discard butter and milk, some do away with cooking, and some even try to live on fruits and nuts.

I will now pass to the description of our different foods. I must say that I shall not dwell upon the flesh foods at all, as these, even where they are used, do not form the staple article of food. India is preeminently an agricultural country, and a very large one. So its products are numerous and varied. Though the foundation of the British rule in India dates from the year 1746 A.D., and though India was known to the English much earlier than 1746, it is a pity that so little should be known of the foods of India in England. We have not to go very far to seek the cause. Almost all Englishmen who go to India keep up their own way of living. They not only insist on having the things they had in England, but will also have them cooked in the same way. It is not for me here to go into the why and wherefore of all these incidents. One would have thought that they would look into the habits of the people, if only out of curiosity, but they have done nothing of the kind, and hence we see the result of their stolid indifference in the loss to many Anglo-Indians of the finest opportunities of studying the food question. To return to the foods, there are many kinds of corn produced in India which are absolutely unknown here.

Wheat, however, is, of course, of the greatest importance there as here. Then there are *bajara* (which is called millet by the Anglo-Indians), *joar*, rice, etc. These are what I should call bread foods, because they are chiefly used for bread-making. Wheat, of course, is greatly used, but it being comparatively dear, *bajara* and *joar* take its place among the poor classes. This is very much so in the southern and the northern provinces. Speaking of the southern provinces, in his Indian History, Sir W. W. Hunter¹ says: "The food of the common

¹ (1840-1900), served in India for 25 years; wrote a number of books including *Indian Empire*. Compiled *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* in 14 volumes. Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council (1881-87). On retirement from India became member of the British Committee of the Congress, and from 1890 contributed to *The Times* on Indian affairs.

people consists chiefly of small grains, such as *joar*, *bajara*, *ragi*.” Of the north, he says: “The two last (i.e., *joar* and *bajara*) form the food of the masses, rice being only grown on irrigated lands and consumed by the rich.” It is not at all unusual to find persons who have not tasted *joar*. *Joar* being the diet of the poor, it is held in reverence, as it were. Instead of good-bye as the parting salute, the poor in India say '*joar*', which, when extended and translated, would, I think, mean: “May you never be without '*joar*'.”¹ The rice, too, is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. The Bengalees use rice more than wheat. In other parts, rice, as an article for bread-making, is rarely, if ever, used. *Chana*, or gram as it is called by the Anglo-Indians, is sometimes used for the same purpose, either in combination with or without wheat. It closely resembles peas in taste and shape. This brings me to the various kinds of pulses for soup-making, or dal. Gram, peas, lentils, haricot beans, *tuar*, *mug*, *muth*, *urad* are the chief pulses used for dal. Of these, I think, *tuar* heads the list in popularity. Both these kinds of foods are chiefly used when dried. Now I come to the green vegetables. It would be useless to give you names of all the vegetables. They are so numerous that I am sure there are many of them that I do not know. The soil of India is so rich that it can produce any vegetable you like. So we may safely say that with a proper knowledge of agriculture, the Indian soil may be made to produce any vegetable to be found on earth.

There now remains fruit and nuts. I am sorry to say that the proper value of fruits is not known in India. Though it is used in abundance, it is used rather as a luxury than anything else. It is used more for the sake of its palatable taste than of health. Therefore, we do not get such valuable fruits as oranges, apples, etc., in plenty; hence they are available only to the rich. But we get plenty of seasonal fruits and dried fruits. Summer in India, as everywhere, is the best season for the former. Of these, the mango is the most important. It is the most delicious fruit I have yet tasted. Some have placed the pineapple at the top of the list; but a great majority of those who have tasted the mango vote in its favour. It remains in season for three months, when it is very cheap, and consequently both the rich and the poor can enjoy it. I have heard that some even live on mangoes—of course, only while they are in season. But, unfortunately, the mango is a fruit that will not keep long in a good condition. It resembles the peach in

¹ Gandhiji appears to have confused between '*jowar*' (the foodgrain) and '*juhar*', a word of salutation in some Indian languages.

taste, and is a stone-fruit. It is often as big as a small melon. That brings us to the melons, which are also plentiful in summer. They are far superior to what we get here. However, I must not inflict any more names of fruits on you; suffice it to say that India produces innumerable varieties of seasonal fruits, which do not keep long. All these fruits are available to the poor; the pity is that they never make a meal of these fruits. Generally, we believe that fruit causes fever, diarrhoea, etc. In summer, when we always dread cholera, authorities prohibit—rightly, too, in many cases—the sale of melons and other such fruits. As for dried fruits, we get almost all the varieties that are to be had here. Of nuts we get some varieties which you do not get here; on the other hand, some that are to be had here are not seen in India. Nuts are never used as food in India; and so, properly speaking, they should not be included in the “Foods of India”. Now, before I come to the last division of my subject, I should request you to bear in mind the following divisions that I have made: first, corn for bread-making, e.g., wheat, millet, etc.; second, pulse, for dal or soup-making; third, green vegetables; fourth, fruits; and, fifth and last, nuts.

Of course, I am not going to give you recipes for cooking these different kinds of foods. That is beyond my power. I shall tell you the general way in which they are cooked for their proper uses. Diet cure or hygiene is a comparatively recent discovery in England. In India we have been practising this from time out of mind. Native physicians no doubt, use drugs, too, but they depend more upon change of diet than upon the efficacy of the drugs they prescribe. They would ask you to take salt in certain cases; in many, they would ask you to abstain from acid foods, and so on, every food having its medical value. As for the corn for bread-making, it is the most important article of diet. For convenience, I have called the preparation made of flour bread, but cake would be a better name for it. I shall not relate the whole process of making it, but I may just say that we do not throw away the bran. These cakes are always fresh made, and generally eaten hot with clarified butter. They are to the Indians what meat is to the English. The quantity of food a person eats is measured according to the number of cakes he eats. Pulse and vegetables are left out of account. You may make a meal without pulse, without vegetables, but never without cakes. Different preparations, too are made of the various kinds of corns, but they are merely cakes in disguise.

Pulse for soup-making, e.g., peas, lentils, etc., is prepared by simply boiling it in water. But an addition of innumerable condiments makes it a most delicious dish. The art of cooking has full play in these foods. I have known peas spiced with salt, pepper, turmeric, cloves, cinnamon, and such like. The proper use of pulse is to help you to eat the cakes. Medically, it is not supposed good to take too much of the pulses. A remark on rice here would not be out of place. As I have already said, rice is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. Some of the doctors trace the diabetes from which the Bengalees very often suffer to this source. No one in India would call rice a nourishing food. It is the food of the rich, i.e., of people who do not want to work. Labouring men very rarely use rice. Physicians put their feverish patients on rice. I have suffered from fever (no doubt by breaking hygienic rules, as Dr. Allinson would say), and was put upon a diet of rice and mug-water. Recovery was marvellous.

Next come green vegetables. These are prepared in much the same way as pulses. Oil and butter play an important part in the preparation of vegetables. Often gram flour is mixed with them. Simply boiled vegetables are never eaten. I never saw a boiled potato in India. Not infrequently they make a combination of many vegetables. It is needless to say that India would far outbid France in cooking vegetables nicely. Their proper use is much the same as that of pulse. In importance they stand next to it. They are more or less a luxury, and are generally supposed to be a source of disease. Poor people have hardly one vegetable once or twice a week. They would have cakes and dal. Some of the vegetables have an excellent medicinal value. There is one vegetable called *tandalja*. It very closely resembles spinach in taste. Physicians prescribe it to persons who have indulged in too much cayenne pepper and spoiled their eyesight thereby.

Then come fruits. They are used chiefly on "fruit days", but are rarely, if ever, used at the end of ordinary meals. People generally take them now and then. Mango-juice is very greatly used in the mango-season. It is eaten with cakes or rice. We never cook or stew ripe fruits. We preserve unripe fruits, chiefly mangoes, while acid. Medicinally, fresh fruits, being generally acid, are supposed to have a tendency to give fever. Dried fruits are much used by children, and dried dates deserve some notice. We suppose them to be strength-

giving, and therefore in winter, when we take concentrated foods, we prepare them with milk and various other things too numerous to be mentioned, and eat an ounce every day.

Lastly, nuts take the place of English sweets. Children eat a great quantity of sugared nuts. They are also largely used on “fruit days”. We fry them in butter, and even stew them in milk. Almonds are supposed to be very good for the brain. I will just point out one of the various ways in which we use the cocoanut. It is first ground and then mixed with clarified butter and sugar. It tastes very nice. I hope some of you will try at home those coconut sweet balls as they are called. This, ladies and gentlemen, is a sketch—a most imperfect sketch—of foods of India. I hope you will be induced to learn more about them, and I am sure you will profit by doing so. In conclusion, I further hope the time will come when the great difference now existing between the food habits of meat-eating in England and grain-eating in India will disappear, and with it some other differences which, in some quarters, mar the unity of sympathy that ought to exist between the two countries. In the future, I hope we shall tend towards unity of custom, and also unity of hearts.

The Vegetarian Messenger, 1-6-1891

17. *SPEECH TO THE BAND OF MERCY, LONDON*

UPPER NORWOOD,
[Before *June 6, 1891*]

By previous arrangement . . . Mrs. McDouall . . . was to deliver a lecture to a meeting of the members of the Band of Mercy¹, by the courtesy of Miss Seecombe, but she being ill, Mr. Gandhi (a Hindu from India) was requested and kindly consented to take the meeting. Mr. Gandhi spoke for about a quarter of an hour on vegetarianism from a humanitarian standpoint, and insisted that the members of the Band of Mercy, in order to be logical, ought to be vegetarian. He wound up with a quotation from Shakespeare.

The Vegetarian, 6-6-1891

¹ For the prevention of cruelty to animals

18. SPEECH AT FAREWELL DINNER¹

June 11, 1891

Although it was a sort of a farewell dinner, there was no sign of sorrow, because all felt that though Mr. Gandhi was going back to India, yet he was going to a still greater work for vegetarianism, and that upon the completion of his law career and his final success, congratulations to him should take the place of personal wailings. . .

At the close of the function, Mr. Gandhi, in a very graceful though somewhat nervous speech, welcomed all present, spoke of the pleasure it gave him to see the habit of abstinence from flesh progressing in England, related the manner in which his connection with the London Vegetarian Society arose, and in so doing took occasion to speak in a touching way of what he owed to Mr. Oldfield² . . .

He also pointed to the hope that a future congress of the Federal Union would be held in India.

The Vegetarian, 11-6-1891

19. INTERVIEW TO “THE VEGETARIAN”³-I

Mr. Gandhi was first asked what was the reason which first induced him to think of coming over to England and adopting the legal profession.

In a word, ambition. I matriculated at the Bombay University in the year 1887. Then I joined the Bhavnagar College, for unless you graduate at the Bombay University you get no status in society. If you want any employment before that, you cannot secure unless, of course, you have a very good influence to back you up, a respectable post, giving a handsome salary. But I found that I would have to spend three years at the least before I could graduate. Moreover, I suffered from constant headaches and nose-bleeding, and this was supposed to be due to the hot climate. And, after all, I could not, even after graduating, expect any very great income. While I was incessantly brooding over these things, an old friend of my father saw

¹ Held at Holborn

² Dr. Josiah Oldfield, editor of *The Vegetarian*

³ To enable Englishmen to appreciate the difficulties confronting Hindus intending to proceed to England for studies and to point out to such Hindus how the difficulties might be overcome, a representative of *The Vegetarian* put Gandhiji a number of questions.

and advised me to go to England and take the robe; he, as it were, fanned the fire that was burning within me. I thought to myself, "If I go to England not only shall I become a barrister (of whom I used to think a great deal), but I shall be able to see England, the land of philosophers and poets, the very centre of civilization." This gentleman had great influence with my elders, and so he succeeded in persuading them to send me to England.

This is a very brief statement of my reasons for coming to England, but they by no means represent my present views.

Of course, your friends were all delighted at your ambitious purpose?

Well, not all. There are friends and friends. Those who were my real friends, and of about my age, were very glad to hear that I was to go to England. Some were friends, or rather, well-wishers, old in years. These sincerely believed that I was going to ruin myself, and that I would be a disgrace to my family by going to England. Others, however, set up their opposition simply from malice. They had seen some of the barristers who derived fabulous incomes, and they were afraid that I might do the same. Some, again, there were, who thought that I was too young (I am now about twenty-two), or that I should not be able to bear the climate. To cut the matter short, no two persons supported or opposed my coming on the same grounds.

How did you set about carrying out your intention? Just tell me, if you please, what were your difficulties, and how you overcame them.

Even to try to tell you the story of my difficulties would fill up the whole of your valuable paper. It is a tale of misery and woe. The difficulties may well be likened to the heads of Ravana—the giant of the second¹ great Hindu epic *Ramayana*, whom Rama, the Hero, fought, and ultimately defeated—which were many, and which were no sooner chopped off than replaced. They may be divided chiefly under four heads, viz., money, consent of my elders, separation from relations, and caste restrictions.

First, then, as to money. Though my father was the prime minister of more than one native State, he never hoarded money. He spent all that he earned in charity and the education and marriages of his children, so we were practically left without much cash. He left some property, and that was all. When asked why he did not collect money and set it aside for his children, he used to say that his children

¹ The other great epic is the *Mahabharata*

represented his wealth, and if he hoarded much money he would spoil them. So, then, money was no small difficulty in my way. I tried for some State scholarship but failed. At one place, I was asked to prove my worth by graduating and then expect it. Experience teaches me that the gentleman who said so was right. Not daunted, I requested my eldest brother to devote all the money that was left to my education in England.

Here I cannot help digressing to explain the family system that prevails in India. There, unlike as in England, the children always, if male, and until marriage, if female, live with their parents. What they earn goes to the father, and so also what they lose is a loss to the father. Of course, even the male children do separate under exceptional circumstances, e.g., in the case of a great quarrel. But these are the exceptions. In the legal languages of Mayne: "Individual property is the rule in the West. Corporate property is the rule in the East." So then Everything was under the control of my brother, and we were all living together.

To return to the question of money. What little my father could leave for me was in the hands of my brother. It could only be set free subject to his consent. Moreover, that was not enough, so I proposed that the whole capital should be devoted to my education I ask you if any brother would do so here. There are very few such brothers in India. He was told that I might prove an unworthy brother after imbibing the Western ideas, and that the only chance of regaining the money would be in my returning alive to India, which was very doubtful. But he turned a deaf ear to all these reasonable and well-meant warnings. There was one, and only one condition attached to the consent to my proposal, viz., that I should get the permission of my mother and my uncle. May many persons have such brothers as mine! I then set about the allotted task, which I can assure you was uphill enough. Fortunately, I was the pet of my mother. She had much faith in me, and so I succeeded in getting over her superstition, but how was I to make her nod consent to a three years' separation? However, by showing the exaggerated advantages of coming to England, I got her to accede, with much reluctance, to my request. Now for the uncle. He was on the point of going to Benares and such other holy places. After three days' incessant persuasion and arguments I could get the following answer from him :

"I am going on a pilgrimage. What you say may be right, but

how could I willingly say 'yes' to your unholy proposal? The only thing I can say is that, if your mother does not mind your going, I have no right to interfere."

This was easily interpreted into 'yes'. Nor were these the only two whom I had to please. In India everyone, no matter how remotely connected, thinks that he has a right to poke his nose into another's affairs. But when I had exacted (for it was nothing else) acquiescence from the two, the pecuniary difficulties almost disappeared.

The difficulties under the second head are partially discussed above. You will, perhaps, be astonished to hear that I am married. (The marriage took place at the age of twelve.) Small blame then to my wife's parents if they thought that they had a right to interfere if only for the sake of their daughter. Who was to look after her? How was she to manage to spend the three years? Of course she was to be looked after by my brother. Poor brother! According to my ideas at that time, I should have taken little notice of their legitimate fears and growlings, had it not been that their displeasure would have been reflected on my mother and brother. It was no easy task to sit night after night with my father-in-law and to hear and successfully answer his objections. But then I was taught the old proverb, "Patience and perseverance overcome mountains", too well to give way.

When I had the money and the requisite permission, I said to myself, "How am I to persuade myself to separate from all that is dear and near to me?" In India we fight shy of separation. Even when I had to go for a few days my mother would weep. How, then, was I to witness, without being affected, the heart-rending scene? It is impossible for me to describe the tortures that my mind had to suffer. As the day of leave-taking drew near I nearly broke down. But I was wise enough not to say this, even to my closest friends. I knew that my health was failing. Sleeping, waking, drinking, eating, walking, running, reading, I was dreaming and thinking of England and what I would do on that momentous day. At last the day came. On the one hand, my mother was hiding her eyes, full of tears, in her hands, but the sobbing was clearly heard. On the other, I was placed among a circle of some fifty friends. "If I wept they would think me too weak; perhaps they would not allow me to go to England," soliloquized I; therefore I did not weep, even though my heart was breaking. Last, but not least, came the leave-taking with my wife. It would be contrary to custom for me to see or talk to her in the presence of friends. So I

had to see her in a separate room. She, of course, had begun sobbing long before. I went to her and stood like a dumb statue for a moment. I kissed her, and she said, "Don't go". What followed I need not describe. This done, my anxieties were not over. It was but the beginning of the end. The leave-taking was only half done, for I parted with the mother and the wife in Rajkot—where I was educated—but my brother and friends came to see me off as far as Bombay. The scene that took place there was no less affecting.

The collisions with my caste fellows in Bombay defy description, for Bombay is the place where they chiefly live. In Rajkot I did not meet with any such opposition worthy of the name. It was my misfortune to live in the heart of the city of Bombay, where they most abound, so I was hemmed in on all sides. I could not go out without being pointed and stared at by someone or other. At one time, while I was walking near the Town Hall, I was surrounded and hooted by them, and my poor brother had to look at the scene in silence. The culminating point was reached when a huge meeting of the caste fellows was summoned by the chief representatives. Every member of the caste was called upon to attend the meeting, under pain of forfeiting a fine of five annas. I may here mention that, before this step was determined upon, I was pestered with many deputations from them without avail. At this great meeting, I was seated in the centre of the audience. The Patels, as the representatives are called, remonstrated with me very strongly and reminded me of their connection with my father. It may be mentioned that all this was quite a unique experience to me. They literally dragged me out of seclusion, for I was not accustomed to such things. Moreover, my position became more precarious on account of an extreme shyness. Seeing that remonstrance fell flat on me, the head Patel addressed me (in effect) in the following words: "We were your father's friends, and therefore we feel for you; as heads of the caste you know our power. We are positively informed that you will have to eat flesh and drink wine in England; moreover, you have to cross the waters; all this you must know is against our caste rules. Therefore we command you to reconsider your decision, or else the heaviest punishment will be meted out to you. What have you to say to this?"

I replied in the following words: "I thank you for your warnings. I am sorry that I cannot alter my decision. What I have heard about England is quite different from what you say; one need

not take meat and wine there. As for crossing the waters, if our brethren can go as far as Aden, why could not I go to England? I am deeply convinced that malice is at the root of all these objections.”

“Very well, then,” replied the worthy Patel in anger, “You are not the son of your father.” Then, turning to the audience, he went on: “This boy has lost his sense, and we command everyone not to have anything to do with him. He who will support him in any way or go to see him off will be treated as an outcaste, and if the boy ever returns, let him know that he shall never be taken into the caste.”

These words fell like a bombshell upon all. Even the chosen few who had supported me through thick and thin left me alone. I had a great mind to answer the childish taunt, but was prevented from so doing by my brother. Thus even though I got out of the ordeal safely, my position became worse than ever. Even my brother began to vacillate, though only for a moment. He was reminded of the threat that the pecuniary support from him would cost him not only the money, but his membership of the caste. So although he did not say anything to me in person, he asked some of his friends to persuade me either to reconsider my decision or to defer its execution till the fury had subsided. There could be but one answer from me, and ever since that he never flinched, and, in fact, he has not been excommunicated; but the end had not come yet. The intrigues of the caste fellows were always at work. They almost seemed to have scored this time, for they could put off my going for a fortnight. They carried it out thuswise. We went to see a captain of a steamship company, who was requested to say that it would be unwise for me to leave during that time—August—because of the rough weather in the sea. My brother would consent to anything but this. Unfortunately, this was the first voyage that I had undertaken, so no one knew whether I was a good sailor or not, so I was helpless. Much against my will I had to put off the departure. I thought the whole structure would fall to the ground. My brother, having left a note to a friend, requesting him to give me the passage money when the time came, took leave. The parting scene was similar to the one described above. Now I was left alone in Bombay without money to buy the passage. Every hour that I had to wait seemed a year. In the meanwhile I heard that another Indian gentleman¹ was about to leave for England; this

¹ Mazmudar; *vide* “London Diary”, 12-11-1888.

news was godsend to me. I thought I would be allowed to go now. I made use of the note, and was refused the money. I had to make preparations within twenty-four hours; I was in a dreadful flutter. Without money I felt as if I was a bird without wings. A friend whom I shall always thank came to the rescue and advanced the passage money. I bought the ticket, telegraphed to my brother, and sailed for England on the 4th September, 1888. Such were my chief difficulties, which spread over nearly five months. It was a time of terrible anxiety and torture. Now hopeful, and now desponded, I dragged along always trying my best, and then depending upon God to show me the cherished goal.

The Vegetarian, 13-6-1891

20. INTERVIEW TO "THE VEGETARIAN"-II

On your arrival in England, of course, you were face to face with the flesh-eating problem; how did you solve it?

I was overwhelmed with gratuitous advice. Well-meaning yet ignorant friends thrust their opinions into unwilling ears. The majority of them said I could not do without meat in the cold climate. I would catch consumption. Mr. Z went to England and caught it on account of his foolhardiness. Others said I might do without flesh but without wine I could not move. I would be numbed with cold. One went so far as to advise me to take eight bottles of whisky, for I should want them after leaving Aden. Another wanted me to smoke, for his friend was obliged to smoke in England. Even medical men, those who had been to England, told the same tale. But as I wanted to come at any price, I replied that I would try my best to avoid all these things, but if they were found to be absolutely necessary I did not know what I should do. I may here mention that my aversion to meat was not so strong then as it is now. I was even betrayed into taking meat about six or seven times at the period when I allowed my friends to think for me. But in the steamer my ideas began to change. I thought I should not take meat on any account. My mother before consenting to my departure exacted a promise from me not to take meat. So I was bound not to take it, if only for the sake of the promise. The fellow-passengers in the steamer began to advise us (the friend who was with me and myself) to try it.

They said I would require it after leaving Aden. When this

turned out untrue, I was to require it after crossing the Red Sea. And on this proving false, a fellow-passenger said, "The weather has not been severe, but in the Bay of Biscay you will have to choose between death, and meat and wine " That crisis too passed away safely. In London, too, I had to hear such remonstrances. For months I did not come across any vegetarian. I passed many anxious days arguing with a friend about the sufficiency of the vegetable diet; but at that time having but little knowledge of arguments other than humanitarian in favour of vegetarianism, I got the worst of it as the friend scouted the idea of humanity in such discussions. At last I sealed his tongue by telling him I would sooner die than break the promise to my mother. "Humph," said he, "childishness, rank superstition; but since, even after coming here, you are superstitious enough to believe in such nonsense, I cannot help you any more, I only wish you had not come to England."

He never afterwards pressed the point seriously, except perhaps once, though ever since that he took me for little more than a fool. In the meanwhile I remembered once to have passed by a vegetarian restaurant (it was the "Porridge Bowl"). I asked a gentleman to direct me there, but instead of reaching there I saw the "Central" restaurant, and went there and had some porridge for the first time. I did not at first enjoy it, but I liked the pie which I had for the second course. It was there that I first bought some vegetarian literature among which was a copy of *A Plea for Vegetarianism* by H. S. Salt, after reading which I adopted vegetarianism from principle.

Till then I considered flesh to be a superior diet from a scientific point of view. Moreover, it was there that I came to know the existence of the Vegetarian Society of Manchester. But I did not take any active interest in it. I did, now and then, read *The Vegetarian Messenger* and that was all. My knowledge of *The Vegetarian* dates from a year and a half. It was at the International Vegetarian Congress that I may be said to have known the L.V.S.¹. That the Congress was sitting I knew by the kind courtesy of Mr. Josiah Oldfield, who heard of me from a friend, and was good enough to ask me to attend it. In conclusion, I am bound to say that, during my nearly three years' stay in England, I have left many things undone, and have done many things which perhaps I might better have left undone, yet I carry one great

¹ London Vegetarian Society

consolation with me that I shall go back without having taken meat or wine, and that I know from personal experience that there are so many vegetarians in England.

The Vegetarian, 20-6-1891

21. APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT AS ADVOCATE

BOMBAY,
November 16, 1891

TO
THE PROTHONOTARY AND REGISTRAR
OF THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE
BOMBAY
SIR,

I am desirous of being admitted as an Advocate of the High Court. I was called to the Bar in England on the 10th June last. I have kept twelve terms in the Inner Temple and I intend to practise in the Bombay Presidency.

I produce the certificate of my being called to the Bar. As to the certificate of my character and abilities, I have not been able to obtain any certificate from a judge in England, for I was not aware of the rules in force in the Bombay High Court. I, however, produce a certificate from Mr. W. D. Edwards, a practising Barrister in the Supreme Court of Judicature in England. He is the author of the *Compendium of the Law of Property in Land*, one of the books prescribed for the Bar Final Examination

*I beg to remain,
Sir;
Your most obedient servant
M. K. GANDHI*

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat:

22. ON WAY HOME TO INDIA-I

It was on the 12th June, 1891, that I left for Bombay after three years' stay in England. A beautiful day it was: the sun shone brilliantly; no overcoat was needed to keep off the cold breezes.

It was at 11.45 that an express train carrying the passengers left the Liverpool Street Station for the docks.

I could not make myself believe that I was going to India until I stepped into the steamship *Oceana*, of the P. & O. Company. So much attached was I to London and its environments for who would not be? London with its teaching institutions, public galleries, museums, theatres, vast commerce, public parks and vegetarian restaurants, is a fit place for a student and a traveller, a trader and a “addist”—as a vegetarian would be called by his opponents. Thus, it was not without deep regret that I left dear London. At the same time I was glad because I was to see my friends and relations in India after such a long time.

Oceana is an Australian steamer, one of the largest boats of the Company. She weighs 6,188 tons and her horse-power is 1,200. When we stepped into this vast floating island, we were treated to a good refreshing tea, to which all (passengers and friends alike) did justice. I must not omit to say that the tea was served gratis. At this time, a stranger would have taken them all for passengers (and they were a goodly number), from the ease with which they were taking their tea; but, when the bell rang to inform the friends of the passengers that the ship was going to weigh anchor, the number appreciably melted away. There was much cheering and waving of handkerchiefs when the ship steamed off the harbour.

It may be well here to contrast the *Oceana* with the *Assam* into which the Bombay-bound passengers had to transship at Aden. There were English waiters on the *Oceana*, always neat, clean and obliging. On the other hand, there were Portuguese waiters on board the *Assam*, who murdered the Queen's English, and who were always the reverse of clean, and also sulky and slow.

There was, moreover, a difference of quality in the food supplied in the two steamers. This was evident from the way in which the passengers were grumbling in the *Assam*. Nor was this all. The accommodation in the *Oceana* far outdid that in the *Assam*; this, however, the company could not help; they could not throw away the latter because the former was better.

How did the vegetarians manage in the ship? This would be an apt question.

Well, there were only two vegetarians, including myself. Both of us were prepared, in case we did not get anything better, to manage with boiled potatoes, cabbage and butter. But we had no reason to go to that extreme. The obliging steward gave us some vegetable curry,

rice, stewed and fresh fruit from the first saloon, and last, but not least, brown bread; so we had all we wanted. Undoubtedly, they are very liberal in giving good and sufficient food to the passengers. Only, they go too far; so at least it seems to me.

It would not be amiss to describe what the second-saloon menus contained, and how many meals the passengers had.

To begin with, the first thing in the morning, an average passenger would have a cup or two of tea and a few biscuits. At 8.30 a.m. the breakfast bell would bring down the passengers to the dining-room. They were punctual to the minute, at their meals, at any rate. The breakfast menu generally contained oatmeal porridge, some fish, chop, curry, jam, bread and butter, tea or coffee, etc., everything ad libitum.

I have often seen passengers take porridge, fish and curry, bread and butter, and wash down with two or three cups of tea.

Hardly had we time to digest the breakfast, when, bang,-it was the dinner bell at 1.30 p.m. The dinner was as good as breakfast: plenty of mutton and vegetables, rice and curry, pastry, and what not. Two days of the week, all the second-saloon passengers were served with fruit and nuts in addition to the ordinary dinner. But this, too, was not sufficient. The dinner fare was so easily digestible that we wanted a “refreshing” cup of tea and biscuits at 4 p.m. Well, but the evening breezes seemed so soon to take away all the effect of “that little” cup of tea that we were served a “high tea” at 6.30 p.m.: bread and butter, jam or marmalade, or both, salad, chops, tea, coffee, etc. The sea-air seemed to be so very salubrious that the passengers could not retire to bed before taking a few, a very few—only eight or ten, fifteen at the most—biscuits, a little cheese and some wine or beer. In the light of the above, are not the following lines too true:

Your belly is your God, your stomach is your temple, your paunch is your altar, your cook is your priest. . . . It is in the cooking-pots that your love is inflamed, it is in the kitchen that your faith grows fervid, it is in the flesh-dishes that all hope lies hid. . . . Who is held in so much esteem with you as the frequent giver of dinners, as the sumptuous entertainer, as the practised toaster of health?

The second saloon was pretty full of passengers of all sorts. There were soldiers, clergymen, barbers, sailors, students, officials and, maybe, adventurers. There were three or four ladies. We beguiled our time chiefly in eating and drinking. The rest of the time was either

dozed away or passed in chatting, at times in discussing, in playing games, etc. But after two or three days, the time between the meals seemed to hang heavy in spite of discussions and cards and scandals.

Some of us really warmed to the work and got up concerts, tugs-of-war, and running races for prizes. One evening was devoted to concerts and speeches.

Now, I thought it was time for me to poke my nose in. I requested the secretary of the committee, who managed those things, to give me a quarter of an hour for a short speech on vegetarianism. The secretary obligingly nodded consent to my request.

Well, I made grand preparations. I thought out and then wrote out and re-wrote the speech that was to be delivered. I well knew that I had to meet a hostile audience, and that I should take care that my speech did not send my audience to sleep. The secretary had asked me to be humorous. I told him that I might be nervous, but humorous I could not be.

Now, what do you think became of the speech? The second concert never came off, and so the speech was never delivered, to my great mortification. I fancy it was because no one seemed to enjoy the first evening, for we had no Pitts and Gladstones in the second saloon.

However, I succeeded in discussing vegetarianism with two or three passengers, who heard me calmly, and answered in effect, "We grant you the argument; but so long as we feel happy on our present diet (never mind about our being dyspeptic at times), we cannot give it a trial!"

One of them, seeing that my vegetarian friend and I got nice fruits every day, did give the V.E.M. diet a trial, but the chop was too great a temptation for him.

Poor man!

The Vegetarian, 9-4-1892

23. ON WAY HOME TO INDIA-II

Moreover, as an instance of affability between passengers and of politeness on the part of the first-saloon passengers, the second-saloon passengers were often invited to witness the theatricals and dances that they got up from time to time.

They had some very nice ladies and gentlemen in the first

saloon. But it would not do to have all play and no quarrel, so some of the passengers thought fit to get drunk (beg your pardon, Mr. Editor, they got drunk almost every evening, but this particular evening they got drunk and disorderly). They, it seems, were discussing with one another over a glass of whisky, when some of them used improper language. Then followed a fight of words culminating in a fight of blows. The matter was reported to the captain. He reproved these pugilistic gentlemen, and ever since then we had no more rows.

Thus, dividing our time between eating and amusements, we moved onward.

After two days' voyage, the steamer passed by, but did not touch, Gibraltar. This caused much disappointment, mostly among smokers, who wanted to get tobacco, duty-free in Gibraltar, as some of us had entertained a hope the steamer would cast anchor.

The next place reached was Malta. It being a coaling station, the steamer stops there for about nine hours. Almost all the passengers went ashore.

Malta is a beautiful island without the London smoke. The construction of houses is different. We had a look round the Governor's palace. The armoury is well worth a visit. Napoleon's carriage is on view there. You see there some beautiful paintings too. The market is not bad. The fruit is cheap. The cathedral is magnificent.

We had a nice drive of about six miles to the orange garden. There you see some thousands of orange trees and some ponds with gold fish. The drive was very cheap, only 2s. 6d.

What a wretched place Malta is for beggars! You cannot go along the road quietly without being pestered by a crowd of dirty-looking beggars. Some would offer to be your guides, others would offer to take you to shops where you could buy cigars or the famous Maltese sweet nougat.

From Malta we reached Brindisi. It is a good harbour and that is all. You cannot pass a single day in amusement. We had about nine hours or more at our disposal, but we could not utilize even four.

After Brindisi we reached Port Said. There we took final leave of Europe and the Mediterranean. Of course, there is nothing to be seen in Port Said, unless you want to see the dregs of society. It is full of rogues and rascals.

From Port Said the steamer moves along very slowly, for we enter the Suez Canal of M. de Lesseps. It is a distance of eighty-seven miles. The steamer took nearly twenty-four hours to travel that distance. We were close to the land on both sides. The strip of water is so narrow that two steamers cannot go abreast except at certain places. At night the sight is charming. All the ships are required to light electric lights in front and these are very powerful. The scene when two ships pass one another is very pleasant. The electric light you get from the opposite ship is simply dazzling.

We passed the Ganges. We raised three cheers for her, which were heartily returned by the passengers on board the Ganges. The town Suez is at the other end of the canal. The steamer hardly stops there for half an hour.

Now we entered the Red Sea. It was a three days' voyage but it was most trying. It was unbearably hot. Not only was it impossible to remain inside the steamer, but it was too hot even on the deck. Here, for the first time, we felt that we were going to India to face the hot climate.

We had some breeze when we reached Aden. Here, we (the passengers for Bombay) had to transship into the Assam. It was like leaving London for a miserable village. The Assam is hardly half as big as the Oceana.

Misfortunes never come single; with the Assam we had a stormy ocean, because it was the monsoon season. The Indian Ocean is generally calm, so during monsoon it is stormy with a vengeance. We had to pass five days more on the waters before we reached Bombay. The second night brought the real storm. Many were sick. If I ventured out on the deck I was splashed with water. There goes a crash; something is broken. In the cabin you cannot sleep quietly. The door is banging. Your bags begin to dance. You roll in your bed. You sometimes feel as if the ship is sinking. At the dinner table you are no more comfortable. The steamer rolls on your side. Your forks and spoons are in your lap, even the cruet stand and the soup plate; your napkin is dyed yellow and so on.

One morning I asked the steward if that was what he would call a real storm, and he said: "No, sir, this is nothing." and, waving his arm, showed me how the steamer would roll in a real storm.

Thus tossed up and down, we reached Bombay on July 5th. It was raining very hard and so it was difficult going ashore. However, we reached the shore safely, and bade good-bye to the Assam.

What a human cargo was on the Oceana, and the Assam! Some were going to make fortunes in Australia in high hopes; some, having finished their studies in England, were going to India in order to earn a decent living. Some were called away by a sense of duty, some were going to meet their husbands in Australia or India, as the case may be, and some were adventurers who, being disappointed at home, were going to pursue their adventures, God knows where.

Were the hopes of all realized? That is the question. How hopeful, yet how often disappointed, is the human mind! We live in hopes.

The Vegetarian, 16-4-1892

24. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

BOMBAY,
September 5, 1892

MY DEAR PATWARI,

I thank you for your kind letter and the advice you have given me.

As I told you in my last p.c., I have to postpone going abroad for practice. My brother is very much against it. He thinks that I need not despair of getting a decent livelihood in Kathiawar¹ and that without directly taking part in the khutput². However this may be, since he is so hopeful and is entitled to every consideration from me, I shall follow his advice. Here, too, I have been promised some work. So I intend to be here for about two months at least. I do not think my accepting a literary post will materially interfere with my legal studies. On the other hand, such a work will add to my knowledge that cannot but be indirectly useful in practice. Moreover, thereby I can work with a more concentrated mind free from worry, but where is the post? Not an easy thing to get one.

Of course, I asked for a loan on the strength of the promise you made me while at Rajkot. I entirely agree with you that your father should not know of it. Never mind about it now. I shall try somewhere else. I can easily understand that you cannot have a large surplus from one year's practice.

My brother has been retained in Sachin as Secretary to the Nawab of Sachin. He has gone to Rajkot and will return in a few days.

¹ Kathiawar, also known as Saurashtra, a collection of former princely States, or principalities in Gujarat

² Machinations, in Gujarati

I am glad to hear from Kashidas that he will settle in Dhandhuka.

The caste opposition is as great as ever. Everything depends upon one man who will try his best never to allow me to enter the caste. I am not so very sorry for myself as I am for the caste fellows who follow the authority of one man like sheep. They have been passing some meaningless resolutions and betraying their malice clerly in overdoing their part. Religion, of course, finds no place in their arguments. Is it not almost better not to have anything to do with such fellows than to fawn upon them and wheedle their fame so that I might be considered one of them? However, I have to move with the times.

I was very glad to hear of Vrajlalbhai becoming Karbhari¹ somewhere in Gujarat.

You write such a nice hand that I have been induced to imitate you though but imperfectly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original

25. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
May 26, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I was startled to read a paragraph in your today's issue referring to myself, under the heading, "An Unwelcome Visitor".² I am very

¹ Administrator.

² The reference was as follows: "An Indian entered the Court House yesterday afternoon and took a seat at the horseshoe. He was well-dressed and it was understood that he was an English barrister, on his way to Pretoria, where he is reported to be engaged in an Indian case. He entered the Court without removing his head-covering or salaaming, and the Magistrate looked at him with disapproval. The new arrival was courteously asked his business, and he replied that he was an English barrister. He did not attempt to present his credentials, and, on returning to the horseshoe was quietly told that the proper course for him to pursue, before taking up his position at the Bar, was to gain admission to the Supreme Court." The incident was reported in *The Natal Mercury*, 26-5-1893.

sorry if His Worship the Magistrate looked at me with disapproval. It is true that on entering the Court I neither removed my head-dress nor salaamed, but in so doing I had not the slightest idea that I was offending His Worship, or meaning any disrespect to the Court. Just as it is a mark of respect amongst the Europeans to take off their hats, in like manner it is in Indians to retain one's head-dress. To appear uncovered before a gentleman is not to respect him. In England, on attending drawing-room meetings and evening parties, Indians always keep the head-dress, and the English ladies and gentlemen generally seem to appreciate the regard which we show thereby. In High Courts in India those Indian advocates who have not discarded their native head-dress invariably keep it on.

As to bowing, or salaaming as you would call it, I again followed the rule observed in the Bombay High Court. If an advocate enters the Court after the judge has taken his seat on the bench he does not bow, but all the advocates rise up when the judge enters the Court, and keep standing until the judge has taken his seat. Accordingly, yesterday when His Worship entered the Court I rose up, and took my seat only after His Worship had done so.

The paragraph seems to convey also that though I was told privately not to keep my seat at the horseshoe, I nevertheless "returned to the horseshoe". The truth is that I was taken by the chief clerk to the interpreters' room, and was asked not to take my seat at the horseshoe the next time I came unless I produced my credentials. To make assurance doubly sure I asked the chief clerk if I could retain my seat for the day, and he very kindly said "yes". I was therefore really surprised to be told again in open court that in order to be entitled to the seat I had to produce credentials, etc.

Lastly, I beg His Worship's pardon if he was offended at what he considered to be my rudeness, which was the result of ignorance and quite unintentional.

I hope, in fairness, you will extend me the favour of finding the above explanation a space in your paper, as the paragraph, if unexplained, would be likely to do me harm.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 29-5-1893

26. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

PRETORIA,
September 16, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

My attention has been drawn to the reproduction of Mr. Pillay's letter¹ to *The Transvaal Advertiser* in your paper with comments thereon. I am that unfortunate Indian barrister-at law who had arrived in Durban, and who is now in Pretoria²; but I am not Mr. Pillay, nor am I a Bachelor of Arts.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 18-9-1893

27. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

PRETORIA,
September 19, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

I shall be very thankful to you if you would be good enough to find place for the following in your paper:

Mr. Pillay, who recently wrote to *The Transvaal Advertiser*, has been taken to pieces for being "nasty" by some gentlemen here and by the papers there. I wonder if your leader about "the wily wretched Asiatic traders", "the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community", "these parasites who live a semi-barbaric life" would not bear Mr. Pillay's letter out of the field in a hard-word competition. However, tastes differ as to style, and I have no right to sit in judgment upon anyone's style of writing.

But why all this outpouring of wrath on the poor Asiatic traders? It is difficult to see how the Colony is in danger of literal ruination.

¹ Pillay's complaint was that he was violently pushed off the footpath.

² Administrative capital of the Union; 511 miles from Durban

The reasons, so far as I can gather from your leading article of the 15th instant, can be summed up in the following words: "One Asiatic has gone into insolvency, and paid 5d. in the £. This is a fair sample of an Asiatic trader. He has driven out the small European trader."

Now, granting that a majority of Asiatic traders do become insolvent, and pay very little to their creditors (which is not at all the case), is that a good reason for driving them out of the Colony or South Africa? Does it not rather show that there must be a defect in the Insolvency Law that they can thus ruin their creditors? If the law would give any latitude for such practices, people would take advantage of it. Do not the Europeans seek the protection of the Insolvency Court? I do not, of course, mean to defend the Indian traders by this *tu quoque* argument. I sincerely regret that the Indians should resort to such practices at all. It is a disgrace to their country, which one time had too great an idea of its honour to be associated with any dishonest dealing in trade. But it certainly seems to me that a case is not made out for expelling the Indian traders on the strength of the fact of their availing themselves of the law of bankruptcy. Not only can the law put a stop to the frequent occurrence of such cases, but the wholesale merchants, too, by being a little more careful, can do so. And, by the way, does not the very fact that these traders do get credit from the European merchants show that they are not, after all, so bad as they are portrayed by you?

If the small European trader has been driven out, is it to be laid at their door? This shows, it would appear, a grater competency on the part of the Indian trader in commerce, and this very superior competency is to be a reason for his expulsion! I ask you, sir, is this fair? If one editor edited his paper more ably than his rival, and consequently, drives the latter out of the field, how would the former like to be told that he should give place to his crestfallen rival because he (the successful one) was able? Should not the superior ability be a special reason for encouragement so that the rest may try to rise as high? Is it a sound policy to stifle healthy competition? Should not the European trader take a leaf out of the book of the Indian trader, if that be not below his dignity, and learn how to trade cheaply, how to live simply? "Do unto others as you would be done by."

But you say these wretched Asiatics live a semi-barbaric life. It would be highly interesting to learn your views of a semi-barbaric life. I have some notion of the life they live. If a room without a nice, rich

carpet and ornamental hangings, a dinner table (perhaps unvarnished), without an expensive table-cloth, with no flowers to decorate it, with no wines spread, no pork or beef *ad lib*, be a semi-barbaric life; if a white comfortable dress, specially adapted to a warm climate, which, I am told, many Europeans envy them in the trying heat of summer, be a semi-barbaric life; if no beer, no tobacco, no ornamental walking-stick, no golden watch chain, no luxuriously-fitted sitting-room, be a semi-barbaric life; if, in short, what one commonly understands by a simple frugal life be a semi-barbaric life, then, indeed, the Indian traders must plead guilty to the charge, and the sooner the semi-barbarity is wiped out from the highest Colonial civilization, the better.

The elements that generally constitute a reason for expulsion of a people from civilized States are entirely absent in the case of these people. You will agree when I say that they are not a political danger to the Government, since they meddle very little, if at all, in politics. They are not notorious robbers. I believe there is not a single case of an Indian trader having suffered imprisonment, or even been charged with theft, robbery, or any of the heinous crimes. (I speak under correction.) Their teetotal habits make them exceptionally peaceful citizens.

But they spend nothing, says the leading article under discussion. Don't they? I suppose they live on air or sentiments. We know that Becky lived on nothing for a year in *Vanity Fair*. And here a whole class seems to have been found out doing the same. It is to be presumed they have to pay nothing for shop-rents, taxes, butchers' bills, grocers' bills, clerks' salaries, etc. etc. One would, indeed, like to belong to such a blessed class of traders, especially in the present critical condition of the trade all the world over.

It seems, on the whole, that their simplicity, their total abstinence from intoxicants, their peaceful and, above all, their businesslike and frugal habits, which should serve as a recommendation, are really at the bottom of all this contempt and hatred of the poor Indian traders. And they are British subjects. Is this Christian-like, is this fair play, is this justice, is this civilization? I pause for a reply.

Thanking you in anticipation for inserting this.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 23-9-1893

28. WELCOME ADDRESS TO NEW GOVERNOR

TOWN HALL,
DURBAN,
September 28, 1893

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY,
SIR WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., ETC.
MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We the undersigned members of the Mahomedan and Indian community of the Colony of the Natal, beg most respectfully to welcome your Excellency on the occasion of Your Excellency's arrival here as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, Empress of India.

We trust that your Excellency will find the Colony and its associations congenial, and that the task of introducing a new form of government into Natal will be as free from difficulty as it will be pregnant with interest.

The special affairs of the Indian community in Natal will, owing to the extending Indian influence here, constantly occupy your Excellency's attention; and we bespeak, with your Excellency's permission, that consideration towards our community, which, we are confident, Your Excellency, representing Her Most Gracious Majesty, will be pleased to grant to us.

We take leave to wish for your Excellency and Lady Hely-Hutchinson all prosperity during your stay in this country. And we are,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,
DADA ABDULLA¹ DAWOD MAHOMED
M. C. CAMROODEEN² AMOD JEEWA
AMOD TILLY PARSEE RUSTOMJI

A. C. PILLAY

The Natal Mercury, 30-9-1893

¹ Proprietor of Dada Abdulla & Co., Durban, leading Indian firm, in connection with whose law-suit Gandhiji first went to South Africa

² Indian merchant of Johannesburg and active member of the Natal Indian Congress

29. LETTER TO “THE NATAL ADVERTISER”

PRETORIA,
September 29, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I have to request your indulgence for inserting the following in your paper:

To make an exhaustive reply to the programme set forth by you for the would-be anti-Asiatic league in your issue of the 19th inst. is a Herculean task, and it cannot be undertaken in the compass of a letter to a newspaper. I would, however, with your permission, take up only two items. viz., the fears about “the coolie vote swamping the European vote”, and the supposed unfitness of the Indians to vote.

At the outset, I would appeal to your good sense, and the love of fair play which is supposed to be a characteristic of the British nation. No amount of facts or arguments would convince you or your readers of the justness of my remarks if you or they are resolved upon looking at one side only of the question. Cool judgment and a dispassionate and impartial enquiry are essential to a right view of the whole matter.

Does it not appear a far-fetched view that the Indian vote can ever swamp the European vote? A mere superficial observer can see that such a thing can never happen. A sufficient number can never command the property qualifications to be able to outdo the European vote.

They are divided into two classes—the traders and the labourers. The latter are by far in the majority, and have no votes as a rule. Poverty-stricken, they come to Natal on starvation wages. Can they ever dream of having enough property to qualify themselves for voting? And these are they who live here with any degree of permanence. Some only of the former class have the property qualifications; but then they do not live permanently in Natal, and many of those who can legally vote would never care to do so. The Indians as a class never, even in their own country, avail themselves of all their political rights. They are too much taken up with their

spiritual well-being to think of taking an active part in politics. They have no great political aspirations. They come not to be politicians, but to earn an honest bread, and it is a matter for regret if some do not earn it strictly honestly. So, then, it seems that all the fears about the Indian vote assuming portentous proportions are ill-grounded.

And even the few votes that the Indians command cannot in any way affect Natal politics. All talk about an Indian party clamouring for Indian representation seems to be chimerical, for the selection would always be between two White men. Would it, then, matter much that there are some Indian votes? The most the few votes can do will be to secure them a perfectly White gentleman, who would, if he is faithful to his promise, do them good service in the Assembly. And fancy one or two such members making up an Indian party! Why, they, or rather he, would be a veritable John¹ crying in the wilderness without his electric, and perhaps I should say divine, power of converting. Even strong little parties representing diverse minor interests can effect very little in the Imperial Parliament. They can only heckle the First Lord with a few questions, and have the satisfaction of seeing their names appear in the next morning's papers.

Then, you think that they (the Indians) are not civilized enough to be fit for voting; that they may not be any better than the Natives; and that they are certainly not equal to the Europeans in the scale of civilization. Perhaps not. And all would depend upon the meaning of the word "civilization". It is impossible to enter into a full discussion of all the questions suggested by an enquiry into the matter. I may, however, be allowed to point out that they enjoy these privileges in India. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858—which is justly and rightly called the Magna Charta of the Indians—runs :

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.

I can produce other similar extracts relating to the Indians. But I

¹ The reference is to John the Baptist.

am afraid I have already trespassed too much upon your courtesy. I may add, however, that an Indian has been the acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta; an Indian is a judge of the High Court at Allahabad, whose co-religionists the Indian traders as a rule are; and an Indian is a member of the British Parliament. Moreover, the British Government in many respects follow in the footsteps of Akbar the Great, who ruled and lived in the 16th century. He was an Indian. The present land system is a copy of the policy of Todarmull, the great financier and an Indian, with but few modifications. If all this is the outcome, not of civilization, but of semi-barbarity, I have yet to learn what civilization means.

If, in the face of all the above facts, you can foment dissensions, and set the European section of the community to work against the Indian section, you are great.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 3-10-1893

30. WORK FOR VEGETARIANISM

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in a private letter from Pretoria, writes:

There is a very fine opportunity in South Africa for a vegetarian gardener. Cultivation is very much neglected though the soil is very fruitful.

I am glad to say I have been able to induce my landlady, who is an English woman, to become a vegetarian, and bring up her children on a vegetarian diet, but I am afraid she will slide down. Proper vegetables cannot be had here. Such as can be had are very dear. Fruit, too, is very dear; so is also milk. It therefore becomes very difficult to give her a sufficient variety. She would certainly leave it off if she finds it more expensive.

I was very much interested in Mr. Hills's article on vital food.¹ I intend giving it another trial very soon. You will recollect that I did

¹ The theory of vital food was originally propagated by Mr. A. F. Hills, Chairman of the Vegetarian Society, at its first quarterly meeting on February 4, 1889. In The First Diet of Paradise, he expounded, at some length, a somewhat remarkable theory of vitality, energy, rays of the sun, etc., which were to be found in the following foods: fruit, grain, nuts and pulse, all raw. Vide also "An Experiment in Vital Food", 24-3-1894.

give it a trial when in Bombay, but not for a time long enough to warrant any opinion about it.

Kindly remember me to all our friends.

The Vegetarian, 30-9-1893

31. GUIDE TO LONDON

[1893-94]¹

INTRODUCTION

In these days of cheap publication authors are constantly multiplying and have naturally lost a great deal of the respect they used to command before. Let me then at once inform the reader that, in issuing this little guide I am not aspiring to authorship, but simply supplying, as I believe, a long-felt want. Issuing guides does not make authors. They are made of 'sterner stuff'.

It will be readily admitted that, though Indians have been going to and returning from England for the last twenty years and more, no attempt has yet been made at writing a guide like this. Some of them have published books describing with much effect what is to be seen

¹ The exact date of writing is not available. Pyarelal says: "comparative leisure at Pretoria enabled Gandhiji to resume two little unfinished ventures which he had launched while he was in India. One was a little handbook or *Guide to London* that he had set about to prepare in answer to numerous inquiries on his return from London. . . . It bears the evidence of having been written, at least in part, between the second half of 1893 and the first half 1894. . . . He never published it." (*The Early Phase*, p. 316).

In the introduction, Gandhiji writes: "And here the only topic of conversation with my visitors has been England till I have been sometimes literally bored (Vol 1: "Guide to London"; Introduction)." "Here" in this sentence appears to refer to Indian. It is not known whether the introduction was written before or after the text, but it may be presumed that the work was commenced before Gandhiji left for South Africa in 1893. Gandhiji mentions the "morning coat . . . now five years old", which he must have bought on reaching London in September 1888; *vide* Vol 1: "Guide to London", chapter II.

About the circumstances in which the MS was located, Pyarelal writes: "The existing copy was retrieved by me from a heap of papers littering the floor of the weaving shed in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, shortly after my arrival there in 1920. It being shown to Gandhiji, he said that it had been made at his instance by one of his clerks in South Africa, who wrote a very bad hand, to improve his handwriting. Unfortunately some pages in the appendix are missing. The original could never be traced" (*E.P.*).

in England and elsewhere. But they have not gone further. They leave you in suspense, for they do create in you a desire for going to England, but how to do it they seem to have failed to tell. Scores of Indians have become barristers, yet no one has been bold to inform his countrymen how he managed to live in England. While there I received many from friends asking me to throw some light on one thing or another. And here the only topic of conversation with my visitors has been England till I have been sometimes literally bored. The avidity with which they have devoured the information must by itself justify the publication of this unpretentious guide.

No doubt there are many reasons why a book like this has not been before the public long ago. Any such book in order to be exhaustive must necessarily contain important revelations which I know painfully would perhaps stir up a useless controversy and wrangle and which some would always like not to be made at all. The movements alike of students and laymen in England are shrouded in mystery. No one for instance knows definitely what an Indian eats in England, where he lives; whether he cooks his food or not, etc., etc. now these are the very points which are of vital importance to those who intend to go to England. The writer, Therefore, of the following pages proposes to discover the mystery and lay bare the movements of Indians in England.

Such a course, I hope, would facilitate to some extent the way to England in addition to helping the people to understand the England-returned Indians, but I am afraid it will bring on me showers of reproaches and remonstrances from many persons. It may even cost me friendships. Some would call me rash, others would be content with saying that I lack tact¹, while yet others would fling youth into my face, but I have resolved upon bearing the storm for the sake of truth.

The next question is whether I am the person who should write such a book. I am inclined to leave it to the reader to a great extent to answer the question. I know there are persons who would tell the same story in a nobler language, who would tell it with a greater accuracy, who would tell with a greater fulness and I know also that probably no one can combine in himself all the qualities. The only reason why I write the book is that no one has as yet written it though badly wanted.

¹ The source has 'tactics'.

As a rule the book will contain facts only and at times personal observations when absolutely necessary. If, at any time, anyone finds anything that he cannot understand or any error in the book, I shall thank him to correspond with me so that I may offer an explanation or correct the error.

Before concluding the introduction, I beg [all to] extend me their co-operation, i. e., help me by buying and, what is more necessary, reading the book so that they may help themselves.

Facts which can be determined easily from other sources will not generally find place in this guide, but the sources will be referred to. The province of the book is not to collect information from the existing books, but to attempt that which has not yet been attempted.

CHAPTER I

WHO SHOULD GO TO ENGLAND?

It may be laid down broadly that all who can afford should go to England. Of course, here the meaning of the word 'afford' should be understood in its widest sense. Thus some cannot go to England because they cannot afford the money, some cannot afford through ill-health, others cannot owing to young age and various other objections. All these will be briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first and the foremost question is the question of health. No one with a weak chest or a tendency to consumption should ever think of going to England. It will simply mean going to England in order to court death away from friends and relations. It is true that you can go to the south of Europe not only without injury to the constitution but with benefit to it; thus you can go to the Riviera and be cured of consumption. Thousands of consumptive persons annually flock there to be cured of the fell disease. It is supposed to be one of the finest places for persons with weak chests; but all this means a great outlay of money. And then again the book is not written for invalids so that they may get cured by following the instructions therein contained. It is written for those with a good health who want to learn and be useful. Moreover it is for those who would go to England. It is true also that a person with a generally weak health might take a trip to England during the summer season without coming to much or any harm. Still, if I can venture to give an opinion, I should say that those with any chest disease whatever should never think of going to

England except under special circumstances and conditions. On the other hand, persons suffering from any disease due to a warm climate can do worse than going to England. I used to suffer from headaches and nose-bleeding in India. I could not read for three or four hours at a stretch during the summer months without getting a headache. Now I am happy to say I am entirely free from both and this I ascribe mainly to the cold and invigorating climate of England. On the question of health if there be any doubt about it, it would be best always to consult some medical authority.

The next question is as to age. It is very difficult to lay down any hard and fast rules for that. All parents must generally know when they can part with their children. The solution of the question depends moreover on the character of the boy who wants to go. Then again it depends on what he wants to do there. If he wants to pass the Civil Service examination, the limit of age is now 23. For a person desiring to be a barrister, he must be twenty-one years before he is called. He who wants to matriculate must be at least sixteen years old. If you want to give your child a beginner's education, you can send it without a guardian to one of the many homes, where children only are educated and taken care of.

Having so far dealt with the negative side, I come to the positive. To lay down broadly that all those who have money, a good constitution and [are] of proper age should go to England seems very tempting, but it is not sufficient. All such persons may inquire "Why should we go to England?" And I venture to answer: for the purposes of trade, travel or education. Nowadays many go there for education, some go there for travelling, but very few for trade, though the last is the most important for the material well-being of the country. Everyone knows that India wants trade more than anything else and that England is the best place for getting an insight into different trades. I do not for a moment hold that a person can learn trading only in England. What he does learn is the trading habits of the people. If he wants to extend his commerce with England, the more he knows the land and their people the better for him. From this it follows that he should go to England specially for that. Those who go there for the sake of education or travel do not and cannot make it their object to study everything relating to trade. There one sees different branches of commerce in a most efficient state. He sees also how the large establishments are carried on. A fellow with a trading

knowledge can know what would be the best things to trade in. Then again, if we had a direct communication with English gentlemen, we can dispense with agency. I know there are some Indians who have established themselves in England and are trading there. This is very good so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. I am sorry to say that the management of these houses is far from satisfactory and consequently they are not doing a swinging business. I should like educated traders who have a good knowledge of English to go there, mix with the people, see the secret of their success and then return to India, open up branches in England and India in an improved style. I have been told that we stand a fair chance of doing a good business in selling carved wood and stones and feathers in England. Everyone knows how many feathers are daily wasted away in almost every part of India. Since they are a saleable commodity in Europe, we are wasting away real wealth simply through sheer ignorance or indifference. These are mere instances. There must be various other things which would sell in England. It is exactly because we do not know these things that we should go to England to learn what they are. Will a time come when every trading firm will send their man to England?

Then as to travelling.

Both the traders and students can combine a little travelling with their profession. These are travellers of a low type. Those who want to become professional travellers, who want to write books on travels must go there for the special purpose of travelling. But I believe such persons had better see their own country first. I cannot do better than quote Mr. Malabari on the point:

In study as in travel it is best to begin at the very beginning and to proceed by slow stages, gaining something at every stage and that something such as to be of immediate practical use at the next stage. When you travel or study by degrees, every fresh step or item of knowledge is a keen enjoyment. You are prepared to receive it, and, thus received, your knowledge will fructify. But when knowledge is thrust upon you without previous discipline, i.e., without your being fit for it, it will be inert and unleavened. What is the use of visiting foreign countries when you know nothing of your own? When you go to Europe ignorant of your own national life, you will miss those thousand points of comparison and contrast, those thousand shades of difference, those thousand beauties and blemishes that modern European civilization presents. At the best you will look at things, not see or see through them.

These are wise words worthy of serious consideration. The

outcome of it is that you should begin not at the wrong end.

Last of all comes education. It is with very much regret that I have to record here that almost all who go to England for the purpose of education go there in order to become barristers. Education does not mean becoming barristers. I shall have a good deal to say about barristers in a separate chapter, so here I shall just say what other things you can do there. Of course the most coveted examination is the Civil Service examination. But those only who are British-born subjects can go in for that examination. Engineering is another branch of education which you can learn at the Cooper's Hill College. You can get the highest medical degree at the London University. It has turned out most eminent doctors, but it is a long course and, though theoretically requiring only five years, requires practically seven years. Oxford and Cambridge Universities impart a very good education. They are meant for the richer classes, not the poor. The education received in these universities is quite different from that received in the Indian universities. They are not so exacting as our universities here. Again, in India generally it is all work which, as is said, "with no play makes Jack a dull boy". The Oxford and Cambridge education combines both work and play. That university life is not a drudgery as I suppose, unfortunately, it is here.

It would be impossible to give exhaustive information about the various centres of education. They can only be pointed out. The secretaries of all these institutions can be written to and will send prospectuses wherefrom every detailed information can be gathered. Edinburgh too is a place which has become a favourite place with the Indians, mostly medical students. The medical course there is far easier than the London course which, of course, is the hardest. The Durham University, too, gives a medical diploma.

It might be urged that all these things can be had here and at a less cost. I would admit the former though not the latter. However, the mere fact that the same thing can be had in India is not sufficient. The question is which is of superior quality. Is not education in any branch far superior in England to that in India? Cannot a man learn more during the same time in England than in India? The last proposition is self-evident. A student here is half student and half man. He may be married too. In that case, he has to think of his wife, perhaps children, in addition to house-hold cares which an Indian student is generally saddled with. While, in England, he is alone, no

wife to tease or flatter him, no parents to indulge, no children to look after, no company to disturb. He is the master of his time. So, if he has the will, he can do more. Moreover, the invigorating climate in England is by itself a stimulant to work, the enervating climate of India is a stimulant to idleness. Who has not passed idle hours in a summer noon? Who has not wished he had nothing to do in summer but to sleep? Of course, persons are there who never cease to work in India. In fact, hardest working students are found in India. But that work is against the will. In England, it does not do to be idle. You like the work for the sake of it. You cannot help working. I have heard it said of a very learned professor that he read as much in three years in England as he would have in nine years in India. That amount of work which tells upon one's health in India can be gone through with ease in England. An instance is at our very doors. Do we not work more in winter than in summer? So, then, it will not be doubted that a person willing to work will do more in England than in India. It is needless to mention the advantage that we have in England of talking in the English language the whole of our time. It is fervently to be hoped that examples of persons having cut a sorry figure will not be cited in refutation of the above proposition. For such fall under the category of those who are not willing to work, while we are here talking of persons who seek more opportunities for work in England than in India. It will be very uncharitable to expect drones to return types of learning from England. There are the better opportunities, it is for you to avail of them. If you do not, you are to blame, not England. And if superior education can be obtained in England, it follows that it is not more expensive than that to be obtained in India, if the ratio of superiority be the same as that of increased expenses.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARIES

Having in the previous chapter shown who should go to England, I now proceed to describe what preliminaries one has to make before starting. In so doing if I may at times enter into the most trifling details, I hope the reader will not take it as an insult. The standard by which I go is my intelligence and lower still if possible and I shall describe things which required an explanation in my case when I left for England.

The first consideration is that of money. The amount of money

the candidate has to take with him will be given later on, but whatever the amount, let him make absolutely sure of getting the full amount in England. In certain cases it may be advisable to take the whole amount with him. I know by personal experience how even persons who have promised on oath to give some pecuniary assistance, a loan mind you, not an absolute gift and whom you think [you] can safely depend upon prove false to their promises.¹ In London you do not often find persons who would give you a loan even. The loan too is generally big, for when you do not get the promised money, it is not a small sum, but a tolerably large one which you would not expect any friend to lend. I know by personal experience and that of friends what it is for an Indian to be without money even for a moment in England. It involves an extra expense of wiring home, not to speak of the anxieties one has to suffer under such circumstances, and wiring to India is very expensive. It is four shillings per word. Therefore be sure you will get a sufficient amount of money and that, too, at the proper time.

Then, if possible, it is always advisable to get some introduction notes to gentlemen in England. They are not absolutely necessary, but when you can get them, they are not useless. You know that you will have some friends when you reach there. They are a consolation and, at times, friendships built upon such introduction notes become lasting and genuine.²

Now you have to consider what things to take with you, where to buy the passage and where to put up on reaching London.

I shall first give a list of necessary things and then offer a few remarks thereon, when deemed necessary.

	Rs.	As.
1 Overcoat	30	0
1 Morning coat	20	0
1 Waistcoat	10	0
1 Jacket suit (vest jacket)	30	0
3 Pairs of trousers	27	0

¹ *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, ch. XIII; also "Draft of Letter to Frederick Lely: December 1888.

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIII.

3	” drawers (woollen)	15	0
3	” ” (cotton or merino)	6	0
3	Woollen vests	12	0
3	Cotton or merino vests	4	0
3	Woollen shirts without collars	16	0
6	Woollen shirts with collars	18	0
1	White shirt	2	0
1	Pair of braces	1	8
3	Standup collars	1	0
	Mother-of-pearl studs	0	8
	” links	0	4
12	Handkerchiefs	1	4
2	Sleeping suits (woollen)	15	0
1	Pair of gloves	2	0
1	Rug	10	0
6	Cotton or merino socks	3	0
3	Woollen socks	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
		228	8
			Rs. As.
	B.F.	228	8
1	Rugstrap	1	8
1	Pair of slippers	1	4
1	Pair of shoes	4	0
1	“ boots	6	0
1	Turkish cap	1	4
1	Cloth brush	1	0
1	Hair brush	1	0
1	Tooth brush	0	4
1	Shaving brush	1	0
1	Razor	2	0
1	Razor strap	2	0
1	Comb	0	8
1	Shaving stick	1	0
	Tongue scraper	0	4

Note paper	0	8
Envelopes to match	0	4
Travelling inkstand	0	8
Penholder and pocket pencil	0	8
Blotting	0	4
Pins and needles and thread	0	4
Penknife	1	8
Pens 0	8	
Money purse	0	8
Stick	1	0
Deck chair	5	0
Two trunks	16	0
Some books		
Umbrella		<u>4</u>
Total	Rs.	282 4

To buy the above things care must be taken that the best things are bought at the cheapest prices and that the things bought are suitable. . . There are many shops in Bombay. Some of the native shops are very good. The English shops would be found to be very expensive. Whenever practicable, it is always best to get some experienced person to buy the things for you.

It may not be useless here to make a few remarks on the above list. Two trunks have been mentioned in the list and the price for both has been put down at Rs. 16/-. Each trunk may be 26x12¹. Generally they buy one steel trunk and a leather bag. And one of the best steel trunks would cost Rs. 25 and a leather bag—a gladstone bag—would cost much the same. This expense is not necessary. A good trunk can be bought for Rs. 12. In putting down the price at Rs. 16 I have in my mind native iron trunks which are as strong as, if not stronger than, the steel trunks. That would be an encouragement to native industry and a saving of a few rupees to the purchaser. If the native trunks do not suit or if they cannot be had, wooden boxes can be bought or imitation steel trunks which do not cost more than Rs. 5 each. The P. & O. rules say with regard to the size of the trunks:

¹ Obviously inches

The portmanteau for cabin use should not exceed 3 ft in length, 1 ft 9 inches in width and 1 ft and 3 inches in depth. No packages exceeding this limit are allowed in the saloons or cabins.

The prices for other articles are not by any means the lowest prices. For example, while I have put down $\frac{1}{2}$ rupee for a pair of socks, a good pair can be had for 5 or 6 annas. If good woollen socks cannot be had in Bombay, they may be bought in London. For six socks would answer the purpose in the boat. With the clothing mentioned in the above list one need not spend anything on dress for a year in England. A further list of clothing will be given later on. It may be bought in England if it is found necessary. And that would give one more than enough clothing for a 3 years' stay in England. Certain things that are generally included in such lists have been purposely left out, e.g., towels, soap, etc. These things can be had gratis on board. Foreign stamps can be bought on board.

As to what dress to wear on board, it is best to begin with the jacket suit. It is not at all necessary to wear the undervest or the drawers. They should be made use of only when the cold weather has begun. It is always advisable not to overload oneself with dress. I have come across many persons who have suffered from over-clothing. Of course, it is equally necessary not to underclothe. The undervest and drawers would not be required till the steamer reaches Port Said, for, the weather to be met with from Bombay to Port Said is not less warm than that we experience in India. If cold is felt after leaving Port Said, the cotton underclothing may be worn or, if necessary, the woollen underclothing. Till Brindisi is reached the overcoat may not be touched at all. It must be understood that this is not the condition in which all can live. No hard and fast rules can be laid down for clothing. The above remarks have been made simply to remove the generally prevalent idea that the under-clothing and the over coat are absolutely necessary as soon as the steamer leaves the harbour. The safest thing to do is to begin to wear more and warmer clothes according to necessity.

The white shirts have almost been left out. This may be considered a hardship not because they are a climatic necessity but because they are a fashion. Well, this is a book meant for those who want to live cheaply and yet respectably. One can safely break through fashion especially when it is expensive and injurious, but the process should not be gone through violently. The white shirts have

been left out because they swell up the weekly washing bill to a very great extent. A white shirt would cost 4d to wash while a flannel shirt would cost only 2d. Again, while one flannel shirt per week is sufficient, at least two white shirts would hardly answer the purpose. They spoil sooner than the flannel shirts. Indeed, some unconventional gentlemen in England who have ceased adoring the fashion as a goddess have discarded stiff clothing altogether. They have bidden goodbye to the stiff collars, cuffs and the shirts. Even medical opinion has begun to revolt against too much use of starch which is absolutely necessary for washing white shirts. The starch has been pronounced to be injurious to the body. Whatever it is, there is no denying the fact that flannel shirts are more comfortable and, in the end, less expensive than linen shirts.

However, if the fashion is to be adored as it ought to be more or less, if you are not to break through it violently, wear the flannel shirts without collars; use the white collars and cuffs and you would lead others to believe that you have white shirts on. This trick is resorted to by thousands in London and sometimes it is very convenient. And, if at times, you like to look a London swell, that too has been provided for. A white shirt would be found mentioned in the list and may be used occasionally.

As a token of respect to the fashion goddess, the neckties too have not been forgotten. They will find a place in the further list. They might be used or not according to one's fancies. They do not cost much if bought cheaply.

The morning coat is worn on visits. On board, too, if you are a first-saloon passenger, it is a necessity. As far as possible, you should wear the jacket suit so that the morning coat may not be spoiled. The writer of these pages had only one morning coat. It is now five years old and yet looks as new as if it were made yesterday. As soon as it is done with, brush it well, fold it and put it in your chest of drawers and it would never spoil.

Shaving materials are mentioned in the list. Do not be surprised. You shall not be a professional barber. But you will have to shave yourself if you have a beard. Even kings are not ashamed of so doing in Europe. If you have thick hair, you have to shave every day. It is a trouble to be at the mercy of a barber every day and incur an expense of at least 2d. To save that it is necessary to learn how to shave oneself. It does not take long. Only a few minutes spent for three or four days would be found sufficient.

For head-dress the turkish cap is mentioned. This is very handy. But, for one who feels uncomfortable in the cap and does not like to be noticed by people, a felt-hat is mentioned in the second list that is to follow.

For tooth powder the best (medically) and yet the cheapest powder is precipitated chalk. You can get 4 oz. for 6d. This will last for months.

Slippers are to be worn at home and on board only.

There is another item of dress that has been left out from the list. It is the dress suit. Now this is not at all necessary. Although many Indians buy it, it is not advisable to incur that expense. I bought it myself and am very sorry for it. I wore it but three or four times. I consider that to be the most foolish expense I incurred in England. They wear it for evening parties. We Indians can wear the morning coat or the Parsee coat or our own native dress whatever that may be. I have seen many Indians wearing the morning coat. There is nothing wrong in it. You have to look clean and tidy, nothing more.

A watch has not been mentioned in the list. For, it has become an article of everyday wear among the educated Indians.

The second list will be found in the 4th chapter. The articles contained in it are to be bought in England. No one should go beyond the list unless he uses his clothes very carelessly and, if one goes to England to become or remain careless, might it not be said, he had better not go at all. The two lists include more than ordinarily required clothing for an ordinarily careful man for three years.

The next thing that one has to do is to buy the passage. Three things are to be considered before buying it, viz. :

1. What month to start in.
2. Whether to go all the way by sea or *via* Brindisi.
3. Whether to go by the P. & O. boats or any other Company's.

As to the first question, while one can start in any month, all things considered the middle of March is the best season. Thereby one avoids immediate experience of English winter and, before he meets with the bitter cold, he will have six beautiful months, viz., from April to September. April is the depth of spring and September the beginning of autumn. Before he has the first experience of an English winter, he will have been acclimatized and accustomed to the English ways of living. He would thus be able to bear the winter with a greater equanimity. Moreover by starting in March, one gets the mildest

weather in the Red Sea. And even the mildest weather of the Red Sea is most trying. In summer, although only 3 days have to be spent on the Red Sea, it is unbearable. The heat is suffocating. No use of *punkhas* and ice is sufficient to allay the burning sensation. It is a time of perpetual perspiration. Moreover, in March the sea all the way is the calmest in the year.

The next best time is September or October. By leaving at that time, of course, you have to brave the winter as soon as you reach England, but if you want to become a Barrister, you have this consolation that you would be able to return home three months earlier than by starting in any other month. This will be treated more fully in the chapter for would-be Barristers.

Having selected the season, one has to consider what would be the best thing to do—whether to go all the way by sea or *via* Brindisi. It takes nearly 22 days by the P & O boats to reach London and 13 days to reach Brindisi, whence London is reached in 2 days by rail. It seems that it is much better to take the sea route throughout. Thereby all the inconveniences of removing luggage and having it examined, etc., are avoided and all the comforts to be found in P & O boats are enjoyed for a longer time. Moreover, a long voyage is very good for health. Some remain on the seas for months for the sake of health only. It is, therefore, advisable that one should take the sea voyage when especially it causes a saving of expense. The second-saloon fare to London by sea is Rs. 370, while *via* Brindisi it is more than Rs. 400. Those who get sea-sick very often need not be afraid of a sea voyage on that score. For during the 13 days for Brindisi one gets used to the sea and overcomes the sickness. It is to be hoped that no one would avoid the voyage from Brindisi for the reason that thereby he would be less open to the dangers of a wreck. This is an idea unworthy of one intending to go to England. It must be remembered that he would be one out of many in his steamer. There are dangers even on the railway. In fact, nowhere is life without dangers. It is a question merely of degree.

The next question to be decided is what Company's boat to go by. There is a very wide field for selection. There the City, Hall, Clan, etc., steamers. But by far the best and most popular are the Peninsular and Oriental Company's boats, which carry Her Majesty's mails to London. The other lines are a trifle cheaper than the last mentioned and, if anyone chooses to book his passage on any of the above lines,

he can see the manager and make arrangements. For there are no fixed rates for these lines. However, whenever practicable, P & O boats should be preferred. The passage can be booked through Messrs King and Co., or Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons at Bombay who are always obliging and ready to supply every information. They do not charge any commission.

Whether to take the 1st-saloon or the 2nd-saloon ticket, very much depends upon one's purse. As to comforts, there is not much difference. Of course, a 1st-saloon passenger gets better company and better food. The food, however, given in the 2nd-saloon is good enough. And, especially, a vegetarian should not incur the expenses of a 1st-saloon passage. The main difference is in food and, since a vegetarian would not take flesh meat, for him the 1st-saloon expense would be entirely unnecessary. The second saloon by sea costs Rs. 370, while the 1st saloon costs Rs. 680. A second-saloon passage *via* Brindisi including 2nd-class railway ticket costs Rs. 445 and a first-class railway ticket costs Rs. 500, while a first saloon with 1st-class railway ticket costs Rs. 810. First-saloon passengers are allowed on board 336 lb. of personal luggage free of freight and the second-saloon passengers 168 lb.

A few remarks about food, etc., on board would not be out of place here. For those who do not object to meat, nothing specially need be mentioned here except everything one can wish for can ordinarily be had on the steamer. The only complaint that can be urged against the Company in respect of food is that the passengers are over-fed. From morning till evening or, even as late as eleven o'clock, one can get something to eat at short intervals. As early as six or seven o'clock, you get biscuits and tea or coffee. At 8.30 a.m. you get breakfast consisting of oatmeal porridge, jam, marmalade, bread, butter, salad, meat and potatoes *ad libitum*. At 1 p.m. you get a good dinner consisting of meat, potatoes and cabbage, some sweet, bread, butter, etc., and twice in a week fruits and nuts. At 4 p.m. you can have a cup of tea and biscuits. Again at 6 p.m. a nice supper consisting of salad, cheese, bread, butter, jam, marmalade, tea, cocoa, etc., is provided and, as a finishing stroke, just at the time of going to bed, you can replenish the hungry stomach with biscuits and cheese. All this to an Indian would sound very strange and look like gluttony. A vegetarian must have found from the above that plenty of things can be had in the steamer that he can take. An Indian who has not

been used to English dishes would, it is very likely, not relish the above dishes for some time. Though, after some time, he would find that all the dishes are very nice and nutritious. As a precaution, it would be better to keep a stock of some fresh fruits and sweets, e.g., *jalebi*, *halva*, etc., and some salty things, e.g., *ganthia*¹, etc. These with English dishes now and then would quite suffice. Care should be taken that English dishes are increased and the quantity of native things taken decreased. Such a gradual change would be effected imperceptibly and without affecting the constitution. The things to be found on board for a vegetarian are bread, butter, milk, fruit, nuts, jam, marmalade, rice, cheese, potatoes, cabbage, salad, cakes, tea, coffee, biscuits and porridge. This is really a large variety out of which many meals containing quite distinct articles can be made. Nothing can be more nutritious than porridge, bread and butter and a cup of cocoa or if you like tea. For dinner you can have one course of bread, butter and vegetables, another course of rice, milk and jam (a sweet preparation) and a third course of some fruit or bread and cheese. You can make a very good supper of bread, butter and cocoa and jam and salad or cheese or both. If these be not sufficient, special arrangements are made for vegetarians. The chief steward should be informed and requested to prepare some vegetable dishes and he very obligingly gets for you vegetable curry, fresh fruit and stewed fruit and brown bread. And you cannot want anything more. Some interesting facts would be found from the appendix as to how the writer of these pages managed on board.² If a pious Indian does not want to eat food cooked by Europeans, he can cook his own food in the Indian quarters, where they would give a space for cooking. Whether this is advisable or not is quite another matter. This is mentioned just to remove the prevailing prejudice to the effect that on board one has no other course open but to take food cooked by the Europeans.

The much-vexed and important question whether it is possible to remain a vegetarian on board and in England will be discussed in another chapter. It is sufficient to mention for the present purposes that it is not at all necessary to take meat or wine and it is positively injurious to take the latter.

¹ The source has this in Devnagari script; reference to a preparation made of grame flour.

² *Vide also An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIII

Having landed in London, where to go seems to present some difficulty. The editor of *The Vegetarian*, a newspaper published in London Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, has kindly consented to give the necessary directions and find them the proper lodgings where they can have everything cheap and nice. Here I may be allowed to say a word about *The Vegetarian*. It is a paper which I believe should be subscribed to by every Indian who would see Englishmen as vegetarians and who would sympathize with the movement now going on in London. It should be bought not especially as mental food, not for the sake of the information given by it, not for the high-class intellectual matter contained in it, though these are by no means of an inferior quality, but for encouraging a movement every Indian should have at heart. To return, however, to the main subject, the people of the London Vegetarian Society are always kind and hospitable towards Indians and a more genial man than the editor of *The Vegetarian* it would be difficult to find. It would, therefore, be a great gain for every Indian going to England to let the editor know of his so doing. I may perhaps suggest, though the suggestion has nothing whatever to do with the editor, that in common fairness every such person would subscribe himself as a member of the Society or subscribe to the paper.

But, if the above arrangement be not deemed feasible or advisable, the next best thing to do would be put up at the Vegetarian Hotel, Charing Cross, be he a vegetarian or meat-eater. A list¹ of houses would be found at the end of the book wherefrom to make a selection. The terms in the appendix places are very reasonable. Other hotels would be found very dear. On landing, a cab can always be had which would take you, on your giving the name, to the place named. These lodgings, it must be understood, are only temporary until a permanent one is found. So the next thing to do would be to search for a good and suitable room. This can be done in the company of some friend whom you may be knowing or to whom you have got an introduction note.

CHAPTER III

THE COST OF LIVING

This is the stumbling block. This is the question which is the

¹ This is not available in Appendix A as some pages are missing.

most inviting and yet most repulsive. To enter into that question seriously is to differ from everybody. Every man would furnish his own estimates, thinking at the same time that no other estimates could be true and, if true, possible for everyone. That again is the question which is the most important, especially, to a man of ordinary circumstances. And it is strange that, although the question is admittedly of such a vast importance, greater ignorance does not prevail with regard to any question ordinarily presenting itself to an Indian wishing to go to England than with regard to this. It is moreover true that the ordinary estimates quoted are from 10 to 20 pounds per month. Living on £10 per month was pronounced to be very economical. With such estimates to say that one can live comfortably on £4 a month or £1 a week could be a heresy: Nevertheless, it is a fact beyond doubt, as shall be proved just now, that it is possible to live on one pound a week and that many have lived on less. I may say that I have tried the experiment successfully and was never happier than under the £4 living. While I was living on £4 per month, I had to work the hardest. The reader will find from (App. A) how, from £12 per month, I gradually came down to £4 per month.

First of all, I shall consider the cost of lodgings. It is commonly supposed that a student should have two rooms, one bed-room and one sitting-room. Now this is quite useless except to show, that you are very rich and can afford to spend any amount of money. This guide is not written for those who would make a show very often false, of their riches. It is written for those who would live a regular student's life, as economical as possible. There are many professional gentlemen-bachelors living in one room only. Of course, there are many Indian students and thousands of English students living in one room only. Two rooms are more for families than for students. Then if you have one room only with the necessary furniture in a good quarter, it can be had for 7s per week and less. Of course, one room can be had for 2s per week. I give low estimates. Such rooms can be had in North London, West, Central, West Kensington, Westbourne Park, and many other respectable parts of London commonly favoured by Indian students. In such a room you would find a table, three or four chairs, an easy chair, a wash-stand with all the requisites, a hearth, a chest of drawers, probably a book-case, cupboard, a carpet, a bedstead with bed-sheets and blankets, a looking-glass, etc. Are Indian students used to better-furnished rooms? Indeed, a raw Indian not used to the two rooms would be quite enchanted with such a room

and would not wish for a better one. When I first saw my room in the Victoria Hotel, I thought I could pass a lifetime in that room. It is always best to find out a room in the neighbourhood of a place to be frequented most by you. Thereby a great deal of money required in travelling by bus or tram is saved.

Secondly, as to other expenses, e.g., washing, bathing, etc. Your washerman's bill need not amount to more than 11 pence per week, which is as follows:

		d
1	Flannel shirt	2
1	Drawers	2
1	Vest	2
2	Handkerchiefs	1
1	Sleeping suit	<u>4</u>
	Total	11 d

A saving can be effected in the above if you do not use the drawers which you need not, in summer especially. The sleeping suits may be changed fortnightly. Moreover, with a little care, a good washerman can be found who would wash the drawers and suits for 1½d each and sleeping suits for 3 d. If and when you wear the white shirts regularly for a week, instead of the flannel shirt, the washerman's bill would be heavier by 6 or 8d. But under no circumstances should it amount to more than 11d per week on an average.

As to bathing, it is only in the newly-built houses that bathrooms are attached to them. In ordinary houses no bath-rooms can be found. In such cases very many visit the public baths weekly which cost 6d or 4d. But it is possible to have a daily bath without any expense wherever you go. You can take a sponge bath with two or three tumblers of hot water always to be supplied at your request by the landlady in the morning. You can pour water into your basin, dip a sponge in it and rub hard with the sponge twice or thrice and then rub the body with a dry towel, and you have taken a very nice bath which gives a glow to the body and keeps it clean. Even the sponge may be left out and the hands only used. To these daily baths may be added a fortnightly or monthly visit to the public baths. Your landlady supplies you with two towels every week. All these arrangements must be made with the landlady before engaging a room so that no misunderstanding may arise in future. Whenever you go to engage a

room, explain to the landlady what you want to have included in the weekly rent. Boot black, sheets, towels, service, hot-water in the morning, etc., are generally included.

It is not true to say, as is commonly supposed, that owing to the severe cold one cannot take baths daily. On the other hand, it is necessary that one should bathe daily in order to keep good health. A landlady, I know, drove away her boarder simply because he would not take his daily bath. She often used to quote: "Cleanliness is next to godliness", and, no matter how cold it was, she used to see every morning that everyone in her house had a bath.

Next to bathing come travelling expenses, which should not amount to more than 6d per week. By having your room in the neighbourhood of the place to be most frequented by you, you avoid the daily expense of travelling to the place, but on Sundays you may visit friends and spend a few pence in travelling. Of course, one week you may spend a shilling if need be and not spend anything the next week. It is always best, whenever possible, to walk so that you may have exercise at the same time that you save the money. Nothing can be better. Many do this purposely in England, not so much for the sake of saving a few pence, as for the sake of exercise. Walking three or four miles is a pleasure in the cold climate of England. Indeed, whenever it is possible in the cold weather, a brisk walk should be preferred to a ride in a train or a bus. Very often the latter proves injurious. I was once literally stiff in a bus. Even the bus conductors recognize the danger. At intervals they run with the bus and get into it when they are warm.

Six pence per week on an average may be set apart for stamps, etc., though such sum is hardly necessary.

If you have your hair cut twice every month, it would cost you 8d, so that 2d per week may be put down for hair-cutting. Of course, you shave yourself.

One cake of Pear's soap would last a month. It costs 3½ d. So then 1 d per week may be allowed for soap.

One penny per week may be set aside for tooth powder. This is rather extravagant. You can have a very fine and harmless tooth powder in precipitated chalk, four ounces of which can be had for 6 d. And an ounce would last you quite a month instead of a week.

There is one big item of expenditure that should not be lost sight of. In winter, fire is required in the room during the day time if

you use the room. For those who use the library in the case of students, the expense does not amount to much. But for others, it amounts to nearly 2 shillings per week. For 2 shillings you can get 4 scuttles coal. But, as fire is not required generally from April to September, we may put down on an average one shilling per week for coals.

This ends the extra expenditure per week which may be thus summed up :

	d
Washerman's bill	11
Bathing	6
Travelling expenses	6
Stamps, etc.	6
Hair-cutting	2
Soap	1
Tooth powder	1
Coal	12
Margin	3

Total	4 s-0 d

With 7s for the room rent and 4s for extras we have 9s remaining for food. It may here be remarked that a saving can be effected even in the 11s, whenever required, so that it may be spent on food or buying books and many other useful things. Thus, for instance, out of 6d for stamps, etc., only a penny or two may be spent. One penny, I suppose, would be absolutely necessary for writing home a postcard. Fortnightly baths (in winter especially) may take the place of weekly baths when a sponge bath is taken daily. Similarly, at times, nothing may be spent in travelling. It is an expense to be counted, not necessary to be incurred. The aim ought to be not to spend more than one pound per week on an average and live comfortably.

Passing now from this comparatively incontestable part of the question of the cost of living, we reach the most important and contestable part of the question, viz., the cost of food.

There is so much to be said on this part of the subject, so much prejudice and misunderstanding to be removed that to treat the subject fully would require a separate and larger book.

How to get good, nutritious, healthy and palatable food for 9s per week is the question before us.

At the outset I may say that those only can live on that sum who “eat to live”, not “live to eat”. If you must have the luxuries, if you cannot sit at the table without company, if you must entertain friends pretty frequently to sumptuous dinners, if you must live like a gourmand, then for you ten times the sum may not be sufficient. But if you would live frugally and happily and *not* luxuriously, 9s per week would be more than sufficient.

I earnestly beseech the reader to dismiss from his mind all premeditated ideas, all prejudice, and he will, I am sure, see for himself that without entailing any loss of health, but rather keeping it up, he would find 9s sufficient for his food per week.

As nothing tells like illustrations, I would first cite illustrations in support of the contention that one pound a week is sufficient for a person of frugal habits and not born in the lap of luxury or rather not addicted to a luxurious mode of living. There are thousands of commercial gentlemen living on one pound a week in England. I had a chat with an Anglo-Indian here who said that he was living on one pound a week. There is a gentleman who is an M.A., B.E.L., Barrister-at-Law, who lived on 10s a week and has yet been living on less than one pound a week. He is the editor of a newspaper and I have seen him work at the rate of 16 hours or more per diem. He was, when I saw him last, living on bread, figs and water.

There are Irish M.P.’s living on one pound per week. And some of them are the best debaters. The late Mr. Biggor, M.P., I believe, lived on one pound a week.

And what did Charles Bradlaugh do? Says Mrs. Annie Besant of him:

He sold everything he possessed except his books. His home that he had got together by hard work, his furniture, even a diamond ring given to him by a grateful person whom he had helped. He sent his children to school. His wife, not physically able to bear the life he faced, went to live with her parents in the country and he took two small rooms in Turner Street, White Chapel, for which he paid 3s 6d a week and where he remained until he had cleared off most of his liabilities. He then moved to lodgings over a music shop in Circus Road, St. John's Wood, where he lived for the remainder of his life, his daughters joining him on the death of their mother in 1877. . . . He died poor indeed with no personal property save his library, his Indian gifts and his very modest wardrobe, but he left his name free, his honour unstained.

He began life on 10s a week. And we all know how clever intellectually and how strong in body he was. So far as food is concerned, his food did not cost Cardinal Manning more than nine shillings per week if what is written about him be true.

There are, to take a noted and living example, few harder working men in England than Archbishop Manning, a man full of cares and labours, yet I am assured by those who have had the most intimate personal relations with him that Mr. Disraeli in 'Lothair' has not in the least exaggerated his habitual abstinence and that his ordinary meal, in public or private, is a biscuit or a bit of bread and a glass of water.

His strict abstinence from wines is notorious.

Dr. Nichols from whose work the above has been taken did not, and probably does not, spend more than 6d a day on food. (3s 6d per week). He has written a book *How to Live on Six Pence a Day*, a book everybody who would live frugally ought to read. In it he relates his experiment with the most gratifying results.

There are many other books written on the subject. There is a book entitled *How to Live on One Pound a Week*. This includes everything, lodging, food, clothes, etc.

Indeed, a gentleman has even tried to limit his food expenses to one shilling a week and written a book on the subject. We however allow nine times the sum for food.

All these instances must suffice to show that, not only is it possible to live on £1 a week, but many have done it.

Has any Indian done it, some may ask? Yes, a gentleman, a judge from the Punjab, while I was in England came there, for a Barrister's education on furlough. He was over 40 years of age and was with his son in England. He said his pay was Rs. 150. He gave, he said, Rs. 50 to his wife at home and spent Rs. 50 for himself and his boy in London. That amounted to £3¹/₃ per month, i.e., less than £1 per week for two souls. This small sum was made to include many things besides those that we allow for one pound.

Another Indian gentleman from Gujarat was living on less than 10s per week and seemed to be quite happy. He shared a room for 4s with a friend and thus got his accommodation for 2s only. This gentleman has been receiving medical education in England. Sadhu Narayan Hemchandra has been living on one pound a week.¹ He has a

¹Vide An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. XXII.

room for 6s a week. He spends 3 or 4d for washing and 7s for food per week. He works very hard. He says in his letter that he knows now German, English and French. In one pound per week he manages to buy his clothes and books of which I brought to India a boxful. He must have bought quite as many, if not more, by this time. A gentleman who has recently gone to England writes thus to me:

From my last letter you might have thought very badly of me because I myself look upon my conduct at the time with little satisfaction. But, as you wanted to know how I was living, I had to give you my sincere views. Since that time a great change has been brought about by degrees. What I thought an impossibility at that time is now a practical possibility. Six pounds a month are a thing of the past, and you will wonder to hear that, even in London, I am able to limit my board and lodging expenses to three pounds per month.

With this array of facts before the reader, I hope he will have no difficulty in following and agreeing with me that, if one has the will, one can live on one pound a week and even less in England.

Now we come to the solution of the question how to live on 9s a week.

In the first place it may be mentioned that, to live so cheaply, all the luxuries ought to be avoided, viz., tea, coffee, tobacco and wines and, last but not least, flesh foods.

There are people to tell you that it is impossible to do without tea in England. Some say you cannot do without coffee, others say you would die without tobacco, wines or meat. All these gentlemen must be questioned as to the source of their information and the difficulty will be solved. It is all humbug and hearsay. There is difference of opinion as to flesh foods. As to the rest, every Indian who has gone to England would tell you that not one of them is necessary except for the sake of pleasure of luxury. However what do they think of tea and coffee in London? Says Dr. Nichols about tea and coffee:

Even the milder stimulants such as tea and coffee have no appreciable nutritive value. If the leaves of tea or the berries of coffee had as much nutrition as the same weight of spinach, but an infinitesimal portion can be in the decoctions we drink. In the matter of food and as the materials of bone, muscle or nerve, an ounce of bread is worth gallons of tea or coffee. The sugar and milk drunk in them are food, all the rest is almost worthless. They soothe hunger as narcotics and sedatives, Some physiologists are of opinion that they prevent waste and so make less food necessary. If this were true, it would be injurious, for waste and the removal of waste matter are necessary to the

health of the system. Tea and coffee are stimulants only and their influence upon the body is either inappreciable or hurtful. Strong decoctions of either stimulate the brain and nerves, produce over-action and, by combating fatigue for a time, allows us to over-task our powers until we bring on dyspepsia, neuralgia, softening of the brain, paralysis, apoplexy.

A distinguished Indian doctor of considerable experience, while talking about tea, said that he refused to treat patients who would not leave off tea under his treatment. However, if tea and coffee are to be taken, they would not mean so much more expense as so much less nutritive food. For they will be substituted for milk which is far better than tea or coffee. From a pecuniary point of view, a cup of tea or coffee *made at home* would cost less than a glass of milk. If tea is to be taken, it would be better to use condensed milk as it would be difficult to buy milk sufficient only for one or two cups of tea, unless only milk is used for making tea.

As to tobacco, it is positively injurious to the system and an expensive luxury which does no good and a great deal of harm. Tobacco, it must be known, is very dear in England. If it is indulged in, six pence would be ordinarily required daily. It cost an Indian gentleman £30 during his three years' stay. A good cigar costs 4 to 6d and a cigarette 1d each. One can get 5 cigarettes for a penny, but this is the dirtiest stuff possible. It contains either ashes of tobacco or cabbage leaves. So in order to be able to live well on £1 a week, it is absolutely necessary to [abstain from]¹ tobacco which “whether chewed or smoked or snuffed has no nutritive property but is an acrid poison, absorbed into the blood and resting upon the brain and nerves, first exciting and then dulling their sensibility and finally stupefying and paralysing.”

Thus hatefully does Count Tolstoy, than whom “few men have been more given to wine and cigarettes”, speak of both:

People drink and smoke not merely for want of something better to do to while away the time or to raise their spirits, not because of the pleasure they receive, but simply and solely in order to drown the warning voice of conscience.

To illustrate the proposition he says :

No one would take the liberty to flood with water a room in which people were sitting to scream and yell in it or to perform any other acts tending to disturb or injure others and yet out of a thousand smokers scarcely

¹ Source is damaged here.

one will hesitate to fill with noxious fumes a room the atmosphere of which is being breathed by women and children who do not smoke.

Indeed, this nuisance is so much felt that, in railway carriages, special compartments for smoking are reserved. In orderly houses smoking rooms are set apart for young men who are never allowed to smoking in dining-rooms. A friend was taken to task for smoking in a shelter on the staircase of the house he was living in.

Says the Court further:

For the more a man stupefies himself with these stimulants, narcotics, the more stolid, quiescent and stagnant he become intellectually and morally.

We all know what deeds are committed by men in a drunken state.

As to the wines, the above quotations are sufficient to show what a man who used to drink fearfully thinks of them. It is not necessary to quote extracts to prove that wines are injurious and that we are not required to drink wines in England. There are hundred of societies to convince you of the fact that wines are not necessary. There are many members of Parliament who do not drink at all. In fact, there in a teetotalers party in the Commons, with which are prominently associated the names W.S. Caine and Sir Wilfred Lawson. We have temperance societies in Bombay and many parts of India. There are even Anglo-Indians who are teetotalers. In spite of all this, persons there are, enlightened by then, who believe and refuse to disbelieve, even though convinced, that wines are absolutely necessary in England. A gentleman said: "After reaching England, you may not require them, but somewhere in the Mediterranean sea, I am told you die without them." He was told, I may be allowed to tell him that if the wines were so very necessary, the P. & O. Company would provide wines together with the food for the fees they charge and not make the passengers pay separately for the wines they consume. If the wines were to be taken in England, and that regularly, 9s would be used up simply in drinking and it would be impossible to make the two ends meet for the estimate given by me.

So, then, it is absolutely necessary to exclude wines and tobacco from the estimate and advisable to exclude tea and coffee, as the latter can be used at a sacrifice of far more substantial drink: milk.

Now we come to the question of flesh foods which, I think, must be abandoned if 9s are to be sufficient so as not to injure health. How would the Mahommedans and Parsis do, it may be asked in that case. For them this guide is useless. Tarry a little. I would ask: Are there not

many Mahommedans and Parsis who, on account of their poverty, get flesh foods only on rare occasions and some on none? These surely can manage without flesh foods which they get but rarely in India, not for the sake of religion or principles, but for the sake of economy. They are free to take meat whenever they can get it, e.g., in their Inn if they have gone for a Barrister's education. If it be true that one can live on vegetable foods without injuring one's health, why should not all live on a vegetable diet because it is more economical than a meat diet? That vegetarianism exists in England there are living examples to prove.

There are vegetarian societies and any quantity of vegetarian literature to testify to the existence of vegetarianism in England. There are living notable Englishmen who are vegetarians.

Lord Hannen of the H.M.'s Privy Council, better known as Sir James Hannen, the President of the late Parnell Commission, is a vegetarian.

Mr. Gotling of Bombay is a vegetarian.

John Wesley was a vegetarian. So was Howard the philanthropist and a host of others all men of light and learning. The poet Shelley was a vegetarian. It is impossible in the compass of a small book to so much as do justice to such a vast subject. I must content myself with referring the inquisitive reader to *Perfect Way in Diet* by Dr. Anna Kingsford¹ who says of herself :

I cured myself of tubercular consumption by living on vegetable food. A doctor told me I had not six months to live. What was I to do? I was to eat raw meat and drink port wine. Well, I went into the country and ate porridge and fruit and appear today on this platform.

There is another advisable book to which the reader might be referred. It is entitled *A Plea for Vegetarianism* by H. S. Salt.²

Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson, M.B., L.R.C.S., etc., himself not a vegetarian, has come to the following conclusions in his *Food for Man*.

1. Man, although possessing the capacity of existing on an animal diet in whole or in part, is by original cast adapted to a diet of grain and fruit and, on a scientific adaptation of his natural supplies, might easily be provided with all he can require from that source of subsistence.

¹ *Vide also An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XV.

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIV

2. The vegetable world is incomparable in its efficiency for supply of food for man when its resources are thoroughly understood and correctly applied.

3. The supplies of food for man are most economically and safely drawn direct from the vegetable world.

4. Diseases may be conveyed by both sources of supply, but need not be conveyed by either. Diseases may be generated by misuse of either source, of supply, but need not be, and under judicious management, would not be, generated by either.

Under a properly constituted fruit and vegetable diet, strength of mind and body may be as fully secured as under an animal or a mixed animal and vegetable system. He says also, "I admit that some of the best work has been done and is being done on a vegetarian regimen."

If so much is conceded by a thoughtful and cautious doctor not a vegetarian, the reader will easily guess how much must be claimed by vegetarians for their system. They claim that anatomically, physiologically, economically and morally vegetarianism is far superior to meat-eating.

From this it must be abundantly clear that vegetarianism is not only possible, but is really practised by hundreds of people in England.

If, then, vegetarianism be as shown above as good as flesh-eating in other respects, I hope no man, not determined upon setting his face against vegetarianism at any cost, would hesitate to adopt it if it is cheaper than flesh-eating.

While a vegetable soup costs 3 d per plate, a meat soup costs from 9 d to 1/3s and more. A mutton chop would cost at least three times as much as a vegetable chop, unless you go in for meat of the worst kind, and it must be borne in mind that there are more diseases lurking in cheap meat than in vegetables.

It would be futile for me to demonstrate an admitted fact, viz., that vegetarianism costs far less than meat-eating. If there be anyone who can contradict this, let him try to live on 9s per week and get flesh foods. I concede that, by a judicious management, it would be possible to have in that sum, if anyone thinks that he must have, not as a luxury but as a sheer medical necessity, meat once or twice a week.

Another fact is worth mentioning here. An ordinary vegetarian in England does not exclude eggs from his dietary, while an Indian vegetarian would. As a counterpart, there are vegetarians in England

who do not take even milk and butter, they being animal products.

Before describing the food that can be had for 9s per week, there are one or two points still remaining to be cleared.

Whether you would cook the food yourself or whether you would have it cooked by your landlady, from a religious point of view, if you are a strict Hindu, you would of course cook your own food. In this case, your expenses would be much cheaper.

Here let me remark, in spite of all that is said to the contrary, that given all the resources at your command, there is nothing to prevent you from leading a purely Hindu life. To say that there are no cooking arrangements to be had in London is humbug and a mere bagatelle. It would be true to say that there are very few who have the mind to do it. Again, to perform the everyday ceremonies, to dine bare-bodied, to sit in contemplation bare-bodied for hours together would be impossible for a poor man, but a rich man who is prepared to spend any amount of money can perform each and every religious ceremony that can be performed in India. If he does not want to cook his own food, he can even take a cook with him. But, then, an ordinary student would not be able to command money and time for such things. I should like to know how many students are there who find time or have the mind to perform all the ceremonies even in India. If they are not performed here, some of them may well be left out in London without shocking the pious and elderly persons, as even our scriptures make certain exemptions in favour of travellers and students. A distinguished yogi told me that he forwent most of the usual ceremonies while travelling.

For an ordinary Indian who is not overscrupulous in his religious views and who is not much of a believer in caste restrictions, it would be advisable to cook partly himself and get a part of his food ready made.

Of course, he can have all his things cooked by his landlady which, by a previous arrangement, she engages to do for 7s that are paid for the rent. But, this would be found to be inconvenient in certain cases. The landlady may not know the vegetarian cookery. She may not be honest; she may be very unclean. She may cook vegetables in utensils used for cooking meat without first cleaning them. The first two difficulties can be surmounted: she may be given a cookery book and she would cook the required food by the help of the book. By a strict watch, she may not be given an opportunity for

being dishonest, but if she is not clean, there is no help for the poor lodger if he has to be at her mercy. The last difficulty can be overcome or overlooked. So, then, on the whole, it would be better to cook one's food if the landlady is not clean. Cooking, as perhaps would be feared, is not at all a difficult or troublesome process. No smoke, no wood, no cowdung cakes and no blowing or fanning are associated with the idea of cooking as here advocated. A portable oil stove serves the purpose of the Indian chulas. On that stove one can cook almost everything that may be cooked on the Indian chulas for 5 or 6 persons. Moreover, the cooking does not take much time. Twenty minutes would be found quite sufficient. Ten minutes are required for boiling milk. During the interval, while milk is boiling, many find it convenient to read something, e.g., a newspaper. An enamelled pan, one or two plates, two spoons would be your cooking utensils. The whole would cost not more than 10s. Water-white kerosene oil is very good for cooking. It does not give any nasty smell and burns well. The utensils would be supplied by your landlady too. It is, however, advisable to buy your own pan.

Some meals may be prepared by the landlady and some taken outside, e.g., breakfast and supper may be prepared by the landlady and the midday meal taken outside.

Some meals may be cooked by yourself and others taken outside. It is not troublesome to prepare one's breakfast and supper which consist of simple things.

Under every one of these modes it is possible to live on 9s per week. And every one of the modes has been tried by me as well as many others.

The first mode is the cheapest, viz., to cook all your meals; but it would cost more time and may prove inconvenient for a student who may pass his day in his library.

However, let us see how under the first mode, 9s would give us sufficient food. As has been said above, the same food that we usually take in India is sufficient in England.

Then we may see what would be the cost of the Indian meals. For example, if you stick to the two meals per day, you have for dinner at 10 p.m. chapati, dal, vegetable, *bhat* and milk.

Such a dinner would cost as follows:

	oz	d
Wheat meal flour	8	$\frac{3}{4}$
Rice	4	$\frac{1}{2}$
Potatoes	8	$\frac{3}{4}$
Lentils	4	$\frac{1}{2}$
Butter	1	1
Salt & pepper		$\frac{1}{4}$
Oil for cooking		$\frac{1}{4}$
Milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint	<u>1</u>
		5 d
For the evening meal, <i>khichadi</i> and chapati may be had.		
Rice and lentils	16	2
Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
Milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint	1
Salt, pepper & oil	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
		<hr/>
		4 d

Thus, two good meals can be had for 9 d And if it be found desirable that a third meal should be had, 3 d can be laid out in milk and bread or tea and bread. This for a week would amount to 7 s with a balance of 2s in our favour.

However, it would be found convenient and perhaps better for health to have English vegetable dishes. You have before you a wide range of selection.

In cereals you have wheat, oatmeal, maize, etc.

In pulses you have peas, haricots, lentils, rice [*sic*], etc. In vegetables you have potatoes, cabbage, spinach, celery, artichokes, haricot beans, green peas, tomatoes, cauliflower, parsnips, onions and leeks. In fruits there are fresh fruits and dry. Among the first class can be counted apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, apricots, pears, peaches, plums, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, etc. Among the second class are found figs, dates, currants, raisins, muscatel raisins and sultanas, etc.

In nuts we have hazel, brazil nuts, almonds, chestnuts, etc.

The above presents a variety sufficient to satisfy the most delicate tastes and all of these are within the reach of the 9-s man.

Fruits are supposed in England to be absolutely necessary. At any rate, the vegetarians think so. They are a sure safeguard against medicine. They purify the blood and keep the bowels regular; since constipation is the father of many diseases, one cannot do better than take the utmost precautions to prevent that fell disease. This can be best done by a liberal use of whole wheat meal and fruits. The fine wheat flour ordinarily to be had in England is to be discarded altogether. It is very innutritious and very often injurious when it is adulterated as it very often is. Moreover, it is insipid. On the other hand wheat meal flour is very sweet to the taste. So one should always make it a point to use brown bread made of whole wheat meal flour and discard the white bread altogether. It may be said that the above observations are unauthenticated and useless coming from a person who cannot pretend to any knowledge of chemistry or medicine. Well, they are not unauthentic. Only the authorities have not been quoted. That what has been written above is the general opinion of doctors can be seen by reading the many vegetarian pamphlets published by the Vegetarian Society. It must be repeated here that the aim of this guide is not to supersede other useful books and to give all the information, its aim is to supplement, to give information not hitherto given and to direct where the proper information can be had.

We assume then that food is to be selected for three meals from the vegetable kingdom. The meals consist of breakfast at 8.30 a.m., dinner at 1 p.m., and supper at 6.30 p.m.

A good breakfast may be made of oatmeal porridge—a splendid dish especially in winter. In almost every household, they have this porridge for breakfast in winter. Thousands of Scotch people live on oatmeal. It tastes like wheat and is sweeter. The preparation is very simple. You can stir one ounce of oatmeal into a sufficient quantity of water and put it on the oil stove. If it is fine oatmeal, the porridge would be ready in 20 minutes. If it is coarse, it would take 30 minutes. It can be eaten with sugar and milk or stewed fruit. Stewed fruit is fruit cooked in water with a little sugar. The porridge may be made entirely in milk or milk and water. Made in milk it tastes better. This breakfast would cost as follows :

	oz	d
Oatmeal	1	$\frac{1}{4}$
Milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint	1
Fruit (currants or raisins)	2	$\frac{1}{2}$
Bread		$\frac{1}{2}$
Butter		$\frac{3}{4}$
		3d.

Breakfast may consist of bread (1d), butter (1d) and cheese ($\frac{1}{2}$ d). It may consist of toast and milk (3d), toast, jam and tea (3d), bread and butter and fruit (3d), maize, musc and fruit (2d) bread and apples $\frac{1}{2}$ lb (4d per 1b) (3d), bread, butter and cocoa (3d), bread, butter and marmalade ($2\frac{1}{2}$ d), *et ad lib*.

Soup and bread and fresh fruit or rice and milk and sugar would make a good dinner. Soup made of potatoes, onion and haricots costs $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. Rice, milk and sugar would cost 2d or less and bread 1d. This dinner, then, can be had for $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. And if you are very fond of butter, you can have a penny worth of butter in which case your dinner would be $5\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The following variety of dinners can be had for and under 5d:

Pea soup and bread and stewed fruit or fresh fruit, rice, milk and bread and radishes and cheese. Potato soup, bread and semolina with stewed fruit or milk.

Tapioca pudding bread with almonds and raisins, etc., etc.

Supper may consist of bread, butter and cocoa (3d), bread and butter and cheese ($2\frac{1}{2}$ d), toast and milk and radishes (3d), porridge and fruit and bread (3d), bread, butter, celery and cheese, etc.

Thus, three meals can be had for 11d or say 1s. These meals are quite sufficient and nourishing and give as much nutrition as a sumptuous meat meal with no dyspepsia or other disease which is generally the consequence of the latter. Thousands subsist well on such meals.

The three meals or two of them may be cooked by you or by your landlady. When the cooking is entrusted to the landlady, all the things must be bought by you so that you may be sure that you get the right thing at the right price. It may be remarked here that only those fruits and vegetables must be bought which are in season, otherwise they are very expensive. Moreover, they must be bought at

the proper place. If you go to Regent Street and think of buying the hot-house grapes, they would cost 3s per pound. These, of course, you cannot buy; but you can easily buy the grapes at 4d per pound when they are in season.

Sometimes, I was going to say very often, it is found convenient to take the dinner outside. Whether you be a traveller or a student, you would go out after breakfast and return in the evening. In such a case, you would not care to return home for dinner. That entails a great loss of time and trouble and you would not care to go home from your library, especially if it be some distance from your house. There are vegetarian restaurants in all the busy quarters of London for such people. They have generally two divisions. One division provides six-penny dinners of 3 courses. You buy a ticket and, on presenting the ticket, you get a selection of 3 out of about 20 courses. The popularity of these dinners is immense. From 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., very often it becomes very difficult to find a place owing to the large number of customers.

In the other division, you can have any number of courses and you pay for what you eat. A list of items called the menu is shown to you in which the prices are marked against each item and you select your dinner according to your appetite and purse. Our 9-s man can patronize either division. Two courses would be found to be quite sufficient in the first division. And three courses of the first division are more than sufficient even for a gourmand. It may be remarked that there is no difference in the quality of food in both the divisions. In fact, there are the same dishes in both. In the first division, you have the satisfaction to know that you pay more and, if you are ashamed to sit side by side with a labourer, to know that there is no such person to shame you in the first division. There is again more room in the first division called the dining-saloon and the hall is better ornamented. I give a specimen menu showing the courses generally provided in the vegetarian restaurants of which Dr. Richardson says:

I confess with perfect candour that, if I could on all occasions get for my meals the same foods as are to be obtained in the best vegetarian dining-rooms, I should not take willingly any other kind of food. In time, I doubt not that the present centres for good vegetarian diets will become schools for the nation and that every hotel in the kingdom and every private dwelling will have its cook or housewife.

Monday Oct. 22/88

SOUPS		PORRIDGES	
Green pea	3d	Oatmeal	
Scotch broth	3d	Wheaten	in sugar or syrup 3d
Florador and milk	3d	Maize musc	
Bread	1d	Anglo-Scotch	
SAVOURIES			
Lentil Cutlets		Parsley se	& sprouts 4
“		“	Turnips 4
“		“	Tomatoes 4
VEGETARIAN PIES			
Tomato & macaroni pudding			4
Yorkshire pudding se & haricot			4
Curried egg and rice			4
Sprout se & baked potatoes			4
EXTRA VEGETABLES			
Macaroni	2	Turnips	2
Rice	2	Sprouts	2
Tomatoes	2	Baked potatoes	2
Haricots	2	Mashed “	2
SWEET PUDDINGS		PASTRY	
College pudding	3		
Tapioca and custard	3	Damsonpie	3
Blanc mango & jam	3	Apple tart	3
Maize and peaches	3	Plum	3
Wheat and jelly	3		
STEWED FRUITS		SUNDRIES	
Apples	3	Wheat cake	2
Raisins	3	Coffee chocolate	2
Plums	3	Cheddar	1
Damson	3	Gorgonzola	2
Peaches	3	Celery	2

No greater variety can be required for a good selection.

The vegetarian restaurants are closed on Sundays and bank holidays. On these days dinners must be taken at home.

In dealing with this subject of food, I have simply put down the result of my own experience and that of others. It may interest the reader to know that the meals above enumerated give all the elements

necessary to sustain life. It is outside the province of this work to show what they are and in what proportion they are required. That is a separate study. The enquiring reader can test the truth of my statement from *The Perfect Way in Diet, Fruits and Farinacea*, and such other works.

This closes the remarks on the most important subject. There should be no difficulty in carrying out the above plan and, if carried out, it will be found that it is far better even from the point of view of health. For, luxury and over-eating never lead to health. Wise frugality in diet is the surest mode of preserving or attaining health. Says Dr. A. Von Düring: "Wouldst thou enjoy life, renounce life's enjoyment." There is an Italian proverb which says: "He who eats more eats less (because he shortens his days by gluttony)." Again Seneca says: "*Multos morbos multa fercula fuerunt*" — "Many dishes many diseases."

Says Professor Meyor, that first Latin professor from whose *Why I Am a Vegetarian* the above quotations are taken, with regard to students' extravagance :

Many we know who, for their own persons put up with plain fare, blush to set before guests what costs them little. They deem it penurious, shabby, churlish. This prejudice certainly affects students, at least in England, to no small extent. Even thrifty men may save three shillings a day, i.e., a guinea a week, by adopting Spartan self-control. In other words, they may win without contest a scholarship of £50 a year, tenable for life, purchasing into the bargain independence of character and health.

Sir Henry Thomson goes so far as to say that "our eating is more injurious than our drinking", and who does not know that we are more apt to over-eat than under-eat?

To carry out what has been mapped out above, nothing but a stern will is required. Given that one thing, the way is smooth. A little experience will accustom you to that mode of life. "Adopt that course of life which is best and custom will render it delightful."

I cannot do better than close this chapter with the following lines from Dr. Nichol's *How to Live on Six Pence a Day*:

The case of Louis Cornaro so often quoted is a very remarkable instance of the effects of a very temperate and simple diet in producing health, cheerfulness and longevity. At the age of 40, his constitution seemed ruined by what is called free living. He changed all his habits and lived on 12 ounces of food a day and his health became so perfect that for half a century he was never ill. When past ninety, in deference to his friends, he increased his food

to 14 ounces a day instead of 12 and this trifling addition nearly cost him his life. He became sad and dispirited, everything vexed him and he was attacked with a pain in the stomach which compelled him to return to his former diet and even to diminish it. Writing at the age of ninety-five, he describes his life as one of great serenity and enjoyment. He wrote plays, he assisted in fortifying and embellishing Venice. He enjoyed what he called his beautiful life. He writes: "I have attained my ninety-fifth year and find myself as healthy, merry and happy as if I were but twenty-five." At this age, and even on to a hundred years, his senses, memory, heart, judgment and voice were perfect. He wrote seven or eight hours a day, walked, enjoyed society and music and sang and played delightfully. His grand-niece writes of him : "He continued healthy and even vigorous until he was a hundred years old. His mind did not at all decline. He never required spectacles. He did not become deaf. His voice remained so strong and harmonious that, at the close of his life, he sang with as much power and delight as he did at twenty."

The reader will find in the appendix how I lived on £4 per month during the last year of my stay in England.

In the above estimates no mention is made of expenses on account of newspapers which are found to be an absolute necessity, a daily food as it were. There are now in almost all the parts of London free public libraries, where are to be found all the leading daily and weekly papers. These institutions are visited by hundreds of people every day. So it is always preferable to visit the public libraries to buying a paper. However, if necessary, there is a sufficient margin left for spending 6d per week on newspapers. The London newspapers are very cheap. An evening newspaper can be had for one half penny.

CHAPTER IV

A CHAPTER FOR WOULD-BE BARRISTERS

Whether you will be a Barrister or receive some other education in England is a question that can be best determined by you or those who know you best. Each man's case must be peculiar. I can offer only general remarks.

For the present Barristers are at a discount. They are not so well thought of as they were before. This I suppose is an undisputed fact. It is, however, true that they have got a status from which it is not easy to oust them and it is true also that they have got the widest field for action. And it may be said also that, with a large amount of patience and close application, no Barrister need despair of earning a decent

livelihood from his own profession or by accepting some appointment.

But why are the Barristers at a disadvantage? The fault is partly their own and partly the people's. Again, there are natural causes.

The fault is their own because they do not come up to the expectations of the people. Of the people because they expect too much from them. The natural causes consist in the increase of their number. When there was only one newspaper, it was prized by all; now when there are many only few are held in estimation. A first matriculate was a sort of demi-god. Now when you stumble upon matriculates, they are sold at a nominal price. Again, when there was only one Barrister, he was incomparable, now there are many among whom to set up a comparison.

So, then, there is no need to be fear-stricken by a little dislodging of the position; only we must not lower our standard of work and a time may come when we may be yet too few. That time is distant though. And, during that time, we ought to be cautious so that it may not be extended any further.

In being over-hasty we may spoil matters; in not working as we ought to, we may do the same. We must, therefore, guard against both.

There is nowadays a tendency to do it easily, i.e., to work little and expect much. This ought to be avoided if we would not be thrown further downward. If our parents send us to England, or if we hold a scholarship, we have a sacred trust to perform. We have to account to our parents or patrons for the work we have done and for the money which [we] have spent. We ought to do unto them as we would be done by. If we were to send some one to England at our expense to become a Barrister, I suppose we would expect him to utilize every moment of his stay there and give us an account of how he passed his time. Exactly the same would be expected of us. Consciousness of this and work according to it are all that is required of us. If we do that, we shall have done our duty and will have no occasion to be sorry for having gone to England. When we go there to be Barristers, we ought to do there everything that would make of us good Barristers and not indulge in luxuries or pleasures.

Let those who send their boys to England make sure that they would discharge their trust faithfully and they will have no occasion to regret having sent them. The best way to ensure this is to give your boy just enough money to make of him a Barrister and then tell him

plainly that he should expect no more. Make a certain provision for him on his return from England for a year or two and then let him know that he shall be left to himself to earn his living. This may seem a little hard, but once done it would be a source of the highest happiness, or else it will be a source of woe and misery both to the parents and the boy.

Are there already too many Barristers? Yes and no. Yes, if we take any one province into account, but, if India as a whole were taken into account, there are far too few. That Barristers have a field in any of Her Majesty's dominions seems to have either been forgotten or not cared for, because every Barrister goes to his native land to practise. Now, while in one's fatherland there is some chance of success owing to acquaintances and knowledge of the native country, there is much disadvantage if the profession is overcrowded. Why not then invade the regions not yet invaded?

Then, again, a field, I am told, is sure to be opened as well for Barristers as for all educated persons in the protected States. They are yet in a very backward state. They are expected to make reforms. When that time comes, the aid of the educated of the land is likely to be called in. Again, it is a notorious fact that so far education has been too much neglected by the agencies and back-door influence has prevailed. This too will be set right some day.

I must not, however, be misunderstood to advocate the Indians flocking to England to become Barristers. Whether it is good to be a Barrister or not is not the province of this guide to discuss. There are many other guides to throw light on that matter. Indeed, I must confess freely my incompetence to aid the discussion of that question. I am simply to guide those who have made up their minds to be Barristers as to what they would be required to spend, what examinations they have to pass, how they would gain admission, etc. It was not without many misgivings and hesitation that I was induced to insert even the above paragraphs.

Supposing, then, that you have made up your mind to become a Barrister, the first thing for you to do is to get a certificate of your having passed the matriculation examination. If you have not passed the matriculation examination, you will be required to pass an entrance examination before admission. They examine in History and Latin, but Indian students are by an application exempted from the Latin examination. The examination is rather easy.

This done you get the form of admission for one guinea; you pay the fees which amount to nearly £141.

Those who have joined some university are exempted from the payment of £100 in the beginning, though they have to pay the sum in the end. In Lincoln's Inn, those who have passed public examination only in the British Dominions are exempted from that payment. I am not sure whether this applies to Indian Universities. Such information can be had directly by writing to the treasurers of the respective Inns of which there are four, viz., Inner Temple, Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn. Perhaps, from an economic point of view, Lincoln's Inn is the best Inn, which boasts also the best library. Middle Temple is the most patronized by the Indians. From the education point of view, all the Inns are equal because they have a common examination. Middle Temple pays the scholarships in cash, the Inner Temple makes you join chambers and pays for them.

One has to keep twelve terms before being called to the bar. There are four terms every year, the 1st in January, the 2nd in April, the 3rd in June and 4th in November. The shortest term lasts 20 days and the longest about 31 days.

Keeping terms means taking dinners in the respective Inns to which you belong; you have not necessarily to take your dinner but you must go to the dining-hall punctually at the appointed time and sit there for one hour. You are said to have kept one term when you have attended six dinners in the term. Those who belong to a university have to attend only three dinners. These dinners, whether partaken of or not, have to be paid for Inner Temple charges 3½s per dinner, Middle Temple 2s. Thus you make a saving of 1½s every dinner by joining the Middle Temple. And such dinners have to be taken 12 times in all. Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn, too, charge most probably 2s.

If you pay for the dinners and if you have no religious objection, why should you not take your dinner, one may pertinently ask? The answer is you ought to dine, but, then, a further question arises as to what a vegetarian should do. Well, you can have ordinarily bread and vegetables and cheese, but you can have a better vegetarian dinner specially prepared for you by applying to the chief steward of the Inn or, if need be, the sub-treasurer of your Inn. A Parsi friend who had turned a vegetarian and I used to get our vegetarian dinners specially prepared.

And it is better that every Indian should insist [on this] so that, in future, every Inn may make it a rule to prepare vegetarian dinners regularly.

To be fit for being called to the Bar at the end of 12 terms, two examinations must be passed, one in Roman Law and the other in the English Laws.

A student can appear in the Roman Law examination after—but not before—keeping four terms. Thus, after reaching England, the student has one year at least to prepare for the examination which is much more than what is required for the purposes of passing the examination; hence, the brilliant results of the examination. For Roman Law, Saunder's *Justinian* is the text-book. Many students, however, read Hunter's *Introduction to Roman Law*.

The other examination called the Bar Final a student can appear in it after—but not before—keeping nine terms, i.e., at the end of two years after admission. This time, too, is more than enough for the examination. The examination takes place in the Law of Property, Common Law including Criminal Law and Equity, and lasts for four days. It used to last only three days, but now there are two Equity papers instead of one.

For the Law of Property the prescribed books are:

William's *Real Property*

“ *Personal Property*

Goodeve's *Real Property*

“ *Personal Property*

Edward's *Compendium of the Law of Property in Land*.

Students, however, generally find it sufficient to read William's and Goodeve's *Real Property* and Goodeve's *Personal Property*. Very few read William's on personal property. They read besides, various guides to the examination. In Law the prescribed Common book is Broom's *Common Law*. Indermauer's *Common Law* is, however, read in addition to or instead of Broom by the students. For Equity the prescribed book is Snell's *Equity*.

The matter of the examination changes almost every year. Thus, while generally a competent knowledge of the English laws is required, special subjects are prescribed every year. For instance, for Equity they sometimes prescribe certain portions only (e.g., trusts, mortgages, etc.) from White and Tudor's *Leading Cases in Equity*.

Those, however, who are well grounded in the general principles of law do not find it difficult to pass.

The latest prospectus¹ of the Council of Legal Education is appended hereto.

A notion seems to prevail in many quarters that students are called to the bar without any examinations or that the examinations are a farce. Both these statements are entirely without foundation and inventions of fertile brains.

No doubt the examinations are easy or, rather, found to be easy. The results are generally good. There are two or three reasons for the examinations being found easy.

In the first place, they take place four times every year. So, then, if a student fails, the failure does not shock him so much as it does in India. In England he can re-appear in three months.

Secondly, the time at the student's disposal for preparation is ample. While both the examinations are a year's work at the rate of 6 hours per day, to ensure success there are clear two years at the student's disposal. So, then, the preparation can be made with a light heart and without having to work hard. Whether it is good that more than sufficient time should be given for preparation is another question altogether, but let there be only three months for preparing for the examinations and we shall have cutting [*sic*] results and a different verdict.

Thirdly, there are many facilities for study in the shape of tutors, etc. It is only in rare cases that tutors should be resorted to. It is a useless waste of money. And a tutored student never goes beyond what is required and forgets what he has learnt soon after the examination. Such is the experience of many. Nothing like self-preparation.

It is worthy of notice that the tendency nowadays is happily to raise the standard of the examinations. They have begun to prescribe more useful matter now. The latest prospectus is a substantial improvement on the prospectus of two years ago. For merely a knowledge of Evidence was not [then] necessary; now, however, it is.

Students generally study for themselves through lectures common to the four Inns. Special lectures, too, are organized by each

¹ This is not available.

Inn. These lectures are generally attended by those students only who want to compete for scholarship examinations. But attending the lectures has now been made indirectly compulsory as the examinations are held on the subject of lectures.

Call to the bar is a mere formal ceremony.

After you are called, a certificate is given to you and you have to apply for a special certificate if you want to practise in India or the Colonies.

Before leaving England, students, now Barristers, generally get their names enrolled in Her Majesty's High Court of Justice on a payment of 5 shillings.

It may be important here to discuss whether it is desirable that the student should try for scholarship examinations. It has been said above that, for the purposes of passing the examinations, the time at the student's disposal is more than enough. The question, therefore, is what shall he do with the rest of his time? It may be answered—he will devote it to private study. Now this is all very well to say. There are persons who do study as well for the sake of study as for an examination. But these are exceptions to prove the rule that, unless a person has a task imposed on him, he will not generally do it only because it is good. Private study very often gives place to other pursuits, not so study for an examination. It, therefore, seems better to impose some examination task upon oneself than to rely upon one's own will-power to take care of private study.

And, in that case, it is difficult to say whether it is better to compete for some scholarship or to join some University. In going in for some scholarships there is one drawback. The competition is unequal. There may be M.A.'s, B.A.'s and other University men against mere matriculates who would stand a very poor chance of winning scholarships. For those who have graduated in India nothing can be better than trying for the scholarship examinations. Indeed, there are students who do both—join a University and work for a scholarship. Matriculates and others, if they try for a scholarship, while they may not be successful in getting one, will have the satisfaction of knowing that they have added to the stock of their knowledge and done some useful work. It may, however, be thought more advisable for them to graduate in one of the Universities. Then comes the question of selection of a University. There are Cambridge and Oxford Universities on one side and London University on the

other. So far as substantial knowledge is concerned, London University is by far the best. And if a University is to be joined for enjoyment and pleasures, of course London University would lag far behind. Oxford and Cambridge would win the palm. There is no, what is called, University life in London of which there is plenty in Oxford and Cambridge. London University is an examining body merely and does not require candidates to have kept any terms. There is no doubt an opportunity of mixing with Professors in Oxford and Cambridge which is not to be found in London.

It is said that education in Oxford and Cambridge is very costly. To graduate and become a Barrister would cost at least Rs. 15,000. Though I have no personal experience of either, I can say that education in either should not cost anything more than Barrister's education except the actual expenses of fees and books. Of course, to live with such economy one will have to remain a non-collegiate student. No such charge, however, can be brought against the London University. And, on that account, it would be better to graduate from the London University. The great advantage of the London University is that it holds its examinations even in India. London University would be found better by vegetarians as there are more facilities for them in London than anywhere else.

Now, this University is so exacting that even an M.A. or B.A. of any other University has to matriculate in the London University before he can appear for any of its degree examinations. But, after passing the matriculation examination, one can appear in its Law examinations without having to pass the B.A. examination, as is the case in the Bombay University. The London LL.B. course nearly extends to three years after matriculation. So, in three years one can pass the matriculation and the intermediate LL.B. examination together with being called to the bar. Such a course of training would keep the student's hands pretty full and he will find no time to devote to idle amusements and this would not mean an extra outlay over and above the cost of a Barrister's education of more than £20 to 25.

The cost of Barrister's education:

In order to be called to the bar, it is necessary to leave for England so as to reach there in time for keeping the November term. If you start in October or September, you can return in the July of your third year's stay in England. By starting in any other month you can return in that month of your third year's stay in England, which is

previous to the month you started in for England. Except for the saving of two months by starting in October, it has been shown in a pervious chapter that March is the best month to start in for England.

For three years' stay in England we have, in the previous chapter, calculated the expenses of board and lodging in London, which amount to £4 per month. So £150 may be allowed for board and lodging in England during the three years' stay in England. A list of clothes, too has been given in previous chapter. The clothes contained [in the list] in that chapter would be quite sufficient at least for the first year, though by a judicious use no more may be required for two years. However, a further list of clothes is appended below. These may be bought as required. But more should in no case be required. According to one's fancy changes may be made. The sum to be expended in clothing should not be exceeded.

	£	s	d
3 pairs of trousers	1	16	0
1 jacket suit (vest & jacket)	2	0	0
3 white shirts	0	6	0
2 woollen shirts	0	16	0
2 woollen undervests or merino	0	11	0
4 cotton undervests	0	8	0
2 woollen drawers	0	13	0
6 pairs of woollen socks	0	12	0
	£	7	2
		<hr/>	
12 pairs of merino or cotton socks	0	9	0
12 cotton handkerchiefs	0	2	0
2 felt hats	0	7	0
6 neckties	0	3	0
1 slippers	0	2	0
4 pairs of boots and shoes	1	12	0
1 pair of gloves	0	3	0
	£	10	0
		£	s
			d
		10	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	1
		0	11
		0	3
		0	5

1	gown	0	10	0
4	cotton or merino drawers	0	11	0
1	oil stove	0	5	6
1	enamelled pan	0	1	6
2	spoons	0	2	0
	plates	0	1	0
		£	13	11 6

It must be understood that there is room for economy in the above list as well as the list given in the previous chapter, economy both as regards quantity and prices. When the lists were shown to a friend who is rather exacting than otherwise, he pronounced it to be extravagant. The evening dress mentioned at the bottom in the list is meant for the call night. It is compulsory to wear the dress on the call night, so they say. No one seems to have tried to appear in the ordinary dress. The experiment is worth trying. However, if one has to wear the evening dress, he can have it on hire for one evening for 5s at many shops in the Strand or Fleet Street. It may be borrowed from friends. It may not be superfluous to mention that expenses of mending shoes or clothes at times are included in the £1 per week. Shoes are the article requiring repair rather often. They can be mended for 1/6 per pair or less. In the list will be found mentioned the oil stove and pan, etc. They are meant for cooking. They will prove very useful at times if not always. When travelling, cheap food may not be procurable, the landlady being not a good cook or from various other causes. In such cases it will be best to cook one's food.

There remain now to be considered the expenses on account of fees and dues to be given to the Inns.

They are as follows in the Inner Temple:

	£	s	d
Admission form	1	1	0
Stamp dues and fees	35	6	5
Lecture fee	5	5	0
Commons & dues & dinners for 12 terms	15	13	0
Call certificate for the Colonies	0	12	0
Call fees		<u>94</u>	<u>10</u>
	£	152	7 11
Enrolment in the High Court		<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
	£	152	12 11

These were the fees paid by me. Now, if the Middle Temple is joined and if there are no fees besides those charged in the Inner Temple, as there are probably not, 72 times $1\frac{1}{2}s$, i.e., £5-8-0 can be saved as the Middle Temple dinner costs only 2s [as compared] to the $3\frac{1}{2}s$ of the Inner Temple. I know that in no case do the fees exceed £ 152-7-11. Hence £ 153 may be put down as the highest expense for fees.

Then we come to books. Before enumerating the books, it may be remarked that the libraries of the several Inns are meant for the use of their members and it will be their own fault if they do not make a liberal use of them. Thus, all of the big works on law which have to be read for the scholarship examination will be found in the library. All the works just to be mentioned will also be found in the library. However, they being books of daily reference may be bought. There are law lending libraries in London which entitle their members to issue books to be kept for a month, three months, etc., according to the subscription they pay. So then he who wants to practise further economy may make use of these libraries, too.

And, in passing, I may mention that such economy sometimes becomes very necessary. You may think of travelling and yet may not afford to spend more than a given sum which did not include travelling expenses. In that case you must save somewhere. An instance will be found of a saving thus effected in Appendix A. A few odd shillings or pence saved now and then and collected swell up the savings to a decent sum which may be spent in various other useful pursuits. A mention has nowhere been made of theatres which are a national institution in England and, as some suppose, a seat of education and amusement combined. They moreover portray the modern habits and customs of England. No one would return to India without visiting the theatres. Then, where is provision for that in the estimates provided in this guide, it may be asked. They are provided for generally in the one pound a week and also in the estimates provided for clothing where a margin has been left for cutting down. Theatres do not cost much. Gallery seats are one shilling each and pit 2 or $3\frac{1}{2}d$ each. The last seats are used by respectable middle-class persons and frequently patronized by the Indians. Once a month on an average is more than sufficient and the reader will have remarked that an ample margin has been left for saving even 4 times 2s. The arrangements given in the guide will have to be disturbed only when

some big expense has to be incurred. Thus, if a travel has to be undertaken and if the average limit of £4 is not to be overstepped, a saving may be effected, e.g., by removing to a cheaper room. To return, however, to the libraries. It has been alluded to in the previous chapter that it will be convenient to pass most of your time in the library of your Inn. For even a luxuriously fitted room would not be so comfortable and suitable as the library hall which is always well-warmed and ventilated.

The books to be required are as follows. All the booksellers give a 25 per cent discount on books of general literature and 20% on law books. The prices in the second column are prices minus discount.

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Saunders' <i>Justinian</i>	0	18	0	0	15	0
Hunter's <i>Introduction to Roman Law</i>	0	7	6	0	6	0
William's <i>Real Property</i>	1	1	0	0	17	0
Goodeve's <i>Real Property</i>	1	1	0	0	17	0
Goodeve's <i>Personal Property</i>	1	1	0	0	17	0
Broom's <i>Common Law</i>	1	5	0	1	0	0
Indermauer's <i>Common Law</i>	1	0	0	0	16	0
Snell's <i>Equity</i>	1	0	0	1	0	0
Extra					3	12
					<u>0</u>	
Total	£	10	0	0		

There is now only one item of expenditure to be considered, viz., the fare on returning, which is £35.

Thus the total expenses of a Barrister's education are:

	£
Dress in Bombay	18
Fare from Bombay to London	24
Dress in London	14
Fees, etc.	153
Board and lodging during three years in London	150
Books	10
Fare from London to Bombay	35
Emergencies, etc.	<u>16</u>
	£ 420

This brings down the expenses on a Barrister's education to

£420 which, as the reader must have seen is capable of being reduced to £400 quite easily. There are three items, viz., dress in Bombay, that in London and books, which evidently admit of a reduction of £4 and the emergency sum ought really to find no place in the estimate as that has been taken into account in the £150 for board and lodging.

Attention ought to be drawn to the first two items which have been estimated in rupees and then reduced to pounds sterling at the present rate of exchange which is nearly Rs. 16 for one pound. In rupees, as will have been noticed, it amounts to nearly Rs. 653; represented in pounds, it would fluctuate with the exchange.

The passage Rs. 370, too, is subject to variation. Already owing to the sinking down of the rupee, the passage has been raised some 20 p.c. If the rate goes higher, as it is expected to, [it] is likely that the fare would be brought down to its original value.

Now it has to be discussed how many pounds you will take with you. Of course, Rs. 653 or thereabouts will be spent in Bombay. On reaching London you will have to pay your fees amounting to nearly £141. Out of this £41 are taken as fee and £100 as deposit as security for further dues to your Inn. It has been said above that this deposit is excused in certain cases. If you are sure that you come under the excuse rules, you may take £100 less. But, in all other cases, take with you or be sure that you will get on your landing in England at least 175 pounds sterling. If you take money with you, of course, you would not take it in cash, but take a bill of exchange to some bank. Messrs Hutchinson & Co., are good bankers and cater for Indian customers. Mr. Wm. Digby is concerned with the business. They undertake to supply gratis the requisite information to Indians about lodging, etc. I do not suppose they would be able, however, to show them cheap lodgings. They have got a list of families who take Indians, as boarders, but these families charge nearly 30s per week for board and lodging. Some charge even 25s. But they may be told that you want to live cheaply and perhaps they would secure you good lodgings. On this point, however, the editor of *The Vegetarian* would be the best guide. He has promised to find suitable lodging for Indians asking for his advice. That is by the way. As bankers, Messrs Hutchinson & Co. would be quite good. Their address in London is :¹

Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons, Hornby Road, Bombay, also are

¹ The source carries no address.

good and well-known bankers. Many Indians have their accounts with them. All these firms get their customer's letters free of charge. It is better, however, to get your letters at your Inn or at your lodging when you have fixed upon one.

It would be advisable to keep two or three pounds with you in cash in order to pay for your railway-ticket on landing in London and to pay a few shillings to the steward of your cabin or to pay for boat hires if you land at various stations touched by your boat.

Although the estimates supplied are not the lowest possible it is supposed that no one would venture to go to England who could not afford £420, i.e., at the present rate of exchange Rs. 6,720. I have, however, a word to say further. If you have got Rs. 10,000, do not spend all in London, thinking that you would be able to lead a happier life there.

I shall just diverge from my main subject. I am going immediately to point out that, from every point of view, the life you would have to lead on £420 would be happier than the life led by many a student in India. And mind, Rs. 10,000 would not supply you with luxuries. They would simply make you pine for more to vie with your luxurious brothers and thus, in fact, make you more miserable. Did you say one room in England would not be sufficient for you? I ask you, then, what have you been having here? Do you not sleep, even though you may be the son of a rich man, two or three in one room, a room without a carpet, without any furniture, surrounded by dirty ditches having hardly a window or two? Have you not in Bombay used the same room for kitchen, bed-room and sitting room? Why, I have seen very rich students spending money like water living in a dirty house not even swept daily. Did you say you could not live on the food provided in the book? Well, if so, you can only be pitied. I am sure that you are having no better food here. Do you always taste, much less eat¹, fruit in India? Do you not subsist on two meals only, in India, with milk only once in the day? Did you say you could not cook your food? Well, if so, it is not absolutely necessary that you should cook in London except for your religion. But, does not many a student, if not you, cook his food in India and in what? In the miserable fire-places, blowing the fire, now and then spoiling the clothes and having the eyes quite red with smoke after the dinner is

¹ The source has 'cut', obviously a slip.

cooked. In the place of all this, what do you have in England on one pound per week? A nice comfortable room all to yourself, a room with a nice carpet specklessly clean, a nice bedstead with a feather bed, two pillows, looking-glass, washing-stand, chairs, etc. (see the description *ante*). The maid of the house always makes the bedding for you, washes your basin and dances attendance on you whenever you want her and does all the household work for you. You have not to cry out aloud for her, but just touch the bell and she knocks at your door and enters only when you say, yes. That surely is not a miserable life and, if it be miserable, the Rs. 10,000 would not make it less so.

To return, then, to our subject from the digression: if you have Rs. 10,000, keep them. Only spend out of them Rs. 6,000 or the equivalent of £420. And the rest you will be able to command on your return to India. What a relief! Just ask a junior how he felt to be told that he would be able to command some Rs. 2,000 to go on with in India and you will gauge the measure of relief. But, if you spend the whole Rs. 10,000, why to find yourself without money on your return would cause far greater pain than the additional happiness, which you may expect but are sure not to get by spending more than £420 worth of rupees. It is absolutely necessary that you should have some money, [Rs.] 1,000, 2,000 or any such sum at your disposal. Then you would not regret having gone to England. On that you would be able to build your position, but, if you have not got the foundation money, any edifice you may hope to build without that foundation would crumble down to pieces and you would find yourself in the open air without an edifice. For there is no work awaiting you on your return. There may be empty honours and congratulations just to sting you. Even if there be work, perhaps, without a knowledge of practice you will not be able to accept it. Therefore, if you would take the advice of one who has undergone the bitter experience and would profit by it, if you have Rs. 10,000, only spend £420 worth and keep the rest to be spent in India and you would be happy and contented. No one would point his finger at you; your position you would not feel unstable. And, in two years or so, according to abilities and opportunities, you would be able to establish yourself as a respectable Barrister. Nay, more, the economical habits cultivated in England would stand you in good stead in India. You would then be able to “pull on” better and not feel the want of the luxurious way of living. Indeed, if you do not expect to command about Rs. 2,000 on your return, it were advisable not to go to England

at all for a Barrister's education unless, of course, you expect to get some suitable appointment. For, the Rs. 2,000 or some such sum are as indispensable for India as the £420 for England.

Too much stress cannot be laid, if you want to practise in India on your return, on the importance of studying the Indian Codes in England. These books will be available in your library. Whitley Stoke's *Anglo-Indian Codes* are very popular with Indian students in England.

There are books published for the information and guidance of those wishing to go to England for study. They invariably give much higher estimates than those given here. It will occupy a very large space to answer them here. I can only say that they may be read side by side with this and compared. There is, however, an association doing good work for Indians that deserves notice. It is the national Indian Association. So long as it can count upon the active services of that good and philanthropic lady, Miss E. A. Manning, 35 Bloomfield Road, Maiden Hill, the Association cannot fail to do good. She may, indeed, be consulted by every Indian whom she is always willing to help and give kind advice to. But the information given by the Association is, I am afraid, not trustworthy. The estimates furnished by it are too extravagant. I have talked to some of those who were put under the care of the Association, and they told me that the estimates given were extravagant. They are as follows in the *India Magazine and Review*, the organ of the Association:

With regard to expenses it is estimated that the amount required will be:

For an ordinary school education, from £150 to 200 a year according to the age of the pupil and the standing of the school.

For a student at the University	300 a year
For an Indian Civil Service student	300 " "
For a student of engineering	300 " "
For a law student at the Inns of Court	250 " "
For a medical student	250 " "
For an agricultural student	250 " "

These sums include tuition, board and residence, dress, vacation expenses and cost of superintendence. Fees for entrance at one of the Inns of Court amounting to nearly £150 are not included in the above estimate. The sum of £30 is also required to meet the expenses of outfit on arrival.

So, according to the above, the expenses amount to £250 per year, i.e., £750 in three years. Add to that £150 for fees, not included in the above, as also £30 for dress, and I suppose about £18 in

Bombay and also the fares to and from London, about £60, and we get £1,008. These estimates include tuition and superintendence not calculated in the estimates given in the guide. And he must be in a sorry plight, indeed, who would require tuition for passing the Bar Final examination and superintendence so that he may not go astray. Will it not be better to keep your boy with you if he required a strict watch than trust him to the superintendence of a committee not one of whom you know personally? It must be by this time clear to those who know or must know that no amount of superintendence, especially of the above type, would set a student right if he is bent upon going astray. He must be trusted to take care of himself or not sent at all. Only, he must not be given a full command of the purse so that he may play fast and loose with it. It is the purse more than anything else that is the most powerful instrument in spoiling a student in England. Why, it would be quite safe to undertake to spoil two students on £250 a year. It is not, however, for a moment argued that a single penny more than £50 a year spent would be credited to extravagance. Far from it. Even £500 a year can be spent usefully in England. The aim of this guide is not, however, to show how £500 can be spent usefully per year in England, but to show that one can live happily on £50 per year and do all the things generally done by Indian students in England spending much more.

In Appendix A, it will be found how from £15 per month I came down to £4 per month and, in so doing, how I was not obliged to sacrifice any of the comforts I used to enjoy before.

APPENDIX A

It was on the 4th September 1888 that I left for England to receive a Barrister's education per s.s. *The Clyde*. I had two Indian companions with me whom I did not know before.¹ The mere fact that we were three Indians was a sufficient introduction to us.

How I managed on the steamer:² As I was not sure that I would be able to partake of the vegetable foods provided on the steamer, I was well provided with Indian sweets, *ganthias*, and plenty of Indian fruits. This was my first experience of a voyage on a steamer. I was, therefore, very modest and shy and would not go to the table to

¹ *Vide* "London Dairy", 12-11-1888.

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIII.

partake even of tea.

I, therefore, began with the sweets. I lived upon them exclusively for about two or three days and could have done so for a long time, but one of the Indian friends mentioned above was very fond of his *roti* and rice and dal; so he arranged with one of the native sailors to cook us some Indian dishes. The flour and other articles were provided free of charge by the steamer authorities. So we lived on these Indian dishes. The sailors were very dirty and I generally preferred the English loaf to the *roti*. In spite of the persuasions of the brother passengers, I could not persuade myself to sit at the table with them to eat. I was so modest. During the return voyage, however, I naturally managed better. I was not ashamed to sit at the same table with other passengers. And it is very desirable that, if one has no religious objections, to do so even on going to England. There is sufficient vegetable food provided on the steamer. I, however, requested the chief steward to supply some vegetable foods and I had usually for breakfast oatmeal porridge, milk and stewed fruit and bread, butter and jam and marmalade and cocoa. For dinner I had rice, vegetable curry, milk and jam pastry, stewed fruit, bread and butter. For supper bread, butter, jam, cocoa, some lettuce with pepper and salt and cheese. I had only three meals per day. Two days in the week they provide fresh fruit and nuts on the steamer.

How I began on 12 pounds per month:

After staying with a friend for a month who treated me very kindly and taught me how to behave and how to use the fork and the spoon.¹ I moved to a family where I had to pay 30s per week for board and lodging. Thus, my board and lodging cost me only £6. I was told, however, that living on £12 per month would be considered very economical. I therefore managed somehow or other to spend £12

per month. I did not discard tea from the very beginning. Did I believe at first in taking only three meals per day? A suggestion was thrown out by somebody that I would be considered to be stingy if I took all meals every day in the family and tea very often. Following up this suggestion, I used to lunch outside at least once a week and take tea only thrice a week. Thus, I paid for all this in the family; I spent about 10s in the lunching and taking tea outside. I used to spend unnecessarily a great deal also in travelling. It need hardly be

¹ *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIV.

said here that taking your meals or tea outside purposely to show that you are not stingy or that you are rolling in wealth is anything but gentlemanly and entirely unnecessary. Of course, it is another thing altogether when you have to dine or take tea outside because you have to go far for some business and it would be a waste of time to return home for tea. Again, while living in the family, you are supposed to be punctual. They have fixed times for all the meals and they do not or are not expected to wait for you. So, if you are outside and if you think that you would not reach in time for your meal, that would be a case of dining outside. These occasions are rare and do not at all prove costly, though one who would live on £4 per month cannot afford to do these things. He cannot even get into a good family for £1 per week.

The food they used to provide for dinner was third-rate; (no fault of the family. I was the first vegetarian boarder with them) : vegetable soups and a vegetable, mostly potatoes, and some fresh fruit. For breakfast they gave me bread and butter and jam and tea and I had porridge occasionally. For lunch they gave me bread and butter and cheese invariably. For tea, bread and butter and tea and cake sometimes. All this did not cost them more than 7s per week. Thus, it will be seen that I paid 30s not because the cost of giving board and lodging was so much or even half so much, but because of the privilege of being allowed to enjoy their company.

It is generally thought desirable to live in families in order to learn the English manners and customs. This may be good for a few months, but to pass three years in a family is not only unnecessary but often tiresome. And it would be impossible to lead a regular student's life in the family. This is the experience of many Indians. If you live in a family, you must—it is only fair—sacrifice some time for them if only. . .¹. . . was to cook the morning and the evening meals and to have the midday meal outside. I was to spend at the most 8s for one room per week, 6d breakfast, supper and one shilling at the most, for dinner. I was told that there was a vegetarian restaurant in Brighton.²

On reaching Brighton, it was after some difficulty that I could get a good room. The landladies could not be persuaded to believe that the room would not be spoiled by my cooking in room. One of

¹ Pages 5, 6, 7 & 8 are missing.

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIX.

them said: "No, I cannot give the room even for 20s. The whole carpet would be spoiled by stain of grease and no one else after you leave would take my room." I however assured her that she so spoke because her ideas were associated with mutton and that by allowing me to cook her room would not be spoiled as I simply wanted to prepare porridge or boil the milk and I told her also that, if her carpet was spoiled, I would pay for the spoiling. She after some hesitation accepted my proposal and I took her room for 8s per week. After leaving my luggage in the room, I went out in search of the vegetarian restaurant. I could not find it. And I thought my experiment would fail. This gloomy outlook was rendered gloomier still when I found that no restaurant-keeper would arrange to provide me a dinner consisting of vegetable soup, and bread and butter for one shilling. All thought they could not undergo the bother for one man. I thought the task was hopeless and that I would be obliged to pay 2s or 3s merely for a dinner. I was quite tired by this time and very hungry, but I did not give up. I knew that I was to take rest and was not to read much during my stay in Brighton. So I said to myself that if I should cook two meals, why not cook three? As soon as the idea flashed in my mind, I caught hold of it, went to a grocer and bought the necessary things and went to my place.

On reaching the house, I told the landlady that, although the arrangement was to allow me to cook only two meals, I would have to cook three. She was angry and would have driven me out of the house, had I not offered to raise the rent from 8 to 10s. I then set about to work. The first evening I prepared porridge and stewed fruit and I liked it very much. The next morning I had the same.

For dinner I had haricot soup which proved to be very nourishing and nice. I thus arranged my meals for the [four] weeks. For breakfast I had bread and milk and stewed fruit and bread and butter (3d), for dinner I had soup (1½), strawberries (2d) and bread (1d). For supper I had porridge (1½), bread and butter and fruit (2). Thus I spent only 11d or 1 shilling per day at the most for food in Brighton. With the 10s rent, 3 shillings for washing, the whole expenses for board and lodging for four weeks amounted to £3-10-0. And it cost me £4-8-5 for fares to and from Brighton. Thus I was able for four pounds to go to live for four weeks in and return from Brighton.

I found out during the last week of my stay in Brighton that

there was a vegetarian home where I could have got board and lodging for 14s per week. The house is situated near the Preston Park. The weekly rent was 5s, breakfast 4d, dinner 9d, and supper 4d. Had I found the house a little earlier, I could have lived in Brighton yet more cheaply and more comfortably; but I would not have learnt how to cook with facility. There is also another vegetarian house in Brighton where they charge 18s per week for board and lodging.

It may be said that the cooking did not take much time. The breakfast took only 10 minutes to be ready. For there was only milk to be made hot. The supper took nearly 20 minutes and the dinner 1 hour. Thus encouraged by success on reaching London, the first thing for me to do was to go on in search of a suitable bed-sitting room. I selected a room in Tavistock Street for 8s a week. Here I cooked my breakfast and supper and dined outside. The landlady supplied me with plates, spoons and knife, etc. The breakfast almost always consisted of porridge, stewed fruit and bread and butter (3d). I dined for 6d at one of the many vegetarian restaurants and for supper I had bread and milk and some stewed fruit or radishes or fresh fruit (3d); so then the expenses for board and lodging in England were, during the last 9 months of my stay, only 15s and even 14s latterly when, in the same house, I took up a 7-s room. During this time I enjoyed the best of health and had to work very hard, if not the hardest, as there were only 5 months left for the final examination.

I used to walk about 8 miles every day and in all I had three walks daily, one in the evening at 5.30 p.m. for an hour and the other always for 30 or 45 minutes before going to bed. I never suffered from ill health except once when I suffered from bronchitis owing to over-work and neglect of exercise. I got rid of it without having to take any medicine. The good health I enjoyed is attributable only to vegetable diet and exercise in the open air. Even the coldest weather or the densest fog did not prevent me from having my usual walks. And under the advice of Dr. Allinson, the champion of open air, I used to keep my bedroom windows open about 4 inches in all weathers. This is not generally done by people in winter, but it seems to be very desirable. At any rate it agreed with me very well.

From the typescript. Courtesy : Pyarelal Nayyar

32. FRAGMENT OF A PETITION

[1894]¹

An Indian member of the British House of Commons, should he come here, would not be fit for becoming a voter. We thank your Honour for receiving this deputation, and the patience and courtesy shown us, and implore you to use your Honour's powerful influence to see full justice is done to Indians.

It is justice we want, and that only.

From a photostat: S.N. 881

33. DIARY, 1894²

JUNE 22, FRIDAY

Wrote to Jayshanker and Brother³. Read [*Kavya*] *Dohan*.

Translated the judgment, etc.

JUNE 23, SATURDAY

Telegram from Tayob⁴ saying he would leave Monday.

JUNE 24, SUNDAY

Went out for a picnic with Abdoolla⁵. There [was] some rowdyism there. Received a long letter from Brother discussing *Gita*. Paul came in the evening. Discussed the condition of the [Indians] with him. He said he would talk to Burn about partnership.

JUNE 25, MONDAY

Drafted a petition⁶ regarding the Franchise Law Amendment

¹ 1894 a Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which deprived British Indians of any voting rights, had been introduced in the Natal Assembly (*vide* Vol. I). The petition of which this fragment formed part was presumably submitted in that year to someone in authority, who cannot be identified.

² The text, in Gandhiji's hand, is damaged in many places. Wherever possible words have been supplied in square brackets. In this diary Gandhiji has frequently used abbreviations, such as, 'fr' for 'from', 'w' for 'with', 'wd' for 'would', 'rd' for 'received', and so on. These have been spelt out.

³ Lakshmidas Gandhi

⁴ Mahomed Tayob

⁵ Abdoolla Hajee Adam, President of the Natal Indian Congress

⁶ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Assembly", 28-6-1894.

Bill. Read the *Gita*.

JUNE 26, TUESDAY

Received a letter from Tayob. Telegraphed to him "Your letter. Have. . . God fully. Start today. We shall talk over matter re. . . settlement document passed between Friggens & Dada. . . . Showed petition to Laughton¹.

JUNE 27, WEDNESDAY

Telegraphed to the Speaker asking whether the [petition was] received although the Bill [had] passed the committee [stage. He] replied it was too late as the [Bill] was to be read at third time. [Requested] the Legislative Assembly to [postpone] the third reading. Sent also telegrams to Escombe², Tatham & Hitchins³ in Abdoolla's name. Sent copies [of] the petition to the editors of *Mercury*⁴ & *Advertiser*⁵.

JUNE 28, THURSDAY

Abdoolla, Rustomji⁶, two coolies and myself went to Maritzburg. Saw there Labistour who congratulated me on the petition but could not help in any way although the [prayer] was very just. Saw Escombe & Hitchins who also admitted the justice but could not help. Attended the 3rd reading which was postponed. There were many Indians in the gallery. A man named Neal saw me. Saw Tatham who said he could not do [anyth]ing & that he was . . . Indians come voting.

JUNE 29, FRIDAY

Left for Durban. Escombe & Hitchins were in the same [compartment.] Escombe said the debate in the second reading [was] the real reason for passing the Bill. The object was to prevent Indians from coming any more. Saw Robinson⁷ before leaving. [He admitted] the justice but said he did not make any definite promise. Saw. . . &

¹ F. A. Laughton

² Sir Harry Escombe; Attorney-General; Premier of Natal in 1897. He had pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court.

³ Charles T. Hitchins

⁴ *The Natal Mercury*

⁵ *The Natal Advertiser*

⁶ Parsi Rustomji

⁷ Sir John Robinson, Premier and Colonial Secretary, Natal (1893-7)

Archibald. They too fully admitted the justice but could do [nothing], the measure being a Government measure.

JUNE 30, SATURDAY

Paul came to see me being sent for. Told him to go to [England if] possible and in the meantime to work for the Indians & induce them [to give up the] habit of drinking. He seemed to like the proposal being printed in the papers & favourably [commented] upon. Saw Campbell¹. He too admitted the justice of the [prayer. Saw] Escombe. He admitted his former promises but said he had. . . The utmost he would do would be to see that the firms that had [property] should have votes. Telegraphed to T. & received a reply.

JULY 1, SUNDAY

Wrote a long letter to Dr. Stroud; also to Barn De Matalha, [Jennings] & to Tayob. About 100 Indians met. Spoke to them for 45 [minutes]. Exhorted them to talk less & work more, to have [unanimity] & to subscribe. The speech seemed to have made a favourable impression. Paul came and said he was going to work seriously.

JULY 2, MONDAY

Bill was read a 3rd time. . . . Drafted . . . and sent a letter to [Tatham that] the Indians protested against his attitude towards the Indians. Saw Maydon Who . . . said he was quite willing that a commission should be moved for and that Indians should not be indiscriminately disqualified and also that some of his. . . Indian electors were six times better than his white electors. Letter from Brother.

JULY 3, TUESDAY

Drafted a petition to the Legislative Council.² Telegraphed to Governor [asking him to] appoint time to see. He was in Durban & therefore received the deputation here in Town Hall.³ Drafted a letter [to] the members of both the houses.⁴ It was printed. Sent the petition

¹ Henry Campbell, advocate and chief agent for the Transvaal British Indian merchants

² *Vide* "petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894

³ *Vide* "Deputation to Natal Governor", 3-7-1894

⁴ *Vide* "A Circular Letter to Legislators", 1-7-1894. It is, however, dated July 1.

to Campbell. Received a letter from Bird¹. Wrote to [him.]

JULY 4, WEDNESDAY

Received a letter from Bird also [regarding] deputation that waited upon Premier.² Received a letter from Tayob. Wrote to Bird, [also] to Tayob. Telegraphed to Campbell who [replied that the] petition was presented [but ruled] out of order. Telegraphed again . . . ered post all the lette[rs to the] members. Translated for Abdoolla.

JULY 5, THURSDAY

Received a letter from Campbell as to how petition was ruled out of order. Also a letter from Tatham. Drafted another long petition to Council.³ Sent it with a letter to Campbell. Drafted a letter in reply to Tatham, and sent it.

JULY 6, FRIDAY

Received a letter from Bird saying petition to Home Government⁴ may be printed and their original signatures need not be applied to the other two copies. [Wrote to Miabhai] a long letter and also to Brother. Received a letter from Ramsay & the book

JULY 7, SATURDAY

Wrote to The Mercury about the constitution of the Mysore Assembly.⁵ Sent £ 10 to Dadabhai⁶.

JULY 8, SUNDAY

A letter from Jayshanker and one from Ruffe. The educated youths (Indian) about. . . assembled. I spoke to them for _ hours on political activity, drunkenness and self-respect. They seemed to have been favourably impressed.

JULY 9, MONDAY

Began to draft the petition to the Home Government. Paul saw

¹ C. Bird, Principal Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, Pietermaritzburg

² *Vide* "Deputation to Natal Premier", 29-6-1894

³ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

⁴ *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894

⁵ *Vide* "The Natal Mercury", 7-7-1894

⁶ Dadabhai Naoroji

it. Received *The Vegetarian* containing Mrs. Besant's¹ speech on vegetarianism. Wrote to Tayob in reply to his. . .

JULY 10, TUESDAY

Finished and sent the petition to the Press. Sent Mrs. Besant's speech to the editor, *Mercury* with a request to publish it. Sent a petition to the Governor² requesting him not to send his dispatch before the Indian petition was received.

JULY 11, WEDNESDAY

My letter appears in today's *Mercury*.

JULY 12, THURSDAY

Worked at the petition.

JULY 13, FRIDAY

Wrote to Dadabhai enclosing a copy of the petition to Home Government.

JULY 14, SATURDAY

Wrote to Jayshanker. Ramsay's son saw me on Thursday and said he would send 2,000 signatures from Verulam. An article signed Ramnath appeared in *The Advertiser* against the Indians.

JULY 15, SUNDAY

[Paul] sent about 11 Indians to make copies. He works very well and is very attached to me.

JULY 16, MONDAY

[Contrary] to my expectations Joosub³ brought 1,500 signatures from Verulam. Letter from Brother and Oldfield⁴.

Sent the petition to the P.O. but [it] was not accepted being above [weight]. Requested A. to let me go or give a definite reply. He said he would see that all the expenses were paid and also the furniture, expenses, etc. Paul was very anxious that I should stop.

JULY 17, TUESDAY

Sent the petition through the railway agency. Went with A. to see rooms. A spl. . . room was found for 2-15-0 and a house in Beach

¹ Annie Besant

² *Vide* "Petition to Natal Governor", 10-7-1894

³ Joosub Abdul Karim

⁴ Dr. Joshua Oldfield, editor of *The Vegetarian*

Grove for £ 8. A said it was decided to make me a written request to stop here and that he would make me a present of the furniture, fees for admission and books.

JULY 18, WEDNESDAY

Have not been doing anything in particular for the past few days.

JULY 19, THURSDAY

Looked for house A. says I should take his room in Grey Street for £ 4 per month.

JULY 20, FRIDAY

Wrote to Ramsay enclosing Mrs. Besant's lecture and letters for Baker & Dr. Stroud & also to Mrs. Hutchinson.

JULY 21, SATURDAY

Dr. B. refused to let the house in West St. Gave the account to Abdoolla yesterday. Made translation for Arthur. Went to Umgeni with A. Saw Escombe who said I should take out the licence as advocate. He said also that the Franchise petition having been signed by 8,000 Indians would serve the purpose of the Government. He said the argument about the unfitness of Indians was all twaddle. The only argument was that of policy. He admitted that the Bill was unjust in so [far] as it did not provide for the children of those who were already on the [list] and also for those who had property and whose representatives may come hereafter.

JULY 22, SUNDAY

Had been to see Paul. Talked again about England. Advised him to get rid of all useless expenditure. Had been for a walk with A. Received yesterday a letter for Mrs. Lewis¹.

JULY 23, MONDAY

Abdoolla received a letter from Baker who says he should be given 5 p.c. of the purchase price instead of 2_ p.c. I drafted a reply to this. Read *Nala Damayanti*.

JULY 24, TUESDAY

Read *Okha Haran*. Had a long walk with Dada Sheth².

¹ Mrs. A. M. Lewis

² Dada Abdulla of Dada Abdulla & Co., for whose law-suit Gandhiji had initially gone to South Africa

JULY 25, WEDNESDAY

Translated the Franchise petitions to Council and Home Government. Wrote a letter to Baker for Abdoolla. Paul came and asked if I would join Coakes and pay a premium. I said I would join but not pay a premium. I told him also that I was preparing to depart and told him that he should not show overanxiety to Coakes.

JULY 26, THURSDAY

Told A. that unless everything was settled by next [week] I would understand that I must go. Paul saw me and said Coakes would give a share and not require a premium. Wrote letters to Dadabhai, Sir William Wedderburn, Pincott¹, Caine², *Echo*, [The] *Star*, *Chronicle*, [The] *Times of India*, *Bombay Gazette*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Gujarati Kaisari Hind*, Digby, Chhaganlal³ and *India* enclosing petitions. Wrote to Portuguese consul for A. Wrote two letters for Moosa Haji Adam. A. said the house in Beach Grove will be let for £ 6_. Wrote to the Registrar of the Supreme Court inquiring about time for licence.

JULY 27, FRIDAY

Read Samal Bhatt's poems. Paul came and said Coakes has appointed 10 to 1 to see me tomorrow. Paul wrote to me on behalf of the magistrate asking me to translate a document. I sent him the translation.

JULY 28, SATURDAY

Saw Coakes. He seemed to be anxious to enter into partnership. He said he would give 25p. c. for the first six months and 30% for the last six. He seemed to be quite sincere. A postcard from Brother asking me to return soon. Drafted a letter to Baker for A. and also to Sir Donald.

JULY 29, SUNDAY

Had a long walk to Umgeni. Read *Kavya Dohan*. Did not like to read *Ras*, etc., connected with Krishna. Received a letter from Registrar, Supreme Court, enclosing Supreme Court rules for admission of advocates and attorneys.

¹ F. Pincott

² William Sproston Caine

³ Chhaganlal Gandhi

JULY 30, MONDAY

Saw Coakes. He was agreeable to paying a 1/3 rd share.

JULY 31, TUESDAY

Received the draft agreement from Coakes. The House in Beach Grove accepted at 6/10.

AUGUST 1, WEDNESDAY

Sent the draft agreement with alterations and additions.

Discussed with him the alterations. He said he was willing to give me credit for the cases entrusted to me but conducted by him but that it was not usual to put that in a deed of partnership. Wrote to Tayob.

AUGUST 2, THURSDAY

Saw Coakes, gave him a cheque for £ 30 for fees for advocate's licence and interpreter's.

AUGUST 3, FRIDAY

Wrote to Oldfield, Annie Besant, President, L.V.S.¹; also to Kegan Paul, Brother, Mehta, Chhaganlal & Mrs. Lewis. Drafted a letter to Lord Reay for Abdoolla, etc., regarding petition.

AUGUST 4, SATURDAY

Signed the agreement of partnership. Signed the petition. Received a letter from P. Davis saying they would charge 10-10-0 for the Natal laws. Consequently sent them £ 10-10-0 cheque from A. by registered post.

AUGUST 5, SUNDAY

Received a letter from Baker enclosing 5 introduction letters. Wrote to Baker and to Purshottam Desai. Drafted for A. a letter to Baker. Began Urdu. Finished the alphabet.

AUGUST 6, MONDAY

Could not do much.

AUGUST 7, TUESDAY

Removed to the house in Beach Grove. The letter of request was presented this evening. Saw Laughton. Talked to him about Theosophy. He said he would give me all the help he could.

¹London Vegetarian Society

AUGUST 8, WEDNESDAY

Many came with the notice of application that Hillier sent out.

AUGUST 9, THURSDAY

Wrote to Dr. Shroud yesterday asking him to send the books. Saw Askew, Voysey Dalton and John Cowey. All were nice, particularly Askew. Coakes has won the application case.

AUGUST 10, FRIDAY

Saw Mrs. Baker in the evening. She was cold. A waiter came to see me not by the front door. Wrote a letter for Narayanswami to the Post Master General. He gave 10/- today for making enquiries for him regarding a £ 5 money order. Heard yesterday from A. that Ruffe is going to oppose my application for interpretership in Hindustani. Drafted a letter from Rustomji to Marshall Campbell. Wrote to Brother, Vora and Juta in Capetown. Enclosed 2 £ 5 Bank of England notes to Vora for law books. Wrote to Livingston a note enclosing anti-vivisection pamphlet by Mehta.

AUGUST 11, SATURDAY

Rustomji & P. Dowjee¹ gave each £ 12. Ruffe dined with me. Attended the Blue Ribbon Meeting. It was a failure. There were recitations not . . . meeting where Jesus would preside. Ruffe talked about the Hindustani. Wrote to Byrne and Whitaker.

AUGUST 12, SUNDAY

Had a long sleep. Read law. The meeting that was to be held has been postponed.

AUGUST 13, MONDAY

Wrote to Trotter & Chire regarding vegetarianism. Voysey called with a Salvation Army captain. Had a short chat with him. Have invited him to dinner for Friday. Had tea with Askew. His wife seems to be well up in Christian teaching. Both were kind.

AUGUST 14, TUESDAY

Voysey saw me with a Salvation Army captain. Wrote to Brunton Thomas & Brown about vegetarianism. Had tea with Askew. Both he and his wife were very kind. Dissuaded a Bengalee man from following up another.

¹ P. Dowjee Mahomed

AUGUST 15, WEDNESDAY

Met D'hotman. He said he would give all the help he could. Ruffe came and asked for £ 5. I said that was left to Mr. Coakes & that I was not myself in a position to render any such aid. Received a reply from Trotter.

AUGUST 16, THURSDAY

A letter from Jayshankar from Zanzibar and one from Dr. Stroud. Wrote to Jayshanker. Settled with Yasinkhan. He paid 10/-. The man Ibrahim paid 7/6. Several [licensed] eating-house men came. I told them they will have to pay £ 50. Wrote a stiff letter to Dawd for not coming. Settled with Khajamiyan.

AUGUST 17, FRIDAY

Signed the deed of lease. Received a letter from Baker & from P. Davis & also from Jayshanker. Wrote to Jayshanker Pretoria, to Jayshanker Zanzibar, to Vora asking him to subscribe to the *Weekly Times*, to Trotter about vegetarianism, to Brother about Harakhchand. Sent tracts to Trotter and a copy of today's *Mercury* to Dadabhai. The Salvation Army captain dined with me. He had a long chat with me. He however could not persuade me that Christianity was the only true religion. I lent him *The New Gospel of Interpretation*. He gave me book called *All the World*.

AUGUST 18, SATURDAY

Received a letter [from] Miss Brunton regarding vegetarianism. Wrote to Mrs. Mary Alling Aber subscribing to a copy of *Spirit* and making a few remarks on 'Souls'. Saw J. A. Polkinghorne. It was a trouble for him to see me. He could not bear my company and wished every moment that I was gone. The situation was extremely embarrassing. I could not possibly leave the moment I met him. It was decided at Abdoolla's that a meeting should be held on Monday and Wednesday.

AUGUST 19, SUNDAY

Was unwell. Advised Abdoolla as to evidence in Ujamshi's case. Translated Abdoolla's affidavit statement and evidence.

AUGUST 20, MONDAY

Letter from Jayshanker. Wrote to him and to Miss Brunton as also to Mr. Spiprian. Sent a copy of *The Vegetarian* to Miss Brunton. Labistour wanted to see me with regard to my petition. Saw him and he

said I should produce a certificate as to the character of my family. He also suggested that Baker should telegraph as to my fitness. I telegraphed to Baker. Got a certificate from Abdoolla, Haji Dada & Moosa Hajee Adam. Wrote to Labistour sending him certificate and wishing it to be understood that the certificate should not be treated as a precedent for other similar cases.

AUGUST 21, TUESDAY

A big meeting yesterday where about 100 attended. They accepted my proposals. Wrote to Ruffe and Baker enclosing a cutting from *The Vegetarian*.

AUGUST 22, WEDNESDAY

Coakes dined with me. Talked about the Congress¹. He sympathized but said he would have to consider whether he would identify himself with the movement. There was a big meeting. The hall was well decorated. About 100 men attended. There was much enthusiasm. The meeting was closed at 11.45 p.m.

AUGUST 23, THURSDAY

People came in and paid subscriptions. Askew sent me an invitation to pass Sunday with him.

AUGUST 24, FRIDAY

Wrote some letters for Abdoolla. There was a question in the House of Commons with regard to the Franchise. A letter from Ruffe.

AUGUST 25, SATURDAY

Saw Askew yesterday. Paul dined with me last evening. Talked to him very seriously about life and its uses. Bought a suit at Harvey & Greenacre's. Wrote to Dr. Stroud on vegetarianism.

AUGUST 26, SUNDAY

Dada Sheth had breakfast with me. Passed the whole day with Askew. I was introduced to his father-in-law Mr. Watson who is a very kind gentleman. Attended the Wesleyan Church with him. Mrs. Askew is an extremely kind lady. Had a long chat on vegetarianism. In the evening Askew preached in one of the Wesleyan chapels in West St. Received a letter from Ramsay.

¹The Natal Indian Congress, which was established on August 22, 1894, with Abdoolla Haji Adam as President and Gandhiji as Hon. Secretary

AUGUST 27, MONDAY

Drew up a deed of partnership for Pragji Bhimbhai. Read the rules of the Supreme Court. Also Dadasahib's essays. Coakes has invited me to dine with him tomorrow.

AUGUST 28, TUESDAY

Askew saw me. Had invited him to dine with me on Thursday. Wrote to Escombe asking him what day would suit him for taking up my application. Wrote to Hoosen Ibrahim.

AUGUST 29, WEDNESDAY

Drafted deed of partnership for K. S. Pillay. Finished the minutes of the last meeting. Dined last evening with Coakes. Was introduced to some of his friends.

AUGUST 30, THURSDAY

Received a letter from Hoosen Ibrahim enclosing a cheque for £ 10 for Dada Abdoolla & Co. A letter to Coakes from Pitcher saying he could not see Escombe and that the Natal Law Society was going to object. Wrote to Hoosen Ibrahim asking him to send £10 more and fees. Wrote to Ruffe. D'hotman saw me. There was a meeting of the Congress. Askew dined with me.

AUGUST 31, FRIDAY

Telegram from Escombe saying my application he will move on Monday. Telegraphed to manager Imperial Hotel to keep one room for me.

SEPTEMBER 1, SATURDAY

Left for and reached Maritzburg. M. H. Adam came with me. Later on came Peeran & Doroosamy and in the evening came Rustomjee & Dowd. Telegram from Dada & Coakes in reply to mine.

SEPTEMBER 2, SUNDAY

There was a large meeting. About 41 signed.

SEPTEMBER 3, MONDAY

Was admitted¹. Had to put off the hat². The application for admission as translator withdrawn. Received about 7 telegrams of congratulation.

¹ As advocate to practice in Natal courts

² To conform to the Court practice; *vide* Vol. I "Chronology", 1894

SEPTEMBER 4, TUESDAY

Letters from Dadabhai returning £ 10, Tayob, Jayshanker and Whitaker, a vegetarian. Wrote to Whitaker sending foods and *The Vegetarian*. A telegram from Baker.

SEPTEMBER 5, WEDNESDAY

Telegraphed to Baker.

SEPTEMBER 6, THURSDAY

Abdoolla came. A sympathetic notice of my admission appears in *The Witness* and *Mercury*.

SEPTEMBER 7, FRIDAY

There was a meeting yesterday. A European attended the meeting. There was some opposition to Paul being elected as President from Steven. It was afterwards withdrawn. Gopee Maharaj's case came up today. Coakes had charge of it. A letter of congratulation from Steven.

SEPTEMBER 8, SATURDAY

Called on Benningfield. He was not in the office. It rained heavily. It was settled that A. should telegraph from P. if I was required.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY

The committee meeting of the Congress was held. Dr. Prince came. Letter from Jayshanker.

SEPTEMBER 10, MONDAY

A letter from Mehta. Accepted Deloosea's case For £ 8-5-0 after telling her that she would lose whether she had an attorney or not. Colondo [*sic*] Veloo Pillay paid £ 12.

SEPTEMBER 11, TUESDAY

Coakes took Deloosea's case and won. She paid £ 2 more. Gopee Maharaj case was adjourned to Friday. Received a letter from Edward Baxter of Maritzburg asking if I would employ him as clerk for £ 200. Wrote declining the offer. Ward wrote for a loan of £ 2. Declined.

SEPTEMBER 12, WEDNESDAY

Saw Benningfield. Offered £ 11 for the law books. Received a

letter from Desai inviting me. Wrote declining. Letters from Amod Bhayat, Suleiman & Dawd Mahomed. Wrote to them acknowledging subscriptions sent. Drew up a deed. Received a note from Arthur begging for money. Gabriel came to ask for money too. Read yesterday Digby's *India for the Indians and for England*.

SEPTEMBER 13, THURSDAY

Drew out a power of attorney for Moosaji Amod.

SEPTEMBER 14, FRIDAY

Conducted Dada Abdoolla's case. Had a meeting of the educational association. Gave an address on plain living.

SEPTEMBER 15, SATURDAY

Coakes said the Manager of the A. B. Corporation would give 1_ p.c. on a fixed deposit for [a] year at least. That he would charge no ledger fees and would make no charge for opening account. Received a letter from Mahomed Essackji with a book for translation. Wrote to [him] saying he should send £ 1-1-0 for charges. Naran's services have been retained by me. Jeeva at £ 3 per month.

SEPTEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Saw Askews at their house. Mrs. A did not like me to chat on vegetarianism or Buddhism [for] fear that her children may become contaminated. She questioned my sincerity. said I should not go to their house if I was insincere and not seeking the truth. I said it was not within my power to make her believe that I was sincere and that I had [no] wish to trust myself on her as a companion. I told her also that I did not go to [her] place as a spy to convert her children. Dined with Rustomji in the evening. Mehta [told] the whole story of his wonderful vision. Wrote to Abdulla.

SEPTEMBER 17, MONDAY

Received a letter from Brother, one from Mehta, one from Dadabhai and one from Chhaganlal.

Wrote to Brother and Mehta. Wrote to Abdulla.

SEPTEMBER 18, TUESDAY

Had a very boisterous meeting of the Congress Committee, Ward came in. . . . to speak, was not allowed and so went away threatening to write in the papers.

SEPTEMBER 19, WEDNESDAY

Gopee Maharaj case came up today. Got judgment with costs. Sent Baker a clip[ping] from *The Advertiser* containing an account of McNeill's services. Wrote to Abdul Rahman at

From the original: S.N. 32320

34. AN EXPERIMENT IN VITAL FOOD

Before describing the experiment, if it may be called one, I would mention that I gave the vital food a trial in Bombay for a week; that I left it off only because at the time I had to entertain many friends, and because there were some other social considerations; that the vital food agreed with me very well than; and that, had I been able to continue it, very likely it would have suited me.

I give the notes as I took them while I was conducting the experiment.

August 22nd, 1893. Began the vital food experiment. I have been having a cold for the last two days, with a slight cold in the ears too. Had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, one of peas, one of rice, two of sultanas, about twenty small nuts, two oranges, and a cup of cocoa for breakfast. The pulses and cereals were soaked overnight. I finished the meal in 45 minutes. Was very bright in the morning, depression came on in the evening, with a slight headache. For dinner had the usual things —bread, vegetables, etc.

August 23rd. Feeling hungry, had some peas last evening. Owing to that I did not sleep well, and woke up with a bad taste in the mouth in the morning. Had the same breakfast and dinner as yesterday. Though the day was very dull and it rained a little, I had no headache or cold. Had tea with Baker¹. This did not agree at all. Felt pains in the stomach.

August 24th. In the morning woke up uneasy, with a heavy stomach. Had the same breakfast, except that the one spoonful of peas was reduced to half. The usual dinner. Did not feel well. Had feeling of indigestion the whole day.

August 25th. Felt a heaviness in the stomach when I got up.

¹ A. W. Baker, attorney and preacher, who discussed Christianity with Gandhiji and introduced him to Christian friends in Pretoria

During the day, too, did not feel well. Had no appetite for dinner. Still I had it. There were undercooked peas for dinner yesterday. That may have to do with the heaviness. Got headache in the latter part of the day. Took some quinine after dinner. The same breakfast as yesterday.

August 26th. Rose up with a heavy stomach. For breakfast I had half a tablespoonful of peas, half of rice, half of wheat, two and a half of sultanas, ten walnuts, and one orange. The mouth did not taste well throughout the day. Did not feel well either. Had the usual dinner. At 7 p.m. had an orange and a cup of cocoa. I feel hungry (8 p.m.), and yet no desire to eat. The vital food does not seem to agree well.

August 27th. In the morning got up very hungry, but did not feel well. For breakfast had one-and-a-half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, ten walnuts and an orange (mark, no peas and rice). Towards the latter part of the day felt better. The cause of yesterday's heaviness was perhaps peas and rice. At 1 p.m. had one teaspoonful of unsoaked wheat, one tablespoonful of raisins, and fourteen nuts (thus, the usual dinner was replaced by vital food). At Miss Harris's had tea (bread, butter, jam and cocoa). I enjoyed the tea very much and felt as if I was having bread and butter after a long fast. After tea felt very hungry and weak. Had, therefore, a cup of cocoa and an orange on returning home.

August 28th. In the morning the mouth did not taste well. Had one and a half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty nuts, one orange and a cup of cocoa; except that I felt weak and hungry I felt all right. The mouth, too, was all right.

August 29th. Woke up well in the morning. For breakfast had one-and-a-half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of sultanas, one orange and twenty nuts. For dinner had three tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of currants and twenty nuts and two oranges. In the evening had rice, vermicelli and potatoes at Tyab's. Felt weak towards evening.

August 30th. For breakfast had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty walnuts, and one orange. For dinner had the same things with an addition of one more orange. Felt very weak. Could not take the usual walks without fatigue.

August 31st. When I got up in the morning the mouth was very sweet. Felt very weak. Had the same quantity of food both for breakfast and dinner. Had a cup of cocoa and an orange in the evening. Felt extremely weak throughout the day. I can take the walks

with much difficulty. The teeth, too, are getting weaker, the mouth too sweet.

September 1st. Got up in the morning quite tired. Had the same breakfast as yesterday, the same dinner. Feel very weak; teeth are aching. The experiment must be left off. Had tea with Baker as it was his birthday. Felt better after the tea.

September 2nd. Woke up fresh in the morning (the effect of last evening's tea). Had the old food (porridge, bread, butter, jam and cocoa). Felt ever so much better.

Thus ended the vital food experiment.

Under more favourable circumstances it might not have failed. A boarding-house, where one cannot control everything, where it is not possible to make frequent changes in the diet, is hardly a place where food experiments can be conducted successfully. Again, it will have been noticed that the only fresh fruit that I could get was oranges. No other fruits were to be had in the Transvaal then.

It is a matter of great regret that, although the Transvaal soil is very fruitful, the fruit cultivation is very much neglected. Again, I could not get any milk, which is a very dear commodity here. People generally use condensed milk in South Africa. It must, therefore, be admitted that the experiment is entirely useless to prove the value of vital food. It were sheer audacity to venture any opinion on the vital food after an eleven days' trial under adverse circumstances. To expect the stomach, used for twenty years and upwards to cooked food, to assimilate, at a stroke, uncooked food, is too much, and yet I think the experiment has its value. It should serve as a guide to others, who would embark upon such experiments, attracted to them by some of their charms, but have not the ability, or the means, or the circumstances, or the patience, or the knowledge to carry them to a successful issue. I confess I had none of the above qualifications. Having no patience to watch the results slowly, I violently changed my diet. From the very start, the breakfast consisted of the vital food, while four or five days had hardly passed when the dinner, too, consisted of vital food. My acquaintance with the vital food theory was very superficial indeed. A little pamphlet by Mr. Hills, and one or two articles that recently appeared from his pen in *The Vegetarian* were all I knew about it. Anyone, therefore, not possessing the necessary qualifications, is, I believe, doomed to failure, and will hurt both himself and the cause he is trying to investigate into and

advance.

And after all, is it worth while for an ordinary vegetarian to devote his attention to such pursuits—a vegetarian who enjoys good health and is satisfied with his diet? Would it not be better to leave it to the adepts who devote their lives to such researches? These remarks apply especially to those vegetarians who base their creed on the grand basis of humanitarianism—who are vegetarians because they consider it wrong, nay, even sinful, to kill animals for their food. That the ordinary vegetarianism is possible, is conducive to health, he who runs may see. What more, then, do we want? Vital food may have its grand possibilities in store; but it will surely not make our perishable bodies immortal. That any considerable majority of human beings would ever do away with cooking does not seem feasible. The vital food will not, cannot, as such, minister to the wants of the soul. And if the highest aim, indeed, the only aim of this life, be to know the soul, then, it is humbly submitted, anything that takes away from our opportunities of knowing the soul, and therefore, also playing with the vital food and other such experiments, is playing away, to that extent, the only desirable aim in life.

If we are to eat that we may live to the glory of Him, of whom we are, then, is it not sufficient that we eat nothing that, to Nature, is repulsive, that requires the unnecessary spilling of blood? No more, however, of this while I am yet on the threshold of my studies in that direction. I simply throw out these thoughts, which were passing through the mind while I was conducting the experiment, so that some dear brother or sister may find, perchance, an echo of their own in this.

The reasons which led me to try the vital food were its extreme simplicity. That I could dispense with cooking, that I could carry about my own food wherever I went, that I should not have to put up with any uncleanness of the landlady or those who supplied me with food, that, in travelling in such countries as South Africa, the vital food would be an ideal food, were charms too irresistible for me. But what a sacrifice of time and trouble to achieve what is after all a selfish end, which falls short of the highest! Life seems too short for these things.

The Vegetarian, 24-3-1894

35. LETTER TO “THE VEGETARIAN”¹

[PRETORIA]

TO

THE EDITOR

The Vegetarian

MY DEAR BROTHER,

If you are a vegetarian, I think it is your duty to join the London Vegetarian Society, and to subscribe to *The Vegetarian* if you have not done so already.

It is your duty because —

(1) You will thereby encourage and aid the creed you profess.

(2) That will be an expression of the bond of sympathy that should exist between a vegetarian and a vegetarian in a land where there are so few of them.

(3) The vegetarian movement will indirectly aid India politically also, inasmuch as the English vegetarians will more readily sympathize with the Indian aspirations (that is my personal experience).

(4) Looking at the question even from a purely selfish point of view, you will thereby be able to have a large circle of vegetarian friends who ought to be more acceptable than others.

(5) Your knowledge of the vegetarian literature will enable you to remain firm in your principles in a land where you are exposed to so many temptations, which have in very many cases proved irresistible, and you will, in case of illness, be able to get the aid of vegetarian doctors and drugs, whom and which you will know very easily, having joined the Society and subscribed to its paper.

(6) That will help your fellow-brothers in India a great deal, and be also a means of dispelling the doubt that still lingers in the minds of our parents as to the possibility of existence under a vegetarian diet,

¹ This was published along with the note reading: “Mr. M. K. Gandhi has sent round the following letter to the Indians in England and we reproduce it here to show what active work is still being done in our midst by Mr. Gandhi, in spite of the distance which separates him from us. And yet our opponents say that vegetarian Indians have no persistence of purpose like the sons of “Honest John Bull”! Ed., Veg.”

and thus facilitate the way of other Indians to visit England a great deal.

(7) If there were a sufficient number of Indian subscribers, the Editor of *The Vegetarian* may be induced to devote a page or a column to India, which, you will admit, cannot but result in benefit to India.

Many more reasons can be given to show why you should join the Society and subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, but I hope these will be sufficient to induce you to view my proposal with favour.

Even if you are not a vegetarian, you will find that many of the above reasons will apply to you also, and you can subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, and who knows but you may, in the end, consider it a privilege to join the rank of those who never depend for their existence on the blood of their fellow-creatures.

Of course, there is also the Manchester Vegetarian Society and its organ *The Vegetarian Messenger*. I have pleaded for the L.V.S. and its organ simply because it is so very handy, being in London, and because its organ is weekly.

I do trust that you will not excuse yourself from joining and subscribing on the score of economy, for the subscription is so small, and it is sure to more than repay your money.

Hoping you will not consider this an impertinence on my part.

Yours in brotherly love,

M. K. GANDHI

The Vegetarian, 28-4-1894

36. VEGETARIANISM AND CHILDREN

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in a private letter, writes:

Recently a grand convention of Keswick Christians was held in Wellington, under the presidency of Rev. Andrew Murray. I attended it in the company of some dear Christians; they have a boy six or seven years old. He came out with me for a walk one day during the time. I was simply talking to him about kindness to animals. During the talk we discussed vegetarianism. Ever since that time, I am told, the boy has not taken meat. He did watch me, before the above conversation, taking only vegetables at the dinner table, and questioned me why I would not take meat. His parents, though not

themselves vegetarians, are believers in the virtue of vegetarianism, and did not mind my talking to their boy about it.

I write this to show how easily you can convince children of the grand truth, and induce them to avoid meat if their parents are not against the change. The boy and I are thick friends now. He seems to like me very much.

Another boy, about 15, I was talking to, said he could not himself kill or see a fowl killed, but did not object to eating it.

The Vegetarian, 5-5-1894

37. QUESTION ON RELIGION¹

[PRETORIA,
Before June, 1894]

What is the Soul? Does it perform actions? Do past actions impede its progress or not?

What is God? Is He the Creator of the universe?

What is *moksha*²?

Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *moksha*?

It is said that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree, or even a stone. Is that so?

What is *Arya Dharma*? Do all Indian religions originate from the Vedas?

Who composed the Vedas? Are they *anadi*³? If so, what does *anadi* mean?

Who is the author of the *Gita*? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

Does any merit accrue from the sacrifice of animals and other things?

¹ Gandhiji put Raychandbhai some questions in a letter written sometime before June 1894. The original being untraceable the questions have been extracted from Raychandbhai's reply. The source indicates that a few more questions asked were omitted and hence their text is not available. For Raychandbhai's answers, *vide* Vol. XXXII, Appendix I; also *An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. I.

² The supreme goal of spiritual life, liberation from phenomenal existence

³ Without origin or beginning

If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

The Christians hold that the Bible is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being His son. Was He?

Were all the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Christ? Can anyone remember his past lives or have an idea of his future lives?

If yes, who can?

You have given the names of some who have attained *moksha*.

What is the authority for this statement?

What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *moksha*?

What will finally happen to this world?

Will the world be morally better off in the future?

Is there anything like total destruction of the world?

Can an illiterate person attain *moksha* by *bhakti* alone?

Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

Who were Brahma, Vishnu and Siva?

If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

[From Gujarati]

Shrimad Rajachandra, pp. 292 et seq.

38. *PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY*¹

DURBAN,
June 28, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL
THE PETITION OF THE INDIANS RESIDENT IN
THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Petitioners are British subjects, who have come from India and settled in the Colony.

2. Your Petitioners are many of them registered as electors duly qualified to vote at the election of members to your Honourable Council and Assembly.

3. Your Petitioners have read with feelings of unfeigned regret and alarm the debate as reported in the newspapers on the second reading of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

4. Your Petitioners, with the greatest deference to your Honourable House, beg to dissent entirely from the views of the various speakers, and feel constrained to say that the real facts fail to support the reasons adduced in justification of the passing of the unfortunate measure.

5. The reasons, as reported in the newspapers, brought forward in support of the measure, your Petitioners understand, are:

(a) that the Indians have never exercised the franchise in the land they come from;

(b) that they are not fit for the exercise of the franchise.

6. Your Petitioners respectfully beg to press on the notice of the Honourable Members that all the facts and history point the other way.

7. The Indian nation has known, and has exercised, the power of election from times far prior to the time when the Anglo-Saxon races first became acquainted with the principles of representation.

¹ First it was addressed to both the Council and the Assembly, Then it was amended and addressed only to the Assembly, and a separate petition was addressed to the Council; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894.

8. In support of the above, your Petitioners beg to draw the attention of your Honourable Assembly to Sir Henry Sumner Maine's¹ *Village Communities*, where he has most clearly pointed out that the Indian races have been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial. That eminent lawyer and writer has shown that the Teutonic Mark was hardly so well organized or so *essentially representative* as an Indian village community until the precise technical Roman form was engrafted upon it.

9. Mr. Chisolm Anstey², in a speech delivered before the East India Association in London, said:

We are apt to forget in this country, when we talk of preparing people in the East by education and all that sort of thing for Municipal Government and Parliamentary Government, that the East is the parent of Municipalities. Local Self-government, in the widest acceptance of the term, is as old as the East itself. No matter what may be the religion of the people who inhabit what we call the East, there is not a portion of the country from East to West, from North to South, which is not swarming with municipalities; and not only so, but, like to our municipalities of old, they are all bound together as in a species of network, so that you have, ready-made to your hand, the framework of the great system of representation.

Every caste in every village or town has its own rules or regulations, and *elects* representatives, and furnishes an exact prototype of the Saxon Witans, from which have sprung the present Parliamentary institutions.

10. The word *Panchayat* is a household word throughout the length and breadth of India, and it means, as the Honourable Members may be well aware, a Council of Five elected by the class of the people to whom the five belong, for the purpose of managing and controlling the social affairs of the particular caste.

11. The State of Mysore has at the present moment a representative parliament, called the Mysore Assembly, on the exact model of the British Parliament.

12. The trading Indian community now residing in Durban have their *Panchayat*, or Council of Five, and in case of matters of pressing importance their deliberations are controlled by the community at large, who can, according to the constitution of the body, overrule

¹ 1822-88; eminent jurist whose works include *Ancient Law* and *Early History of Institutions*. He was a member of the Indian Council, 1862-69 and 1871.

² 1816-73; lawyer and politician; Member of Parliament, 1847-52

their decisions by a sufficient majority. Here is, your Memorialists submit, a proof of their capabilities as regards representation.

13. Indeed, so much has the Indians' ability to understand representative institutions been recognized by Her Majesty's Government that India enjoys municipal local self-government in the truest sense of the term.

14. There were, in 1891, 755 municipalities and 892 local boards in India, with 20,000 Indian members. This would give some idea of the magnitude of the municipalities and the electorate.

15. If further proof be needed on this head, your Petitioners draw the Honourable Members' attention to the recently passed India Councils Bill, whereby the system of representation has been introduced even into the Legislative Councils of the various Presidencies of India.

16. Your Honourable Assembly will, your Petitioners trust, see, therefore, that the exercise of the franchise by them is no extension of a new privilege they have never before known or enjoyed, but on the contrary, the disqualification to exercise it would be an unjust restriction which, under similar circumstances, would never be put on them in the land of their birth.

17. Hence, also, your Petitioners submit that the fear that they may, if they were allowed to exercise the privilege of franchise, "become propagandists of agitation and instruments of sedition in that great country they come from", is, to say the least of it, without ground.

18. Your Petitioners deem it unnecessary to dwell upon the minor points and the needlessly harsh remarks made in the course of the debate on the second reading. They would, however, crave leave to give some extracts which bear on the subject under consideration. Your Petitioners would rather have been judged by their works than have sought to justify themselves by quoting what others have thought of their race; but, under the present circumstances, they have no other course left open to them, since, owing to want of free intercourse, there seems to prevail much misunderstanding about their capabilities.

19. Speaking at a meeting at the Assembly Rooms, Kennington, Mr. F. Pincott said:

We have heard a great deal in this country about the ignorance of the Indian people and their unfitness for appreciating the great advantages of representative government. All that is really very foolish, because

representative government has nothing to do with education. It has a great deal to do with common sense, and the people of India are gifted with as much common sense, as we have; we exercised the right of election and we had representative institutions many hundreds of years before we possessed any education whatever. Therefore, the educational test goes simply for naught. Those who know the history of our country know very well that two hundred years ago the grossest superstition and ignorance prevailed, and yet we had our representative institutions.

20. Sir George Birdwood¹, writing on the general character of the people of India, thus sums up:

The people of India are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards, false to ourselves, we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

21. Says Sir Thomas Munro, one of the Governors of Madras:

I do not know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient; but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufacture . . . if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality . . . are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then they are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

22. Professor Max Muller thus speaks of the much abused and more misunderstood Indian :

If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problem of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India.

23. To appeal to the finer feelings, your Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, if passed, would have a tendency to retard, instead of hastening, the process of unification the flower of the British and the Indian nations are earnestly striving for.

24. Your petitioners have purposely let the English authorities speak on their behalf, without any comments to amplify the above extracts. It is yet possible to multiply such extracts, but your Petitioners confidently trust that the above will prove sufficient to convince your Honourable Assembly of the justice of their prayer, and they earnestly beseech your Honourable Assembly to reconsider

¹ 1832-1917; served in the Bombay Medical Service in 1854, and later for thirty years in the India Office, London, Author of *Report on the Miscellaneous Old Records of the India Office* and *The Industrial Arts of India*.

your decision; or to appoint a Commission to enquire into the question as to whether the Indians resident in the Colony are fit to exercise the privilege of franchise, before proceeding further with the Bill.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Colonial Office Records, No. 179, Vol. 189: Votes and Proceedings of Parliament, Natal, 1894

39. DEPUTATION TO NATAL PREMIER¹

DURBAN,
June 29, 1894

TO
SIR JOHN ROBINSON, K.C.M.G.
PREMIER AND COLONIAL SECRETARY
COLONY OF NATAL

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,

We have to thank Your Honour very much for sparing some of Your Honour's valuable time to receive this deputation.

We beg to present this petition of the Indians residing in the Colony to Your Honour and beg you to give it Your Honour's earnest attention.

We would not trespass longer on Your Honour's courtesy than is absolutely necessary. We, however, regret that we have not at our disposal time enough to lay our case as thoroughly as possible before Your Honour.

Sir, we have been taunted with having woken up almost too late. It is only necessary to put before you the peculiar circumstances to convince Your Honour that we could not possibly have approached the honourable Houses earlier. The two chief leading members of the community were away from the Colony on urgent business and were shut out from all communication with people in the Colony. Our very imperfect knowledge of the English language materially prevents us from keeping ourselves in touch with important matters as we should like to be.

¹ Enclosure No. 1 in Schedule of Correspondence published by order of the Legislative Assembly of Natal on April 21, 1896

With greatest respect to Your Honour, we beg to point out that both the Anglo-Saxon and the Indian races belong to the same stock. We read Your Honour's eloquent speech at the time of the second reading of the Bill with rapt attention and took great pains to ascertain if any writer of authority gave countenance to the view expressed by Your Honour about the difference of the stocks from which both the races have sprung up. Max Muller, Morris, Greene and a host of other writers with one voice seem to show very clearly that both the races have sprung from the same Aryan stock, or rather the Indo-European as many call it. We have no wish whatever to thrust ourselves as members of a brother nation on a nation that would be unwilling to receive us as such, but we may be pardoned if we state the real facts, the alleged absence of which has been put forward as an argument to pronounce us as unfit for the exercise of the franchise.

Your Honour has, moreover, been reported to have said that it would be cruel to expect Indians to exercise the privilege of franchise. We humbly submit that our petition is a sufficient answer to this.

It has given us no small satisfaction to know that, however unjust Your Honour's speech may have appeared to us from our point of view, it breathed truest sentiments of justice, morality and, what is more, Christianity. So long as such a spirit is noticeable among the chosen of the land, we would never despair of right being done in every case.

It is therefore that we have ventured to approach Your Honour, fully believing that, in the light of the new facts disclosed by our humble petition, a display of the same sentiments will result in substantial justice being done to the Indians in the Colony.

We believe that the prayer of the petitioners is very modest. If the newspaper reports are trustworthy, Your Honour was pleased to acknowledge that there were some respectable Indians who were intelligent enough to exercise the precious privilege. That alone, in our humble opinion, is a sufficient reason for granting a Commission of enquiry into the momentous question. We are willing to face, nay, we court such a Commission, and, will it be asking too much if we ask that the Indians should be allowed to exercise the privilege, if the impartial judgment of an impartial Commission pronounced the Indians fit for such an exercise? If we have understood the Bill rightly, the Indians would, in the event of its becoming law, rank lower than the lowest native. For, while the latter can educate himself into fitness

for the power of election, the former never can. The Bill seems to be so sweeping that even the Indian Member of the British House of Commons, did he come here, would not be fit for becoming a voter.

Did we not know that other matters of equal importance seriously engage Your Honour's attention, we could go on showing the injurious consequences that would flow from the interpretation of the Bill, consequences perhaps never contemplated by its illustrious authors. If we were given a week's time we could put our case more exhaustively before the House of Assembly. We would then leave our cause in Your Honour's hands, imploring Your Honour with all the earnestness at our command to use Your Honour's powerful influence and to see that full justice is done to the Indians. For it is justice we want and that only.

We thank your Honour for receiving this deputation and the patience and courtesy shown to us.

We beg to subscribe ourselves on behalf of the Indian community,

Your Honour's obedient servants,

M. K. GANDHI

AND THREE OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 41

40. A CIRCULAR LETTER TO LEGISLATOR¹

DURBAN,

July 1, 1894

TO

. . . .

SIR,

We, the undersigned, have sent copies of this letter under registered cover to the Honourable Members of both the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with a request to answer the questions asked in the enclosed. You will lay us under deep obligation, if you would be good enough to fill in the reply column of the enclosed memorandum, with any remarks that you may choose to make in the remarks column, and sign and send

¹ The letter and the questionnaire are referred to in paragraph 8 of "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 14-7-1894.

the same back to the first undersigned at the above address.

*We beg to remain,
Sir,*

.

M. K. GANDHI
AND FOUR OTHERS

QUESTIONS

REPLY

REMARKS

Yes or No

1. Do you conscientiously say that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill is a strictly just measure without needing any modification or change?
2. Do you think it just that those Indians, who have not been able, from some cause or other, to have their names on the Voters' List, should ever be debarred from voting in the Parliamentary Elections, no matter how capable they may be or what interests they may have in the Colony?
3. Do you really believe that no Indian British subject can ever acquire sufficient attainments for the purpose of becoming a full citizen of the Colony or of voting?
4. Do you think it just that a man should not become a voter simply because he is of Asiatic extraction?
5. Do you wish the indentured Indian who comes and settles in the Colony to remain in the state of semi-slavery and ignorance for ever, unless he chooses to go back to India for ever?

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

41. DEPUTATION TO NATAL GOVERNOR¹

DURBAN,
July 3, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AN SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION
MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

At a meeting held on the 1st July, 1894, of leading Indians in Durban, we were requested to await Your Excellency's pleasure with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was read a third time last evening in the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Natal.

The Bill as it stands, disqualifies every Indian, whether a British subject or not, not already on the Voters' List, from becoming a voter.

We venture to say that, without any further qualification, the Bill is manifestly unjust, and would work very harshly at any rate upon some Indians.

Even in England, any British subject having the proper qualifications is entitled to vote, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed.

We would not deal at length with the question here lest we should trespass too much upon Your Excellency's courtesy, but would beg leave to present Your Excellency with a printed copy of the petition addressed to the Honourable Assembly and request Your Excellency to persue it carefully.

To us our cause seems to be so just that it should not need any arguments to support it.

We trust that Your Excellency, representing Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress, will not sanction a measure that would seem to lay down that an Indian British subject of Her Majesty can never become fit to exercise the franchise.

¹ Enclosure No. 2 in Despatch No. 62 of July 16, 1894 from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies

We hope to send a proper petition¹ to Your Excellency through the regular channels about the matter.

We thank Your Excellency very much for granting the deputation an interview in Durban and for Your Excellency's courtesy and patience.

We have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
AND SIX OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

42. *PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL*²

DURBAN,
July 4, 1894

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to address this humble petition to your Honourable Council with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill which was read a third time on the 2nd July in the Hon. the Legislative Assembly. Your Petitioners, instead of setting forth herein their grievances at length, respectfully beg to refer your Hon. Council to the petition made by the Indians to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly regarding the Bill, a printed copy of which is annexed hereto for ready reference by the Hon. Members. The petition has been signed by nearly 500 Indians. This was done in the short space of one day. Had the Petitioners been given more time, from all the reports received from the various districts, they fully believe that at least 10,000 Indians would have signed it. Your Petitioners were in

¹ No further petition to the Governor of Natal was, in fact, sent. Evidently Gandhiji and his associates intended to do this, but events overtook them. Even this petition was rejected and the Bill was rushed through the House in all its stages, for submission to Lord Ripon, for the Queen's approval. A second petition had, therefore, to be submitted through Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson; *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 14-7-1894.

² This was presented to the President and members of the Legislative Council by Hon. Henry Campbell, advocate and chief agent for British Indian merchants in the Transvaal who drafted and presented petitions for them.

hopes that the Hon. the Legislative Assembly would see the justice of their prayer and grant it, but their hopes have been frustrated. Your Petitioners, therefore, have ventured to approach your Hon. Council with a view to inducing the Hon. Members to give close attention to the petition hereinbefore referred to, and to use your correctional power in consonance with justice and equity. Some of your Petitioners undersigned had the honour to see some of the Hon. Members of the Lower House in connection with the petition aforesaid, and they all seemed to admit the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, but the general feeling seemed to be that it was addressed too late. Your Petitioners, without going into the question, would respectfully submit that, assuming that it was so, the consequences of the Bill becoming law would be so grave, and the prayer is so just and modest, that being too late should not have weighed with the Hon. Members at all in considering the petition. Instances of Bills being thrown out or modified, under less imperative circumstances, by the Parliaments of civilized countries, after they have passed through the committee stage, would not be difficult to find. Your Petitioners need hardly mention the instance of the House of Lords having thrown out the Irish Home Rule Bill¹, and the circumstances under which it was so treated. The Franchise Law Amendment Bill as it stands is, your Petitioners submit, so sweeping a measure, that no Indian who is not already on the Voters' List, no matter how capable he may be, can become a voter if the Bill becomes law. Your Petitioners trust that your Hon. Council will not endorse such a view, and will, therefore, send the Bill back again to the Legislative Assembly for its reconsideration.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-7-1894

¹ This was introduced by Gladstone in 1886 in the British Parliament. It sought to transfer Irish administration to an executive appointed by an Irish Parliament but left the power of taxation largely to the British Government. It met with furious opposition in the House of Commons. In 1893, Gladstone, again in office, introduced a Home Rule Bill which was passed in the Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by an overwhelming majority.

43. EXTRACT FORM LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI¹

DURBAN,
July 5, 1894

The first Parliament of Natal under Responsible Government has been pre-eminently an Indian Parliament. It has for the most part occupied itself with legislation affecting Indians, by no means favourably. The Governor, in opening the Legislative Council and Assembly, remarked that his Ministers would deal with the Franchise which was exercised by Indians in Natal, although they never exercised it in India. The reasons given for the sweeping measure to disfranchise Indians were that they had never exercised the Franchise before, and that they were not fit for it.

The petition of the Indians seemed to prove a sufficient answer to this. Hence they have now turned round and given out the real object of the Bill, which is simply this: "We do not want the Indians any more here. We want the coolies, but they shall remain slaves here and go back to India as soon as they are free." I earnestly request your undivided attention to the cause and appeal to you to use your influence that always has been and is being used on behalf of the Indians, no matter where situated. The Indians look up to you as children to the father. Such is really the feeling here.

A word for myself and what I have done. I am yet inexperienced and young and, therefore, quite liable to make mistakes. The responsibility undertaken is quite out of proportion to my ability. I may mention that I am doing this without any remuneration. So you will see that I have not taken the matter up, which is beyond my ability, in order to enrich myself at the expense of the Indians. I am the only available person who can handle the question. You will, therefore, oblige me very greatly if you will kindly direct and guide me and make necessary suggestions which shall be received as from a father to his child.

Dadabhai Naoroji : The Grand Old Man of India, pp. 468-9

¹ Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917); statesman, often called. "the Grand Old Man of India". Thrice presided over the Congress session, in 1886, 1893 and 1906. Enunciated, for the first time, Congress goal as one of swaraj or independence. Member of the British Committee of the Congress in London.

44. *PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL¹*

DURBAN,
July 6, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF HONOURABLE
THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF NATAL
THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

(1) Your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to approach your Honourable Council with regard to the “Franchise Law Amendment Bill”.

(2) Your Petitioners regret sincerely that their petition presented on 4th July, 1894, through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, being not in order, they have again to trespass on your Honourable Council's valuable time.

(3) Your Petitioners, as trusted and responsible members of the Indian community, beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the fact that the Bill under discussion has created a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment among the Indian community. The more the provisions of the Bill become known among the Indians, the more your Petitioners hear the following expressions of opinion : “ *Sarkar Mabap²* is going to kill us, what shall we do?”

(4) With the greatest respect to your Honourable Council, your Petitioners submit that this is no mere idle expression of opinion, but a sincere one, which is worthy of the most serious consideration by the Honourable Council.

(5) It is not, your Petitioners venture respectfully to submit, a fact that the Indians do not know what voting means, as was attempted to be shown during the debate on the second reading of the Bill in your Honourable Council. They know very well what privilege a right

¹ This was presented by the Hon. Mr. Campbell to the Legislative Council of the Natal Parliament on July 6, 1894, on behalf of Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada and seven other Indians.

² Government considered as “mother-father”

of voting confers, and feel also the responsibility such a privilege carries with it. Your Petitioners only wish that your Honourable Council could personally witness the excitement and the anxiety with which every stage in the progress of the Bill is watched by the Indian Community.

(6) Your Petitioners would not, for one moment, say that every member of the community has such a knowledge and, therefore such a feeling, but they may be permitted to say that it is general. Nor would your Petitioners hold that there are not Indians who should have no right to vote, but your Petitioners submit that that is no reason why the Indians should be excluded wholesale from the privilege.

(7) Your Petitioners venture to submit for your Honourable Council's consideration some of the anomalous results that would follow the operation of the Bill :

(a) The Bills arbitrarily keeps on the Voters' List those who are already there, while it forever shuts the door against any new addition of a person who has not chosen to exercise the privilege hitherto.

(b) While some Indian fathers will be able to vote, their children never can, although the latter may surpass the former in every respect.

(c) It practically puts the free and indentured Indians in the same scale.

(d) Taking out for a moment the question of policy as the principle of the Bill, which seems to have developed but lately, the Bill seems to lay down that India has not at the present moment any Indian who is fit to exercise the privilege of franchise and that there is such a wide difference between a European and an Indian that contact with the former, even for any length of time, does not fit him for the exercise of the precious privilege.

(8) Is it fair, your Petitioners humbly ask, that, while the father is a voter, he has to see his son, on whom he has lavished enormous sums of money to educate him so that he may become a public man, unable to possess a right that is now recognized as the birthright of all really educated persons born in civilized countries where representative institutions prevail?

(9) Your Petitioners would very much like to have dwelt upon the fear that the permission to allow the Asiatic to vote would ultimately result in a Government of Natives by coloured people, the Indians. But your Petitioners are afraid that this is not the occasion on

which your Petitioners may lay their humble views before your Honourable Council on the question. They would rest content with saying that, in their opinion, such a contingency can never happen, and certainly the time is not ripe to provide against it, were it even possible in the remote future.

(10) Your Petitioners beg respectfully to submit that the Bill makes an invidious distinction between one class of British subjects and another. But it has been said that, if Indian British subjects are to be treated equally with the Europeans, the same treatment should be accorded to other British subjects, e.g., the Natives of the Colony. Without entering into odious comparisons, your Petitioners would venture to quote from the Royal Proclamation of 1858, which would show on what principles the British Indian subjects have been and should be treated :

We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our services, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security and in their gratitude our best reward.

(11) On the lines laid down in the above extract, and also the Charter of 1833¹, the Indians have been admitted to the most responsible posts in India, e.g., that of Chief Justice. And yet here, in a British Colony, an attempt is being made to deprive your Petitioners or their brethren or their children of the commonest right of an ordinary citizen.

(12) It has now been said that the Indians know the Municipal Self-government but not the Political. Your Petitioners submit that this, too, is not now strictly true. But granting that it is strictly so, should that be any reason for barring the door to Political Franchise to Indians in a country where a Parliamentary Government prevails?

¹ Based on the findings of a Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry, the Act abolished the East India Company's trading rights in India and confined its function to ruling its possessions. Reaffirmed in 1853, the Charter Act provided that no Indian shall be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the East India Company by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour.

Your Petitioners submit that the real and only test should be whether your Petitioners, and those on whose behalf they plead, are capable or not. A person coming from under Monarchical Government, e.g., Russian, may not have been able to show his capabilities to understand or appreciate Representative Government, and yet your Petitioners venture to believe your Honourable Council will not condemn such a one as unfit, if he is otherwise capable and fit.

(13) Before concluding, your Petitioners beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the following memorable words of Lord Macaulay : "Free and civilized as we are, it is to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal portion of freedom and civilization."

(14) Your Petitioners fervently trust that the above facts and arguments, if they prove nothing else, will prove to the satisfaction of your Honourable Council that a real necessity exists for a Commission of enquiry as to the fitness or the unfitness of the Indians to exercise the Franchise, as also to ascertain whether there is any ground for the fear that, in case of the Indian being allowed to exercise the privilege of Franchise as heretofore, their vote will swamp the European vote, and that they will have the reins of Government in their hands, and also to report upon such other important questions. Your Petitioners pray, therefore, that your Honourable Council will send the Bill back for reconsideration by the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with such just and equitable recommendations as your Honourable Council may think fit.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 38

45. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
July 7, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

It was a treat to read your learned and able leader in today's issue. It was not expected that there would be nothing to be said against the franchise petition. That would be a wondrous—I was almost going to say, superhuman—thing that would not have its two sides, in these modern times. On the same principle, Sir George Chesney is not the only writer who would serve your purpose. Sir Henry Sumner Maine was also, after all, a mortal. It is, therefore, only natural that his theories and conclusions should be contested. There seems to be no escape for a mortal from "the pairs of opposites". I would, however, without for the present presenting the other aspect of the case, beg leave to revert to the matter on some future occasion.

The object of writing this letter is to "surprise" you. The State of Mysore, I am glad to say, has given the political franchise rights to its subjects. I take the following from a newspaper report :

Under the system now expounded by the Dewan, all landholders paying a

¹ This was in reply to an article entitled "Indian Village Communities" in *The Natal Mercury*, 7-7-1894, commenting on the petition presented to the Natal Legislative Council by the Indian community in connection with the Franchise Law Amendment Bill. It was argued that Parliamentary Government was very different from any form of representation known to the village communities of India. The Bill excluded Indians from the franchise on the ground that they had not exercised the franchise in their own country. The Indians pleaded that they had done so from ancient times in their village communities. But *The Natal Mercury* contested this view, and that of Sir Henry Sumner Maine, in his *Village-Communities in the East and West*, that Indian had been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial. It maintained that Indian village-communities had nothing to do with political representation but only with the legal question of land tenure. It argued that village-community life was common to all primitive peoples and, if anything, proved the backwardness of a people, and quoted General Sir George Chesney's views in *The Nineteenth Century* to the effect that Indians were still in their political infancy.

revenue of Rs. 100 or more, or *mohatarfa*¹ of Rs. 13 and upwards, are entitled to vote for members of the Representative Assembly, and are eligible to become members themselves. Besides, all non-official graduates of any Indian University, ordinarily residing in the taluk, have been given the privilege of electing, as well as of being elected. Thus property as well as intelligence will be represented in the Assembly. Further, it has also been specified that public associations, municipalities and the local boards may also elect members. The total number of members fixed is 347, and these members are elected by nearly 4,000 electors.

Sir, I appeal to your good sense, and ask you, will you not better serve humanity by collecting and pointing our points of resemblances between the two peoples than by holding out to the public gaze points of contrasts, often far-fetched or merely imaginary, that can but arouse the worst feeling of a man, while they can do nobody any real good? I hardly think it can be to your interest to sow the seeds of jealousy and animosity between the two nations. That, I doubt not, is in your power, as it is in anybody's, more or less. But a thing far higher and far nobler, too, lies within your reach—a thing that would bring you not only greatness, but goodness, and what is more, the gratitude of a nation that has not been crushed under 1,200 years' tyranny and oppression, a fact by itself a miracle,—and that thing is to educate rightly the Colony about India and its people.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 11-7-1894

¹ Trade-tax, a word of Persian origin

46. PETITION TO NATAL GOVERNOR¹

DURBAN,
July 10, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Excellency's Petitioners, representing the Indian community residing in the Colony of Natal, beg hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

2. Your Excellency's Petitioners understand that Your Excellency will send the Bill, above referred to, to the Home Government for Royal assent.

3. Such being the case, a petition² is being prepared for the Home Government regarding the Bill.

4. Your petitioners will send the said petition to Your Excellency as soon as possible.

5. Your Petitioners respectfully request Your Excellency to postpone sending Your Excellency's Despatch to the Home Government with regard to the matter, till the petition hereinbefore mentioned is sent to Your Excellency to be forwarded to the Home Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Excellency's Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

M. K. GANDHI
AND SEVEN OTHERS

Colonial Office Records, No. 179, Vol. 189

¹ Enclosure No. 6 in Despatch No. 62 of July 16, 1894 from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies

² *Vide* the succeeding item.

47. PETITION TO LORD RIPON¹

[DURBAN,
Before July 14, 1894]²

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARQUIS OF RIPON,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE
COLONIES

THE PETITION OF THE UNDER SIGNED INDIANS
NOW RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Lordship's Petitioners are Indian British subjects, residing in the various districts of the Colony of Natal.

2. Some of Your Lordship's Petitioners are traders, who have come to the Colony and settled therein. Some again are those who, in the first instance, came from India under indenture, and have now, for some time (even thirty years), become free. Some are Indians under indenture, and some are born and educated in the Colony, and engaged in various pursuits of life as attorneys' clerks, compounders, compositors, photographers, schoolmasters, etc. Again, some of Your Lordship's Petitioners have considerable landed property in the Colony, and are duly qualified to vote at the election of Members for the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. And a few have got sufficient property qualifications, but have not been able to get their names on the Voters' Roll for some cause or other.

3. Your Lordship's Petitioners hereby approach Your Lordship with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was introduced last session by the Honourable Sir John Robinson, the Prime Minister of the Colony, and which has passed the third reading in the Honourable Legislative Council, and received the assent of His Excellency the Governor, subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty.

¹ Enclosure No. 1 in Despatch No. 66 dated July 31, 1894, from Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Natal, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In *An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. XVII, Gandhiji says he took great pains over this petition and obtained over 10,000 signatures for it in the course of a fortnight. The Prime Minister of Natal in his forwarding letter to the Governor set out reasons for recommending rejection of the petition.

² *Vide* the succeeding item.

4. The Bill above referred to has for its object the disqualification of all the persons of Asiatic extraction, who have settled in the Colony, to vote at the Parliamentary elections. It, however, excepts those who are already rightly placed on the Voters' Lists.

5. Your Lordship's Petitioners crave leave to give a short history of the movement carried on to obtain redress through the constituted authorities in the Colony.

6. It was when the Franchise Law Amendment Bill had passed the second reading that Your Lordship's Petitioners first approached the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. When Your Lordship's Petitioners became aware that two days after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage, and a day after, it would pass the third reading it was impossible to present a petition to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly unless the third reading was postponed. Your Lordship's Petitioners, therefore, sent a telegraphic petition¹ to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, requesting that a postponement should be granted. The postponement was very graciously granted for one day. In that one day, about 500 Indians signed a petition which was next day presented to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. In Maritzburg, a deputation waited upon some Honourable Members of the Honourable House, including the Premier and the Attorney-General. The deputation was very courteously received and given a patient hearing. Most of the Honourable Members waited upon more or less admitted the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, though all said that it was presented too late. The Honourable Prime Minister, in order that it might be studied, asked leave to postpone the third reading for four days. It might be mentioned also that telegraphic petitions were sent to the Honourable the Legislative Council from Verulam, Richmond Road and other places, endorsing the said petition. But they were ruled out of order on the ground they were not presented through a Member of the House. Your Lordship's Petitioners have not annexed hereto the various petitions referred to, as these will no doubt be sent to Your Lordship by the Government.

7. Four days, after the presentation of the petition, i.e., on the 2nd July, 1894, Monday, the Bill was, contrary to your Petitioners' expectations and much to their regret, read a third time.

¹ This is not available.

8. On the Tuesday following, Your Lordship's Petitioners thereupon sent a petition to the Honourable the Legislative Council, which was presented through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, but the petition was ruled not in order, because it contained references to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, and the Bill was read a second time. Your Lordship's Petitioners, as soon as they knew this, lost no time in addressing another petition to the Honourable Council, which was sent on the Thursday following, and was presented on Friday through the same Honourable Member. In the meanwhile, i.e., within one day after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage. The Honourable Mr. Campbell moved the postponement of the third reading of the Bill, in order that the petition last mentioned might be considered. The motion, however, was not carried on the ground that the petition was presented *too late*. The Bill had been hardly four days before the Honourable Council, as Your Lordship will notice. Your Lordship's Petitioners may also mention that a deputation was appointed by the leading members of the Indian community to wait upon His Excellency the Honourable Sir Walter F. Hely-Hutchinson, who very kindly and courteously received the deputation. In order to know the individual opinions of the Honourable Members of the two Houses, a Committee of Indians sent a printed circular 'to the Honourable Members requesting them to answer certain questions. Your Petitioners append hereto the Circular and the Memorandum containing the questions. So far, only one Honourable Member has been good enough to send a reply, but he, too, has not answered the questions.

9. Before proceeding to criticize the Franchise Bill, Your Lordship's Petitioners would beg to dispose of one point that has been used against Your Lordship's Petitioners, namely, that they approached the Honourable Assembly too late. As to this, your Petitioners would simply state that they were not technically too late, and that the issues involved were, and are, so important, and the Bill so vitally affected and affects Her Majesty's Indian subjects that the Government, or the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly might well have reconsidered their decision and thoroughly investigated Your Lordship's Petitioners' case before allowing the Bill to pass the third reading.

¹Vide "A Circular Letter to Legislators", 1-7-1894.

10. During the debate it was stated, as also it is stated in the preamble of the Bill, that the Asiatic communities have never exercised the privilege of Franchise, and it was stated further, during the debate, that the Asiatics were not fit to exercise the Franchise. These were, then, the two chief reasons alleged for the exclusion of the Indians from the privilege of the Franchise. Your Petitioners venture to believe that the petition to the Honourable Assembly sufficiently disposes of the two contentions above-mentioned.

11. Although it was not openly acknowledged that the two objections to the Asiatics exercising the Franchise privilege had fallen through, it seemed to be tacitly recognized that such was the case, for it was more openly declared in the third reading of the Bill in the Honourable Assembly, that the exclusion was to be justified, not on moral and equitable grounds, as was contended at the time of the second reading, but on purely political grounds. It was said that, if the Indians were allowed to vote, their vote would swamp the European vote, and that there would be a Government by the Asiatics instead of by the Europeans.

12. Your Lordship's Petitioners venture [to submit], with the greatest deference to both the Honourable Houses, that the above fears are entirely groundless. Even at the present moment there are very few Indian electors as compared with European electors. The Indians who come under indenture cannot possibly have the sufficient property qualifications to be qualified for voting during their term of indenture, and for many more years afterwards. It is, moreover, a notorious fact that those who come on their own means do not remain for good in the Colony, but after a certain number of years, return home and are replaced by other Indians. Thus, so far as the trading community is concerned, the number of votes would, as a rule, always remain unchanged. Another fact, too, cannot be lost sight of, viz., that the Indians do not take such an active interest in the political affairs of the Colony as the European section of the community. It seems that there are 45,000 Europeans, and the same number of Indians; that fact alone shows how material is the difference between the European and the Indian vote. And Your Lordship's Petitioners submit that it is well nigh impossible that any Indian can hope to enter into the Natal Parliament for generations to come. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, hardly needs any proof to support it.

13. And if Your Lordship's Petitioners are not unfit to exercise

the privilege, should it matter that they have some voice in the government of the Colony, and more especially the government of themselves?

14. Your Lordship's Petitioners venture to submit that the Bill is admittedly retrograde in character and that it is manifestly unjust.

15. The very fact that those who are rightly on the Voters' List are to be allowed to remain there, at once, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, recognizes the ability of your Petitioners to understand the privilege and the responsibility attached to the exercise of the Franchise. Your Lordship's Petitioners cannot believe that they are allowed to remain on the List even though they are not fit to vote, as was attempted to be shown in the course of the debate.

16. It has also been said that Clause II of the Bill fully meets the ends of justice. Your Petitioners submit that it does not. On the contrary, it injures the feelings of both those who are on the List and those who are not.

17. It is little comfort to those who are already on the List to know that they may vote, while their children never can, no matter how well educated and well qualified they may be. Indian parents who settle in the Colony will have, if the Bill becomes law, the best stimulus to give higher education to their children taken away from them. They would hardly like to see their sons pariahs of society, without a status or without any ambition in life. Even wealth becomes useless if it gives a man no place in society. The very aim with which men collect wealth is thus nipped in the bud.

18. And the Second Clause vexes those who have been in the Colony already to know that, while their brethren, who are in no way superior to them, by a chance retain the right to vote, they themselves cannot vote simply because, perhaps, owing to circumstances entirely beyond their control, they have not been able to get their names on the Voters' List. The Bill thus makes between Indian British subjects of the same class an invidious distinction based on accidental circumstances.

19. It has also been hinted that the justice done by the Second Clause is not gratefully acknowledged by your Petitioners. But, with the greatest respect to the just intentions of the Government in introducing the Second Clause, Your Lordship's Petitioners have failed to see the justice thereof. This was even admitted by some Honourable Members themselves, who did not care whether the Second Clause was

“in” or “out”, as those votes were bound to drop off before long. This seems to be self-evident.

20. Your Lordship's Petitioners have noticed with shame and sorrow the zealous attempt made to compare your Petitioners with the Natives of South Africa. Very often it was said the Natives had a better claim to vote, if the Indians had any, simply because they were British subjects. Your Lordship's Petitioners would not enter into a discussion of the comparison, but would draw Your Lordship's attention to the Royal Proclamation of 1858, as also to Your Lordship's own personal experience of the Indian nation. Your Petitioners need hardly point out the marked difference that exists between the Governments of Indian British subjects and Native British subjects.

21. There are, at the present moment, hundreds of educated Indians, signatures of some of whom appear in the petition, who would not be able to vote at the Parliamentary elections if the Bill became law. Your Petitioners fully trust that Your Lordship will never advise Her Most Gracious Majesty to sanction a Bill that would cause such a grave injustice to any section of British subjects.

22. In the Natal Government *Gazette* of March 27, 1894, Your Lordship's Petitioners find, from the Indian Immigrants School Board Report for 1893, that there were 26 schools and 2,589 scholars studying in the schools that year. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that these boys, who are many of them born in the Colony, are entirely brought up after the European style. They, in later life, come in contact chiefly with the European community, and therefore, in every respect, become as fit for the Franchise privilege as any European, unless there is something radically wanting in them to compete with the Europeans in educational ability. That they are not incompetent, Your Lordship's Petitioners submit, has been proved beyond doubt by the best authorities on such subjects. The results, alike in India as in England, of the competition between English and Indian students, furnish ample proof of the Indian's ability to successfully compete with the European. Your Lordship's Petitioners purposely refrain from quoting extracts from the evidence given before the Parliamentary committees, or from great writers on the above head, because that would almost look like carrying coals to Newcastle. If, then, your Petitioners humbly venture to claim a vote for these boys when they come of age, is it not merely asking what any person in a civilized country would consider as his birthright and

would very properly resent any interference with? Your Petitioners confidently trust that Your Lordship will not let these boys be subjected to the indignity of being deprived of the commonest right of a citizen in a country governed by Parliamentary institutions.

23. Your Lordship's Petitioners here have to note with gratitude that the Hon. Mr. Campbell and the Hon. Mr. Don saw and remarked about the injustice that would be done to those Indians who come to the Colony on their own means, but they, too, seem to think, with the other Honourable Members, that those who come under indenture should *never* get the vote. Your Lordship's Petitioners, while they admit (although they cannot help remarking that poverty should be no crime if a man is otherwise fit) that the indentured Indians, while under indenture, may not have the right to vote, they respectfully submit that even these men should not *for ever* be deprived from voting if they acquire the sufficient qualifications in later life. Such men who come here are, as a rule, ablebodied and young; they come under European influences, and while they are under indenture, and especially after they become free, rapidly begin to assimilate themselves to the European civilization, and develop into full Colonists. They are admitted to be very useful, in fact, invaluable people, who live quietly and peacefully. It may be remarked that most of the educated Indian youths, who are now in the Civil Service as clerks and interpreters, or outside it as schoolmasters, teachers or attorneys' clerks, have come to the Colony under indenture. It is submitted that it would be cruel *not* to allow them, or their children, to vote and to have a voice in their own government at any rate. Your Petitioners submit that the fact alone that a person is of Asiatic extraction or has once been under indenture, should not be a bar to political freedom and political privileges, if he is or becomes otherwise duly fit and qualified.

24. Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to the anomaly that the Bill would rank the Indian lower than the rawest Native. For while the rawest Native can become emancipated if he acquires the proper qualifications, the Indian British subject who is now entitled to vote would be so disenfranchised that he can never again become emancipated, no matter how capable he becomes in after life, or how capable he is at the time of disenfranchisement.

25. The measure is so sweeping and so drastic that, Your

Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, it is an insult to the whole Indian nation, inasmuch as, if the most distinguished son of India came to Natal and settled, he would not be able to have the right to vote because, presumably, according to the Colonial view, he is unfit for the privilege. This hardship was recognized by the Honourable Members in both the Houses, and the Honourable the Treasurer went so far as to say that special cases of hardship may in future be dealt with by the Parliament.

26. To illustrate the above argument more fully, your Petitioners would draw Your Lordship's attention to the papers and Government *Gazettes* in connection with the Indian vote question that was raised and discussed in the late Honourable the Legislative Council of Natal. From a Blue-book containing the correspondence relating to the affairs of Natal (C-3796, 1883), your Petitioners take the following from Mr. Saunders's letter to the Colonial Office (page 3) :

The mere definition that these signatures must be in full, and in the elector's own handwriting, and written in European characters, would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English.

Thus Mr. Saunders, zealous advocate as he was of anti-Asiatic policy, could not go further than this. In the same letter, the honourable gentleman says further:

The better-class Indians feel and see there is a difference between the raw coolie and themselves.

Therefore, it seems that the Government of the day was quite willing to distinguish between Indians and Indians. Now, unfortunately, under free institutions, all Indians, indentured, and freed, and free, are attempted to be put in the same scale. Your Petitioners cannot help respectfully expressing that Mr. Saunder's measure was comparatively very mild compared to the Bill under discussion. But that measure, too, did not receive support from Her Majesty's benign Government; much less, therefore, your Petitioners submit, should the Franchise Law Amendment Bill. In the same book above referred to, the then Protector of Immigrants, Mr. Graves, says, at page 7 :

I am of the opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families for a free return passage to India are *justly* entitled to the Franchise.

He very justly pointed out also, that the signature test suggested by Mr. Saunders was not applied in practice to the European electors.

At the same page, the then Attorney-General says in his report :

It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains certain clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the Select Committee, providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while *the proposal for the specific disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.*

Your Lordship's Memorialists would beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to the same learned gentleman's report at page 91 of the same Blue-book. The temptation to quote again from another report by the same learned Attorney-General is irresistible. At page 14 (*ibid.*) he says:

As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the Franchise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report on Bill No. 12, I cannot *recognize the justice or expediency of such a measure.*

27. Thus it happens that, under a freer constitution in the Colony, that should include Your Lordship's Petitioners also, the First Responsible Ministry, your Petitioners regret to say, have attempted to make your Petitioners less free, to disenfranchise them wholesale. In the face of the fact that, under the old *regime*, a far less bold attempt to restrict the rights of your Petitioners did not receive countenance from the Home Government, your Petitioners have every hope that the present attempt will meet with the same fate, and justice done to Your Lordship's Petitioners.

28. The other pernicious consequences indirectly connected with the Franchise Bill are too numerous to mention; your Petitioners would, however, crave leave to discuss a few.

29. It is a known fact that there is, in the Colony, a wide gulf between the European section of the community and the Indian. The Indian is hated and shunned by the European. He is often needlessly vexed and harassed. The Franchise Bill, your Petitioners submit, will only accentuate such a feeling. The signs have already begun to appear. To verify this, your Petitioners commend the newspapers of the current dates to Your Lordship's attention, and also the debates in both the Honourable Houses.

30. It was said, in the course of the debate on the second reading, that the disqualification put upon the Indians would put a

greater responsibility upon the legislators of the Colony and that the Indian interests would be better protected than if they were represented. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to submit, is contrary to all experience up to the present time.

31. Some Honourable Members thought that the Indians should not be allowed to vote at the Municipal elections also. It was whispered, during the debate, among the responsible quarters, that that question would receive attention on a future, but early, date. The Franchise Bill is only the proverbial thin end of the wedge. Once driven a little, it would not be difficult to drive it through. That seemed to be the feeling.

32. Your Lordship is aware that it is intended to levy a residential tax on the Indians coming under indenture, should they choose to settle in the Colony. The tax, it was said, should be sufficiently heavy not to make it worth their while to stop in the Colony or to make it possible for them to compete with the Colonists. That is another indication of how your Petitioners' interests would be better protected if they were disenfranchised!

33. During the debate on the Civil Service Bill, it was contended by some Honourable Members that, since the Franchise was to be taken away from the Indians, it was as well that the Indians should be debarred from entering the Civil Service also. An amendment was moved to this effect, and was rejected only by the casting vote of the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, thanks to the forethought and tact of the Government who requested that the House should be divided. Your Petitioners fully recognize that, in this case, the Government took up a very sympathetic attitude towards the Indians; but still, the tendency and portents of these events are unmistakable. The Franchise Bill gave the opportunity for the amendment.

34. Your Lordship's Petitioners understand that in the Cape Colony no such colour or race distinctions are made.

35. Your Lordship's Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the effect of the Bill, if it became law, will be simply disastrous to the interests of the British Indian subjects in the other parts of South Africa. Down-trodden and hated as they already are in the Transvaal, things will be simply unbearable for them. If Indian British subjects in a British Colony are allowed to be treated at all on an unequal footing, your Petitioners humbly submit that a time will soon come when it will

be impossible for Indians, having any idea whatever of self-respect, to remain in the Colony and that such a thing would materially interfere with their business, and throw hundreds of Her Majesty's Indian subjects out of work.

36. In conclusion, your Petitioners hope that above facts and arguments will convince Your Lordship of the injustice of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, and that Your Lordship will not allow an unwarranted interference with the rights of one section of Her Majesty's subjects by another.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Lordship's Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

HAJEE MOHAMED HAJEE DADA¹
AND SIXTEEN OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

48. *LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

C/O MESSRS DADA ABDOOLA & Co.,
DURBAN,
July 14, 1894

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI M.P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter² dated the 7th instant, I have to inform you of the progress of the movement against the Franchise Law Amendment Bill as follows :

The Bill passed the 3rd reading in the Legislative Council on the 7th instant. The other petition to the Council was accepted. One Hon. Member moved the postponement of the 3rd reading till the petition was considered by the House. The motion was rejected.

The Governor has given his assent to the Bill subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty. The Bill has a proviso in it that it shall not become law until, by a proclamation or otherwise, the Governor signifies that it is not Her Majesty's wish to disallow the Bill.

¹ Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress, 1894-99

² This letter is not available.

I send you herewith a copy of the petition¹ to the Home Government that will be sent to the Governor here probably on the 17th instant. It will be signed by nearly 10,000 Indians. Nearly 5,000 signatures have already been received.

I regret to say that I am unable to send you a copy of the petition² to the Council. I however beg to send a newspaper cutting which gives a fairly good report.

I do not think there remains anything more to be added. The situation is so critical that if the Franchise Bill becomes law, the position of the Indians 10 years hence will be simply intolerable in the Colony.

*I remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat of the original : S. N. 2251

49. *LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

Confidential

P. O. B. 253,
DURBAN,
July 27, 1894

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI, M.P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 14th instant I have to inform you as follows :

The petition to the Home Government, a copy of which has already been sent to you, was sent, I hear, last week.

Mr. Escombe³, the Attorney-General, has made a report to the effect—f the informant is right—that the only reason for passing the Bill is to prevent the Asiatics from controlling the government of the Natives. The real reason, however, is simply this. They want to put the Indians under such disabilities and subject them to such insults that it may not be worth their while to stop in the Colony. Yet, they do not

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894.

³ Sir Harry Escombe (1838-99); Premier of Natal in 1897. He pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court.

want to dispense with the Indians altogether. They certainly do not want those Indians who come on their own means and they want the indentured Indians very badly; but they would require, if they could, the indentured Indian to return to India after his term of indenture. A perfect leonine partnership! They know very well that they cannot do this at once—so they have begun with the Franchise Bill. They want to feel the pulse of the Home Government on the question. One member of the Assembly writes to me that he does not believe that the Home Government would sanction the Bill. I need hardly say how important it is for the Indian community that the Bill should not receive the sanction.

Natal is not a bad place for the Indians. Good many Indian traders earn a respectable living here. The Bill, if it became law, would be a very great blow to further Indian enterprise.

Of course, I may state again, as I have done once, that there is not the slightest probability of the government of the Natives passing from the Europeans to the Indians. This is simply meant to frighten the Home Government. Those who live here—including the Government—know very well that such a thing will never happen. They do not want the Indians to elect white members—2 or 3—who may look after their interests in the Parliament, so that the Government may work their way towards the destruction of the Indians without any opposition whatever.

I have sent copies of the petition to Sir W. Wedderburn¹ and others there and also some copies to Indian newspapers.

Please excuse the length of my letters. You will very much oblige me by giving hints as to the way of working.

*I beg to remain,
Sir
Your faithful servant
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat of the original : S.N. 2252

¹ Spent 25 years in India as member of the Bombay Civil Service; on his retirement, member of Parliament till 1900. Chairman of the British Committee of the Congress in 1893; president of the Congress in 1910.

50. LETTER TO MRS. A. M. LEWIS

P. O. B. 253,
DURBAN,
August 4, 1894

DEAR MRS. LEWIS¹,

I thank you for your kind letter of the 27th June.

After I wrote to you last,² I had occasion to come in contact with a doctor in Pretoria. He seemed to be the only gentleman in addition to another who took interest in theosophical subjects. I gave him *The Perfect Way* to read. He liked it so much that he wished me to get another copy for him. I made him a present of my copy. I would therefore thank you if you will kindly send me a copy of *The Perfect Way*. I would send you the money next time. I have no time to do so this time.

I have settled in Durban for practice as an advocate. More of this you will know from Mr. Oldfield.

During my stay here I intend to spread as much as possible information about theosophy. (To me there is little difference between Theosophy and Esoteric Christianity). I have therefore sent out letters³ to the President of the Vegetarian Society and Mrs. Besant⁴.

I propose that the E.C.U.⁵ should send me a selection of books to be sold here. I would sell the books at cost price plus the postage and 5% commission to be kept by me. As to the price, however, I should be left free to use my discretion. I would send up the⁶ sale proceeds of the books every three months. The advertisement charges will be borne by me. If at the end of one year nothing is sold, I would

¹ An admirer of Anna Kingsford, author of *The Perfect Way*, etc., and friend of Edward Maitland, President of the Esoteric Christian Union; she was a founder of the Union. Gandhiji appears to have come into close contact with her while studying for the Bar in England.

² The letter is not available.

³ These are not available.

⁴ Dr. Annie Besant, the theosophist leader

⁵ Esoteric Christian Union.

⁶ For an advertisement in Gandhiji's name, *vide* "Books for Sale", before 26-11-1894.

return the books at my cost. I give my personal guarantee for the safe keeping of the books and the sale proceeds. 5 copies of *The Perfect Way*, 5 of *Clothed with the Sun* and 10 of *The New Gospel of Interpretation* and other books may be sent to me. If sufficient interest is evoked, I would add on the advertising charges also to the cost price. The cost price of the books should be stated in each case in the letter of instruction.

If it is necessary to read this letter or a portion thereof to the Union, you can do so. I hope you will be able to persuade the Union or those in authority to accede to the above proposal.

If you do not think much of the *Souls*, what position is the book to occupy in respectable literature? If the author has written what is absolutely true from personal observation, the book cannot be lightly treated. If it is an attempt to delude the people into a belief in real truths by fascinating falsehoods, the book deserves the highest condemnation possible. For we will not learn truth by means of falsehoods. Of course I write this without meaning the slightest disrespect for the author of whom I know nothing. She may be a lady of the highest probity and truth. I only repeat that to appreciate the *Souls*, acquaintance with the author's character is absolutely necessary.

I could get many signatures to the petition you enclosed. But I am afraid the Natal signatures would be quite useless. Is it not a sad commentary on the morality of the age that a most important, and yet most harmless and elevating, movement should not receive good support? At times when I think of these things, I thoroughly despair of fruits of works. A verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* saves me from utter despair and consequent inaction—a verse which enjoins freedom from attachment to *fruits* of works.

With respects,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please note change of address

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original : Courtesy: E. S. Hart

51. CONSTITUTION OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

(ESTABLISHED 22ND AUGUST, 1894)

PRESIDENT

Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Messrs Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada, Abdool Kadir, Hajee Dada Hajee Habib, Moosa Hajee Adam, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Peeran Mahomed, Murugesu Pillay, Ramaswami Naidoo, Hoosen Miran, Adamjee Miankhan, K. R. Nayanah, Amod Bayat (P. M. Burg), Moosa Hajee Cassim, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Parsee Rustomjee, Dawad Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim Amod Tili, Doraiswamy Pillay, Omar Hajee Aba, Osmankhan Rahamatkhan, Rangaswami Padayachi, Hajee Mahomed (P. M. Burg), Camroodeen (P. M. Burg).

HON. SECRETARY

Mr. M. K. Gandhi

CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Chairman : Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam; *Hon. Secretary* : Mr. M. K. Gandhi; *Members of the Committee* : The Vice-Presidents and Messrs M. D. Joshi, Narsiram, Manekji, Dowjee Mammuji Mutalah, Muthu Krishna, Bissessar, Goolam Hoosen Randeri, Shamshoodeen, G. A. Bassa, Sarabjit, L. Gabriel, James Christopher, Sooboo Naidu, John Gabriel, Suleiman Voraji, Cassimjee Amoojee, R. Kundaswamy Naidu, M. E. Kathrada, Ibrahim M. Khatri, Shaik Farid, Varind Ismail, Ranjit, Perumal Naidoo, Parsee Dhanjisha, Royappan, Joosub Abdool Carim, Arjun Singh, Ismail Kadir, Easop Kadua, Mahomed Esak, Mahomed Hafejee, A. M. Paruck, Suleiman Dawjee, V. Narayana Pather, Lutchman Panday, Osman Ahmed & Mahomed Tayub.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Any person approving of the work of the Congress can become its member by paying the subscription and signing the membership form. The monthly subscription is 5/- minimum and yearly £3.

THE OBJECTS OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS¹

1. To promote concord and harmony among the Indians and the Europeans residing in the Colony.
2. To inform the people in India by writing to the newspapers, publishing pamphlets, and delivering lectures.
3. To induce Hindustanis—particularly Colonial-born Indians—to study Indian history and literature relating to India.
4. To inquire into the conditions of the Indians and to take proper steps to remove their hardships.
5. To inquire into the conditions of the indentured Indians and to take proper steps to alleviate their sufferings.
6. To help the poor and helpless in every reasonable way.
7. To do such work as would tend to improve the moral, social and political conditions of the Indians.

RULES AMENDED OR CANCELLED BY THE COMMITTEE AND
RATIFIED BY THE CONGRESS

1. Authority is given to rent a hall for meetings for a sum not exceeding £10 monthly.
2. The Committee shall meet at least once every month.
3. The General Meeting of the Congress shall be held at least once every year—not necessarily in Durban.
4. The Hon. Secretary shall invite members from other parts of the Colony.
5. The Committee shall have the power to frame and pass rules and shall have all other powers of ordinary transaction.
6. The Committee shall have the power to appoint a paid Secretary at a reasonable salary.
7. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, invite a European who takes interest in the welfare of the Congress to be a Vice-President.
8. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, subscribe for the newspapers and books for the Congress Library out of the Congress Fund.

¹Vide also "Letter to *The Natal Advertiser*", 23-9-1895 and "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896.

9. The Hon. Secretary shall record in the Account Book whether a cheque is signed by himself or jointly with the signature of another.

RULES PASSED BY THE COMMITTEE

1. The Chairman shall preside at every meeting; in his absence, the first member of the Committee; if he too be absent, then the second member and so on.

2. The Hon. Secretary shall, at the commencement of a meeting, read out the minutes of the last meeting after which the President shall sign it.

3. The Committee may not recognize a proposal or a resolution for which no notice had been given in advance to the Secretary for its introduction.

4. The Hon. Secretary shall read out a detailed account of moneys received or spent by the Committee or the Congress.

5. The Committee may not attend to a proposal unless such is proposed by a Committee member and seconded by another.

6. The Chairman and the Secretary shall be counted by virtue of their offices as Committee members. In case of equal voting, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

7. Every member shall face the Chairman when addressing a meeting.

8. Every member shall use the word *Mr.* in addressing another member at a Committee meeting.

9. The proceedings of a Committee meeting shall be carried on in one or all of the following languages: Gujarati, Tamil, Hindustani and English.

10. If it be deemed necessary, the Chairman shall order a member to translate the speech of another member.

11. Every proposal or resolution shall pass by a majority of votes.

12. When the Congress has £50 minimum in hand, the Hon. Secretary shall deposit such amount in any bank he chooses in the name of the Natal Indian Congress.

13. The Hon. Secretary shall be held responsible for any moneys he has not deposited in the Bank.

14. An authority shall be first obtained from the Committee for any irregular expenditure exceeding the sum of £5. If any expenses

are incurred exceeding the above sum by the Chairman or the Secretary without the sanction and approval of the Committee, it shall be held that he did it at his own responsibility. The Hon. Secretary shall sign cheques up to the sum of £5, and for any amount exceeding the said sum [they] shall be signed jointly with any of the following members : Messrs Abdoola Hajee Adam, Moosa Hajee Cassim, Abdool Kadar, Colundaveloo Pillay, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim.

15. A quorum shall be formed of ten members, in addition to the Chairman and the Secretary, to carry on the work of the meeting.

16. The Hon. Secretary shall issue notice of a proposed meeting not less than two days in advance.

17. It shall be held that the 16th rule was observed provided a written notification was given through the post or a messenger.

18. Any Committee member who is absent from six consecutive meetings shall be liable to have his name struck off the list (after having been notified by the Committee of such intention). A member who is absent from a meeting shall show the cause of his absence at the next meeting.

19. Any member who fails to pay his subscription for three consecutive months without showing any reasonable ground shall cease to be a member.

20. No smoking shall be allowed at any Committee meeting.

21. If two members get up simultaneously to speak, the chairman shall decide who is to speak first.

22. If a sufficient number of members is present the Committee meeting shall proceed at its appointed hour. However, if the sufficient number is deficient at the appointed time or half an hour after it, the meeting shall terminate without any transaction.

23. The Natal Indian Association may use the Hall and the Library free of charge, and they, in return, shall give their reasonable services such as doing writing work, etc.

24. All the members of the Congress shall be entitled to use the Congress Library.

25. The Committee members shall sit in an enclosure and the onlookers outside. The onlookers must not take any part in the proceedings. Should they create any disturbance by shouting, etc., they shall be liable to be expelled from the Hall.

26. The Committee shall have the power to amend these rules in future.¹

From a photostat : S.N. 141

52. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF NATAL"²

DURBAN,
October 25, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of Natal

SIR,

I would, with your permission, venture to make a few remarks on your leader, entitled "Rammysammy", in your issue of the 22nd instant.

I have no wish to defend the article in *The Times of India* noticed by you; but is not your very leader its sufficient defence? Does not the very heading "Rammysammy" betray a studied contempt towards the poor Indian? Is not the whole article a needless insult to him? You are pleased to acknowledge that "India possesses men of high culture, etc." and yet you would not, if you could, give them equal political power with the white man. Do you not thus make the insult doubly insulting? If you had thought that the Indians were not cultured, but were barbarous brutes, and on that ground denied them political equality, there would be some excuse for your opinions. You, however, in order to enjoy the fullest pleasures derived from offering an insult to an inoffensive people, must needs show that you acknowledge them to be intelligent people and yet would keep them under foot.

Then you have said that the Indians in the Colony are not the same as those in India; but, Sir, you conveniently forget that they are the brothers or descendants of the same race whom you credit with intelligence, and have, therefore, given the opportunity, the potentiality of becoming as capable as their more fortunate brethren in India, just as a man sunk in the depth of ignorance and vice of the

¹ A copy of the Constitution in English in Gandhiji's hand and a Gujarati manuscript copy are also available.

² This was published under the title "Rammysammy".

East End of London has the potentiality of becoming Prime Minister in free England.

You put upon the franchise petition to Lord Ripon an interpretation it was never meant to convey. The Indians do not regret that capable Natives can exercise the franchise. They would regret if it were otherwise. They, however, assert that they too, if capable, should have the right. You, in your wisdom, would not allow the Indian or the Native the precious privilege under any circumstances, because they have a dark skin. You would look to the exterior only. So long as the skin is white it would not matter to you whether it conceals beneath it poison or nectar. To you the lip-prayer of the Pharisee, because he is one, is more acceptable than the sincere repentance of the publican, and this, I presume, you would call Christianity. You may; it is not Christ's.

And in spite of such opinions held by you, a respectable newspaper in the Colony, you impute falsehood to *The Times of India*. It is one thing to formulate a charge, it is another to prove it.

You end with saying that "Rammysammy" may have every right a citizen can desire, with one exception, viz., "political power". Are the heading of your leader and its tenor consistent with the above opinion? Or is it un-Christian, un-English to be consistent? "Suffer little children to come unto me," said the Master. His disciples (?) in the Colony would improve upon the saying by inserting "white" after "little". During the children's *fete*, organized by the Mayor of Durban, I am told there was not a single coloured child to be seen in the procession. Was this a punishment for the sin of being born of coloured parents? Is this an incident of the qualified citizenship you would accord to the hated "Rammysammy

If He came among us, will he not say to many of us, "I know you not"? Sir, may I venture to offer a suggestion? Will you reread your New Testament? Will you ponder over your attitude towards the coloured population of the Colony? Will you then say you can reconcile it with the Bible teaching or the best British traditions? If you have washed your hands clean of both Christ and British traditions, I can have nothing to say; I gladly withdraw what I have written. Only it will then be a sad day for Britain and for India if you have many followers.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Times of Natal, 26-10-1894

53. BOOKS FOR SALE¹

DURBAN,

[Before November 26, 1894]

The following books by the late Mrs. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland² are offered for sale at their published prices. They are introduced in South Africa for the first time :

The Perfect Way, 7/6

Clothed with the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 2/6³

The New Gospel of Interpretation, 1/-

The Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-

The following are some of the opinions concerning the books:

A fountain of light (The Perfect Way) interpretative and reconciliatory. . . . No student of divine things can dispense with it.

—*Light, London*

Unequaled as a means of grace amongst all the English books of the century.

—*Occult World*

Some pamphlets bearing on the subject can be had free of charge at my office.

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Mercury, 28-11-1894

¹ This appeared as an advertisement; *vide* "Letter to Mrs. A. M. Lewis", 4-8-1894

² Edward Maitland (1824-97): Writer on mystical subjects and devoted to vegetarianism; established the Esoteric Christian Union in 1891. Gandhiji corresponded with him and was considerably influenced by his books.

³ The price given in a subsequent advertisement is 3/6; *vide* "Books for Sale", 2-2-1895.

54. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
November 26, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

You will greatly oblige me by allowing me to draw the attention of your readers to an advertisement that appears in your advertisement columns with regard to the Esoteric Christian Union. The system of thought expounded by the books advertised is not, by any means, a new system but a recovery of the old, presented in a form acceptable to the modern mind. It is, moreover, a system of religion which teaches universality, and is based on eternal verities and not on phenomena or historical facts merely. In that system, there is no reviling Mahomed or Buddha in order to prove the superiority of Jesus. On the other hand, it reconciles the other religions with Christianity which, in the opinion of the authors, is nothing but one mode (among many) of presentation of the same eternal truth. The many puzzles of the Old Testament find herein a solution at once complete and satisfactory.

If there is anyone of your readers who has found the presentday materialism and all its splendour to be insufficient for the needs of his soul, if he has a craving for a better life, and if, under the dazzling and bright surface of modern civilization, he finds that there is much that is contrary to what one would expect under such a surface, and above all, if the modern luxuries and the ceaseless feverish activity afford no relief, to such a one I beg to recommend the books referred to. And I promise that, after a perusal, he will find himself a better man, even though he may not thoroughly identify himself with the teaching.

If there is anyone who would like to have a chat on the subject, it would afford me the greatest pleasure to have a quiet interchange of views. In such a case, I would thank any such gentleman to correspond with me personally. I need hardly mention that the sale of the books is not a pecuniary concern. Could Mr. Maitland, the President of the Union, or its agent here, afford to give them away, they would gladly do so. In many cases, the books have been sold at

less than cost price. In a few, they have even been given away. A systematic distribution for nothing has been found impossible. The books will be gladly lent in some cases.

I would try to conclude with a quotation from a letter of the late Abbe Constant to the authors : “Humanity has always and everywhere asked itself these three supreme questions: Whence come we? What are we? Whither go we? Now these questions at length find an answer complete, satisfactory, and consolatory in *The Perfect Way*.”

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 3-12-1894

55. OPEN LETTER

DURBAN,

[Before *December 19, 1894*]¹

TO

THE HON. MEMBERS OF

THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND

THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SIRS,

Were it possible to write to you anonymously, nothing would have been more pleasing to me. But the statements I shall have to make in this letter will be so grave and important that it would be considered a sheer act of cowardice not to disclose my name. I beg, however, to assure you that I write not from selfish motives, nor yet from those of self-aggrandisement or of seeking notoriety. The one and only object is to serve India, which is by accident of birth called my native country, and to bring about better understanding between the European section of the community and the Indian in this Colony.

The only way this can be done is to appeal to those who represent and, at the same time, mould public opinion.

Hence, if the Europeans and the Indians live in a perpetual state of quarrel, the blame would lie on your shoulders. If both can walk together and live together quietly and without friction, you will receive

¹ This was circulated among Europeans in Natal on December 19, 1894; *vide* the following item.

all the credit.

It needs no proof that masses throughout the world follow, to a very great extent, the opinions of the leaders. Gladstone's opinions are the opinions of half England, and Salisbury's are those of the other half. Burns¹ thought for the strikers during the dock labourers' strike. Parnell thought for almost the whole of Ireland. The scriptures—I mean all the scriptures of the world—say so. Says *The Song Celestial*² by Edwin Arnold: “What the wise choose the unwise people take; what the best men do the multitude will follow.”

This letter, therefore, needs no apology. It would hardly be called impertinent.

For, to whom else could such an appeal be more aptly made, or by whom else should it be considered more seriously than you?

To carry on an agitation in England is but a poor relief when it can only create a greater friction between the two peoples in the Colony. The relief, at best, could only be temporary. Unless the Europeans in the Colony can be induced to accord the Indians a better treatment, the Indians have a very bad time before them under the aegis of the Responsible Government, in spite of vigilance of the Home Government.

Without entering into details, I would deal with the Indian question as a whole.

I suppose there can be no doubt that the Indian is a despised being in the Colony, and that every opposition to him proceeds directly from that hatred.

If that hatred is simply based upon his colour, then, of course, he has no hope. The sooner he leaves the Colony the better. No matter what he does, he will never have the white skin. If, however, it is based upon something else, if it is based upon an ignorance of his general character and attainments, he may hope to receive his due at the hands of the Europeans in the Colony.

The question what use the Colony will make of the 40,000 Indians is, I submit, worthy of the most serious consideration by the Colonists, and especially those who have the reins of Government in

¹ John Burns (1858-1943) : Prominent labour representative in the British Parliament (1897-1918). Came into prominence as a friend of working men during the days of the London Dock Strike of 1889..

² An English rendering, in verse, of the *Bhagavad Gita*

their hands, who have been entrusted by the people with legislative powers. To root out the 40,000 Indians from the Colony seems, without doubt, an impossible task. Most of them have settled here with their families. No legislation that could be permissible in a British Colony would enable the legislators to drive these men out. It may be possible to devise a scheme to effectively check any further Indian immigration. But apart from that, the question suggested by me is, I submit, sufficiently serious to warrant my encroaching upon your attention and requesting you to pursue this letter without any bias.

It is for you to say whether you will lower them or raise them in the scale of civilization, whether you will bring them down to a level lower than what they should occupy on account of heredity, whether you will alienate their hearts from you, or whether you will draw them closer to you—whether, in short, you would govern them despotically or sympathetically.

You can educate public opinion in such a way that the hatred will be increased day by day; and you can, if you chose so to do, educate it in such a way that the hatred would begin to subside.

I now propose to discuss the question under the following heads:

1. Are the Indians desirable as citizens in the Colony?
2. What are they?
3. Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?
4. From a purely material and selfish point of view, will an abrupt or gradual withdrawal of them from the Colony result in substantial, lasting benefit to the Colony?

I

In discussing the first question, I will deal, first of all, with the Indians employed as labourers, most of whom have come to the Colony under indenture.

It seems to have been acknowledged by those who are supposed to know, that the indentured Indians are indispensable for the welfare of the Colony; whether as menials or waiters, whether as railway servants or gardeners, they are a useful addition to the Colony. The work that a Native cannot or would not do is cheerfully and well done by the indentured Indian. It would seem that the Indian has helped to

make this the Garden Colony of South Africa. Withdraw the Indian from the sugar estate, and where would the main industry of the Colony be? Nor can it be said that the work can be done by the Native in the near future. The South African Republic is an instance in point. In spite of its so-called vigorous Native policy, it remains practically a desert of dust, although the soil is very fruitful. The problem how to secure cheap labour for the mines there has been daily growing serious. The only garden worthy of the name is that on the Nelmapius Estate, and does it not owe its success entirely to the Indian labour? One of the election addresses says:

. . . and at the last, as the only thing to be done, the immigration of Indians was entered upon, and the Legislature very wisely rendered their support and help in furthering this all-important scheme. At the time it was entered upon *the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance*. And now what is the result of this scheme of immigration? Financially, £10,000 has been advanced yearly out of the Treasury of the Colony. With what result? Just this, that no vote ever made of money to develop the industries of the Colony, or to promote its interest in any way in this Colony, has yielded such a financially profitable return as that shown by the introduction of coolies as labourers into this Colony. . . . I believe the Durban population of Europeans, had no such labour been supplied as required for Colonial industries, would be less by at least half what it is today, and five workmen only would be required where twenty now have employment. Property in Durban generally would have remained at a value some 300 or 400 per cent below that which now obtains, and the lands in the Colony and other towns, in proportion according to the value of property in Durban and coast land, would never have realized what it now sells at.

This gentleman is no other than Mr. Garland. In spite of such invaluable help derived from “the coolie”, as the poor Indian is contemptuously termed even by those who ought to know better, the honourable gentleman goes on, ungratefully, to regret the tendency of the Indian to settle in the Colony.

I take the following extract from Mr. Johnston's article in the *New Review*, quoted in *The Natal Mercury* of the 11th August, 1894:

One seeks the solution in the introduction of a yellow race, able to stand a tropical climate and intelligent enough to undertake those special avocations which in temperate climates would be filled by Europeans. The yellow race, most successful hitherto in Eastern Africa, is the native of Hindostan—that race in diverse types and diverse religions which, under British or Portuguese aegis, has created and developed the commerce of the East African littoral. The immigration of the docile, kindly, thrifty,

industrious, clever-fingered, sharp-witted Indian into Central Africa will furnish us with the solid core of our armed forces in that continent, and will supply us with the telegraph clerks, the petty shopkeepers, the skilled artisans, the cooks, the minor employees, the clerks, and the railway officials needed in the civilized administration of tropical Africa. The Indian, liked by both black and white, will serve as a link between these two divergent races.

As to the Indian traders, who are miscalled Arabs, it would appear best to consider the objections raised to their coming to the Colony.

From the papers, especially *The Natal Mercury* of 6-7-'94, and *The Natal Advertiser* of 15-9-'93, the objections appear to be that they are successful traders, and that, their mode of living being very simple, they compete with the European trader in petty trades. I dismiss as unworthy of consideration the generalizations from rare particular instances that the Indians resort to sharp practices. As to the particular instances of insolvency, I would only say, without meaning in the least to defend them, "Let those that are without sin first cast a stone". Please examine the records of the Insolvency Court.

Coming to the serious objection as to successful competition, I believe it is true. But is that a reason for driving them out of the Colony? Will such a method commend itself to a body of civilized men? What is it that makes them so successful competitors? He who runs may see that it is nothing but their habits, which are extremely simple, though not barbarous, as *The Natal Advertiser* would have it. The chiefest element of their success, in my humble opinion, is their total abstinence from drink and its attendant evils. That habit at once causes an enormous saving of money. Moreover, their tastes are simple, and they are satisfied with comparatively small profits, because they do not keep uselessly large establishments. In short, they earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is difficult to see how these facts can be urged as an objection to their stopping in the Colony. Of course, they do not gamble, as a rule do not smoke, and can put up with little inconveniences; work more than eight hours a day. Should they be expected to, is it desirable that they should, abandon these virtues, and contract the terrible vices under which the Western nations are groaning, so that they may be permitted to live in the Colony without molestation?

It will be best, also, to consider the common objection to the Indian traders and labourers. It is their insanitary habits. I am afraid I must, to my great mortification, admit this charge partially. While

much that is said against their insanitary habits proceeds merely out of spite and hatred, there is no denying that in this respect they are not everything that could be desired. That, however, never can be a reason for their expulsion from the Colony. They are not hopelessly beyond reform in this branch. A strict, yet just and merciful, operation of the sanitary law can, I submit, effectually cope with the evil, and even eradicate it. Nor is the evil so great as to require any drastic measures. Their personal habits, it would appear, are not dirty, except in the case of the indentured Indians, who are too poor to attend to personal cleanliness. I may be allowed to say, from personal experience, that the trading community are compelled by their religion to bathe once a week at least, and have to perform ablutions, i.e., wash their faces and hands up to the elbows, and their feet, every time they offer prayers. They are supposed to offer prayers four times a day, and there are very few who fail to do so at least twice a day.

It will, I hope, be readily admitted that they are exceptionally free from those vices which render a community a danger to society. They yield to no one in their obedience to constitutional authority. They are never a political danger. And except the ruffians who are sometimes picked out, of course unknowingly, by the immigration agents at Calcutta and Madras, they seem to be free from the highly grievous offences. I regret that my inability to compare the Criminal Court statistics prevents me from making any further observations on this point. I will, however, beg leave to quote from the *Natal Almanac*: "It must be said for the Indian population that it is on the whole orderly and law-abiding."

I submit that the above facts show that the Indian labourers are not only desirable but useful citizens of the Colony, and also absolutely essential to its well-being, and that the traders have nothing in them that should render them undesirable in the Colony.

As to these latter, before quitting the subject, I would further add that they are a veritable blessing to the poor portion of the European community, in so far as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessities of life; and knowing their language and understanding their customs, are indispensable to the Indian labourers, whose wants they study and supply, and whom they can deal with on better terms than the Europeans.

II

The second head of the enquiry is the most important, viz., what

are they, and I request you to peruse it carefully. My purpose in writing on this subject will have been served if only it stimulates a study of India and its people; for, I thoroughly believe that one half, or even three-fourths, of the hardships entailed upon the Indians in South Africa result from want of information about India.

No one can be more conscious than myself of whom I am addressing this letter to. Some Honourable Members may resent this portion of my letter as an insult. To such I say with the greatest deference: "I am aware that you know a great deal about India. But is it not a cruel fact that the Colony is not the better for your knowledge? Certainly the Indians are not, unless the knowledge acquired by you is entirely different from and opposed to that acquired by others who have worked in the same field. Again, although this humble effort is directly addressed to you, it is supposed to reach many others, in fact all who have an interest in the future of the Colony with its present inhabitants."

In spite of the Premier's opinion to the contrary, as expressed in his speech at the second reading of the Franchise Bill, with the utmost deference to His Honour, I venture to point out that both the English and the Indians spring from a common stock, called the Indo-Aryan. I would not be able, in support of the above, to give extracts from many authors, as the books of reference at my disposal are unfortunately very few. I, however, quote as follows from Sir W. W. Hunter's *Indian Empire*:

This nobler race (meaning the early Aryans) belonged to the Aryan or Indo-Germanic stock, from which the Brahman, the Rajput, and the Englishman alike descend. Its earliest home visible to history was in Central Asia. From that common camping ground certain branches of the race started for the East, others for the West. One of the Western offshoots founded the Persian Kingdom; another built Athens and Lacedaemon, and became the Hellenic nation; a third went on to Italy and reared the city on the seven hills, which grew into Imperial Rome. A distant colony of the same race excavated the silver ores of prehistoric Spain; and when we first catch a sight of ancient England, we see an Aryan settlement, fishing in wattle canoes and working the tin mines of Cornwall.

The forefathers of the Greek and the Roman, of the Englishman and the Hindoo, dwelt together in Asia, spoke the same tongue and worshipped the same gods.

The ancient religions of Europe and India had a similar origin.

Thus, it will be seen that the learned historian, who must be supposed to have consulted all the authorities, without a shadow of doubt makes the above unqualified assertion. If then I err, I err in good company. And the belief, whether mistaken or well-founded, serves as the basis of operations of those who are trying to unify the hearts of the two races, which are, legally and outwardly, bound together under a common flag.

A general belief seems to prevail in the Colony that the Indians are little better, if at all, than savages or the Natives of Africa. Even the children are taught to believe in that manner, with the result that the Indian is being dragged down to the position of a raw Kaffir¹.

Such a state of things, which the Christian legislators of the Colony would not, I firmly believe, wittingly allow to exist and remain, must be my excuse for the following copious extracts, which will show at once that the Indians were, and are, in no way inferior to their Anglo-Saxon brethren, if I may venture to use the word, in the various departments of life—industrial, intellectual, political, etc.

As to Indian philosophy and religion, the learned author of the *Indian Empire* thus sums up :

The Brahmin solutions to the problems of practical religion were self-discipline, alms, sacrifice to and contemplation of the Deity. But, besides the practical questions of the spiritual life, religion has also intellectual problems, such as the compatibility of evil with the goodness of God, and the unequal distribution of happiness and misery in this life. Brahmin philosophy has exhausted the possible solutions of these difficulties, and of most of the other great problems which have since perplexed the Greek and Roman sage, mediaeval schoolman and *modern man of science* (the italics are mine). The various hypotheses of creation, arrangement and development were each elaborated and the *views of physiologists at the present day are a return with new lights to the evolution theory of Kapila*² (the italics are mine). The works on religion published in the native language in India in 1877 numbered 1192, besides 56 on mental and moral philosophy. In 1882 the total had risen to 1545 on religion and 153 on mental and moral philosophy.

Max Muller says with regard to Indian philosophy (the following, and a few more that will follow, have been partly or wholly

¹ Member of a South African race; loosely applied to Natives in South Africa

² Sage of ancient India, *circa* seventh century B.C., who founded the Sankhya system of philosophy

quoted in the Franchise petition) :

If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India; and if I were to ask myself from what literature we have here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact, more truly human—a life not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.

The German philosopher, Schopenhauer, thus adds his testimony to the grandeur of Indian philosophy as contained in the Upanishads:

From every sentence deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us, and original thoughts of kindred spirits ... In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnek'hat¹. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.

Coming to science, Sir William says :

The science of language, indeed, had been reduced in India to fundamental principles at a time when the grammarians of the West still treated it on the basis of accidental resemblances, and modern philosophy dates from the study of Sanskrit by European scholars. . . The grammar of Panini² stands supreme among the grammars of the world. . . It arranges in logical harmony the whole phenomena which the Sanskrit language presents, and stands forth as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry.

Speaking on the same department of science, Sir H. S. Maine, in his Rede lecture, published in the latest edition of the *Village-Communities*, says :

India has given to the world Comparative Philosophy and Comparative Mythology; it may yet give us a new science not less valuable than the sciences of language and of folklore. I hesitate to call it Comparative

¹ Collection of fifty Upanishads rendered originally into Persian from Sanskrit in the 17th century

² Celebrated Sanskrit grammarian, *circa* sixth century

Jurisprudence because, if it ever exists, its area will be so much wider than the field of law. For India not only contains (or to speak more accurately, did contain) an Aryan language older than any other descendant of the common mother tongue, and a variety of names of natural objects less perfectly crystallized than elsewhere into fabulous personages, but it includes a whole world of Aryan institutions, Aryan customs, Aryan laws Aryan ideas, Aryan, beliefs, in a far earlier stage of growth and development than any which survive beyond its borders.

Of Indian astronomy the same historian says:

The astronomy of the Brahmins has formed alternately the subject of excessive admiration and of misplaced contempt. . . In certain points the Brahmins advanced beyond Greek astronomy. Their fame spread throughout the West, and found entrance into the *Chronicon Paschale*¹. In the 8th and 9th centuries the Arabs became their disciples.

I again quote Sir William :

In algebra and arithmetic the Brahmins attained a high degree of proficiency independent of Western aid. To them we owe the invention of the numerical symbols on the decimal system . . . The Arabs borrowed these figures from the Hindus, and transmitted them to Europe. . . The works on mathematics and mechanical science, published in the native languages in India in 1867, numbered 89, and in 1882, 166.

The medical science of the Brahmins (continues the eminent historian) was also an independent development. . . . The specific diseases whose names occur in Panini's grammar indicate that medical studies had made progress before his time (350 B.C.). . . . Arabic medicine was founded on the translations from the Sanskrit treatises. . . . European medicine down to the 17th century was based upon the Arabic. . . . The number of medical works published in the native languages of India in 1877 amounted to 130, and in 1882 to 212, besides 87 on natural science.

Writing of the art of war, the writer proceeds :

The Brahmins regarded not only medicine but also the arts of war music, and architecture as supplementary parts of their divinely inspired knowledge. . . . The Sanskrit epics prove that strategy had attained to the position of a recognized science before the birth of Christ, and the later *Agni Purana*² devotes long sections to its systematic treatment.

¹ An outline of Chronology from Adam to 629 A.D., supposed to have been compiled in the seventh century

² One of the eighteen *puranas* or old sacred Hindu mythological works it is believed to have been expounded by Agni, the god of fire, and deals with, among other things, ritual worship, duties of kingship and the art of war.

The Indian art of music was destined to exercise a wider influence. . . . This notation passed from the Brahmins through the Persians to Arabia, and was thence introduced into European music by Guido of Arezzo at the beginning of the 11th century.

On architecture the same author says :

The Buddhists were the great stone-builders of India. Their monasteries and shrines exhibit the history of the art during twenty-two centuries, from the earliest cave structures of the rock temples to the latest Jain erections dazzling in stucco, over-crowded with ornament. It seems not improbable that the churches of Europe owe their steeples to the Buddhist topes. . . . Hindu art has left memorials which extort the admiration and astonishment of our age.

The Hindu palace architecture of Gwalior, the Indian Mahomedan mosques, the mausoleums of Agra and Delhi, with several of the older Hindu temples of Southern India, stand unrivalled for grace of outline and elaborate wealth of ornament.

English decorative art in our day has borrowed largely from Indian forms and patterns. . . . Indian art works, when faithful to native designs, still obtain the highest honours at the international exhibitions of Europe.

Here is what Andrew Carnegie in his *Round the World* says about the Taj of Agra :

There are some subjects too sacred for analysis, or even for words. And I now know that there is a human structure so exquisitely fine or unearthly, as to lift it into this holy domain. . . . The Taj is built of a light creamy marble, so that it does not chill one as pure cold white marble does. It is warm and sympathetic as a woman. . . . One great critic has freely called the Taj a feminine structure. There is nothing masculine about it, says he; its charms are all feminine. This creamy marble is inlaid with fine black marble lines, the entire Koran, in Arabic letters, it is said, being thus interwoven. . . . Till the day I die, amid mountain streams or moonlight strolls in the forest, wherever and whenever the moon comes, when all that is most sacred, most elevated and most pure recur to shed their radiance upon the tranquil mind, there will be found among my treasures the memory of that lovely charm—the Taj.

Nor has India been without its laws, codified or otherwise. The Institutes of Manu have always been noted for their justice and precision. So much does Sir H. S. Maine seem to have been struck with their equity that he calls them “an ideal picture of that which, in the view of the Brahmins, ought to be the law”. Mr. Pincott, writing in 1891 in *The National Review*, alludes to them as “the philosophical precepts of Manu”.

Nor have the Indians been deficient in the dramatic art. Goethe thus speaks of *Shakuntala*, the most famous Indian drama:

Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms, and the fruits of its decline,

And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed.

Wouldst thou the earth, and heaven itself in one sole name combine?

I name thee, O Shakuntala! and all at once is said.

Coming to the Indian character and social life, the evidence is voluminous. I can only give meagre extracts.

I take the following again from Hunter's *Indian Empire*:

The Greek ambassador (Megasthenes) observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, and the chastity of the women and the courage of the men. In valour they excelled all other Asiatics; they required no locks to their doors; above all, no Indian was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers and skilful artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a lawsuit, and lived peaceably under their native chiefs. The kingly government is portrayed almost as described in Manu, with its hereditary castes of councillors and soldiers. . . The village system is well described, each little rural unit *seeming to the Greek an independent republic* (the italics are mine)

Bishop Heber says of the people of India :

So far as their natural character is concerned, I have been led to form on the whole a very favourable opinion. They are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager after knowledge and improvement. . . . They are sober, industrious, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their children; of tempers almost uniformly gentle and patient, and more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings than almost any men whom I have met with.

Sir Thomas Munro, sometime Governor of Madras, says :

I do not exactly know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient, but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufacturers, if a capacity to produce what convenience and luxury demand, if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality, and, above all, if a scrupulous respect and delicacy towards the female sex, are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

Sir George Birdwood gives the following opinion on the general

character of the Indians :

They are long-suffering and patient, hardy and enduring, frugal and industrious, law-abiding and peace-seeking. . . . The educated and higher mercantile classes are honest and truthful, and loyal and trustful towards the British Government, in the most absolute sense that I can use, and you understand the words. Moral truthfulness is as marked a characteristic of the Settia (upper) class of Bombay as of the Teutonic race itself. The people of India, in short, are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards—false to our-selves—we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

Sri C. Trevelyan remarks that :

They have very considerable administrative qualities, great patience, industry, and great acuteness and intelligence.

Of the family relations, thus speaks Sir W. W. Hunter :

There is simply no comparison between Englishmen and Hindus with respect to the place occupied by family interests and family affections in their minds. The love of parents for children and of children for parents has scarcely any counterpart in England. Parental and filial affection occupies among our Eastern fellow-citizens the place which is taken in this country by the passion between the sexes

And Mr. Pincott thinks that :

In all social matters the English are far more fitted to sit at the feet of Hindus and learn as disciples than to attempt to become masters.

Says M. Louis Jacolliot :

Soil of ancient India, cradle of humanity, hail! Hail, venerable and efficient nurse, whom centuries of brutal invasions have not yet buried under the dust of oblivion. Hail, fatherland of faith, of love, of poetry, and of science! May we hail a revival of thy past in our Western future!

Says Victor Hugo :

These nations have made Europe, France and Germany. Germany is for the Occident that which India is for the Orient.

Add to this the facts that India has produced a Buddha, whose life some consider the best and the holiest lived by a mortal, and some to be second only to that lived by Jesus; that India has produced an Akbar, whose policy the British Government have followed with but few modifications; that India lost, only a few years ago, a Parsee Baronet who astonished not India only, but England also, by his

munificent charities; that India has produced Christodas Paul, a journalist, whom Lord Elgin, the present Viceroy, compared with the best European journalists; that India has produced Justices Mahomed and Muthukrishna Aiyer¹, both Judges of High Courts in India, whose judgments have been pronounced to be the ablest delivered by the judges, both European and Indian, who adorn the Indian Bench; and, lastly, India has in Baddruddin², Banerji³, and Mehta⁴, orators who have on many an occasion held English audiences spellbound.

Such is India. If the picture appears to you to be somewhat overdrawn or fanciful, it is none the less faithful. There is the other side. Let him who takes delight in separating, rather than in uniting, the two nations give the other side. Then, please, examine both with the impartiality of a Daniel, and I promise that there will yet remain a considerable portion of what has been said above untouched, to induce you to believe that India is not Africa, and that it is a civilized country in the truest sense of the term *civilization*.

Before, however, I can quit this subject, I have to crave leave to be allowed to anticipate a possible objection. It will be said: "If what you say is true, the people whom you call Indians in the Colony are not Indians, because your remarks are not borne out by the practices prevailing among the people whom you call Indians. See how grossly untruthful they are." Everyone I have met with in the Colony has dwelt upon the untruthfulness of the Indians. To a limited extent I admit the charge. It will be very small satisfaction for me to show, in

¹ The reference is to Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyer.

² Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906); actively associated with and *de facto* President of the Bombay Presidency Association; presided over Congress session at Madras (1887); Judge of Bombay High Court (1895) ; nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1882.

³ Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925); Moderate politician, Member of the Indian National Congress deputation to Britain in 1890. Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal (1893-1901). Owned and edited the *Bengalee*. Under the Montford Reforms became member of the Bengal Executive Council. President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902.

⁴ Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915); Indian leader, dominated the public life of Bombay for a long time; one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and thrice Chairman of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Member of the Bombay Legislative Council and later, of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. One of the pioneer founders of the Indian National Congress in 1885; was elected to its presidentship twice, in 1890 and 1909.

reply to the objection, that other classes do not fare much better in this respect, especially if and when they are placed in the position of the unfortunate Indians. And yet, I am afraid, I shall have to fall back upon argument of that sort. Much as I would wish them to be otherwise, I confess my utter inability to prove that they are more than human. They come to Natal on starvation wages (I mean here the indentured Indians).

They find themselves placed in a strange position and amid uncongenial surroundings. *The moment they leave India* they remain throughout life, if they settle in the Colony, without any moral education. Whether they are Hindus or Mahommedans, they are absolutely without any moral or religious instruction worthy of the name. They have not learned enough to educate themselves without any outside help. Placed thus, they are apt to yield to the slightest temptation to tell a lie. After some time, lying with them becomes a habit and a disease. They would lie without any reason, without any prospect of bettering themselves materially, indeed, without knowing what they are doing. They reach a stage in life when their moral faculties have completely collapsed owing to neglect. There is also a very sad form of lying. They cannot dare tell the truth, even for their wantonly ill-treated brother, for fear of receiving ill-treatment from their master. They are not philosophic enough to look with equanimity on the threatened reduction in their miserable rations and serve corporal punishment, did they dare to give evidence against their master. Are these men, then, more to be despised than pitied? Are they to be treated as scoundrels, deserving no mercy, or are they to be treated as helpless creatures, badly in need of sympathy? Is there any class of people who would not do as they are doing under similar circumstances?

But I will be asked what I can have to say in defence of the traders, who, too, are equally good liars. As to this, I beg to submit that the charge against them is without foundation, and that they do not lie more than the other classes do for the purposes of trade or law. They are very much misunderstood; in the first place, because they cannot speak the English language, and secondly, because the interpretation is very defective, through no fault of the interpreters. The interpreters are expected to perform the Herculean task of interpreting successfully in four languages, viz., Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani and Gujarati. The trading Indian invariably speaks Hindustani or Gujarati.

Those who speak Hindustani only, speak high Hindustani. The interpreters, with one exception, speak the local Hindustani, which is a grotesque mixture of Tamil, Gujarati and other Indian languages, clothed in extremely bad Hindustani grammar. Very naturally, the interpreter has to argue with the witness before he can get at his meaning. While the process is going on, the judge grows impatient, and thinks that the witness is prevaricating. The poor interpreter, if questioned, true to human nature, in order to conceal his defective knowledge of the language, says the witness does not give straight answers. The poor witness has no opportunity of setting himself right. In the case of the Gujarati speakers the matter is still more serious. There is not a single Gujarati interpreter in the Courts. The interpreter, after great difficulty, manages to get at the sense only of what the witness is speaking. I have myself seen a Gujarati-speaking witness struggling to make himself understood, and the interpreter struggling to understand the Gujarati-Hindustani. Indeed, it speaks volumes for the acuteness of the interpreters in extracting even the sense from a forest of strange words. but all the while the struggle is going on, the Judge makes up his mind not to believe a word of what the witness says, and puts him down for a liar.

III

In order to answer the third question, "Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?" it will be necessary to enquire what their treatment is. I think it will be readily granted that the Indian is bitterly hated in the Colony. The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the footpath. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples : "The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community"; "these parasites"; "Wily, wretched, semi-barbarous Asiatics"; "a thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindoo"; "he is chock-full of vice, and he lives upon rice.... I heartily cuss the Hindoo"; "squalid coolies with truthless tongues and artful ways". The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name. He is "Ramsamy"; he is "Mr. Sammy"; he is "Mr. Coolie"; he is "he black man". And these offensive epithets have become so common that they (at any rate one of them, "coolie) are used even in the sacred precincts of the

Courts, as if “the coolie” were the legal and proper name to give to any and every Indian. The public men, too, seem to use the word freely. I have often heard the painful expressio “coolie clerk” from the mouths of men who ought to know better. The expression is a contradiction in terms and is extremely offensive to those to whom it is applied. But then, in this Colony the Indian is a creature without feelings!

The tramcars are not for the Indians. The railway officials may treat the Indians as beasts. No matter how clean, his very sight is such an offence to every white man in the Colony that he would object to sit, even for a short time, in the same compartment with the Indian. The hotels shut their doors against them. I know instances of respectable Indians having been denied a night's lodging in an hotel. Even the public baths are not for the Indians, no matter who they are.

If I am to depend upon one-tenth of the reports that I have received with regard to the treatment of the indentured Indians on the various estates, it would form a terrible indictment against the humanity of the masters on the estates and the care taken by the *Protector* of Indian immigrants. This, however, is a subject which my extremely limited experience of it precludes me from making further remarks upon.

The Vagrant Law is needlessly oppressive, and often puts respectable Indians in a very awkward position.

Add to this the rumours that are rife in the air, to the effect that they should be made, or induced, to live in Locations. It may be merely an intention; none the less, it is an index of the feeling of the European Colonists against the Indians. I beseech you to picture to yourself the state the Indian would be in in Natal if it were possible to carry out all such intentions.

Now, is this treatment in consonance with the British traditions of justice, or morality, or Christianity?

I would, with your permission, quote an extract from Macaulay, and leave it to you to answer the question as to whether the present treatment would have met with his approval. Speaking on the subject of the treatment of the Indians, he expressed the following sentiments:

We shall never consent to administer the *pousta*¹ to a whole community, to stupefy and paralyse a great people whom God has committed to our charge, for the

¹ Seed of opium poppy

wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control. What is that power worth which is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on misery, which we can hold by violating the most sacred duties which as governors we owe to the governed, which as a people blessed with far more than an ordinary measure of political liberty and of intellectual light we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft? *We are free, we are civilized, to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilization.*

I have but to refer you to writers like Mill, Burke, Bright, and Fawcett¹, to further show that they, at any rate, would not give countenance to the treatment accorded to the Indians in the Colony.

To bring a man here on starvation wages, to hold him under bondage, and when he shows the least signs of liberty, or, is in a position to live less miserably, to wish to send him back to his home where he would become comparatively a stranger and perhaps unable to earn a living, is hardly a mark of fair play or justice characteristic of the British nation.

That the treatment of the Indians is contrary to the teaching of Christianity needs hardly any argument. The Man, who taught us to love our enemies and to give our cheek to the one who wanted the coat, and to hold out the right cheek when the left was smitten, and who swept away the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, would never brook a disposition that causes a man to be so proud of himself as to consider himself polluted even by the touch of a fellow-being.

IV

The last head of the enquiry has, I believe, been sufficiently discussed in discussing the first. And I for one would not be much grieved in an experiment were tried to drive out each and every Indian from the Colony. In that case, I have not the slightest doubt that the Colonists would soon rue the day when they took the step and would wish they had not done it. The petty trades and the petty avocations of life would be left alone. The work for which they are specially suited would not be taken up by the Europeans, and the Colony would lose an immense amount of revenue now derived from the Indians. The climate of South Africa is not such as would enable the Europeans to do the work that they can easily do in Europe. What, however, I do submit with the greatest deference is this, that if the Indians must be kept in the Colony, then let them receive such treatment as by their

¹ Henry Fawcett (1833-84); statesman and professor of Political Economy at Cambridge

ability and integrity they may be fit to receive, that is to say, give them what is their due, and what is the least that a sense of justice, unalloyed by partiality or prejudice, should prompt you to give them.

It now remains for me only to implore you to give this matter your earnest consideration, and to remind you (here I mean especially the English) that Providence has put the English and the Indians together, and has placed in the hands of the former the destinies of the latter, and it will largely depend upon what every Englishman does with respect to the Indian and how he treats him, whether the putting together will result in an ever lasting union brought about by broad sympathy, love, free mutual intercourse, and also a right knowledge of the Indian character, or whether the putting together will simply last so long as the English have sufficient resources to keep the Indians under check, and the naturally mild Indians have not been vexed into active opposition to the foreign yoke. I have, further, to remind you that the English in England have shown by their writings, speeches and deeds that they mean to unify the hearts of the two peoples, that they do not believe in colour distinctions, and that they will raise India with them rather than rise upon its ruins. In support of this I beg to refer you to Bright, Fawcett, Bradlaugh, Gladstone, Wedderburn, Pincott, Ripon, Reay, Northbrooke, Dufferin, and a host of other eminent Englishmen who represent public opinion. The very fact of an English constituency returning an Indian to the British Ho'use of Commons, in spite of the expressed wish to the contrary of the then Prime Minister, and almost the whole British Press, both Conservative and Liberal, congratulating the Indian member on the success, and expressing its approval of the unique event, and the whole House again, both Conservative and Liberal, according him a warm welcome—this fact alone, I submit, supports my statement. Will you, then, follow them, or will you strike out a new path? Will you promote unity, “which is the condition of progress”, or will you promote discord, “which is the condition of degradation”?

In conclusion, I beg of you to receive the above in the same spirit in which it has been written.

*I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI*

From a pamphlet

¹ The reference is to Dadabhai Naoroji's election in 1893 from Central Finsbury.

56. LETTER TO EUROPEANS¹

BEACH GROVE,
DURBAN,
December 19, 1894

SIR

I venture to send you the enclosed for perusal, and solicit your opinion on the subject matter of the Open Letter.

Whether you be a clergyman, editor, public man, merchant or lawyer, the subject cannot but demand your attention. If you are a clergyman, inasmuch as you represent the teaching of Jesus, it must be your duty to see that you are in no way, directly or indirectly, countenancing a treatment of your fellow-beings that would not be pleasing to Jesus. If you are an editor of a news-paper, the responsibility is equally great. Whether you are using your influence as a journalist to the evolution or degradation of humanity will depend upon whether you are encouraging division among class and class or striving after union. The same remarks will apply to you as a public man. If you are a merchant or lawyer, you have then too, a duty to discharge towards your customers and clients from whom you derive a considerable pecuniary advantage. It is for you to treat them as dogs or fellow-beings demanding your sympathy in the cruel persecution that they are put to owing to the prevalent ignorance about the Indians in the Colony. Coming as you do in comparatively close contact with them, you have, no doubt, the opportunity and incentive to study them. Looked at from a sympathetic standpoint, they would perhaps show themselves to you as they have been seen by scores and hundreds of Europeans who had the opportunity to study them, and who used it alright.

Your opinion is solicited with a view to ascertaining if there are many Europeans in the Colony who would actively sympathize with and feel for the Indians in the Colony, assuming that their treatment is not all that could be desired.

I am, Sir,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : S.N. 201

¹ A printed circular letter sent by Gandhiji to Europeans in Natal

57. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
January 21, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
SIR

You will oblige me by letting me draw the attention of your readers to the notice that appears in your advertisement columns about the Esoteric Christian Union and the London Vegetarian Society.

The system represented by the Union establishes the unity and common source of all the great religions of the world, and points out, as the books advertised will amply show, the utter inadequacy of materialism which boasts of having given the world a civilization which was never witnessed before, and which is alleged to *The Natal Advertiser* have done the greatest good to humanity, all the while conveniently forgetting that its greatest achievements are the invention of the most terrible weapons of destruction, the awful growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between capital and labour and the wanton and diabolical cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science, "falsely so called".

There seem to be, however, signs of reaction setting in—the almost phenomenal success of the Theosophical Society, the gradual acceptance by the clergy of the doctrine of holiness, and what is more, the acceptance by Professor Max Muller of the doctrine of reincarnation so conclusively demonstrated in *The Perfect Way*, his statement that it was gaining ground among the thinking minds in England and elsewhere, and the publication of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*. It is not possible to secure these works in S. Africa. My knowledge of them is, therefore, confined to their reviews. All these and many such facts are, I submit, unmistakable signs of a return from the materialistic tendencies, which have made us so cruelly selfish, to the unadulterated esoteric teachings of not only Jesus Christ, but also of Buddha, Zoroaster and Mahomed, who are no longer so generally denounced by the civilized world as false prophets, but whose and Jesus's teachings are beginning to be acknowledged to be complementary of one another.

I regret that I am unable yet to advertise books on vegetarianism, as they have, by mistake, been forwarded to India, and will,

therefore, take some time before they arrive in Durban. I may, however, state one valuable fact with regard to the efficacy of vegetarianism. There is no more potent instrument of evil than drunkenness, and I may be allowed to say that all those who suffer from the craving for drink, but would like really to be free from the curse, have only to give a trial for at least one month to a diet chiefly consisting of brown bread and oranges or grapes, to secure an entire freedom from the craving. I have myself carried on a series of experiments, and can testify that on a vegetarian diet, without any condiments, and consisting of a liberal supply of juicy fresh fruits, I have lived comfortably, without tea, coffee, or cocoa, and even water, for days together. Hundreds in England have become vegetarian for this reason, and having once been inveterate tipplers, have now reached a stage when the very smell of grog or whisky is an offence to their tastes. Dr. B. W. Richardson, in his *Food for Man*, recommends pure vegetarianism as a cure for drunkenness. In a comparatively hot country like Natal, where there is a plentiful supply of fruits and vegetables, a bloodless diet should prove very beneficial in every way, apart from its immeasurable superiority to flesh foods on grounds scientific, sanitary, economic, ethical and spiritual.

It is, perhaps, needless to mention that the sale of E.C.U. books is not at all a money-making concern. In certain cases the books have even been given away. They will be gladly lent in some cases. I shall be very happy to correspond with any of your readers who may want any further information, either about the E.C.U. or the L.V.S., or to have a quiet chat on these (to me at any rate) momentous questions.

I would conclude with what Rev. John Pulsford, D.D., has to say with regard to the teaching of the E.C.U.:

It is impossible for a spiritually intelligent reader to doubt that these teachings were received from within the astral veil. They are full of the concentrated and compact wisdom of the Holy Heavens, and of God. If the Christians knew their own religion, they would find in these priceless records Lord Christ and His vital process abundantly illustrated and confirmed. That such communications are possible, and are permitted to be given to the world, is a sign, and a most promising sign, of our age.

I am, etc.

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR

THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION

&

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Advertiser, 1-2-1895

58. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

328 SMITH STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
January 25, 1895

To
DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ., M.P.
LONDON
SIR

Though the Government is silent, the papers have been informing the public that the Franchise Bill has been disallowed by Her Majesty. Can you give us any information on the point?

The Indian settlers cannot thank you and the Congress Committee too much for the trouble taken on their behalf.

I remain,
Sir,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I venture to send the enclosed for perusal.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original : S.N. 2253

59. BOOKS FOR SALE

The following books by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland, introduced for the first time in South Africa, are offered for sale at their published prices :

The Perfect Way, 7/6

Clothed with the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 3/6

Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-

The New Gospel of Interpretation, 1/-

It is like listening to the utterances of God or arch-angel. I know of nothing in literature to equal it (*The Perfect Way*).

— The Late Sir F. H. Doyle

We regard *The Perfect Way* as the most illumined and useful book published in the nineteenth century.

—GNOSTIC (U.S.A.)

M. K. GANDHI
AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND
THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY
The Natal Advertiser, 2-2-1895

60. LETTER TO "THE NATAL WITNESS"

DURBAN,
March 23, 1895

To
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness
SIR

I trust, in the interests of justice, you will allow me to make a few remarks on your report of the conversation that took place between Sir Walter Wragg and Mr. Tatham with regard to a point of Mahommedan Law, in your issue of the 22nd instant.

¹ This was with reference to the following report in *The Natal Witness*, 22-3-1895 :

Mr. Tatham applied to the Supreme Court yesterday for confirmation of the Master's report in the intestate estate of Hassan Dawjee, and remarked that a plan of distribution, prepared by Mr. Gandhi, barrister, had been embodied in the report, and was framed according to Mahommedan Law.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : The only thing about this is that Mr. Gandhi knows nothing of Mahommedan Law. He is as great a stranger to Mahommedan Law as a Frenchman. For what he has stated he would have to go to a book as you would; of his own knowledge he knows nothing.

Mr Tatham said that a plan of distribution had been obtained from the priests and from Mr. Gandhi. Where else they were to go he did not know. They had exhausted all the expert evidence available.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : The portion which Mr. Gandhi states should go to the brother of the deceased, should, according to Mahommedan Law, go to the poor. Mr. Gandhi is a Hindu and knows his own faith, of course, but he knows nothing of Mahommedan Law.

MR. TATHAM : The question is whether we shall take Mr. Gandhi's view or the priests'.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : You must take the priests'. When the brother can show that he represents the poor he will be entitled to 5/24ths, as stated by Mr. Gandhi.

I have ventured to trespass upon your courtesy, not because I want to defend myself, but because of the decision of the Supreme Court, which, I believe, with all due respect to Sir Walter Wragg, is based upon an erroneous view of the Mahommedan Law, and would vitally affect a large portion of the Indian Colonists.

Were I a Mahommedan, I should be very sorry to be judged by a Mahommedan whose sole qualification is that he is born a Mahommedan. It is a revelation that the Mahommedans know the law intuitively, and that a non-Mahommedan never dare give an opinion on a point of Mahommedan Law.

The decision (if your report is correct) that the brother will be entitled to his 5/24ths only after he "can show that he represents the poor", is, I am afraid, according to the Mahommedan Law administered in India and revealed in the Koran, subversive of that law. I have carefully gone through the chapters on "Inheritance" in Macnaughten's *Mahomedan Law* (which, by the way, is edited by a non-Mahommedan Indian and which Messrs Binns & Mason, in their report published after their return from India, say is the book considered to be one of the best on that law), and have also gone through that portion of the Koran which relates to the subject, and in them I find not one word with regard to the poor being entitled to any part of the inheritance of a deceased Moslem. If the Koran and the book above mentioned are any authority on that law, then not only is there no portion to which the poor are entitled in the case in question, but under no circumstances are the poor entitled to any part of an intestate estate. I hope to be able to show that the brother (it should really be the half-brother), when he takes anything under that law, takes it *in his own right*, and takes it *because* he is a *brother*.

It is likely that His Lordship, when he was talking about an inheritance, was actually but unconsciously thinking of almsgiving, which is incumbent upon every Mahommedan. It is one of their articles of faith. But the principle that guides almsgiving during life does not obtain in cases of distribution of inheritance. A Mahommedan, by giving alms during his lifetime, earns for himself heaven or a respectable place therein. Alms given out of his estate by the State after his death can surely do him no spiritual good, because it is not *his* act. After a Moslem's death it is the relatives who have a prior, nay exclusive, claim upon his estate.

Says the Koran :

We have appointed unto everyone kindred to inherit part of what their parents and relations shall leave after their deaths.

The law says :

There belong to the property of a person deceased four successive duties : first, his funeral ceremony and burial without superfluity of expense, yet without deficiency; next the discharge of his just debts from the whole of his remaining effects; then the payment of his legacies out of a third of what remains after his debts are paid; and lastly, the distribution of the residue among his successors.

The successors are thus described :

1. Legal sharers; 2. residuaries; 3. distant kindred; 4. successors by contract; 5. acknowledged kindred; 6. universal legatee; 7. Crown.

“Legal sharers” are defined as “all those persons for whom specific shares have been appointed or ordained in the sacred text, the traditions, or with general assent”, and according to the table enumerating the 12 classes of sharers, include half-brothers also. “Residuaries” are “all persons for whom no share has been appointed, and who take the residue after the sharers have been satisfied, or the whole estate when there are no sharers”. It should here be noted that some legal sharers are as such, under certain conditions, excluded, and then rank as residuaries. “Distant kindred” are “all relations who are neither sharers nor residuaries”. “After the sharers are satisfied, if there remains a residue of the property left by the deceased, *it is to be divided among the first class of heirs called residuaries*. If there be no residuaries, the residue will revert to the sharers in proportion to their shares.”

I would not occupy your valuable space by giving definitions of the other successors. Suffice it to say that they do not include the poor at all, and that they can “take” only after the first three classes are exhausted.

The residuaries in their own right include, among others, “the 'offspring' of the father of the deceased, i.e., brothers, consanguine brothers, and their sons, how low soever”. Rule 12 of Section 1 says: “It is a general rule that a brother shall take double the share of a sister. The exception to it is in the case of brothers and sisters by the same mother only, but by different fathers.” And Rule 25, Section 11, says: “Where there are daughters or son's daughters and no *brothers*,

the sisters take what remains after the daughters or son's daughters have realized their shares, such residue being half should there be only one daughter or son's daughter, and one third should there be two or more." The two rules read together help us materially to determine the share the brother gets in the case in point.

In the typical examples given in the book I have been quoting from, I find the following with its solution : "*Example 7. Husband, daughter, brother and three sisters.*" The solution need not be given fully. The brother as a residuary *in his own right* gets 2/20ths.

It will then be seen from the above that brothers, and in their absence, half-brothers, rank either as sharers or residuaries in their own right, and, therefore, with the greatest deference to Sir Walter's opinion in the case in question, the brother "takes", if he does at all, *in his own right and not as representing the poor*, and if he does not "take" (a thing that cannot happen in such a case if the law is to be respected), the residue "reverts" to the sharers.

But the report says that the priest and I differ. If you eliminate the "I" and put "the law" instead (for I simply said what the law was), I would venture to say, the priest and the law should never differ, and if they do, it is the priest and not the law that goes to the wall. In this case, however, the priest and I do not differ if the distribution in the report sent to me by Mr. Tatham was the one approved by the priest, as it seems to have been, according to his letter of advice. The priest says not a word about the half-brother taking as representing the poor.

Lastly, after I saw the report, I saw purposely some Mahommedan gentlemen who ought to know the law according to Sir Walter, and they were surprised when I told them about the decision. They, without even taking time to consider—the thing appeared to them so plain and clear—said, "The poor never take anything from an intestate estate. The half-brother *as such* should have his share."

The decision then, I submit, is contrary to the Mahommedan Law, the priest's opinion, and other Mahommedan gentlemen. It will be a manifest hardship if the portions rightly belonging to the relations of a deceased Mahommedan are to be locked up until they can show that "they represent the poor"—a condition never contemplated by the law or sanctioned by Mahommedan usage.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 28-3-1895

61. MEMORIAL TO AGENT, PRETORIA¹

PRETORIA,
April 16, 1895

To

HIS HONOUR, SIR JACOBUS DE WET, K.C.M.G.,
HER MAJESTY'S AGENT, PRETORIA

THE MEMORIAL OF TAYOB KHAN AND ABDOOL GANI² OF
PRETORIA AND HAJEE HABIB HAJEE DADA OF JOHANNESBURG WHO
ACT AS A COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH
INDIAN MERCHANTS IN THIS REPUBLIC

We respectfully request Your Honour to place yourself in communication with His Excellency the High Commissioner, in order to ascertain whether Her Majesty's Government will be satisfied with the Award given by the Arbitrator in the recent arbitration held at Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State, between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, on the Indian question. As Your Honour is aware, the Arbitrator has decided that Law 3 of 1885³, as amended by Volksraad's besluit of 1886, must be enforced by this Government, and that in the event of any dispute or difference as to the interpretation of that law, the High Court of this Republic must decide such difference.

In one of the Green books, No. 21894, pages 31 and 35, put in

¹ This was enclosed with Despatch No. 204 of April 29, 1895 from the High Commissioner to the South African Republic to the Principal secretary of State for the Colonies.

² Partner and manager of the firm of Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen in Johannesburg

³ A Transvaal law; this applied to "the so-called Coolies, Arab, Malay and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire". It rendered them incapable of obtaining extended citizenship rights and of owning fixed property in the Republic. An exception was later made in the case of the "Coolies" who could, as sanctioned by Volksraad resolution of January 1887, own fixed property in specified streets, wards and Locations on grounds of sanitation. A further Volksraad resolution, in 1893, laid down that all Asiatics should be enforced to live and trade in the Locations. Trade could be carried on by registration and payment of a fee of £3. The law was considered to be in contravention of the London Convention.

⁴ Sometimes abbreviated to Raad, South African (Dutch) word for National Legislative Assembly in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

at the above-mentioned arbitration by the Government of this Republic, statements are made to the effect that His Honour the Chief Justice, in giving judgment in a certain application before the High Court by Ismael Suliman and Co.,¹ held that no difference could be made between places where business is carried on and where Indians reside. In view of these facts, we respectfully submit, without in any way impugning the High Court, that it would be a foregone conclusion, if the statements referred to above as to the judgment of the Chief Justice be correct, that the judgment of the Court in any case submitted to it under the above quoted law would be against the Indian subjects of Her Majesty in this Republic. As, therefore, the Arbitrator did not decide the question submitted to him in terms of the Deed of Submission, but practically left it to the decision of the High Court of this Republic, we would respectfully submit that the Arbitrator did not decide the question in terms of the reference to him. We, therefore, respectfully request Your Honour to communicate with her Majesty's Government and ascertain whether they will be satisfied with the above Award and acquiesce therein.

TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MOHAMED
ABDOOL GANI
HAJEE HABIB HAJEE DADA

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 148

¹ In this case Ismail Suliman, an Arab trader, in August 1888, was denied a trading licence to carry on business except in a Location. Arbitration by the Chief Justice of Orange Free State recognized the right of the South African Republic to enforce Law 3 of 1885 subject to interpretation by the country's Tribunals. The Supreme Court of the Transvaal however reversed the judgment later, and held that the Government had no power under that law to withhold licences from Asiatics.

62. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY¹

[DURBAN,
Before May 5, 1895]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL
THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners, as representing the Indians in this Colony, hereby respectfully approach your Honourable Assembly with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that so much of the Bill which provides for re-indenture and imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture, is manifestly unjust, entirely uncalled for and in direct opposition to the fundamental principles upon which the British Constitution is based.

That the Bill is manifestly unjust, does not need, your Petitioners submit, many words to prove. To raise the Maximum term of indenture from five years to an indefinite period is in itself unjust, because it puts in the way of the masters of the indentured Indians greater temptations to oppression or harshness. No matter how humane the masters may be in the Colony, they will always remain human. And your Petitioners need hardly point out what human nature is when selfish considerations guide one's actions. Moreover, the Bill, your Petitioners venture to say, is an absolutely one-sided arrangement, for, while it shows every consideration to the employer, it gives practically nothing in return to the employee.

The Bill is, your Petitioners submit, uncalled for because no reasons exist for its introduction. It is not meant to help the Colony out of a pecuniary crash or help forward any industry. On the other hand, it was because it was recognized that the industries, for which the Indian labour was specially required, no longer required any extraordinary aid that the £10,000 vote was abolished only last year. it

¹ The petition was published in *The Natal Advertiser*, 5-5-1895.

is then evident that there is no real need for such legislation.

To show that Bill is in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, your Petitioners humbly refer your Honourable Assembly to the whole course of the great events during the last century in which Britain has played a prominent part. Forced labour, from the grossest form of slavery to the mildest form of *veth*¹, has always been repugnant to the British traditions, and has everywhere, so far as practical, been abolished. Indentured labour exists in Assam as it does in this Colony. It was only a short time ago when it was admitted by her Majesty's Government, in reference to such labour in that country, that the indentured labour was an evil to be countenanced only as long as it was absolutely necessary to support or promote an important industry, and to be removed at the first suitable opportunity. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the Bill under consideration violates the above principle.

If the proposed extension of the term of indenture is thus (your Petitioners hope they have shown to your Honourable Assembly's satisfaction) unjust, uncalled for, and opposed to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, the proposed imposition of a tax is more so. It has long been acknowledged as an axiomatic truth that taxation is meant only for the purposes of revenue. It will not for a moment be said, your Petitioners humbly think, that the proposed tax is meant for any such purpose. The proposed taxation is avowedly meant to drive the Indian out of the Colony after he has finished his indenture. It will, therefore, be a prohibitive tax, and conflict with the principles of Free Trade.

It will moreover inflict, your Petitioners fear, an unwarranted wrong on the indentured Indians, because for an indentured Indian, who has severed all connection with India and come down to the Colony with his family, to go back and hope to earn a livelihood is almost an utter impossibility. Your Petitioners crave leave to mention from their own experience that, as a rule, it is only those Indians who cannot find work to keep body and soul together in India who come to the Colony under indenture. The very fabric of the Indian society is such that the Indian, in the first place, does not leave his home, and when once he is driven to do so, it is hopeless for him to return to India and expect to earn bread, much less to make a fortune.

¹ Forced, unpaid labour

It is an admitted fact that the Indian labour is indispensable to the prosperity of the Colony. If so, your Petitioners submit that the indentured Indians, who so materially help forward the prosperity of the Colony, are entitled to better consideration.

It need hardly be mentioned that the Bill is a piece of class legislation and that it accentuates and encourages the prejudice that exists against Indians in the Colony, and thus would widen the gulf between one class of British subjects and another. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly will come to the conclusion that that portion of the Bill which contemplates re-indenture and the imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture is not such as could be considered favourably by your Honourable Assembly, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHERS

From a photostat : S.N. 434

63. PETITION TO LORD RIPON¹

PRETORIA,
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC,
[Before *May 5, 1895*]²

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE MARQUIS OF
RIPON, HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON
THE PETITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN
THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners respectfully venture to approach Your Excellency in connection with their position in the S. A. R., especially as affected by the Award lately given by the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State in the Indian Arbitration Case.

2. Your Petitioners, whether as traders, shopkeepers' assistants,

¹ This was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet to the High Commissioner at Cape Town on May 30, 1895.

² *Vide* "Letter to M. C. Camroodeen", 5-5-1895.

hawkers, cooks, waiters, or labourers, are scattered over the whole of the Transvaal, though the greatest number is settled in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Of traders there are nearly 200 whose liquidated assets would amount to nearly £100,000. Of these about three firms import goods directly from England, Durban, Port Elizabeth, India, and other places, and have thus branches in other parts of the world whose existence mainly depends upon their Transvaal businesses. The rest are small vendors having stores in different places. There are nearly 2,000 hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about, while those of your petitioners who are labourers are employed as general servants in European houses or hotels. They number about 1,500 men, of whom about 1,000 live at Johannesburg.

3. Your Excellency's Petitioners, before entering into a discussion of their precarious position in the State, would with the greatest deference venture to point out that your Petitioners, whose interests were at stake, were never once consulted as to the arbitration, that the moment the question of arbitration was broached, your Petitioners protested both against the principle of arbitration and against the choice of the Arbitrator. Your Petitioners conveyed the protest verbally to His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria, who, your Petitioners here take the opportunity to say, has always been most courteous and attentive to those of your Petitioners who had occasion to wait upon him from time to time in connection with the grievances of the Indians in the Transvaal. Your Petitioners would also draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that even a written protest was sent to Her Majesty's High Commissioner at Cape Town. However, your Petitioners by dwelling upon the matter do not at all wish to cast the slightest reflection on the high-mindedness or probity of the learned Chief Justice of the Orange Free State or to question the wisdom of Her Majesty's officers. Having known the bias of the learned Chief Justice against the Indians, your Petitioners thought, and still humbly venture to think, that he could not, in spite of his most strenuous efforts to do otherwise, bring to bear upon the question an equibalanced judgment which is so necessary to a right and proper perception of the facts of a case. Judges having a previous knowledge of case have been known to refrain from deciding them, lest they should unconsciously be led away by preconceived notions or prejudices.

4. The reference to the learned Arbitrator in the case submitted

on behalf of Her Majesty's Government runs thus :

The Arbitrator shall be free to decide either in favour of the claims put forward by Her Majesty's Government or by the South African Republic, or to lay down such interpretation of the said Ordinances, read together with the Despatches referring to the question, as shall appear to him to be correct.

5. The Award as published in the papers is as follows:

(a) The claims of Her Majesty's Government and of the Government of the South African Republic respectively are disallowed, save and except to the extent and degree following, that is to say:

(b) The South African Republic is bound and entitled in its treatment of Indian and other Asiatic traders, being British subjects, to give full force and effect to Law No. 3 of 1885, enacted, and in the year 1886 amended by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, subject (in case of objection being raised by or on behalf of any such persons to any such treatment as not being in accordance with the provisions of the said law as amended) to sole and exclusive interpretation in the ordinary course by the Tribunals of the country.

6. Now, your Petitioners humbly submit that the above Award not being in terms of the reference is void, and that Her Majesty's Government is not, therefore, bound by it. The very object with which the arbitration was decided upon is, it is respectfully pointed out, frustrated. The reference leaves it to the Arbitrator *either* to allow the claims of one of the two Governments or to lay down such interpretation of the Ordinances as may appear to him to be correct, regard being had to the Despatches referring to the question. Instead of interpreting, the learned Arbitrator has delegated the interpretation, and in delegating has, moreover, limited the delegation to such persons as, by the very nature of their position, cannot possibly avail themselves of the procedure and evidence that could be availed of, nay that was expressly stipulated to be availed of, by the Arbitrator, and that would tend to enable them to lay down such an interpretation as would be just and equitable, though, perhaps, not strictly legal.

7. The Award, your Petitioners submit, is invalid on two grounds. First, because the Arbitrator had delegated his function, which no arbitrator in the world can do. Secondly, the Arbitrator has failed to keep to the reference, inasmuch as he has left undecided the question that he was expressly called upon to decide.

8. The object, it would seem, was not to have the question of

interpretation decided in a law-court, but to terminate the question once for all. Had not such been the case, Her Majesty's Government would never have entered into the voluminous correspondence with regard to the question of interpretation as found in the Transvaal Green Books, Nos. 1 and 2, 1894. The question that was to be, and your Petitioners submit can only be, decided diplomatically and politically has been left, if the Award is to be valid, to be decided judicially only. And if it is true that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has already expressed his opinion in the case presented on behalf of the Transvaal Government, the decision of the question is almost a foregone conclusion. To prove that this is so, your Petitioners refer Your Excellency to newspapers of current dates, especially *The Johannesburg Times* of 27th April 1895 (weekly edition).

9. But your Petitioners' appeal to Your Excellency is on higher and broader grounds; your Petitioners have every confidence that the question that affects thousands of Her Majesty's subjects, on a proper solution of which depend the bread and butter of hundreds of British subjects, and a technical solution of which may bring ruin to hundreds of homes and may leave them penniless, will not be left to be decided merely in a court of law where everybody's hands are tied down, and where such considerations find no place. So far as the traders are concerned, if the contention of the Transvaal Government is ultimately upheld, it means absolute ruin to them, and not only to them personally, but to their families and relations and servants, both in India and the Transvaal, who are dependent upon them. It is impossible for some of your Petitioners, who have been trading for a long time in the Transvaal, to seek "pastures new" and manage to keep body and soul together, if they are driven out of their present position through no fault of their own, but merely, as will be seen presently, because of the misrepresentation of a few interested persons.

10. The gravity of the question and the immense interests that are at stake are your Petitioners' excuse for the following some-what lengthy resume of their position, and for humbly soliciting Your Excellency's undivided attention to it.

11. The unfortunate departure from the 14th Clause of the Convention of 1881¹, which protects *equally* the interests of *all*

¹ This should be 1884; *vide* footnote on the following page.

persons *other* than *Natives*, has originated and been countenanced in and by the assumption that the Indian settlers in the Transvaal do not observe proper sanitation and is based on the misrepresentations of certain interested persons. It has been emphatically laid down by Her Majesty's Government throughout the correspondence about the Law 3 of 1885 that separate streets might be set apart for the Indians in the interests of public health, but that they cannot be compelled to trade in certain fixed parts only of the towns. After the Law 3 of 1885 was strenuously opposed for some time, the then High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson, in withdrawing opposition to the amended Law of 1886, says in his letter (26th September, 1886, page 46, Green Book No. 1, 1894) : "Although the amended law is still a contravention of the 14th Article of the Convention of London¹ I shall not advise Her Majesty's Government to offer further opposition to it in view of Your Honour's opinion that it is necessary for the *protection of the public health*." Even the reference to the Arbitrator and the Law 3 of 1885 shows clearly that the departure from the Convention was to be assented to only for sanitary reasons.

12. Your Petitioners hereby enter their most respectful, but emphatic protest against the assumption that there exist sanitary reasons for such a departure; your Petitioners hope to be able to show that no such reasons exist.

13. Your Petitioners append hereto three certificates from doctors which would speak for themselves and which show that their dwellings are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, from a sanitary point of view (App. A,B,C). Your Petitioners challenge comparison of their own dwellings with those of the Europeans who have theirs in their immediate neighbourhood. For, it so happens in Pretoria that, side by side with some of your Petitioners' houses and stores, are situated also the houses and stores of Europeans.

14. The following unsolicited testimonial will speak for itself. On the 16th October, 1885, Mr. Mitchell, the then Joint General Manager of the Standard Bank, writes thus to the High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson:

¹ London Convention, signed on February 27, 1884, between the Boers and the British. Article XIV assured all persons, other than Natives, full liberty of entry, travel, residence, ownership of property and trade in the South African Republic (or the Transvaal). The Boer Government tried to interpret the word 'Natives' to include the Indians, but this view was rejected by the British Government.

It may not be deemed out of place if I add that they (the Indian traders) are, within my knowledge, in all respects orderly, industrious and respectable people, and some among them are merchants of wealth and position, having establishments on a large scale in Mauritius, Bombay and elsewhere (Green Book No. 1, p. 37).

15. About 35 European firms of repute

distinctly declare that the aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places as well as their residences in a clean and proper sanitary state, in fact, just as good as the European (App. D).

16. It is true, however, that this does not appear in the newspapers. The public Press thinks that your Petitioners are “filthy vermin”. The representations to the Volksraad say the same thing. The reasons are obvious. Your Petitioners, not knowing the English language so well as to be able to take part in such discussions, or even to keep themselves informed of all the misrepresentations about them, are not always in a position to refute such statements. It was only when they became aware that their very existence was at stake that they went to the European firms and doctors to give their opinion about their sanitary habits.

17. But your Petitioners claim also a right to speak for themselves, and they have no hesitation in stating deliberately that collectively, though their dwellings may appear uncouth and are certainly without much adornment, they are in no way inferior to the European dwellings from a sanitary point of view. And as to their personal habits, they confidently assert that they use more water and bathe much oftener than the Europeans residing in the Transvaal whom they come in frequent connection with. Nothing can be further from your Petitioners’ wish than to set up comparisons, or to try to show themselves superior to their European brethren. Force of circumstances only has driven them to such a course.

18. The two elegant petitions at pp. 19-21 of the Green Book No. 2, which pray for an exclusion of all Asiatics, and contain wholesale denunciation of all the Asiatics, Chinamen, etc., render it absolutely necessary to state what has been stated above. The first petition enumerates terrible vices, peculiar, as alleged therein, to Chinamen, and the second, referring to the first, includes in the denunciation all the Asiatics. Speaking specifically of Chinese, Coolies and other Asiatics, the second petition refers to “the dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, syphilis,

and the like loathsome diseases engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people”.

19. Without entering into further comparison, and without entering into the question as affecting the Chinamen, your Petitioners most emphatically state that the above charges are entirely without-grounds so far as your Petitioners are concerned.

20. To show how far the interested agitators have gone, your Petitioners quote below an excerpt from a memorial presented to the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, a copy of which was sent with approval by the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce to the Transvaal Government :

As these men enter the State without wives or female relatives the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to consider all women as soulless and Christians as natural prey (Green Book No. 1, 1894, p. 30).

21. Your Petitioners ask, can there be a grosser libel on the great faiths prevailing in India or a greater insult to the Indian nation?

22. Such are the statements which, it will be noticed from the Green Books referred to, have been used to make out a case against the Indians.

23. The real and the only reason has all along been suppressed. The only reason for compelling your Petitioners [to live in Location] or putting every obstacle in the way of your Petitioners earning a decent livelihood is the trade jealousy. Your Petitioners, i.e., those who are traders—and the whole crusade is practically against them—have, by their competition and owing to their temperate and thrifty habits, been able to reduce the prices of the necessaries of life. This does not suit the European traders who would make very large profits. It is a notorious fact that your Petitioners, who are traders, are almost without exception teetotallers. Their habits are simple, and thus they are content to make small profits. This and this only is the reason of the opposition against them, and this is well-known to everybody in South Africa. That this is so can be gathered from the public Press of South Africa, which sometimes becomes frank and shows the hatred in its true light. Thus, dealing with the “Coolie question”, as it is contemptuously called, after showing that the real “Coolie” is indispensable to South Africa, *The Natal Advertiser* of the 15th September, 1893, thus delivers itself:

The sooner the steps are taken to suppress, and if possible to expel, the Indian trader the better. These are the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community.

24. Again, the *Press*, the Government organ in the Transvaal, dealing with this question, says : “If the Asiatic invasion is not stopped in time, European shopkeepers must be driven to the wall, as they have been in Natal, and in many parts of the Cape Colony.” The whole of the above article is interesting reading, and is a fair sample of the feeling of the Europeans towards colour in South Africa. Although the whole tenor of it betrays fear on the grounds of competition, there occurs this characteristic passage:

If we are to be swamped by these people, trade by Europeans will be impossible, and we shall one and all become subjected to the horrible danger inseparable from close contact with a large body of uncleanly citizens, with whom syphilis and leprosy are common diseases, and hideous immorality a matter of course.

25. And yet Dr. Veale, in the certificate attached hereto, gives it as his deliberate opinion that “the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class White” (App. A).

26. Furthermore, the doctor puts on record that while “every nationality had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto*, there was not a single Indian attacked”. Added to this is the testimony of the two doctors from Johannesburg to the effect that “the Indians are in no way inferior to the Europeans of the same standing” (App. B and C).

27. In further proof of your Petitioners’ contention, your Petitioners would take the liberty to quote from a leading article from *The Cape Times* of 13th April, 1889, which states the case for the Indians as fairly as could be wished:

The outcry which was raised in the Capital of the Transvaal against the “Coolie trader” some little time ago is brought to the mind by occasional paragraphs in the morning papers, regarding the doings of the Indian and the Arab traders.

After quoting a flattering description of the Indian enterprise from another newspaper, the article goes on to say:

In face of such reminders as these, one may reasonably expect to be pardoned for referring, for a few moments, to a body of respectable, hard-working men whose position is so misunderstood that their very nationality

is overlooked and a name labelled to them, which tends to place them in an exceedingly low level in the estimation of their fellow-creatures. In the face, too, of financial operations, the success of which many of their detractors would envy, one fails to understand the agitation which would place the operators in the same category as the half-heathen Native and confine him to Locations, and subject him to the harsher laws by which the Transvaal Kaffir is governed. The impression, which is but too prevalent both in the Transvaal and in this Colony, that the quiet and inoffensive Arab shopkeeper, and the equally harmless Indian, who carries his pack of dainty wares from house to house, is a Coolie, is due largely to an insolent ignorance as to the race whence they spring. When one reflects that the conception of Brahmanism, with its poetic and mysterious mythology, took its rise in the land of the "Coolie trader", that in that land 24 centuries ago, the almost divine Buddha taught and practised the glorious doctrine of self-sacrifice, and that it was from the plains and mountains of that weird old country that we have derived the fundamental truths of the very language we speak, one cannot but help regretting that the children of such a race should be treated as equals of the children of black heathendom and outer darkness. Those who, for a few moments, have stayed to converse with the Indian trader have been, perhaps, surprised to find they are speaking to a scholar and a gentleman. ... And it is the sons of this Land of light who are despised as Coolies, and treated as Kaffirs.

It is about time that those who cry out against the Indian merchant should have pointed out to them, who and what he is. Many of his worst detractors are British subjects enjoying all the privileges and rights of membership in a glorious community. To them the hatred of injustice, and the love of fair play is inherent, and when it affects themselves, they have a method of insisting upon their rights and liberties, whether under a foreign government or under their own. Possibly, it has never struck them that the Indian merchant is also a British subject, and claims the same liberties and rights with equal justice. To say the very least of it, if we may be permitted to employ a phrase of Palmerston's days, it is very un-English to claim rights one would not allow to others. The right of trade as an equal privilege has, since the abolition of the Elizabethan monopolies, become almost a part of the English Constitution, and were anyone to interfere with that right, the privilege of British citizenship would suddenly come to the front. That the Indian is more successful in competition and lives on less than the English merchant is the unfairest and weakest of arguments. The very foundation of English Commerce lies in the fact of our being able to compete more successfully with other nations. Surely, it is protection running to madness when English traders wish the State to intervene to protect them against the

more successful operations of their rivals. The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as Natives, simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level. . . . Enough has been said to show that the Indian merchant is something more than the 'Coolie' of the newspaper, the Dutchman and the disappointed shopkeeper.

28. It will also be seen from the above quotation that the European feeling, when not blinded by selfishness, is not against the Indians. But since it has been insisted throughout the Green books, before alluded to, that both the Burghers of the State and the European residents objected to the Indians, your Petitioners are sending two petitions to His Honour the State President of the S.A. Republic, one showing that a very large number of the Burghers are not only not against the Indians freely residing and trading in the Transvaal, but they would also deem it a hardship, should the harassing measures ultimately result in their withdrawal (App. E); and the other signed by the European residents, showing that, in the opinion of the signatories, their sanitary habits are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and that the agitation against the Indians is due to the trade jealousy (App. F). But were it otherwise—were every European and every Burgher of the State dead against the Indian—even that, your Petitioners submit, cannot affect the main issue, unless the causes which render such a state of things possible were such as would discredit a community against whom such a feeling exists. At the time of going to press (14-5-95), the Dutch petition was already signed by 484 Burghers and the European by 1340 Europeans.

29. That the Award of the Chief Justice of the O. F. S.¹ does not at all simplify the question and bring its solution a step nearer will appear from the following :

The active exercise of Her Majesty's Government protection will be just as necessary as if the Award had never been given. For, assuming, for argument's sake and that only, that the Award is proper and final, and that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has decided that the Indians must trade and reside in the places fixed by the Government, the question at once arises: where will they be put? May they be put in gullies—in places where sanitation is impossible, and which are so far away from towns as to render it absolutely impossible

¹ Orange Free State

for the Indians to trade or live decently? That this is quite likely would appear from the following strong protest addressed by His Honour the British Agent against the Transvaal Government assigning an uninhabitable place to the Malays in 1893, at p. 72, Green Book No. 2:

To be forced into a small Location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the Location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them, whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered. But, apart from these serious objections, some of these people have not the means of erecting dwellings for themselves on the land pointed out (or anywhere else) such as they have been accustomed to live in. The consequence of forcing them out of their present habitations will, therefore, result in all of them leaving Pretoria to the great inconvenience and loss of the White people who employ their labour, not even to speak of the hardship to themselves. . . .

30. At the last page of the same book, in his Despatch dated the 21st March, 1894, the High Commissioner says as follows:

. . . Her Majesty's Government assume that the Arbitration will apply to any Aboriginal of Asia who may be a British subject.

31. If, in terms of that Despatch, the Arbitration is to apply to the Aborigines of Asia, the question is, are there any Asiatic Aborigines at all in the Transvaal, unless all the Asiatics are to be treated as such *ipso facto*—a contention, your Petitioners are confident, will not be held out for one moment. Your Petitioners, therefore, will not certainly rank as Aborigines.

32. If the whole objection to the Indian proceeds from sanitary grounds, the following restrictions are entirely unintelligible:

1. The Indians, like the Kaffirs, cannot become owners of fixed property.

2. The Indians must be registered, the fee being £3-10s.

3. In passing through the Republic, like the Natives, they must be able to produce passes unless they have the registration ticket.

4. They cannot travel first or second class on the railways. They are huddled together in the same compartment with the Natives.

33. The sting of all these insults and indignities becomes more galling when it is borne in mind that many of your Petitioners are large holders of property in Delagoa Bay. There they are so much respected that they cannot take out a third-class railway ticket. They

are gladly received by the Europeans there. They are not required to have passes. Why, your Petitioners humbly ask, should they be differently treated in the Transvaal? Do their sanitary habits become filthy as soon as they enter the Transvaal territory? It often happens that the same Indian is differently treated by the same European in Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal.

34. To show how harassing the pass law is, your Petitioners have appended hereto an affidavit from Mr. Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, which will speak for itself (App. G). Who Mr. Haji Mahomed is, will be gathered from the copy of a letter attached to the affidavit (App. H). He is one of the foremost Indians in South Africa. Your Petitioners have attached the affidavit by way of illustration only, and to show how hard must be the lot of the other Indians, when a foremost Indian cannot travel without suffering indignity and actual hardships. If it were necessary, hundreds of such cases of ill-treatment could be proved to the hilt.

35. It has been also mentioned that the Indians live as parasites, and spend nothing. So far as the Indian labourers and their children are concerned, the objection will not hold water at all, and they are not supposed to be parasites, even by the most prejudiced Europeans. Your Petitioners may be allowed to mention from personal experience that, so far as a majority of the labourers are concerned, they live above their means and have settled with their families. As to the trading Indians, who are the butt of all the prejudice, a little explanation may be necessary. Your Petitioners, who are traders, do not deny, they take pride in acknowledging, that they send remittances to India for those who are dependent upon them, but the remittances are entirely out of proportion to their expenditure. The only reason why they are successful competitors is because they spend less on luxuries than the European traders. But, all the same, they have to pay rents to the European landlords, wages to the Native servants, and to pay Dutch farmers for the animals for meat. The other provisions, such as tea, coffee, etc., are bought in the country.

36. The question, then, really is not whether the Indian is to live in this street or that, but what *status* he is to occupy throughout South Africa. For, what is done in the Transvaal will also affect the action of the two Colonies. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion that the question will have to be settled on a common basis, modified by local conditions.

37. So far as the feeling has been *expressed*, it is to degrade the Indian to the position of the Kaffir. But the general feeling, not so strongly expressed but here and there voiced in the newspapers, of the respectable portion of the European community is quite the reverse.

38. The Colony of Natal has been inviting the other South African States to a 'Coolie' Conference. The word 'Coolie' has been used officially and it shows how high the expressed feeling runs against the Indians and what the Conference would do, if it could, with regard to the question. In the case put by the Transvaal Government before the Arbitrator, it is stated that the word 'Coolie' applies to *any* person coming from Asia.

39. When the feeling runs so high in South Africa against the Indian, when such a feeling owes its origin to interested agitation (as it is hoped, has been sufficiently shown above), when it is known that that feeling is by no means shared by all Europeans, when there is a general scramble for wealth in South Africa, when the state of morality of the people is not particularly high, when there are gross misrepresentations about the habits of the Indians which have given rise to special legislation, it is not too much, your Petitioners submit, to request Your Excellency to receive with the utmost caution the statements received against your Petitioners, and the proffered solutions of the Indian question.

40. Your Petitioners would also urge upon Your Excellency's consideration that not only does the Proclamation of 1858 entitle your Petitioners to the same privileges and rights as enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects, but your Petitioners have been specially assured of such a treatment by Your Excellency's Despatch, which says:

It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects.

41. Nor is this a local question; but, your Petitioners submit, it is pre-eminently an Imperial question. The decision of the question cannot but affect and guide the policy of the other Colonies and countries, where by treaty Her Majesty's subjects enjoy freedom of commerce, etc., and where Her Majesty's Indian subjects also may emigrate. Again, the question affects a very large Indian population in South Africa. With those who have settled in South Africa, it is almost a question of life and death. By persistent ill-treatment they cannot but degenerate, so much so that from their civilized habits they would

be degraded to the habits of the aboriginal Natives, and a generation hence, between the progeny of the Indians thus in course of degeneration and the Natives, there will be very little difference in habits, and customs, and thought. The very object of immigration will be frustrated, and a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects, instead of being raised in the scale of civilization, will be actually lowered. The results of such a state of things cannot but be disastrous. No self-respecting Indian can dare even visit South Africa. All Indian enterprise will be stifled. Your Petitioners have no doubt that Your Excellency will never allow such a sad event to happen in a place where Her Majesty enjoys suzerain power, or where the Union Jack flies.

42. Your Petitioners beg respectfully to point out that, under the present state of feeling against the Indians in South Africa, for Her Majesty's Government to yield to the interested clamour against your Petitioners would be an act of grave injustice to your Petitioners.

43. If it is true that your Petitioners' sanitary habits are not such as to endanger the health of the European community, and if it be true also that the agitation against them is due to trade jealousy, your Petitioners submit that the Award of the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State cannot be binding, even though it be in strict accordance with the terms of the reference. For, the very reason which induced Her Majesty's Government to assent to a departure from the Convention does not then exist.

44. If, however, Your Excellency is disposed to doubt the statements made herein, as regards your Petitioners' sanitary habits, your Petitioners humbly urge that, in view of the fact that very large interests are at stake, and that there are conflicting statements with regard to your Petitioners' sanitary habits, and that the feeling is very high against the Indians in South Africa, before any departure from the Convention is finally assented to, some impartial inquiry should be made as to the truth of the conflicting statements, and that the whole question of the *status* of the Indian in South Africa should be sifted.

In conclusion, your Petitioners leave their case in Your Excellency's hands, earnestly praying and fully hoping that your Petitioners will not be allowed to become a prey to the colour prejudice, and that Her Majesty's Government will not consent to a treatment of the Indians in the South African Republic which would place them in a degraded and unnatural position and deprive them of

the means of earning an honest livelihood.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.

APPENDIX A

PRETORIA, Z.A.R.¹

April 27, 1895

I hereby certify that I have practised as a general medical practitioner in the town of Pretoria for the last five years.

During that period I have had a considerable practice amongst the Indians, especially about three years ago, when they were more numerous than at present.

I have generally found them cleanly in their person, and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class Indian compares most favourably with the lowest class white, i.e. the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class white.

I have, further, found that, during the period that smallpox was epidemic in the town and district, and is still epidemic in the district, that although every nation nearly had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto*, there was not a single Indian attacked.

Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indians on sanitary grounds, provided always the inspection of the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the white.

H. PRIOR VEALE,

B.A., M.B., B.S. (CANTAB)

APPENDIX B

JOHANNESBURG,

1895

This is to certify that I have examined the residences of the bearers of this note, and that they are in a sanitary and hygienic condition, and in fact such as any European might inhabit. I have resided in India. I can certify that their habitations here in the Z.A.R. are far superior to those of their native country.

C. P. SPINIK, M.R.C.P. & L.R.C.S.

(LONDON)

¹ This is Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, Dutch for South African Republic.

APPENDIX C

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

Having frequently occasion to visit the better class of the Indian population of Johannesburg (merchants, etc., coming from Bombay) in my professional capacity, I give as my opinion that they are as clean in their habits and domestic life as white people of the same standing.

DR. NAHMMACHER, M.D., ETC.

APPENDIX D

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

The undersigned, having been informed that the Arbitration Commission in connection with the question regarding the Indian merchants in the South African Republic is now holding its meeting at Bloemfontein, and, also, having been made aware of the accusations against the said Indian merchants, to the effect that on account of their dirty habits they are a danger to reside amongst the European population, hereby wish to distinctly declare:

- 1st.* That the aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places, as well as their residences, in a clean and proper sanitary state—in fact, just as good as the Europeans.
- 2nd.* That it is a distinct error in calling them “Coolies” or inhabitants of British India of a “lower caste”, as they decidedly belong to the better and higher castes of India.

HEYMANN GORDON & Co.	ADAM ALEXANDER
BRANDE & MEIRKS	B. ALEXANDER
LINDSAY & INNES	A. BEHRENS
GUSTAV SCHNEIDER	S. COLEMAN
C. LIEBE	ALEXANDER P. KAY
CHRISTOPHER P. SPNIK	P.P., G. KOENIGSBERG
A. WENTWORTH BALL	J. H. HOPKINS
P.P., J. GARLICK	P.P., LIEBERMANN,
H. WOODCROFT	BELLISTEDT & Co.
P.P., GORDON MITCHELL & Co.	J. H. HOPKINS
JOHANNESBURG, Z.A.R.	J. H. HOPKINS
R. COURTER	SHLOM & ARMSBERG
P. BARNETT & Co.	P.P., HUGO BINGEN
P.P., ISRAEL BROS.	JAS. W. C.
H. CLAPHAM	P.P., H. BERNEBERG & Co.

P.P., PAYNE BROS.
H.F. BEART
JOSEPH LAZARUS & CO.
GEO. JAS KETTLE & CO.
BORTON'S BROS.
P.P., J. W. JAGGER & CO.
T. CHARLE
R. G. KRAMER & CO.
P.P., HOLT & HOLT
B. EMANUEL

GENERAL MERCHANTS AND
IMPORTERS, JOHANNESBERG
E. NEELL
J. KUSTING
N. W. LEWIS
SPENCE & HURRY
FREISMAN & SHAPISO
J. FOGELMAN
T. RATES & CO.
P.P., B. GUNDELFINGER
J. GUNDELFINGER

APPENDIX E

(True Translation)

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR :

In view of the gross misrepresentation by certain interested Europeans residing in the Republic, to the effect that the burghers of this State are opposed to the Indians residing or trading in the State, and their agitation against these people, we, the undersigned burghers, beg respectfully to state that so far from the burghers being opposed to these people fully stopping and trading in the State, they recognize in them a peaceful and law-abiding, and therefore desirable, class of people. To the poor they are a veritable blessing inasmuch as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessaries of life which they can do owing to their thrifty and temperate habits.

We venture to submit that their withdrawal from the State will be a dire calamity to us, especially those of us who, living far away from centres of business, depend upon the Indians for the supply of our daily wants, and that therefore any measures restrictive of their freedom, and having for their object their ultimate removal, and especially that of those Indians who are traders and hawkers, will necessarily interfere with our enjoyment and comforts. We, therefore, humbly pray that the Government will not take any steps that may scare away the Indians from the Transvaal.¹

¹ Signed by a number of Burghers

APPENDIX F

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

We, the undersigned Europeans residing in this Republic, beg to protest against the agitation set up against the Indians, residing or trading freely in the country, by certain interested persons.

So far as our experience is concerned, we believe their sanitary habits to be in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and the statements about prevalence of infectious diseases among them are certainly without ground, especially as regards the Indian traders.

We firmly believe that the agitation owes its origin not to their habits as regards sanitation, but to trade jealousy, because, owing to their frugal and temperate habits, they have been able to keep down the prices of necessaries of life and have therefore been an inestimable boon to the poor classes of the society in the State.

We do not believe any good cause exists for compelling them to reside or trade in separate quarters.

We would therefore humbly request Your Honour not to adopt or countenance any measure that would tend to restrict their freedom and ultimately result in their withdrawal from the Republic, a result that cannot but strike at the very means of their livelihood and cannot, therefore, we humbly submit, be contemplated with complacency in a Christian country.¹

APPENDIX G

I, Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, managing and senior partner of Haji Mahomed Haji Dada & Co., of Durban, Pretoria, Delagoa Bay and elsewhere, merchants, do make oath and say that :

1. Some time in the year 1894, I was travelling from Johannesburg to Charlestown by coach.
2. As I reached the Transvaal border, a European with a uniform and another came up and asked me for a pass. I said I had no pass and was never before required to produce any pass.
3. The man thereupon roughly said to me that I would have to get one.
4. I asked him to get one and offered to pay.
5. He then very roughly asked me to go down with him to the pass officer, and threatened to pull me out if I did not do so.

¹ The petition is printed in Afrikaans and in English. The original signatures do not appear on the field copy.

6. In order to avoid further trouble I got down. I was made to walk about 2 miles, the man riding on a horse.
7. On my reaching the office I was required to take no pass but was only asked where I was going to. I was then asked to go away
8. The man who was on horseback, and who went with me, also left me and I had to walk back two miles to find the coach gone.
9. I was therefore obliged, although I had paid my fare as far as Charlestown, to walk there, a distance of over two miles.
10. I know from personal knowledge that many other Indians, similarly placed, have undergone such troubles and indignity.
11. About a few days ago, I had to travel to Pretoria from Delagoa Bay in the company of two friends.
12. We were all required to arm ourselves with passes, just as the Natives of South Africa are required to do, in order to be able to travel in the Transvaal.

HAJEE MAHOMED HAJEE DADA

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this the 24th day of April, 1895.

Envaralohery

V. Rrasak

APPENDIX H

TEL. & CABLE ADDRESS : "BOATING"

POINT, PORT NATAL,
March 2, 1895

FROM

THE AFRICA BOATING COMPANY, LTD.

TO

MR. HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA

(MESSRS HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA & CO.)

DEAR SIR,

Seeing you about to pay a visit to India, we take this opportunity of placing on record our very high appreciation of your various business qualifications which you have proved during our business relations with you for the last fifteen years, and it gives us very great pleasure in stating that your integrity in business matters has never been questioned by any of the commercial community during your residence here, and we trust you will see your way to return to Natal, and we then hope that we shall renew our business relations with you once again. Hoping you will have a very pleasant voyage.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

For the African Boating Co.,

CHARLES T. HITCHINS

From a photostat: S.N. 417-424; also S.N. 451 (3-16)

64. PETITION TO LORD ELGIN¹

[Before May 5, 1895]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN,
P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., ETC., ETC.
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA
CALCUTTA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners representing the Indian community in the South African Republic venture hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Your Petitioners instead of reiterating the facts and arguments embodied in a similar petition², signed by over 10,000 British Indians, and sent to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, beg to append hereto a copy of the petition with its annexures, and commend it to Your Excellency's perusal.

Your Petitioners after mature deliberation have come to the conclusion that unless they sought the direct protection of Your Excellency as Her Majesty's representative and virtual Ruler of all India, and unless that protection was graciously accorded, the position of the Indians in the South African Republic, and indeed throughout the whole of South Africa, would be utterly helpless and the enterprising Indians in South Africa would be forcibly degraded to the position of the Natives of South Africa, and this through no fault of their own.

If an intelligent stranger were to visit the South African Republic, and were told that there was a class of people in South Africa who could not hold fixed property, who could not move about the State without passes, who alone had to pay a special registration

¹ This petition, along with the preceding item, was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet on May 30, 1895, to the High Commissioner, Cape Town.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

fee of £3 10s as soon as they entered the country for purposes of trade, who could not get licences to trade, and who would shortly be ordered to remove to places far away from towns, where only they could reside and trade, and who could not stir out of their houses after 9 o'clock, and that stranger were asked to guess the reasons for such special disabilities, would he not conclude that these people must be veritable ruffians, anarchists, a political danger to the State and society? And yet your Petitioners beg to assure Your Excellency that the Indians who are labouring under all the above disabilities are neither ruffians nor anarchists, but one of the most peaceful and law-abiding communities in South Africa, and especially in the South African Republic.

For in Johannesburg, while there are people belonging to European nationalities who are a source of real danger to the State, and who have necessitated only lately an increase of the police force, and have thrown too much work on the detective department, the Indian community have not given the State any cause for anxiety on that score.

In support of the above, your Petitioners respectfully refer Your Excellency to the newspapers throughout South Africa.

Even the active agitation, that has brought about the present state of things with regard to the Indian community, has not desired to bring any such charges against the Indians.

The only charge brought forward is that the Indians do not observe proper sanitation. Your Petitioners trust that the charge has been conclusively shown to be groundless in the representation to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Marquis of Ripon. But assuming that the charge has some ground, it is clear that that could not be a reason for preventing the Indians from holding fixed property, or moving about the country freely and without restraint on their liberty. That could not be a reason for making the Indians liable for a special payment of £3 10s.

It might be said that the Government of the South African Republic has already passed certain laws, and that the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State has already given his Award which is binding on Her Majesty's Government.

These objections, your Petitioners humbly believe, have been answered in the accompanying petition. The London Convention specially protects the rights of all Her Majesty's British subjects. This

is a recognized fact. Her Majesty's Government assented to a departure from the Convention and also to arbitration on *sanitary grounds*. And such assent to a departure from the Convention, your Petitioners are informed, was given without consulting Your Excellency's predecessor in office. Thus, so far as the Indian Government is concerned, your Petitioners venture to urge that the assent is not binding. That the Indian Government should have been consulted is self-evident. And even if Your Excellency were ill-disposed to intervene on your Petitioners' behalf at this stage and on this ground alone, the fact that the reasons which induced the above assent did not and do not exist, that in fact Her Majesty's Government has been misled by misrepresentations is, your Petitioners submit, sufficient to justify them in praying for Your Excellency's intervention, and Your Excellency in granting the prayer.

And the issues involved are so tremendously important and Imperial, that in view of your Petitioners' emphatic but respectful protest against the allegation about sanitation, your Petitioners humbly urge that the question cannot be settled without a thorough inquiry, without injustice being done to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Without further encroaching upon Your Excellency's valuable time, your Petitioners would again request Your Excellency's undivided attention to the annexure and, in conclusion, earnestly hope that Your Excellency's protection will be liberally granted to the Indian British subjects residing in South Africa.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc.¹

From a photostat of a printed copy : S.N. 451

65. *LETTER TO M. C. CAMROODEEN*

P. O. Box 66
DURBAN, NATAL
May 5, 1895

DEAR MR. MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN,

I have received from you the signatures of the Indians. I hope

¹ This petition, too, was ineffective. Dadabhai Naoroji led a deputation to Chamberlain at the Colonial Office on August 29. It presented the case of the Indians in the four States of South Africa.

you have obtained those of the Dutch and promptly sent them to Pretoria. There should be no delay in this, as the work is very urgent. I have wired to Pretoria also to send a copy of the Dutch petition there. All this should be completed by Wednesday. Please write to me in detail as to what you have done.

It is very necessary that every Indian should exert himself to the utmost in this work. Otherwise, we shall have to repent.¹

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 317

66. A BAND OF VEGETARIAN MISSIONARIES

It was in England that I read in Mrs. Anna Kingsford's *Perfect Way in Diet* that there was a colony of Trappists² in South Africa who were vegetarians. Ever since that I had wished to see these vegetarians. The wish has at last been realized.

At the outset, I may remark that South Africa, and particularly Natal, is especially adapted for vegetarians. The Indians have made Natal the Garden Colony of South Africa. One can grow almost anything on the South African soil, and that in abundance. The supply of bananas, pineapples and oranges is almost inexhaustible, and far greater than the demand. There is no wonder that the vegetarians can thrive very well in Natal. The only wonder is, that in spite of such facilities and the warm climate, there should be so few vegetarians. The result is that large tracts of land still remain neglected and uncultivated. The staple articles of food are imported when it is perfectly possible to grow all of them in South Africa; and in a vast territory like Natal, there is much distress among a small population of 40,000 whites. All this, because they will not take to agricultural pursuits.

Another curious but painful result of the unnatural mode of living is that there is a very strong prejudice against the Indian population who also number 40,000. The Indians, being vegetarians, take to agriculture without any difficulty whatsoever. Naturally,

¹ On May 8, Camroodeen wrote back (S.N. 39) reporting that he had not been able to collect a single signature to the petition to be presented to Lord Ripon.

² Monks of the Cistercian order founded in 1140 a.d. at Soligny-la-Trappe and noted for silence and other austerities

therefore, all over the Colony, the small farms are owned by Indians, whose keen competition gives offence to the white population. They are following a dog-in-the-manager and suicidal policy in so behaving. They would rather leave the vast agricultural resources in the country undeveloped, than have the Indians to develop them. Owing to such stolidity and shortsightedness, a Colony that can easily support double, or even treble, the number of European and Indian inhabitants, with difficulty supports 80,000 Europeans and Indians. The Transvaal Government have gone so far in their prejudice, that the whole of the Republic, although the soil is very fruitful, remains a desert of dust. And if the gold mines could not be worked from any cause, thousands of men would be thrown out of employment and literally starved to death. Is there not here a great lesson to be learnt? The flesh-eating habits have really tended to retard the progress of the community, and, indirectly, to create division among the two great communities which ought to be united and work hand in hand. There is also this striking fact to be noticed that the Indians enjoy as good a health as the Europeans in the Colony, and I know that many doctors would be simply starving if there were no Europeans, or their flesh-pots, and that by their thrifty and temperate habits, both attributable to vegetarianism, Indians can successfully compete with Europeans. Of course, it should be understood that the Indians in the Colony are not pure vegetarians. They are practically so.

We shall see presently how the Trappists of Mariann Hill, near Pinetown, are a standing testimony to the truth of the above remarks.

Pinetown is a little village, situated at a distance of 16 miles by rail from Durban. It is about 1,100 feet above the sea level, and enjoys a beautiful climate.

The Trappist monastery is about three miles distant from Pinetown. My companion and I walked to Mariann Hill, as the hill, or rather the cluster of hills, on which the Abbey is situated, is called. It is a very pleasant walk through the little hills all covered with green grass.

On our reaching the settlement, we saw a gentleman with a pipe in his mouth, and we at once knew that he was not one of the brotherhood. He, however, took us to the visitors' room, where a visitors' book was kept. It appeared from the book that it commenced from 1894, and there were hardly twenty pages filled up. Indeed, the mission is not at all known as it ought to be.

One of the brotherhood came up and bowed very low. We were offered tamarind water and pineapples. After having refreshed ourselves, we accompanied the guide to the various places he took us to. The various buildings one saw were all substantial red-brick buildings. All was quiet; the silence was broken only by the noise of the instruments in the workshops or the native children.

The settlement is a quiet little model village, owned on the truest republican principles. The principle of liberty, equality and fraternity is carried out in its entirety. Every man is a brother, every woman a sister. The monks number about 120 on the settlement, and the nuns, or the sisters as they are called, number about 60. The sisters' cloister is about half a mile from the brothers'. Both the brothers and the sisters observe a strict vow of silence and of chastity. No brother or sister may speak except those who are allowed to by the Abbot, who is the head of the Trappists in Natal. And those are only allowed to speak who have to go to town to make purchases or to look after visitors.

The brothers are dressed in long robes with a black piece of cloth in front and on the back. The sisters wear red clothing of the simplest style. None seemed to wear socks.

A candidate for the brotherhood has to make a vow for two years and, till then, is called a novice. After two years, he may either leave the cloister or make a vow for life. A model Trappist gets up at 2 a.m. and devotes four hours to prayer and contemplation. At six, he has his breakfast, which consists of bread and coffee, or some such simple foods. He dines at twelve, and makes a meal of bread and soup, and fruits. He sups at six in the evening and goes to bed at 7 or 8 p.m. The brothers eat no fish, flesh or fowl. They discard even eggs. They take milk, but in Natal we were told they could not get it cheap. The sisters are allowed meat four days in the week. Asked why they put up with such an anomaly, the obliging guide said: "Because the sisters are more delicate than the brothers." Neither my companion, who is almost a vegetarian, nor I could see the force or logic of the reasoning. Certainly, both of us were very much grieved to hear the news which was a surprise to us, for we expected both the brothers and the sister to be vegetarians.

They take no intoxicating liquors except under medical advice. None may keep money for private use. All are equally rich or poor.

We saw no wardrobes, chests of drawers, or portmanteaus,

although we were allowed to see every inch of the place. They may not leave the limits of the settlement, except those who are permitted to do so on business. They may not read newspapers and books that are not religious. They may not read any religious books but only those that are allowed. It is this hard austere life that caused our friend with the pipe in his mouth, whom we first met, to remark in reply to a question whether he was a Trappist—"No fear, I am anything but a Trappist." And yet the good brothers and sisters did not seem to consider their lives to have fallen on hard places.

A Protestant clergyman said to his audience that the Roman Catholics are weakly, sickly and sad. Well, if the Trappists are any criterion of what a Catholic is, they are, on the contrary, healthy and cheerful. Wherever we went, a beaming smile and a lowly bow greeted us, whether we saw a brother or a sister. Even while the guide was descanting on the system he prized so much, he did not at all seem to consider the self-chosen discipline a hard yoke to bear. A better instance of undying faith and perfect, implicit obedience could not well be found anywhere else.

If their repast is the simplest possible, their dining tables and bedrooms are no less so.

The former are made on the settlement, of wood, without any varnish. They use no tablecloths. The knives and spoons are the cheapest to be had in Durban. Instead of glass-ware they use enamelled things.

For bedrooms they have a large hall (but none too large for the inmates) which contains about 80 beds. Every available space is utilized for the beds.

In the Native quarters they seem to have overdone it in point of beds. As soon as we entered the sleeping hall for Natives, we noticed the closeness and the stuffy air. The beds are all joined together, separated by only single boards. There was hardly space enough to walk.

They believe in no colour distinctions. The Natives are accorded the same treatment as the whites. They are mostly children. They get the same food as the brothers, and are dressed as well as they themselves are. While it is generally said, not without some truth, that the Christian Kaffir is a failure, everyone, even the wildest sceptic, admit that the mission of the Trappists has proved the most successful in point of turning out really good, Christian Natives. While the mission schools of other denominations very often enable the Natives

to contract all the terrible vices of the Western civilization, and very rarely produce any moral effect on them, the Natives of the Trappist mission are patterns of simplicity, virtue and gentleness. It was a treat to see them saluting passers-by in a humble yet dignified manner.

There are about 1,200 Natives on the mission, including children and adults. They have all exchanged a life of sloth, indolence and superstition, for one of industry, usefulness and devotion to one Supreme God.

On the settlement there are various workshops—blacksmiths', tinsmiths', carpenters', shoemakers', tanners', etc., where the Natives are taught all these useful industries, in addition to the English and the Zulu languages. Here it may be remarked that it speaks volumes for the highmindedness of the noble settlers that, although almost all of them are Germans, they never attempt to teach the Natives German; all these Natives work side by side with the whites.

At the sisters' cloisters, they have the ironing, sewing, strawhat manufacturing and knitting departments, where one can see the Native girls, dressed in clean costumes, working assiduously.

About two miles from the Abbey is situated the printing department, and the flour mill worked by a waterfall. It is a huge pile of building. There is also an oil machine, which is worked for pressing the oil from monkey nuts. It is needless to mention that the above mentioned workshops supply the settlers with most of their requirements.

They grow many kinds of tropical fruits on the farm and the settlement is almost self-supporting.

They love and respect, and are in turn loved and respected by, the Natives living in their neighbourhood who, as a rule, supply them with the converts.

The most prominent feature of the settlement is that you see religion everywhere. Every room has a Cross and, on the entrance, a small receptacle for holy water which every inmate reverently applies to his eyelids, the forehead and the chest. Even the quick walk to the flour mill is not without some reminder of the Cross. It is a lovely footpath. On one side, you have a magnificent valley through which runs a small rivulet which murmurs the sweetest music, and on the other, little rocks whereon are carved the various inscriptions reminding you of the scenes of the Calvary. The valley is wholly covered with a green carpet of vegetation, studded with beautiful trees

here and there. A lovelier walk, or a lovelier scenery, could not be well imagined. The inscriptions carved in such a place cannot fail to produce a grand effect upon the mind. They are carved at such regular intervals that no sooner has one completed one's thoughts on one inscription than another meets one's gaze.

The walk thus forms a continuous exercise for calm contemplation, unmarred by any other thoughts, or outside noise and bustle. Some of the inscriptions are: "Jesus falls a first time"; "Jesus falls a second time"; "Simon carries the Cross"; "Jesus is nailed to the Cross"; "Jesus is laid in his mother's lap", etc., etc..

Of course, the Natives, too, are chiefly vegetarians. Although they are not prohibited from taking flesh or meat, they are not supplied with any on the settlement.

There are about twelve such settlements in South Africa, most of which are in Natal. There are in all about 300 monks and about 120 nuns.

Such are our vegetarians in Natal. Though they do not make of vegetarianism a creed, though they base it simply on the ground that a vegetarian diet helps them to crucify the flesh better, and though, perhaps, they are not even aware of the existence of the vegetarian societies, and would not even care to read any vegetarian literature, where is the vegetarian who would not be proud of this noble band, even a casual intercourse with whom fills one with a spirit of love, charity and self-sacrifice, and who are a living testimony to the triumph of vegetarianism from a spiritual point of view? I know from personal experience that a visit to the farm is worth a voyage from London to Natal. It cannot but produce a lasting holy impression on the mind. No matter whether one is a Protestant, a Christian or a Buddhist or what not, one cannot help exclaiming, after a visit to the farm: "If this is Roman Catholicism, everything said against it is a lie." It proves conclusively, to my mind, that a religion appears divine or devilish, according as its professors choose to make it appear.

The Vegetarian, 18-5-1895

67. *EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO
"THE NATAL ADVERTISER"*¹

[Before May 22, 1895]

The report states that the Indians were observed "with portions of sleepers on their heads".² The evidence was that. . . seven charged had on their heads portions of sleepers together with. . .³ Although the sleepers were called for they were never produced. The report says, "On attempting to arrest them 71 of their number turned round with sticks, tins, pieces of iron and cooking utensils and plied them freely on the police making them fly for safety. P. C. Madden arrived on the scene with further assistance." The evidence went to show that the seven charged turned round with sticks, and two of them incited to oppose. There was only one policeman at first and that was the Native constable. Then P. C. Madden alone, not with any assistance, came on the scene. While the Native constable is alleged to have been resisted, P. C. Madden distinctly said he was not resisted at all. The report goes on: "The rest followed by a body. . . saying they would not leave until their colleagues were discharged." The uncontradicted evidence of Mr. Mason, who knew what he was talking about, went to show that "the rest" were under arrest and were, Mr. Mason was informed by Mr. Madden, going to be charged by the Railway Department with desertion. They have gone now for the second time to Mr. Mason to complain that they were starving. The report says, "Three or four constables appeared in the court with their faces bruised and their clothes torn." The facts are that there was only the Native constable who said he was beaten with sticks. When asked if he could show any marks, he said it was "somewhere" on his head that no one could see. He had no bruises. His clothes were neither torn, nor did he complain that they were. So far as my memory can be trusted, I believe there was not a single word about "utensils and irons". And if all had bundles of sticks on their heads it is not easy to understand how they

¹ Referring to a report in *The Natal Advertiser*, 20-5-1895, Gandhiji wrote "a long letter", pointing out its inaccuracies. The original not being available, the extracts as published in the *Advertiser*, 22-5-1895, are reproduced here.

² According to the report a large number of Indians, leaving the railway yard, were noticed in possession of portions of sleepers. Earlier the railway authorities had ordered that coal instead of firewood be supplied to them which they resented.

³ Some words here are undecipherable.

could carry utensils, etc. P. C. Madden was the only other constable who gave evidence. But he was not interfered with and he could give no evidence of his own knowledge as to the Native constable having been beaten. . . .¹

This is not the first occasion on which I have found the facts in your reports mis-stated or exaggerated, and I am sorry to say whenever this has happened, they have been mis-stated and exaggerated much to the disadvantage of the Indian community.²

The Natal Advertiser, 22-5-1895

68. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL³

DURBAN,

[Before *June 26, 1895*]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF
THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS, RESIDING AS
TRADERS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Petitioners, as representing the Indian community in the Colony, venture hereby to petition Your Honourable Council with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill⁴, so far as it affects the present term of indenture, and proposes a yearly licence of £3 to be taken out by every immigrant wishing to stop in the Colony as a free Indian, after finishing his term of indenture.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that both the clauses

¹ The report here says that “some further evidence” recapitulated by Gandhiji has been omitted.

² The report concludes : Mr. Gandhi implies that any alleged “mis-statements” or “exaggerations” have been knowingly made with a view to prejudicing the Indian community in the eyes of our readers. Such however is not the case. If they have occurred it has been quite unwittingly. In reporting court cases the evidence has almost always to be condensed, and the summary may not satisfy certain of the interested parties. The reports, however, whether accurate or inaccurate are written without the slightest desire or intention to prejudicially affect one side or the other.

³ The Petition was published in *The Natal Mercury*, 26-6-1895.

⁴ The Bill which was introduced in the Natal Council on June 25 had its second reading the next day and was passed.

above referred to are entirely unjust and uncalled for.

Your Petitioners humbly draw the attention of this Honourable House to the following from the report of the delegates, Messrs Binns¹ and Mason, who were commissioned to go to India in connection with this matter:

So far no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which Coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India had frequently been asked for; and in no instance had the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indentures been sanctioned.

Thus the clauses in the Bill are a total departure, your Petitioners submit, for the worse, from the practice prevalent throughout the British Colonies.

Assuming that the average age of an indentured Indian at the time of his entering into the contract of indenture is 25, under the clause which expects the Indian to work for 10 years, the best part of the life of the indentured Indian would be simply spent away in a state of bondage.

For an Indian to return to India after continuous 10 years' stay in the Colony would be pure fatuity. All the old cords and ties will have been broken up. Such an Indian will be comparatively a stranger in his motherland. To find work in India would be almost impossible. The market is already overcrowded, and he will not have amassed sufficient fortune to enable him to live on the interest on his capital.

The total of the wages for 10 years would amount to £87. If the indentured Indian saves £50, allowing only £37 for clothing and other expenses during the whole 10 years, that capital will not give him interest sufficient to keep body and soul together, even in a poor country like India. Such an Indian, therefore, even if he ventured to return to India, would be compelled to return under indenture, and thus his whole life would be spent in bondage. Moreover, during the 10 years the indentured Indian would be entirely neglecting his family, should he have any. And a family man will not be able to save even £50. Your Petitioners know several instances of indentured Indians with families having saved nothing.

As to the 2nd Clause, about the £3 licence, your Petitioners

¹ Sir Henry Binns (1837-99); Premier of Natal 1897

submit that it is calculated to create wide discontent and oppression. Why one class of Her Majesty's subjects, and this the most useful to the Colony, should be singled out for such taxation, it is, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, difficult to understand.

Your Petitioners most respectfully venture to submit that it is not in accordance with the principles of simple justice and equity to make a man pay heavily for being allowed to remain free in the Colony after he has already lived under bondage for 10 years.

The fact that the clauses will apply only to those Indians who would come to the Colony after the Bill has become law, and that they would know the terms under which they may come, does not free the clauses from the objections sought to be raised against them. For both the contracting parties, your Petitioners submit, will not have the same freedom of action. An Indian hard-pressed by pangs of poverty and finding it impossible to support his family can scarcely be called a free agent when he signs the contract of indenture. Men have been known to consent to do far worse things in order to be free from immediately pressing difficulties. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly hope and pray that the clauses above referred to will not meet with the approval of this Honourable House, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHER INDIANS

From a photostat of a printed copy : S.N. 435

69. LETTER TO PHEROZESHAH MEHTA

CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN,
August 9, 1895

THE HON'BLE PHEROZESHAH MEHTA
M.R.C. & C. & C.
BOMBAY
SIR,

By direction of the Indian community I beg to send by registered book [-post] four copies of the petitions to Home Government¹ and the Indian Government² regarding the Immigration

¹*Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlan, 11-8-1895

²*Vide* "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 11-8-1895

Law Amendment Bill passed by the Natal Parliament. I have to request you to extend your active sympathy to the Indians in South Africa.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Pherozechah Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the Colony of Natal, respectfully venture to approach you with respect to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill recently passed by the Hon. Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. Legislative Council of Natal, in so far as it affects the existing conditions of indenture and requires a special licence, costing £3 every year, to be taken out by the indentured Indians coming under that Law and wishing to remain in the Colony as free Indians.

2. Your Memorialists, with a view to have the Clauses dealing with the above matter left out, presented respectful memorials¹ to both the Honourable Houses, but, your Memorialists regret to mention, without avail. The copies of the memorials are annexed hereto, and marked A and B respectively.

3. The Clauses that deal with the matter are as follows:

Clause 2. From and after the date when this Act shall take effect the indentures to be signed by Indian immigrants as provided by Schedules B and

¹*Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", before 5-5-1895, and the preceding item.

C of the Indian Immigration Law, 1891, referred to in Section 11 of the said Law, shall contain a Covenant by the Indian immigrants, in words as follows:

And we further agree that after the expiration or other determination we shall either return to India or remain in Natal under indentures to be from time to time entered into; provided that each term of new indentured service shall be for two years, and provided further, that the rate of wages for each year of indentured service after that provided by this Contract shall be 16/- per month for the first year, 17/- per month for the second year, 18/- per month for the third year, 19/- per month for the fourth year, and 20/- per month for the fifth and each succeeding year.

Clause 6 runs as follows:

Every indentured Indian who shall have entered into the Covenant set out in Section 2 of this Act, and who shall fail, neglect, or refuse to return to India, or become re-indentured in Natal, shall take out year by year, a pass or licence to remain in the Colony to be issued by the Magistrate of his district, and shall pay for such pass or licence a yearly sum of £3 sterling, which may be recovered by summary process by any Clerk of the Peace or other officer appointed to get in such licence money.

The Schedule B referred to in Clause 2, quoted above, so far as it relates to the period of service is as follows:

We, the undersigned, emigrants from . . . to Natal, hereby engage to serve the employer to whom we may respectively be allotted by the Protector of Indian Immigrants to Natal; provided that we shall receive monthly in money the wages stated hereunder opposite our respective names, and the allowances following.

4. From the above it will be seen, that if the Bill under discussion became law, an indentured Indian, in case he desires to settle in the Colony after the first five years of his indentured service, should either have to remain under perpetual indenture, or pay a yearly tax of £3; your Memorialists have used the word *tax* advisedly, because that was the word used in the original Bill before it passed the Committee stage. Your Memorialists submit that the mere change of name from tax to licence does not make it the less offensive but shows the knowledge on the part of the framers that a special poll-tax, on a special class of people in the Colony, is entirely repugnant to the British notions of justice.

5. Now, your Memorialists humbly, but emphatically, submit, that to raise the term of indenture from five years to a practically indefinite period is extremely unjust, especially because such a

measure is absolutely uncalled for so far as the industries protected, or affected by, the indentured Indians are concerned.

6. The clauses owe their origin to the Commission that was sent out to India in the year 1894 by the Natal Government, and the report made by the Delegates, Messrs Binns and Mason, who formed the Commission. The reasons given in that report for such legislation are given at pp. 20 and 21 of the *Annual Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1894*. Your Memorialists venture to quote the following from the report of the Delegates:

In a country where the Native population is in number so far in excess of the European, the unlimited settlement of Indians is not considered desirable, and there is a general wish that when they have completed their last period of indenture they should return to India. There are already about 25,000 free Indians settled in the Colony, many of whom have allowed their right to a return passage to lapse; this is exclusive of a very considerable Banya trading population!

7. Thus the reasons for the special arrangement are political merely. Properly speaking, there is no question of overcrowding at all. There can be none in a newly opened-up country where there are yet vast tracts of land entirely uninhabited and uncultivated.

8. Again, in the same report, the Delegates state as follows:

There is a strong feeling amongst the merchants and shopkeepers with regard to the Arabs, who are all traders and not workers; but as they are mostly British subjects and do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement, it is recognized that they cannot be interfered with.

* * *

The Coolie does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the European. Field work for Europeans is impossible on the coast, where all the plantations are situated, and the number of servants other than Coolies and Natives has always been very small.

* * *

Although we are decidedly of opinion that up to the present the working Indians *who have settled down* (the italics are your Memorialists') have been of great benefit to the Colony, we cannot avoid, having regard to the future, and, in the face of the great Native problem yet to be solved in South Africa, sharing in the concern which is now felt. If a large proportion of

the Coolies had taken advantage of the return passage provided for them, there would have been less cause for alarm.

9. Your Memorialists most respectfully submit that the above extracts, which form part of the reasons given for measures restrictive of the settlement of *freed Indians* in the Colony, go to prove the exact opposite; for if the Indian traders, to which class most of your Memorialists belong, who “do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement”, could not be interfered with, *much less* the indentured Indians, who are also equally British subjects and who are, so to speak, invited to go to the Colony, and whose *settlement* (in the Delegates' own words) “has been of great benefit to the Colony”, and who have therefore a special claim on the goodwill and attention of the Colonists.

10. And, if the 'Coolie' “does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the Europeans”, where is the justification, your Memorialists humbly ask, for adopting measures that would make it difficult for the indentured Indians to earn honest bread in peace and freedom? It does not certainly lie in any qualities special to the indentured Indians which render them dangerous members of society. The peace-loving disposition and the mildness of the Indian nation are proverbial. Their obedience to authorities over them is no less prominent a trait of their character, and it would not lie in the mouth of the Delegates to say otherwise; for the Protector, who was one of the Delegates, in his report, at p. 15 of the same book, says:

Many persons, I am aware, condemn the Indians as a race, yet these persons cannot fail, if they look around them, to see hundreds of these Indians honestly and peaceably pursuing their several useful and desirable occupations.

* * *

I am pleased to be able to state that the Indians generally resident in the Colony continue to form a prosperous, enterprising and *law-abiding* section of the community.

11. The Hon. the Attorney-General, in moving the second reading of the Bill, is reported to have said that:

There was no intention to interfere with the introduction of labour to the injury of any industry, but these Indians were brought here for the purpose

of supplying labour for the development of local industries, and were not intended to form portion of the South African nation which was being built up in the various States.

12. With the greatest deference to the learned Attorney-General, your Memorialists humbly submit that the above remarks condemn entirely the clauses under discussion, and venture to believe that Her Majesty's Government will not endorse such remarks by sanctioning the Bill.

13. Your Memorialists venture to think that it is against the spirit of the British Constitution to countenance measures that tend to keep men under perpetual bondage. That the Bill, if passed, would do so, it is submitted, is self-evident.

14. *The Natal Mercury*, the Government organ, of the 11th May, 1895, thus justifies the measure:

This much, however, the Government cannot accede to, that men who contract at fair wages to assist the Colonists, should be allowed to break their contract, and remain competitors against the Colonists, those whom, and for no other purpose and no other condition, they came to serve. To do otherwise would be to destroy all distinction between right and wrong and to give tacit disavowal of the existence of law and equity. There is no desire for, nor is there any, harshness of any kind, nor is there anything to which unbiased judgment can take exception.

15. Your Memorialists have quoted the above to show what feeling exists even amongst responsible quarters against the Indians only because *some very few* dare to trade in the Colony, after having served as labourers, not only under and during their term of indenture, but a long time after the completion of their term.

16. The statement requiring those who are admittedly indispensable to the welfare of the Colony to remain either under perpetual bondage or to "purchase freedom", as it is put by *The Natal Advertiser*, 9-5-95, by paying an annual tax of £3, "is neither harsh nor inequitable", will not, your Memorialists feel sure, be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

17. The injustice of the clauses seems to be so evident and strong, that even *The Natal Advertiser*, a paper which is by no means favourable towards the Indian, felt it, and expressed it in the following terms on the 16th May, 1895:

The penal clause of the Bill originally was to the effect that the Indians, failing to return to India, should pay "an annual tax to the Government". On Tuesday, the Attorney-General moved that this be altered to read: "should take out a pass or licence to remain in the Colony", for which £3 would be payable. This is decidedly an alteration for the better, and effects the same end under less disagreeable terms. A broad question, however, is raised by this proposal to establish a special tax on the Coolie settlers. If such a disability is to be placed on Coolies coming from another part of the Empire, surely its application should be extended to include members of other non-European races, who have no connection with the British Empire, such as Chinese, Arabs, Kaffirs from outside States, and all such visitors. To specially select the Coolies coming for attention in this way, and to allow all other *aliens* to settle with impunity, and without disability, is not an equitable arrangement. The practice of taxing *aliens*, if it is to be inaugurated at all, should surely commence with those races not under the British flag in their native land, and not with those who, whether we like the fact or not, are the subjects of the same Sovereign as ourselves. These should be the last, not the first, to be placed by us under exceptional disabilities.

18. Your Memorialists submit that the arrangement has not appealed to any fair-minded men at all. How the Indian Government could be persuaded by the Natal Delegates to make a promise to sanction an indefinite extension of the indentures, or compulsory return, no matter how reluctantly, your Memorialists do not profess to know. But your Memorialists venture to hope that the case, as put here, on behalf of the indentured Indians will receive full attention from both Her Majesty's Government and the Indian Government, and that any sanction given on the representation of an *ex parte* Commission will not be allowed to prejudice the case of the indentured Indians.

19. For the sake of ready reference your Memorialists beg leave to quote as follows from His Excellency the Viceroy's despatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal, dated the 17th September, 1894:

I should myself have preferred the continuance of the existing system under which it is open to an immigrant at the termination of his period of indenture to settle in the Colony on his own account, and I have little sympathy with the views that would prevent any subjects of the Crown from settling in any Colony under the British flag. But, in consideration of the feelings at present manifested in the Colony of Natal towards Indian settlers, I am prepared to accept the proposals (*a* to *f*) set forth by the Delegates in the memorandum of 20th January, 1894, referred to in the preceding paragraph, subject to the following provisions, viz.:

(a) That a Coolie when first recruited shall be required by the terms of his contract to return to India, within or immediately on the expiration of the period of his indenture, unless he may prefer to re-enter into a further indenture on the same conditions;

(b) that such Coolies as may refuse to return should in no case be made subject to penalties under criminal law, and

(c) That all renewals shall be for a period of two years, and that a free passage should be secured to the immigrant at the end of the first term for which his engagement is made as well as at the end of every subsequent renewal.

The alterations in the existing system which I am prepared to sanction with the approval of Her Majesty's Government may be summarized as follows.¹

20. Your Memorialists notice with a feeling of relief that Her Majesty's Government have not yet approved of the suggestions of the Delegates.

21. To show yet further how grossly unjust the adoption of the compulsory return or re-indenture has seemed from the first time that the idea was started, your Memorialists crave leave to quote from the report of and evidence taken before the Immigration Commission that sat in Natal in the year 1885.

22. Mr. J. R. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, forcibly puts his views on the matter in his additional report in the following terms:

Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many who now advocate the plan, when they realize what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian immigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.

What is it but taking the best out of servants (the good as well as the bad), and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward! Forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit. Where to? Why, back to face a prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting—Shylock's reward.

¹ The original does not furnish the summary.

Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs and Indians who live in them, and who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country. But let us trace results in this one branch of the enquiry, taking it as an example of others and trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of properties and securities—how, out of this must result stagnation in the building trade and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it—follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for white mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it. The Colony can stop Indian immigration, and that perhaps far more easily and permanently than some ‘popularity seekers’ would desire. But force men off at the end of their service, this the Colony cannot do. And I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

23. The late member of the late Legislative Council and the present Attorney-General (the Hon. Mr. Escombe), giving his evidence before the Commission, said (p. 177):

With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported; I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, *in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent*, (the italics are your Memorialists’) he gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know; in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years. I do not think that the Indian, at the expiration of his five years’ service, should be placed under police supervision unless he is a criminal. I know not why Arabs should be placed under police supervision more than Europeans. In cases of some Arabs the thing is simply ridiculous. They are men of large means, large connections, who are always used in trade if they can be dealt with more profitably than others.

24. Your Memorialists, while drawing your attention to the above, cannot help expressing their regret that the gentleman who

expressed the above views ten years ago should now be the member to introduce the Bill under discussion.

25. Mr. H. Binns, who went with Mr. Mason as a delegate to induce the Indian Government to sanction the compulsory return or re-indenture, expressed the following opinion in giving his evidence before the Commission :

I think the idea which has been mooted, that all Indians should be compelled to return to India at the end of their term of indenture, is most unfair to the Indian population, and would never be sanctioned by the Indian Government. In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large proportion of them, considerably large than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and village. Before there was a free Indian population the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables and fish. At present all these things are fully supplied. We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population, the markets of Pietermaritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were ten years ago (pp. 155-6).

26. The present Chief Justice and the then Attorney-General expressed the following opinion:

I object to any alternation in the terms of the laws under which Indians are introduced into the Colony. In my opinion the numbers of the Indians who have been introduced have in a great measure provided on the coast for the failure of white immigrants, and have cultivated lands, which would otherwise remain uncultivated with the crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants (p. 327).

27. It is yet possible to take out extracts from the same voluminous report and evidence to show what the most distinguished men in the Colony have thought about the arrangement.

28. Your Memorialists further beg to draw your attention to the following from Messrs Binns and Mason's Report:

So far, no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which Coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India has been frequently asked for, and in no case has the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indenture been sanctioned.

29. It has been said in the Colony, in defence of the measure, that there can be no injustice, where two parties voluntarily agree to do

a certain thing, and that the Indians before coming to Natal will know under what conditions they will go to Natal. This point has been dealt with in the petitions to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. the Legislative Council, and your Memorialists venture to repeat that, when the contracting parties are not situated equally, the proposition is entirely inapplicable. An Indian who, in order "to escape from starvation", as Mr. Saunders has put it, seeks indenture can hardly be called a free agent.

30. So recently as 1894, the evidence as to the indispensableness of the Indian has been dwelt upon in the Protector's Report referred to above. At p. 15 he says:

If it were possible even for a short space of time to withdraw the whole of the Indian population from this Colony, I am convinced that, with but very few exceptions, every industry in existence at the present time would collapse, solely for the want of reliable labour. There is no getting over the fact that the Native as a rule will not work, hence it is generally admitted throughout the Colony that without the Indian as a labourer, no industry, agricultural or otherwise, of any importance could possibly be carried on successfully, and not only this but almost every householder in Natal would be without domestic servants.

31. If almost the whole current of what may be called expert opinion, from beginning up to date, goes to show the usefulness of the Indians, then, your Memorialists submit, it is not too much to say that to keep such people under perpetual bondage, or to make them pay a yearly tax of £3 whether they can afford it or not, is, to say the very least, absolutely one-sided and selfish.

32. Your Memorialists beg respectfully to draw your attention to the fact that, were the Bill to become law, the very object of immigration will be frustrated in all its aspects. If it is to enable the Indians to improve their material condition ultimately, the object certainly will not be fulfilled by compelling them to remain under perpetual indenture. If it be to relieve the overcrowded parts of India, that object also will be frustrated. For, the object of the Bill is not to allow the number of Indians in the Colony to increase. The desire is to replace those who can no longer bear the yoke of indenture by fresh importation, and to force the former back to India. Thus your Memorialists humbly submit that the last state will be worse than the first. For, while the number of Indians in the overcrowded districts, so far as Natal as an outlet is concerned, will remain the same, those who would return against their will cannot but be a source of additional

anxiety and trouble, because they, being without any prospect of work or any capital to maintain them, may have to be maintained at the public expense. It may be said in reply to this objection that it presupposes a state of things which will never happen, that is to say, the Indians will gladly pay the annual tax. Your Memorialists, however, beg leave to point out that such an argument, if advanced, would really go to prove that the clauses about re-indenture and tax are absolutely useless, in so far as they will not produce the desired effect. It has never been contended that the object is to raise any revenue.

33. Your Memorialists, therefore, submit that, if the Colony cannot put up with the Indians, the only course, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, is to stop all future immigration to Natal, at any rate for the time being. Your Memorialists beg respectfully, but emphatically, to protest against an arrangement that gives all the benefit to one party only, and that, indeed, the least in need of it. Such stopping of immigration will not, your Memorialists submit, materially effect the congested parts of India.

34. Your Memorialists have so far discussed both the indenture and the licence clauses together. As to the latter, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to the fact that even in the Transvaal—a foreign State—the Government have not ventured to levy an annual tax on the Indians who go there of their own accord and on their own means. There is only a licence of £3 10s to be taken out once for all. And this too has, your Memorialists understand, among other things, formed the subject of a memorial¹ to Her Majesty's Government. Moreover, the licence in this case is an annual tax in its most obnoxious form. This tax has to be paid whether the unfortunate victim has the means or not. When a member, during the discussion, asked how the tax will be collected if any Indian objected to or did not pay it, the Hon. Attorney-General remarked that there would always be found sufficient in the defaulting Indian's house to attach under a summary process!

Lastly, your Memorialists submit that the introduction of the licence clause goes beyond the limits laid down by the Viceroy's Despatch referred to above.

In conclusion, your Memorialists most earnestly pray and confidently hope that Her Majesty's Government will come to the conclusion that the clauses discussed herein are manifestly unjust, and

¹ The text of this is not available.

will, therefore, be pleased to disallow the Indian Immigration Amendment Bill referred to above, or grant such other relief as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 433

71. MEMORIAL TO LORD ELGIN

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO FR

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ELGIN,
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL,
CALCUTTA

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED
INDIANS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, who are Her Majesty's Indian subjects, crave leave to draw Your Excellency's attention to the humble Memorial¹ addressed to Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain clauses of the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill which was recently passed by the Hon. the Legislative Assembly and the Hon. the Legislative Council of Natal, and which is partly based upon Your Excellency's Dispatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal on the subject thereof, a copy of which is annexed hereto.

Besides drawing Your Excellency's attention to the above memorial, your Memorialists beg respectfully to state as follows with regard to the Bill:

Your Excellency's Memorialists have noticed with regret that Your Excellency is disposed to sanction the principle of compulsory re-indenture, or compulsory return.

Your Memorialists also regret that they did not send a representation at the time the Delegates set out for India.¹ It will be idle to discuss the causes that prevented such a course from being adopted. Your Memorialists, however, confidently hope that the wrong

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

inflicted would be so great, in case the Bill became law, that the above omission will not come in the way of its being averted.

Your Memorialists, with the greatest deference, venture to point out that, if the non-compliance with the condition as to compulsory return could not set the criminal law in motion, the insertion in the contracts of such a clause is absolutely useless, if not actually harmful, in as much as it might encourage the contracting party to break his contract, and the law would connive at such a breach. And since such extreme precaution pre-supposes the injustice of the contract, your Memorialists respectfully submit that the reasons adduced for inducing the sanction are absolutely insufficient, if any reasons could justify it.

As has been hinted at in the annexure, your Memorialists implore Your Excellency not to sanction any of the clauses objected to, but, in accordance with the emphatically expressed opinions of Mr. J. R. Saunders and the Hon. Mr. Escombe quoted in the annexure¹, to stop immigration to Natal.

Your Memorialists respectfully beg to protest against any section of Her Majesty's subjects, be they the poorest, being practically enslaved or subjected to a special, obnoxious poll-tax, in order that a body of Colonists, who already have been deriving the greatest benefits from such subjects, may be able to satisfy their whims or desire to exact more from the same men without any return whatsoever. In calling the idea of compulsory re-indenture, or in lieu thereof, of a poll-tax, a whim, your Memorialists believe they have used the right expression. For, your Memorialists firmly believe there would be no cause for alarm even if the Indian population were trebled in the Colony.

But, your Memorialists humbly submit that, in a matter like the above, the wish of the Colony cannot guide Your Excellency's decision, but that the interests of the Indians affected by the clauses should also be considered. And your Memorialists have no hesitation in submitting, with all due respect, that the clauses, if ever sanctioned, will be a grave injustice and wrong to the most helpless of Her Majesty's Indian subjects.

Five years' indenture, your Memorialists submit, is long enough to undergo. To raise it to an indefinite period would mean that an

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895

Indian who cannot pay a poll-tax of £3 or return to India must for ever remain without freedom, without any prospect of ever bettering his condition, without ever even thinking of changing his hut, his meagre allowance and ragged clothes, for a better house, enjoyable food and respectable clothing. He must not ever think of educating his children according to his own taste or comforting his wife with any pleasure of recreation. Your Memorialists submit that a life of semistarvation in India, but of freedom, and among friends and relations in the same state would certainly be better and more desirable than the above. In this case the Indian may expect and get the chance to better his lot, in that, never. That, your Memorialists submit and believe, never was the object of encouraging immigration.

In conclusion, therefore, your Memorialists earnestly pray and confidently hope that, if the Colony does not want the Indian immigration without the arrangement objected to being sanctioned, Your Excellency may be graciously pleased to stop future immigration to Natal, or grant such other relief as may seem just.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.¹

ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 432

72. *REPORT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS*

August, 1895

ITS FOUNDATION

During the month of June in the year 1894 the Natal Government introduced a Bill called the Franchise Law Amendment Bill in the Legislative Assembly. It was recognized that it threatened the very existence of the Indians in the Colony. Meetings were held on the premises of Messrs Dada Abdulla & Co. to consider what steps should be taken to prevent the Bill from passing. Petitions were sent to both the Houses, Members of which were interviewed by a representative who went from Durban to P.M. Burg. The Bill, however,

¹ The appeal was infructuous. The Government of India's feeble protest about the authority and functions of the Protector of Immigrants as provided for in the new Immigration Amendment Bill was ignored. The Secretary of State sought the Viceroy's reconsideration of the Bill in the light of the Natal petitions pending Royal assent to it. Lord Elgin only reiterated his earlier view. (*Vide The Early Phase*, pp. 521-2). The Bill received Royal sanction and became Law on August 18, 1896.

passed both the Houses. The effect of the agitation was that all the Indians recognized the absolute necessity of establishing a permanent institution that would cope with the legislative activity, of a retrograde character, of the first Responsible Government of the Colony with regard to the Indians, and protect Indian interests.

After a few preliminary meetings had been held on Messrs Dada Abdulla's premises, the Natal Indian Congress was formally established on the 22nd August amidst great enthusiasm. All the leading members of the Indian community joined the Congress. Seventy-six members subscribed on the first evening. The list gradually rose to 228. Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam was elected president. Other prominent members were made vice-presidents. Mr. M. K. Gandhi was elected Hon. Secretary. A small committee, too, was formed. But, as the other members of the Congress expressed a wish to attend the committee meetings during the early days of the Congress, the committee was tacitly abolished and all the members were invited to the meetings.

The minimum monthly subscription was 5/-. There was no maximum limit. Two members subscribed £2 each monthly, one 25/-, ten 20/-, twenty-five 10/-, three 7/6, three 5/3, two 5/1, and one hundred and eighty-seven subscribed 5/- each, monthly. The following table shows the various classes of members with the subscriptions paid by them, the deficiency, etc.¹

Class	No.	Yearly		
		£ s d	Actual receipts	Deficiency
40/-	2	48- 0-0	£ 48- 0-0	Nil
25/-	1	15- 0-0	£ 15- 0-0	Nil
20/-	10	120- 0-0	£ 93- 0-0	£ 27- 0-0
10/-	22	132- 0-0	£ 88- 5-0	£ 43-15-0
7/6	3	13-10-0	£ 8-12-6	£ 4-17-6
5/3	2	6- 6-0	£ 3- 8-3	£ 2-17-9
5/1	2	6- 2-0	£ 5- 6-9	£ 0-15-3
5/-	187	559-10-0	£ 273-5-0	£ 286-15-0
	228	900 - 8-0	£ 535-17-6	£ 366- 0-6

¹ The table does not tally with the figures given above and the totals also are not all correct.

It will be seen from the above that, out of a possible income of £900-8-0, the Congress has been so far successful in collecting only £500-17-6 or nearly 50%. The 5/- subscribers have been the greatest defaulters. The causes are many. It should be borne in mind that some joined at a very late stage and, naturally, have not paid for the whole year. Many have left for India, a few are too poor to pay. The most potent cause, however, it is regrettable to mention, has been the unwillingness to pay. It is possible to collect over 30% of the remainder if some workers came forward and exerted themselves. The following is a list¹ of donations, general and special, for the Bennett case, as also the subscriptions from Newcastle and Charlestown.

The list has been given in full because these names do not appear on the printed lists. Thus the total receipts are:

Subscriptions	£535-17-6
Donations	£ 80-17-0
	£616-14-6

The above is worked on the basis of the printed list.

Now the deposits in the Bank amount to £598-19-11. In order to arrive at the above sum the cash expenses and the transfers have to be added.

The case expenses are £7-5-1. The transfers amount to £10-10-0, being £8, rent to Mr. Naidoo which was remitted in lieu of subscriptions, £2, rent not charged by Mr. Abdul Kadir and 10/-, rent not charged by Mr. Moosa H. Adam in lieu of his subscription. Thus

£598-19-11
£ 7- 5- 1
£ 10- 10- 0
£616- 15- 0

Thus, on comparing the deposits with the printed list, we have a difference of six pence which represent 6d received but not specified in the list. This happens because one member once paid 2/6 and another time 3/-. The 3/- could not be well represented on the list.

The expenses by cheque up to date amount to £151-11-1¹/₂. A full statement² is annexed hereto. This leaves a credit balance at the

¹ Not reproduced here

² Not reproduced here

Bank of £447-8-9¹/₂. The liabilities are not yet discharged and the expenses of the Immigration petition and the tickets referred to below.

The rules as to drawing cheques have been strictly adhered to. Although the Hon. Secy. has the power to sign cheques, alone, up to £5, the power has never been availed of. They are signed by him and Mr. Abdul Karim and, in his absence, by Mr. Dorasamy Pillay and Mr. P. Dowji and, in his absence ZKathrada, Mr. Randeri, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Peerun Mahomed, Mr. G. H. Miankhan and Mr. Amod Jeeva have, at one time or another, striven to get in the subscriptions. All, or most of them, more than once went round for subscriptions. Mr. Abdul Kadir alone, at his own expense, went to P. M. Burg and collected nearly £50, but for which most of the sum might have been lost to the Congress. Mr. Abdul Karim at his expense went up to Verulam and collected nearly £25.

There was also a difference among the prominent members as to signing the cheques. The rule originally was to have them signed by the Hon. Secy. and countersigned by one of the following: Mr. Abdulla H. Adam, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. P. Dowji Mahomed, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Abdul Kadir and Mr. Dorasamy Pillay. A suggestion was made that more should sign. At one time this difference threatened the very existence of the Congress, but the good sense of the members and their anxiety to prevent such a catastrophe ultimately dispelled the cloud. And the change above mentioned was agreed to unanimously.

As soon as the Congress was fairly started in Durban, Messrs Dowd Mahomed, Moosa Haji Adam, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Peerun Mahomed and the Hon. Secy. went up, each at his own expense, to canvass for members in P. M. Burg. A meeting was held there and about 48 subscribed. A second similar meeting was held at Verulam where about 37 subscribed. Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Haji, Mr. Dowd, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, and the Hon. Secy. went up there. Messrs Amod Bhayat, Haji Mahomed and Camroodeen rendered active help in P. M. Burg and Messrs Ebrahim Moosaji, Amod, Amod Meter and P. Naidoo, in Verulam.

Mr. Ameerodeen, although not a member of the Congress, did much needed work for the Congress. Mr. N. D. Joshi has been good enough to make a fair copy of the report in Gujarati.

Mr. Somasundram, in the earlier part of the Congress year, helped it by interpreting at the meetings and distributing circulars. Work has also been done in Newcastle and Charlestown. Members have subscribed for the second year.

Mr. Mahomed Sidat and Mr. Suliman Ebrahim and Mr. Mahomed Meer worked indefatigably in Newcastle. They and Mr. Dowd Amla went also to Charlestown at their expense. The Charlestown people responded splendidly. Within an hour all the available men subscribed. Mr. Dindar, Mr. Goolam Russul and Mr. Vanda rendered much help. Nearly 1,000 letters have been written to the friends of the Indians in England and India in connection with the Franchise petition, Transvaal petition and the Immigration petition to the Home Government.

The Immigration law, which contemplates imposition of a £3 tax in lieu of indenture, has been strenuously opposed. Petitions were presented to both the Houses.

The Transvaal petition, though not sent directly under the auspices of the Congress, cannot but be referred to in a review of the Congress work.

According to the spirit or the object of the Congress, an open letter was written to members of both the Houses and widely circulated in the Colony and South Africa. It was widely noticed by the papers and gave rise to much sympathetic private correspondence. Letters, too, occasionally appeared in the newspapers on the position of the Indians in Natal. A correspondence was carried on by the late President with the Government in connection with the separate entrances for the Europeans and Natives and Asiatics at the Post Office.

The result has not been altogether unsatisfactory. Separate entrances will now be provided for the three communities. Work has also been done among the indentured Indians. Balasundram, who was badly treated by his master, was transferred to Mr. Askew.

The Congress interfered on behalf of the indentured Indians in the Railway department, in connection with the Mohurrum festivals as well as supply of wood instead of coal. Much sympathy was shown by the Magistrate presiding.

The Tuohy case is also worthy of mention. Judgment was recorded for Ismail Amod whose hat was taken off forcibly in a public place and who was otherwise ill-treated.

The famous Bennett case cost the Congress a great deal, but it is believed that the money has not been thrown away. That we should not get judgment against the Magistrate was a foregone conclusion. We went to court in spite of Mr. Morecom's opinion to the contrary. It has, however, made the position much clearer and we know exactly what we should do should a similar case occur in future. While the Indian cause has not received much active support from the Europeans in the Colony, much sympathy has been evoked both in India and England. The London *Times* and *The Times of India* have actively supported the Indians in South Africa. The British Committee of the National Congress has been very vigilant. Letters of sympathy have been received from Sir W. W. Hunter, Mr. A. Webb¹, the Hon. Pherozechah Mehta, the Hon. Fazalbai Visram and others. Other Indian and English papers have also viewed our complaints favourably.

Mr. Askew was the only European who attended the Congress meetings. The Congress has not yet made itself officially known to the public because it was thought advisable not to do so unless it was assured of a permanent existence. It has worked very quietly.

This review of the work of the Congress may close fittingly with a mention of the address that was presented to Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, the late President, on his departure for India.

GIFTS TO THE CONGRESS

These have been quite varied and numerous. Mr. Parsee Rustomjee stands foremost in this respect. He has supplied it with three lamps, tablecloth, a clock, a door-blind, inkstands, pens, blotting-paper, flower-pot and also oil throughout the year. He has sent his men to sweep and light the hall on every meeting day with extraordinary punctuality. He has also supplied the Congress with 4,000 circulars. Mr. Abdul Kadir had the list of members printed.

Mr. C. M. Jeewa had 2,000 circulars printed gratis, paper for which was supplied partly by Mr. Haji Mahomed and partly by Mr. Hoosen Cassim.

Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam has made a gift of a carpet. Mr. Manekji provided a table.

¹ Alfred Webb: Member of Parliament. Contributed frequently to *India* and other periodicals on South African Indian topics; was President of the Congress at its Madras session (1894) and a member of the British Committee.

Mr. Pragji Bhimbhai gave 1,000 envelopes.

The Hon. Secretary got the rules printed in India in Gujarati and English and supplied stamps, papers, etc., for the normal fortnightly circulars.

Mr. Lawrence, a non-member, has been doing the work of distributing circulars with quiet zeal.

MISCELLANEOUS

The attendance has been very poor and painfully unpunctual. The Tamil members have not shown much zeal in the Congress work. They might, at any rate, have made up for the laxity in paying by attending punctually and regularly. In order to facilitate canvassing for small donations, tickets for one shilling, two shillings and two shillings and six pence, initialled by Mr. A. H. Adam, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. D. Pillay and the Hon. Secy., have been issued, but no forecast can yet be made as to the results of the plan.

A resolution has also been passed to the effect that medals should be awarded to active workers in order to encourage them. They have not yet been prepared.

DEATH AND DEPARTURE

It has to be noted with regret that Mr. Dinsha died a few months ago.

About 10 members have left for India, among whom may be mentioned, besides the late president, Mr. Haji Mahomed, Mr. Haji Suliman, Mr. Haji Dada, Mr. Manekji. Mr. Muthukrishna and Mr. Ranjitsingh have resigned.

About 20 members never paid any subscription at all, who also may be considered as having never joined the Congress.

SUGGESTIONS

The most important suggestion that has to be made is that, whatever the subscription, it must be made payable for the whole year in advance.

FURTHER REMARKS

It should be noted that some expenses though voted by the Congress have not been incurred. Economy has been strictly observed. At least £2,000 are needed to put the Congress on a sure foundation.

From a copy

73. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
September 2, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I would take the liberty to make a few remarks on your leader letters on the recent cables about the Indians in South Africa. It is not for the first time that you have said that the people in South Africa object to give the Indians equal political rights because they do not enjoy them in India, and that you would not object to give them the same rights as they enjoy in India. As I have said elsewhere, I repeat here that, in theory at any rate, the Indians do enjoy equal political rights with the Europeans in India. The Charter of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 guarantee the Indians the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects. And the Indians in this Colony, as well as in other parts of South Africa, would be quite satisfied if they could only enjoy the same rights that they would enjoy under similar circumstances.

In India, whenever the Europeans are allowed to vote, the Indians are not excluded. If the former have votes at the municipal elections, so have the latter. If the former can elect or become elected members of the Legislative Council, so can the latter. If the former can walk about freely after 9 p.m., so can the latter. The latter cannot possess themselves with arms as freely as the former. The Indians in South Africa also have no very great anxiety to arm themselves. There is no poll-tax in India. Will you be good enough to protest against the recent Immigration Act and earn the gratitude of the helpless indentured Indians? It is the same recognized principle of political equality that enabled Mr. Naoroji to enter the House of Commons. If you object to the Indian having the same rights because "British energy and money" have built up this Colony, you should clearly object to the Germans and the French also. On the same principle, the descendants of the pioneers who shed their blood may well object to even those coming from England and pushing them out. Is this not a narrow and selfish view of the matter? At times I read in your leaders expressions of very lofty and humanitarian sentiments. Unfortunately for the poor Indian, these sentiments are set aside when you deal with

the Indian question. And yet, whether you like it or not, he is your fellow-subject. England does not want to let go her hold of India, and at the same time she does not want to rule her with an iron rod. Her statesmen say that they want so much to endear the English rule to the Indians that they would not have any other. Would not views such as those expressed by you retard the fulfilment of those wishes?

I know very few Indians who, though they may be earning £1,000, live as if they were earning only £50. The fact is that, perhaps, there is no Indian in the Colony who alone earns £1,000 per year. There are some whose trade would lead others to believe that they must be “making a pile”. The trade of some of them is certainly very large; not so the profit, because it is shared by many. The Indian loves trade, and so long as he can earn a decent living, he does not mind sharing his profit largely with others. He does not insist upon the lion’s share. Just like the European, the Indian also loves spending his money, only not so recklessly. Every merchant who has amassed a fortune in Bombay has built for himself palatial buildings. The only palatial building in Mombassa has been built by an Indian. Indian merchants have earned much in Zanzibar, and consequently have built palaces, and, in some instances, pleasure houses also. If no Indian has done so in Durban of South Africa it is because he has not earned sufficient to enable him so to do. Sir, if you will only study the question a little more closely (pardon me for so saying), you will find that the Indians spend in this Colony quite as much as they can without coming to grief. To say that those earning well sleep on the floors of their shops is, I venture to say, rather incorrect. If you would undeceive yourself, and if you will leave your editorial chair for a few hours, I would escort you to some Indian stores. Then, perhaps, you would think much less harshly of them than now.

I humbly believe that the Indian question, at any rate for the British Colonies, has a local as well as Imperial significance, and I submit that to lose temper over it, or to shut one’s eyes to actual facts, in order to form preconceived ideas, is not exactly the way to solve it satisfactorily. It behoves responsible persons in the Colony not to widen the gulf between the two communities, but, if possible, to bridge it. Having invited the Indians to the Colony, how can the responsible Colonists curse them? How can they escape the natural consequences of the introduction of the Indian labour?

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 5-9-1895

74. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"¹

DURBAN,
September 15, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I would venture to make a few remarks in reply to Mr. T. Marston Francis's letter on the Indian question.

I believe your correspondent's description of the Indian municipalities, as also of the Legislative Councils, is not quite accurate. To mention only one instance, I do not think that the chairman of an Indian municipality must be a covenanted civilian. The present president of the Bombay Corporation is an Indian solicitor.

I have never contended—nor do I contend now—that the franchise is as extensive in India as it is here. It would also be idle for me to say that the Legislative Councils in India are as representative as the Legislative Assembly here. What I do contend, however, is that, whatever the limits of the franchise in India, it is extended to all without distinction of colour. The fact that the Indian's ability to understand representative government has been recognized cannot be gainsaid. What Mr. Francis says, viz., that the qualifications for the franchise are not the same in India as in Natal, has never been denied. Under such a test no one coming from even Europe would be entitled to the franchise, for the qualifications in the different European States are not surely the same as here.

This week's mail brings the latest proof that the Indians have never failed in the real and only test, viz., whether or not they understand the principle of representation. I quote from the article on "Indian Affairs" in *The Times*:

¹ Controverting Gandhiji's plea for granting the franchise to Indians in South Africa, Mr. Marston T. Francis, who had lived several years in India, wrote in *The Natal Mercury*, 6-9-1895, that though Indians in India could vote at municipal elections and become members of the Legislative Council, things were so constituted that they could never outvote the European members or arrogate to themselves supreme authority. The chairman of a municipality, he said, was always a covenanted officer of the Indian Civil Service, and the Commissioner of the Division, the Governor, the Viceroy, the Secretary of State for India, and ultimately the British Parliament could impose checks on the municipalities and legislative bodies of India.

But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stirs within us a pride in having such fellow-subjects. . . . indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. . . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow-subjects in more ways than one. The battle-field has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. There was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Council on a partially elective basis three years ago. . . . Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success.

This, as is well known, is from the pen of a historian¹ and Indian officer who has served in India for 30 years. Disfranchisement by itself may seem to some to be very insignificant. But its consequences to the Indian community are too dreadful to contemplate. Its corresponding advantages to the European Colonists, I am convinced, are *nil*, unless there be anything gratifying in degrading or keeping under degradation a race or nation. There is no question of “the white man or the yellow man ruling”, and I hope to be able to show, on a future occasion, that the fears entertained on that score are entirely groundless.

There are passages in Mr. Francis’s letter which would, perhaps, show that he must have left India very long ago. There are very few posts more responsible than that of a civil commissioner, and yet the Secretary of State for India only recently thought it prudent to appoint an Indian to that post. Mr. Francis knows what jurisdiction a Chief Justice in India enjoys, and an Indian has occupied that position both in Bengal and Madras. Those who wish to bind the two races—the British and the Indian—with “the silken cord of love” will not find it difficult to notice innumerable points of contact between the two. Even the three religions of the two, in spite of their apparent antagonism, have much in common, and would not form a bad unity in trinity.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 23-9-1895

¹ Sir. W. W. Hunter

75. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
September 23, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

Your remarks in your Saturday's issue on the "Indian Congress", or more correctly, "The Natal Indian Congress". are premature, seeing that the case¹ in which the name has been used is not yet over. Were I not afraid of running the risk of committing contempt of court I would make a few remarks on the circumstances under which the Congress has been connected with the case. I am, therefore, obliged to postpone any remarks on the matter till the case is over.

In the meanwhile, in order to remove any misimpression your remarks may create, I would with your kind permission, set out the objects of the Congress. They are:

"(1) To bring about a better understanding, and to promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

"(2) To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing, etc.

"(3) To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the Colony, about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

"(4) To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under, and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

¹ The Natal Indian Congress leaders were said to have had a hand in intimidating an Indian witness from giving evidence in a trial for assault. The charge was actually against Padayachi, a member of the Natal Indian Congress, and it was stated that he did so at the instigation of leaders of the Congress. It was further alleged that under Gandhiji's leadership the Congress was conspiring to fight the Government, that it set up Indian labourers to agitate against their grievances, that Gandhiji extracted money from them and from Indian traders promising to help them obtain relief and used the funds for his own purposes. *Vide* also "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 21-10-1895.

“(5) To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

“(6) To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

“(7) And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically.”

The very constitution of the Congress prevented it from dealing with private grievances, unless they have a public significance.

To say that “it has been quite through accident that the existence of the ‘Indian Congress’ has been discovered” is hardly in accordance with known facts. While the Congress was yet in process of formation, *The Natal Witness* announced the fact, and, if I am not mistaken, the paragraph announcing it was copied by you. It is true that it has not been officially made known before. This was not done because its organizers were not, and are not yet, sure of its permanent existence. They thought it prudent to let time alone bring it to the public notice. No attempts have been made to keep it secret. On the other hand, its organizers even invited those Europeans who were considered to be sympathetic either to join it or attend its fortnightly meetings. It is only because it has begun to be misrepresented in private conversation, and has now been publicly misrepresented (no doubt, unconsciously) by you, that the above explanation has been deemed necessary.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

HON. SEC.,

THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

PS.

For your information I enclose copies of the rules, the list of members during its first year, and the first annual report.

M. K. G.

The Natal Advertiser, 25-9-1895

76. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"¹

DURBAN,
September 25, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury
SIR,

Your correspondent "H" has evidently been misinformed as to the genesis of the Natal Indian Congress, as also with regard to other matters. The Congress was formed chiefly by the efforts of Mr. Abdulla Hajee Adam. I have been present at all the meetings of the Congress, and I know that no Civil Servant has taken part in any of the meetings. The responsibility for drafting the rules and the several memorials rests entirely on my shoulders. Not one Civil Servant ever saw the memorials before they were printed and ready for distribution among the Congress members and others.

M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 27-9-1895

77. SPEECH AT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS²

DURBAN,
September 29, 1895

Mr. Gandhi addressed the meeting at great length. He said now that the existence of the Natal Indian Congress had become fully known, it was necessary they should be punctual in paying their subscriptions. They had now £700 in hand, being about £100 more than the last time he met them. They wanted quite £4,000 to meet their requirements, and he said everyone should sign to promise a subscription in a given time; every merchant who sold £100 of goods should endeavour to give 5s to the Congress.

Mr. Gandhi said they had succeeded so far in England but they were now awaiting the good results which will come from India. It was very likely that he (Mr. Gandhi) would leave them in January to go to India, and he would then endeavour to persuade a number of good Indian barristers to come to Natal.

The Natal Advertiser, 2-10-1895

¹ A correspondent, "H", in *The Natal Mercury*, 21-9-1895, referred to a report that a member of the Civil Service, an Indian interpreter in a magistrate's court, was behind the Congress and its work and demanded that he should be prevented from doing such "mischief".

² Under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, Gandhiji addressed a large gathering of Indians, numbering between 800 and 1,000, at Rustomjee's buildings.

78. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"¹

DURBAN,
September 30, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury
SIR,

Were the matter referred to in "H" 's letter in your Saturday issue concerning myself only, I would not have taken any notice, but as this letter affects Civil Servants I am obliged to trespass further upon your courtesy. I am not a paid Secretary of the Congress. On the other hand, in common with other members, I also contribute my humble share to its funds. No one pays me anything whatever on behalf of the Congress. Some Indians do pay me yearly retainers. They are paid to me directly. There is nothing that the Congress has to conceal; only it does not blow its own trumpet. Any enquiries about it, whether public or private, will be answered as promptly as possible. I beg to enclose herewith some papers in connection with the Congress which would throw some light on its working.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 4-10-1895

¹ "H" had written again in *The Natal Mercury*, 28-9-1895, that it was the Indian interpreter that had framed the rules of the Congress, that he was mainly responsible for the submission of the Memorial to Her Majesty and also for Gandhiji's election as Congress Secretary on an annual salary of £300.

79. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
October 9, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

No Indian can take exception to the general tenor of your leader in your yesterday's issue.¹

If the Congress has attempted, even in an indirect manner, to tamper with a witness, it will certainly deserve suppression. I will, for the present, content myself with repeating the statement that it has not made any such attempt. As the judgment in which the Congress has been condemned is under appeal, I do not feel free to deal with the evidence at length. The only witness who was asked questions about the Congress denied that it had anything to do with the matter. If the doings of men in their private capacity were to be fathered upon the association they may belong to, then I venture to think that almost any charge could be proved against any association.

The Indians do not claim "one Indian one vote", nor is any vote claimed for the "Coolie" pure and simple. But then the "Coolie" pure and simple, so long as he remains one, cannot get it even under the existing law. The protest is only against colour or racial distinction. If the whole question were studied coolly there would be no occasion for any display of bad feeling or warmth by anybody.

The Indians have in no part of the world attempted to gain political supremacy. In Mauritius, where they are in such large numbers, they are said to have shown no political ambition. And they

¹ The paper had observed that if the Indian Congress could be proved to have resorted to "wrong and suspicious practices", then "swift and decisive action for its punishment would be justified". The judge in the Padayachi case had said that the Congress was "of the nature of an association of conspiracy, pernicious and fraught with danger to the whole community in this Colony of whatever race". Taking note of this adverse judgment, *The Natal Advertiser* had in an earlier issue observed that if that was really the case, the judge's censure "will not be regarded as a whit too severe".

are not likely to do so in Natal, even though they may number 4,00,00 instead of 40,000.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 10-10-1895

80. *LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY*¹

DURBAN,
October 21, 1895

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
P. M. BURG
SIR,

Certain remarks in the newspapers² and the judgment of the Durban Resident Magistrate in *Regina v. Rungasamy Padayachi* recently tried before him render it necessary for me to write to you, in my capacity as Honorary Secretary for the Congress, in connection with the remarks and the judgment referred to above.

The judgment lays down that the Congress summoned an Indian named Asgara before it on a certain day in August and attempted to intimidate him from giving evidence in a case, and that it is an association of conspiracy, etc.

I have to submit that not only has the Congress never summoned the above-named person or any other person before it with a view to prevent him from giving evidence, but that the presiding Magistrate had absolutely no grounds for making such remarks.

The judgment in which the remarks occur is under appeal. That has prevented me from dealing with the matter at any length in the Press. Unfortunately, the remarks being merely *obiter dicta* of the Magistrate, may not be fully dealt with by the judges. During the examination, cross-examination and re-examination of the witness Asgara, the Congress was not even so much as mentioned. After the re-examination was finished, the Magistrate asked the witness questions about the Congress. It was made clear from the questions

¹ This was Enclosure No. 1 in Despatch No. 128 of November 30, 1895, from the Governor of Natal to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

² *Vide The Early Phase*

and answers that there was no meeting of the Congress during the week during which the intimidation is supposed to have taken place. Two printed circulars were produced, one of which was dated the 14th August, the other the 12th September, inviting members of the Congress to attend the meetings on the Tuesdays following the prospective dates, i.e., on the 20th August and 17th September.

The intimidation was alleged to have happened on the 12th August. The witness is said to have been sent for by Mahomed Camroodeen to Moosa's office that day, where there were present M. C. Camroodeen, Dada Abdulla, Dowd Mahomed and two or three strangers. Here, it is alleged, he was asked certain questions about the case. And this the magistrate has connected with the Congress, in spite of the witness's evidence to the effect that the Congress meetings are not held in Moosa's office, that there was no circular inviting him to the meeting at Moosa's office, that he did not attend the meetings convened in terms of the circulars, that the Congress meetings are held in the Congress Hall, that the circulars had nothing to do with the case, and that he was not present at the actual Congress meetings.

The only point that could in any way be used to support the Magistrate's conclusion was the fact that three out of the six or seven men alleged to have been present at Moosa's office were members of the Congress.

I beg to enclose herewith the extracts from the evidence bearing on the matter.

I venture to submit that, in some way or other, the Magistrate was biased. In the case of Poonoosamy Pather and three others, without a particle of evidence, he has remarked in his reasons for judgment that the defendants are members of and have been backed up by the Congress. As a matter of fact, all of them are not members of the Congress and the Congress had nothing whatever to do with the matter. As a great deal has been made of my instructing Mr. Millar in the Rungasamy case, I may mention that I had no connection whatever with the case of Poonoosamy and others, nor did I know, till after the case had far advanced towards the final stage, that there was such a case at all. My intervention was sought when Rungasamy was charged for the same offence for the second time and then, too, not in my capacity as Hon. Secretary of the Congress but as a lawyer.

I beg to assure the Government that the intention of the organizers of the Congress is to make the Congress an institution

useful to both the communities in the Colony and a medium of interpretation of the feelings of the Indians on questions affecting them, and thus to help the existing Government and not to embarrass it, if it could embarrass it at all.

Holding such views, they naturally resent any remarks made about the Congress that may curtail its usefulness. Nothing, therefore, will be more welcome to the members of the Congress than a thorough enquiry as to its constitution and working, should the Government be inclined to attach any weight to the Magistrate's remarks.

I may state that the Congress has never yet interfered in any court matters between Indians and Indians and has refused to take up private grievances unless they have a public significance. No individual member or members can do anything on behalf of, or in the name of, the Congress without the sanction of a majority of the members of the Congress assembled in accordance with the rules of the Congress, which can only meet on a written notification from the Honorary Secretary.

If the Government are satisfied that the Congress had nothing to do with the case in question, I, on behalf of the Congress, humbly beg to ask for some public notification of the fact; if, on the other hand, there be any doubt as to the matter I venture to ask for an enquiry.

I beg to enclose herewith a copy each of Congress rules, the list of members for the year ending 22nd August, 1895, and the first Annual Report.

I shall be very happy to supply any further information that may be required.¹

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 192

¹ Soon after, the Supreme Court quashed the conviction in the case of *Regina v. Poonoosamy Pather and others* as it was based on untenable evidence. A month later, on November 27, the judgment in the Padayachi case also was set aside by the Supreme Court on the ground that there was "not a particle of evidence". *Vide The Early Phase*,

81. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN¹

JOHANNESBURG,
S.A.R.
November 26, 1895

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON
THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS
RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC
HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the South African Republic, hereby venture respectfully to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to the resolution passed by the Honourable Volksraad of the South African Republic on 7th October, 1895, ratifying the treaty entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic exempting all British subjects residing in the Republic from personal military service with the reservation that by "British subjects" shall be understood "White persons".

Your Memorialists, on reading this resolution, ventured to telegraph to you on 22nd October, 1895, protesting against the distinction made between white and coloured British subjects.²

The reservation is evidently aimed at the Indian British subjects residing in the South African Republic.

Your Memorialists would draw your attention to the fact that the treaty itself does not qualify the words "British subjects" at all, and submit that the resolution, instead of accepting the treaty *in toto*, modifies it and on that ground alone your Memorialists feel sure the

¹ This was an enclosure in despatch No. 692 of December 10, 1895, from the High Commissioner to the South African Republic to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was presented to the Home Government on May 14, 1896; *vide The Early Phase*.

² This telegram is not available. It stated that a Memorial would follow. The telegram was, however, acknowledged by H. O. Arnold Foster, M.P., who observed: ". . . I regard the action taken by Boers with regard to the British Indian subjects in the Transvaal, as not only gross indignity but likely if pressed in to raise very serious questions far outside the limits of the Boer State." *Vide The Early Phase*.

modified ratification will not be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

Your Memorialists will not dwell upon the indignity to which the resolution unnecessarily subjects the Indians.

The reason put forward for exemption of British subjects from commando was chiefly that, as the British subjects were not entitled to full Burgher Right and were subjected to disabilities in the Republic, they should not be compelled to render military service with the Burghers. It was openly avowed at the time the commotion was going on that the Uitlander population of the Republic would gladly serve in the Malaboch campaign¹, if only they were treated as citizens and given the franchise.

If, therefore, the European or, as the resolution puts it, "White" British subjects should be exempt because of the political disabilities they labour under, much more, it is respectfully submitted, should the Indian British subjects, who not only do not enjoy any political rights in the South African Republic but are treated as little more than chattels, of which fact the resolution is another indication.

Your Memorialists, in conclusion, earnestly pray and confidently hope, that in view of the general persecution that is incessantly being meted out to the Indians throughout South Africa, whether in the Colonies or in Independent States (even in the newly opened-up territories of Bulawayo and other parts), and in view of the magnitude of the already existing restrictions placed upon the Indians in South Africa generally and your Memorialists' and their fellow-brothers' attempts to get them removed by the intervention of Her Majesty's Government, this fresh attempt to yet further restrict the freedom of the Indians on the part of the Government of the South African Republic will not be countenanced by Her Majesty's Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.,

M. C. KAMROODEEN
ABDUL GANI
MAHOMED ISMAIL
ETC., ETC.

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 152

¹ War by the Dutch against the Malaboch tribe in Northern Transvaal, in 1894

82. THE INDIAN FRANCHISE¹

BEECH GROVE, DURBAN,
December 16, 1895

AN APPEAL TO EVERY BRITON IN SOUTH AFRICA

The question of Indian franchise has convulsed the whole Colony, indeed the whole of South Africa, so far as the newspapers are concerned. This appeal, therefore needs no apology. It is an attempt to place before every Briton in South Africa, as shortly as possible, an Indian view of the Indian Franchise.

Some of the arguments in favour of the disfranchisement of the Indians are:

- (1) The Indians do not enjoy the franchise in India.
- (2) The Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian; in fact, he is the scum of India.
- (3) The Indian does not understand what the franchise is.
- (4) The Indian should not get the franchise because the Native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none.
- (5) The Indian should be disfranchised in the interests of the Native population.
- (6) This Colony shall be and remain a white man's country, and not a black man's and the Indian franchise will simply swamp the European vote, and give the Indian political supremacy.

I shall take the objections *seriatim*.

I

It has been said over and over again that the Indian cannot and must not claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India, and that he has no franchise whatever in India.

Now, the Indian in the first place does not claim any higher privileges than he enjoys in India. It should be borne in mind that the Government in India is not of the same type as here. Therefore, it is obvious there cannot be any analogy between the two. It might be said in answer to this that the Indians should wait till they get the same kind of government in India. This answer, however, will not do. On the same principle, it can be argued that no man coming to Natal

¹ Gandhiji sent copies of this pamphlet to Indian leaders like Lokamanya Tilak.

could get the franchise unless he enjoyed the franchise in the country he came from in the same way and under the same circumstances, i.e., unless the Franchise Law of that country was the same as that of Natal. If such a doctrine were to be of universal application, it is easy to see that no one coming from England ever could get the franchise in Natal, for the Franchise Law there is not the same as in Natal; much less could a man coming from Germany or Russia, where a more autocratic Government prevails. The only and real test, therefore, is not whether the Indians have the franchise in India, but whether they understand the principle of representative government.

But they *have* the franchise in India, extremely limited it is true; nevertheless it is there. The Legislative Councils recognize the ability of the Indian to understand and appreciate representative government. They are a standing testimony to the Indian's fitness for representative institutions. Members of Indian Legislative Councils are partly elected and partly nominated. The position of the Legislative Councils in India is not very unlike that of the Legislative Council of Natal. And the Indians are not debarred from entering those Councils. They compete on the same terms with the Europeans.

At the last election of Members for the Legislative Council of Bombay, the candidates for one of the constituencies were a European and an Indian.

There are Indian Members in all the Legislative Councils of India. Indians vote at these elections as well as the Europeans. The franchise is certainly limited. It is also circuitous, as for example: the Corporation of Bombay elects one Member to the Legislative Council, and the Corporation consists of Members elected by the ratepayers, mostly Indian.

There are thousands of Indian voters for municipal elections in Bombay from which class, or a class similar to which, are drawn most of the Indian traders in the Colony.

Furthermore, posts of the utmost importance are thrown open to the Indians. Does that show as if they were considered unfit to understand representative government? An Indian has been a Chief Justice—an office that carries with it a salary of 60,000 rupees or £6,000 per year. Only recently an Indian, belonging to the class which most of the traders belong to here, has been appointed Puisne Judge in the High Court of Judicature at Bombay.

A Tamil gentleman, to whose caste belong some of the indentured Indians, is a Puisne Judge of the High Court at Madras. An Indian has been entrusted with the very responsible duties of a Civil Commissioner in Bengal.

Indians have occupied the Vice-Chancellor's chair at Calcutta and Bombay.

Indians compete for the Civil Service on the same terms as the Europeans.

The present President of the Bombay Corporation is an Indian elected by the Members of the Corporation.

The latest testimony to the Indian's fitness for an equality with the civilized races comes from the London *Times* of 23rd August, 1895.

The writer of "Indian Affairs" in *The Times* who, it is well known, is no other than Sir William Wilson Hunter, perhaps the most eminent Indian historian, says :

Of the acts of daring and of the even more splendid examples of endurance by which those honours were won, it is difficult to read without a thrill of admiration. One Sepoy who received the Order of Merit has had no fewer than thirty-one wounds, "probably," says the *Indian Daily News*, "a record number". Another, shot in the defile where Ross's party was cut up, quietly felt out the bullet in his body and with both hands forced it, fearless of the agony, to the surface. When at last he could get it between his fingers he pulled it out, and then, streaming with blood, he shouldered his rifle again and did a march of twenty-one miles.

But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stirs within us a pride in having such fellow-subjects, the paltry rewards doled forth in cases of equal pluck and steadfastness awaken very different feelings. Two water carriers of the 4th Bengal Infantry were singled out in the dispatches 'for the gallantry and devotion exhibited by them during the action at Koragh'. Indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. Another man of the same regiment was mentioned for 'the conspicuous gallantry and devotion exhibited' while with the party which brought the late Captain Baird into Chitral fort . . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow-subjects in more ways than one. The battlefield has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. *There never was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Councils on a partially elective basis three years ago* (the italics are mine). Nor in any part

of India did the issue of that experiment seem more doubtful than in Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal contains a population numerically equal to that of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies put together, and from an administrative point of view much more difficult to manage.

Sir Charles Elliott bears generous testimony not only to the absence of factious opposition but to the valuable practical aid which he has obtained in maturing this necessarily complex measure (The Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act) from his Legislature as expanded by Lord Salisbury's Statute. Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—*the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success* (the italics are again mine).

II

The second objection is that the Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian. The statement is hardly correct. It will not, of course, be true as regards the trading community, nor will it be so as to all the indentured Indians, some of whom belong to the highest castes in Indian. They are certainly all very poor. Some of them were vagabonds in India. Many also belong to the lowest class. But I may be permitted to say without giving any offence that, if the Indian community in Natal is not, nor is the European community here, drawn from the highest class. But I venture to submit that undue importance is given to this fact. If the Indian is not a model Indian, it is the duty of the Government to help him to become one. And if the reader wishes to know what a model Indian is, I beg to refer him to my "Open Letter" where many authorities are collected to show that he is as much civilized as a "model" European. And just as it is competent for a lowest-class European to rise to the highest level in Europe, so is it for the lowest-class Indian in India. By persistent indifference, or retrogressive legislation, the Indian would be degraded lower still in the Colony, and thus may constitute a real danger which he was not before. Shunned, despised, cursed, he will only do and be what others in similar positions have done and been. Loved and well treated, he is capable of rising higher like any member of every other nationality. He cannot be said to be well treated so long as he is not even given those privileges which he enjoys or would enjoy in India under similar circumstances.

III

To say that the Indian does not understand the franchise is to ignore the whole history of India. Representation, in the truest sense of the term, the Indian has understood and appreciated from the earliest ages. That principle—the *Panchayat*—guides all the actions of an Indian. He considers himself a member of the *Panchayat*, which really is the whole body civic to which he belongs for the time being. That power to do so—that power to understand thoroughly the principle of popular government—has rendered him the most harmless and most docile man on earth. Centuries of foreign rule and oppression have failed to make him a dangerous member of society. Wherever he goes, and under whatever conditions he is placed, he bows to the decision of the majority represented by those in authority over him. For, he knows no one can be in authority over him, unless he is tolerated there by a majority of the body to which he belongs. This principle is so ingrained in the Indian heart that even the most despotic princes of the Indian States feel that they are to rule for the people. It is true that they do not all act up to that principle. The causes need not be discussed here. And the most astounding fact is that, even when nominally there is a monarchical government, the *Panchayat* is the supreme body. The actions of its members are regulated in accordance with the wish of the majority. For authorities to support my contention I must beg leave to refer the reader to the Franchise petition¹ to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly.

IV

“The Indian should not get the franchise because the Native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none.”

I have stated this objection as I find it in the papers. It is at variance with the fact that the Indian already enjoys the franchise in Natal. An attempt is now being made to disfranchise him.

Without entering into comparisons, I would beg to state what are hard facts. The Native franchise is governed by a special law which has been in force for some years. That law does not apply to the Indian. It has not been contended that it should apply to the Indian. The franchise (whatever it may be) of the Indian in India is not governed by a special law. It applies to all alike. The Indian has his Charter of Liberty, the Proclamation of 1858.

The latest argument advanced in favour of disfranchisement is that the Indian franchise would do harm to the Native population of the Colony. In what way this will happen is not stated at all. But, I presume, the objectors to the Indian franchise rely upon the stock objection to the Indian on the alleged ground that he supplies liquor to the Natives and this spoils them. Now I venture to submit that the Indian franchise cannot make any difference one way or the other. If the Indians supply liquor they would not do so to any greater extent because of their vote. The Indian vote can never become sufficiently strong to affect the Native policy of the Colony, which is not only jealously watched but to a very great extent controlled by the Downing Street authorities. In fact, even the European Colonists are powerless against Downing Street in this matter. But let us, for a moment, look at facts. The analytical table referred to below, showing the position of the Indian voters already on the List, shows that by far the largest number of them are traders who, it is well known, are not only teetotallers themselves, but would like to see liquor banished altogether from the land, and if the Voters' List continues to remain so, the effect of that vote, if any, on the Native policy will be for the better. But the following extracts from the Indian Immigration Commission, 1885-87, show that the Indians are not worse than the Europeans in this respect. In quoting them I disclaim any intention to make comparisons, which I have tried to avoid as much as possible. Nor do I wish thereby to excuse my countrymen. No one can regret more than myself to see any Indian found drunk or supplying liquor to Natives. I beg to assure the reader that my only wish is to show that the objection to the Indian vote on that particular ground is merely superficial and does not bear scrutiny.

The Commissioners, who were specially commissioned, among other things, to report upon the charge against the Indians of drunkenness and crimes resulting therefrom, at pp. 42 & 43, report thus:

We have examined many witnesses on this subject. Their evidence and such criminal statistics as are forthcoming fail to convince us that drunkenness and crime statistics therefrom are prevalent amongst Indian immigrants in a greater ratio than amongst other sections of the community, against whom no such restrictive legislation is proposed.

We do not doubt that there is much truth in the averment that natives readily obtain ardent liquors through the agency of Indians.... We, however,

doubt that they are more guilty in this matter than the white people who traffic in liquor.

It has been shrewdly observed that the people who make the loudest complaints against the Indian immigrants for selling or disposing of liquor to the Natives are the very persons who themselves sell the liquor to the Native. Their trade is interfered with and their profits are lessened by the competition of Indian traffickers.

What follows the above is instructive reading as showing that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the Indians in India are free from the habit of drinking and that they learn it here. The question how and why they take to liquor in Natal I leave to the reader to answer.

The Commissioners at page 83 say as follows:

Although we are convinced that Indians, and especially free Indians in Natal, surrender themselves to the drinking of intoxicating liquor to a greater extent than in their own country, yet we are constrained to record that there is no satisfactory proof before us that the percentage of drunk and disorderly persons is greater amongst them than amongst other races dwelling within the Colony.

Superintendent Alexander says in his evidence before the Commission (p. 146):

The Indians are to be considered a necessary evil at present; we cannot do without them as labourers; we cannot do without them as storekeepers; they are as good as the Natives; they have very much improved, but the Natives have gone down very much; nearly all the thefts are now committed by Natives; as far as my experience goes, the Natives obtain drink from Indians and from everyone else who will supply them; I find some white people as bad as Indians in this way; these are men out of employ, vagrants, who, to gain a sixpence, will supply a Native with a bottle of liquor.

In the present condition of Natal I do not think it is possible to substitute a white for an Indian population. I do not think we can. I can deal with 3,000 Indians with the staff that I have, but if there were 3,000 corresponding white British workmen, I could not. . . .

At page 149 he says :

I find that people generally suspect Coolies of doing everything wrong stealing fowls, etc., but I find such is not the case. Out of the last nine cases of fowl-stealing, all of which were laid to my corporation night-soil Coolies, I find that two Natives and three white men have been convicted of stealing these fowls.

I would further draw the attention of the readers to the recently issued Native Blue-book, and there they will find that almost all the

Magistrates are of the opinion that European influences have brought about a change for the worse in the moral character of the Natives.

In the face of these incontrovertible facts, is it not rather unfair to impute the blame to the Indians entirely for the Native deterioration? In 1893, while there were 28 convictions against Europeans in the Borough for supplying liquor, there were only 3 against Indians.

VI

“This country shall be and remain a white man’s country and not a black man’s, and the Indian franchise will simply swamp the European vote and give the Indian political supremacy in Natal.”

With the first part of the statement I do not propose to deal. I confess that I do not even understand it fully. I would, however, try to remove the misconception that underlies the latter part of the statement. I venture to say that the Indian vote can never swamp the European vote, and that the idea of the Indian trying to claim political supremacy is contrary to all past experience. I have had the honour to talk to many Europeans with reference to this question, and almost all have argued upon the assumption that there is “one man one vote” in the Colony. That there is a property qualification was an information to them. I must therefore, be pardoned for reproducing here the Section of the Franchise Law dealing with the qualification.

Every man, except as hereafter excepted, above the age of twentyone years, who possesses an immovable property to the value of £50 or who rents any such property of the yearly value of £10 within any electoral district and who is duly registered in the manner hereinafter mentioned, shall be entitled to vote at the election of a member for such district. When any such property as aforesaid is occupied by more persons than one as proprietors or renters, each of such occupants, being duly registered, shall be entitled to vote in respect of such property, provided the value or, as the case may be, the rent thereof be such as would entitle each of such joint occupants to vote if equally divided among them.

From this it is clear that it is not every Indian who can get the franchise. And how many Indians are there in the Colony, compared with the Europeans, who have immovable property of the value of £50 or who rent such property of the yearly value of £10? This law has been in force for a long time, and the following table will give some idea of the relative strength of the European and the Indian franchise. I have compiled the table from the latest lists published in the *Gazette*:

VOTERS

No.	ELECTORAL DIVISIONS	EUROPEANS	INDIANS
1	Pietermaritzburg	1,521	82
2	Umgeni	306	Nil
3	Lion's River	511	Nil
4	Ixopo	573	3
5	Durban. . . .	2,100	143
6	County of Durban	779	20
7	Victoria	566	1
8	Umvoti. . . .	438	1
9	Weenen	528	Nil
10	Klip River	591	1
11	Newcastle	917	Nil
12	Alexandra	201	“
13	Alfred	278	“
		9,309	251
Grand Total		9,560	

Thus, out of 9,560 registered voters only 251 are Indians. And only two divisions have Indian voters worth mentioning. The proportion of Indians voters to the European, roughly speaking, is 1:38, i.e., the European vote at present is 38 times as strong as the Indian vote. According to the *Report of the Protector of Indian Immigrants for 1895*, out of the total Indian population of 46,343 only 30,303 are free Indians. Adding to this the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000, we have, roughly, 35,000 freed and free Indians. At present, therefore, the Indian population that may compete with the European population as to voting is not so large as the European. But I believe I am not wide of the mark in saying that more than half of the 35,000 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians in point of pecuniary circumstances. I have been travelling in the districts surrounding and within 50 miles of Durban, and I may safely venture to assert that most of the Indians who are free are living from hand to mouth and certainly have not immovable property worth £50. Free Indian adults in the Colony number only 12,360. Thus, I submit that the fears as to the Indian vote swamping the European in the near future are entirely groundless.

The following analysis of the Indian Voters' List further shows that most of the Indian voters are those Indians who have settled in the Colony for a very long time; that out of 205 whom I have been able to get identified, only 35 have been at one time indentured Indians, and that they have all been in the Colony for over 15 years.

TABLE SHOWING THE LENGTH OF RESIDENCE OF THE INDIAN VOTERS AND THE NUMBER OF INDIAN VOTERS WHO HAVE ONCE BEEN UNDER INDENTURE:

4 years' residence	..	..	..	13
5 to 9 "	..	..	..	50
10 to 13 "	..	..	..	35
14 to 15 "	..	..	..	59
Free Indians who have once been under indenture, but who have been in the Colony for over 15, and in many cases over 20 years	35
Colonial-born 9
Interpreters 4
Not classified	46

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Of course, this table cannot by any means be said to be absolutely correct. I think, however, it is accurate enough for the present purpose. Thus, so far as these figures go, the Indians who come under indenture take 15 years or more to be able to have sufficient property qualifications to get on the Voters' Roll. And if the freed Indian population were excepted, no one can say that the trading population alone can ever swamp the Voters' Roll. Moreover, most of these 35 freed Indians have risen to the status of traders. Of those who have originally come on their own means, a large majority have taken a long time to be able to get on the Voters' Roll. Of the 46 whom I have not been able to get identified, a great many, by their names, appear to belong to the trading class. There are many Colonial-born Indians in the Colony. They are also educated, and yet on the Voters' Roll there are only 9. This would show that they are too poor to have the sufficient qualifications. On the whole, therefore, it would seem that taking the present List as a basis, the fears as to the Indian vote assuming threatening proportions are imaginary. Of the 205, over 40 are either dead or have left the Colony.

The following table is an analysis of the Indian Voters' List according to their occupation :

TRADING CLASS					
Storekeepers	..	..	..	..	92
Merchants	..	..	..	..	32
Goldsmiths	..	..	..	..	4
Jewellers	..	..	..	..	3
Confectioner	..	..	..	..	1
Fruiterers	..	..	..	..	4
Tradesmen	..	..	..	..	11
Tinsmith	..	..	..	..	1
Tobacco Merchants	..	..	..	..	2
Eating-house Keeper	..	..	..	..	1
					151
CLERKS AND ASSISTANTS					
Clerks	..	..	..	..	21
Accountants	..	..	..	..	6
Book-keeper	..	..	..	..	1
Salesmen	..	..	..	..	6
Schoolmaster	..	..	..	..	1
Photographer	..	..	..	..	1
Interpreters	..	..	..	..	4
Storemen	..	..	..	..	5
Barbers	..	..	..	..	2
Barman	..	..	..	..	1
Managers	..	..	..	..	2
					50
GARDENERS AND OTHERS					
Vegetable Dealer	..	..	..	..	1
Farmers	..	..	..	..	4
Domestic Servants	..	..	..	..	5
Fisherman	..	..	..	..	1
Gardeners	..	..	..	..	26
Lamp-lighters	..	..	..	..	3
Cart Drivers	..	..	..	..	2
Constables	..	..	..	..	2
Labourers	..	..	..	..	2

Waiter	..	..	..	..	1
Cooks	..	..	..	..	3
					50
					<hr/>
					251

This analysis also ought, I think, to assist unbiased men in removing their fears as to the Voters' List being swamped by undeserving or lowest-class Indians. For, by far the greatest number belongs to the trading or the so-called "Arab" class who, at any rate, are acknowledged to be not quite unfit to vote.

Those classified under the second heading either belong to the trader class or to that class of Indians who have received a tolerably good English education.

Those belonging to the third division may be termed labourers of a higher order—far above the average indentured Indian. They are those who have settled in the Colony for over 20 years with their families and either own property or pay good rents. I may say also that, if my information be correct, most of these voters can read and write their own mother tongue. Thus, if the present Indian Voters' List is to serve as a guide for the future and assuming that the franchise qualification remains as it is, the List is very satisfactory from a European standpoint. First, because numerically the voting strength of the Indians is very poor, and secondly, because most (more than $\frac{3}{4}$) of the Indian voters belong to the trading class. It should also be borne in mind that the number of the trading Indians in the Colony will remain almost the same for a long time. For, while many come every month, an equal number leaves for India. As a rule, the incoming ones take the place of the outgoing ones.

So far I have not imported the natural proclivities of the two communities into the argument at all but have merely dealt with the figures. Yet, the natural proclivities will have not a little to do with the political activity of the two. There cannot be two opinions about the fact that the Indians, as a rule, do not actively meddle in politics. They have never tried to usurp political power anywhere. Their religion (no matter whether it be Mohammedan or Hindu, the teaching of ages cannot be obliterated by a mere change of name) teaches them indifference to material pursuits. Naturally they are satisfied so long as they can earn a respectable living. I take the liberty to say that, had not an attempt been made to tread upon their commercial pursuits,

had not attempts been made and repeated to degrade them to the condition of pariahs of society, had not, in fact, an attempt been made to keep them for ever “hewers of wood and drawers of water”, i.e., in a state of indenture or in one very much resembling it, there would have been no franchise agitation. I would go further. I have no hesitation in saying that even now there is no political agitation in the real sense of the term. But an attempt is, most unfortunately, being made by the Press to father, as it were, such an agitation upon the Indians. Leave them to follow their legitimate pursuits, do not attempt to degrade them, treat them with ordinary kindness and there would be no franchise question, simply because they would not even take the trouble to have their names on the Voters’ Roll.

But it has been said, and that too by responsible persons, that a few Indians want political power and that these few are Mahomedan agitators and that the Hindus should learn from past experience that the Mahomedan rule will be ruinous for them. The first statement is without foundation and the last statement is most unfortunate and painful. To gain political power is entirely impossible, if gaining political power means entrance into the Legislative Assembly. Such a statement presupposes the presence in the Colony of very wealthy Indians having a competent knowledge of the English language. Now, there are very few wealthy, as distinguished from well-to-do, Indians in the Colony and there is perhaps none capable of discharging the duties of a legislator, not because there is none capable of understanding politics, but because there is none possessing such a knowledge of the English language as would be expected of a legislator.

The second statement is an attempt to set the Hindus against the Mahomedans in the Colony. How any responsible man in the Colony can wish for such a calamity is very wonderful. Such attempts have been attended by the most grievous results in India and have even threatened the permanence of British rule. To make them in this Colony where the two sects are living most amicably is, I venture to say, most mischievous.

It is a healthy sign that it is now recognized that to debar all Indians from the franchise would be a grievous injustice. Some think that the so-called Arabs should be allowed the franchise, some think there should be a selection made among them, and some think that the indentured Indians should never be able to get the franchise. The

latest suggestion comes from Stanger and is most humorous. If that suggestion were to be followed, those alone who could prove that they were voters in India would be entitled to it in Natal. Why such a rule for the poor Indians alone? I do not think they would object to such an arrangement if it were applicable to all. And I should not be surprised if the Europeans also were to find it difficult to get their names on the Voters' List in the Colony under such conditions. For how many Europeans are there in the Colony who were on the Voters' List in the States they have come from? If, however, the statement were made with regard to the Europeans, it would be received with the strongest indignation. It has been received seriously with regard to the Indians.

It has also been stated that the Indians agitate for "one Indian one vote". I submit that the statement is without the slightest foundation, and is calculated to create unnecessary prejudice against the Indian community. I believe that the present property qualification is sufficient, at any rate for the present if not for all time, to maintain the superior numerical strength of the European vote. If, however, the European Colonists think otherwise, no Indian, I think, will take exception to a reasonable and real educational qualification and a larger property qualification than at present. What the Indians do and would protest against is colour distinction—disqualification based on account of racial difference. The Indian subjects of Her Majesty have been most solemnly assured over and over again that no qualifications or restrictions will be placed upon them because of their nationality or religion. And this assurance was given and has been repeated upon no sentimental grounds but on proof of merit. The first note was struck after it was ascertained beyond doubt that the Indians could be safely treated on a footing of equality, that they were most loyal to the throne and law-abiding, and that the British hold of India could be permanently maintained only upon those terms and no other. That there have been serious departures from the above assurance could, I submit, be no answer to the solid fact of its existence. I think those departures would be exceptions to prove the rule, they would not override it. For, if I had time and space at my disposal, and if I were not afraid of tiring the readers' patience, I could quote innumerable instances in which the Proclamation of 1858 has been strictly acted upon, and is even at the present moment being acted upon in India and elsewhere. And, surely, this is not the occasion for a departure from it. I submit, therefore, that the Indians

are perfectly justified in protesting against racial disqualifications and expecting that their protest will be respected. Having said so much, I venture to say on behalf of my fellow-brothers that they would not thus object to any measure, with regard to the franchise, which may be devised in order to keep the Voters' Roll clear of objectionable men, or to provide against preponderance of the Indian vote in future. I am confident that the Indians have no wish to see ignorant Indians who cannot possibly be expected to understand the value of a vote being placed on the Voters' List. They submit that all are not such, and that such are to be found, more or less, in all communities. The object of every right-minded Indian is to fall in with the wishes of the European Colonists as far as possible. They would rather forgo a crumb from the loaf than have the whole in opposition to the European Colonists and from England. The object of this appeal is to beseech the legislators and the European Colonists to devise or countenance only such a measure, if one is necessary, that would be acceptable also to those affected by it. To make the position clearer, I would take the liberty to show by extracts from a Blue-book what the most eminent Colonists have thought about the question.

Mr. Saunders, a member of the late Honourable Legislative Council, could go only thus far:

The mere definition that these signatures must be in full and in the elector's own handwriting and written in European characters would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English (*Affairs of Natal*, C. 3796-1883).

At page 7 of the same book Captain Graves, the late Protector of Immigrants, says:

I am of opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families to a free return passage to India are justly entitled to the franchise.

It should be noticed that Captain Graves spoke of the Indians recognized by his department, i.e., the indentured Indians.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice says:

It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the Select Committee providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while the proposal for the special disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.

At page 14 of the same book he says again:

As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the franchise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report, Serial No. 12, I cannot recognize the justice or expediency of such a measure.

The Blue-book in question contains much interesting reading on the franchise question and shows clearly that the idea of special disqualification was repugnant to the Colonists at the time.

The reports of the various meetings held in connection with the franchise show that the speakers have invariably argued that the Indians shall not be allowed to occupy this country which has been won by European blood and which has been made what it is by European hands, and show that the Indians are treated as intruders in the Colony. As to the first statement, I can only say that, if the Indians are to be denied any privileges because they have not shed their blood for this land, the Europeans belonging to other States in Europe should not receive the same privileges. It could also be argued that the immigrants from England also have no business to trespass upon the special preserve of the first white settlers. And surely, if the shedding of blood is any criterion of merit, and if British Colonists consider the other British dominions as portions of the British Empire, the Indians have shed their blood for Britain on many an occasion. The Chitral campaign is the most recent instance.

As to the Colony having been made by European hands and the Indian being an intruder, I beg to submit that all the facts show quite the opposite.

Without any comments of my own I shall now venture to quote extracts from the *Report of the Indian Immigrants Commission* referred to above, for a loan of which I am indebted to the Protector of Immigrants.

Says Mr. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, at page 98:

Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better; war, high prices for wool, sugar, etc., kept up prosperity and prices of local produce in which the Indians dealt.

On page 99 he says:

I return to the consideration of the question as one of broad public interest. One thing is certain—white men will not settle in Natal or any other

part of South Africa to become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water; rather than that they will leave us either for the vast interior or by sea. While this is a fact, our records prove, as do those of other Colonies, that the introduction of coloured labour which develops and draws out the hidden capabilities of the soil and its unoccupied acres opens out at the same time numerous unforeseen fields for the profitable employment of white settlers.

Nothing more clearly proves this than our own experience. If we look to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue which increased fourfold within a few years. Mechanics who could not get work and were earning 5/- a day, and less, found their wages more than doubled, and progress gave encouragement to everyone from the Burg to the Sea. But a few years later, alarm (a well-founded alarm) arose, that it¹ would be suspended (the records are there to correct me if I am wrong) simultaneously, down went the revenue and wages, immigration was checked, confidence vanished and retrenchment and reductions of salaries was the main thing thought of; and yet another change some years later in 1873 (long after the discovery of diamonds in 1868), a fresh promise of renewed Indian immigration created its effect, and up again went the revenue, wages and salaries, and retrenchment was soon spoken of as a thing of the past (would that this was so now).

Records like these ought to tell their own tale and silence childish race sentimentalities and mean jealousies.

In further and collateral corroboration of the effect of introduction of coloured labour on the welfare of white settlers let me refer to a speech made by the Duke of Manchester who has so identified himself with colonial interests. He had just returned from Queensland and told his hearers that the result of an agitation there, hostile to the introduction of coloured labour, had proved most disastrous to those very white settlers who had hoped by checking the supply of imported coloured labourers to destroy competition which they wrongly imagined deprived the white settlers of work.

At page 100 the same gentleman continues:

So far as concerns free Indian traders, their competition and the consequent lowering of the prices of articles of consumption by which the public benefits (and yet strange to say, of which it complains) it is clearly shown that these Indian shops have been and are most exclusively supported by the larger firms of white merchants who thus practically employ these men to dispose of their goods.

Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs or Indians, who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country, but let us

¹ Indian labour recruitment

trace results in this one branch of the enquiry taking it as an example of others, trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of property and securities, how after this must result stagnation in the building trade, and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it. Follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for white mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated on in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it.

Mr. Henry Binns gave his evidence to the following effect before the Commission (page 156):

In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large portion of them, considerably larger than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and villages. They are also considerable producers, and from information which I have taken some trouble to gather, I conclude that the free Indians have grown about 100,000 mounds of maize per annum for the last two or three years, besides considerable quantities of tobacco and other articles. Before there was a free Indian population, the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables and fish; at present all these things are fully supplied.

We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population the markets of Maritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were years ago.

. . . Were Coolie immigration to be permanently stopped, the rate of wages payable to European mechanics would probably not be affected one way or the other, but in a very short time after such stoppage there would cease to be as much employment for them as there is now. Tropical cultivation never has been, and never will be, carried on without Indian labourers.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice thus gave his evidence before the Commission (page 327):

. . . In my opinion numbers of the Indians who have been introduced have in a great measure provided on the Coast for the failure of white immigrants, and have cultivated lands which would otherwise remain uncultivated, with crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants.

That both the freed and free Indians have been very useful to the Colony generally can be proved by still more overwhelming proofs. The Commissioners in their report at page 82 say:

19. They show commendable industry in fishing and fish-curing. The Indian fishing settlement on Salisbury Island, in Durban Bay, has been of manifest advantage not only to the Indian but also to the white inhabitants of the Colony.

20. . . . In numerous localities in the upland as well as in the Coast districts, they have converted waste and unproductive land into well-kept gardens, planted with vegetables, tobacco, maize and fruit trees. Those settled in the vicinity of Durban and Pietermaritzburg have succeeded in winning for themselves almost entirely the supplying of the local markets with vegetables. It must be this competition by free Indians which has worked to the prejudice of those white Colonists who once had the monopoly of the trade In fairness to the free Indians we must observe that the competition is legitimate in its nature and that it certainly has been welcomed by the general community. From an early hour in the morning, Indian hawkers, male and female, adults and children, go busily with heavy baskets on their heads from house to house, and thus citizens can now daily, at their own doors, and at low rates, purchase wholesome vegetables and fruit, which, not many years ago, they could not with certainty procure even in the public markets, and at exorbitant prices.

As to the traders the Commissioners' report at page 74 says:

We are convinced that much of the irritation existing in the minds of European Colonists against the whole Indian population of the Colony has been excited by the undoubted ability of these Arab traders to compete with European merchants, and specially with those who have chiefly directed their attention to the supply of articles, notably rice, largely consumed by the Indian immigrant population. . . .

We are of opinion that these Arab traders have been drawn to Natal by the presence therein of those Indians who have been introduced under the Immigration Laws. Rice is the chief food of the 30,000 Indian immigrants now in the Colony, and these astute traders have so successfully devoted their tact and energy to the supply of that article that the price to all consumers fell from 21s per bag in former years to 14s in 1884. . . .

It is said that Kaffirs can buy from Arabs at from 25 to 30 per cent lower rates than those obtaining six or seven years ago.

It does not lie within the scope of our Commission to discuss at length the restrictive measure which some desire to impose upon Asiatics or "Arab" trader. *We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice* (the italics are mine).

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8. . . . Nearly all of them are Mohammedans, either total abstainers from alcoholic liquors or drinking them in moderation. They are thrifty by nature and submissive to the law.

Out of the 72 European witnesses who gave their evidence before the Commission, almost every one of those who spoke as to the presence of the Indian affecting the Colony has said that he is indispensable for its welfare.

I have quoted the extracts at some length not to argue therefrom that the Indians should have the franchise (they have it already), but to refute the charge that the Indian is an intruder and the statement that he has nothing to do with the prosperity of the Colony. "The proof of the pudding lies in the eating." The best proof is that, no matter what is being said against the Indians, they are yet wanted; the Protector's Department is unable to cope with the demand for Indian labour.

At page 5 of the Annual Report, 1895, the Protector says:

At the close of last year there was an unsupplied balance of 1,330 men to complete the year's indent. In addition to this number, 2,760 men were applied for to arrive in 1895, making a total of 4,090. Of this number, 2,032 arrived during the year under report (1,049 from Madras and 983 from Calcutta), leaving a balance of 2,058 (less 12 men lapsed requisitions) to arrive during the present year to complete the last year's indent.

If the Indian is really harmful to the Colony, the best and justest method is to stop further immigration and, in due course, the present Indian population will cease to trouble the Colony much. To have them under conditions that mean slavery is hardly fair.

If then this appeal has at all satisfactorily answered the various objections raised to the Indian franchise; if the reader accepts the assertion that the franchise agitation on the part of the Indians is merely a protest against degradation, which the counteragitation contemplates, and not an attempt to gain political power or influence, I humbly think I am justified in asking the reader to pause and consider before he decides to oppose the Indian franchise tooth and nail. Although the "British subject" idea has been rejected by the Press as a craze and fad, I have to fall back upon that idea. Without it there would have been no franchise agitation whatever. Without it there would probably have been no State-aided immigration. Very probably the Indian would have been an impossibility in Natal if he were not a British subject. I, therefore, appeal to every Briton in South Africa not to lightly dismiss the "British subject" idea from his mind. The Proclamation of 1858 was Her Majesty's acts, presumably

approved of by her subjects. For, it was done, not arbitrarily, but according to the advice of her then advisers, in whom the voters, by their votes, had reposed their full trust. India belongs to England and England does not wish to lose her hold of India. Every act done by a Briton towards an Indian cannot but have some effect in moulding the final relations between Britons and Indians. It is, moreover, a fact that the Indian is in South Africa because he is a British subject; he has to be tolerated whether one likes it or not. Is it not then better that nothing should be done that would unnecessarily embitter the feelings between the two communities? By coming to a hasty conclusion, or by forming conclusions on groundless assumptions, it is not at all unlikely that injustice may unintentionally be done to the Indians.

The question in the minds of all reasonable men, I submit, should be not how to drive away the Indians from the Colony (for that is impossible), but how to bring about satisfactory relations between the two communities. Even from a most selfish point of view, I submit, no good can result from an attitude of unfriendliness and hatred towards the Indians, unless there is any pleasure in creating in one's mind an unfriendly feeling towards one's neighbour. Such a policy is repugnant to the British Constitution and the British sense of justice and fair play, and above all hateful to the spirit of Christianity which is professed by the objectors to the Indian franchise.

I appeal more particularly to the Press, the public men throughout South Africa and the Clergy: Public opinion is in your hands. You mould and guide it. It is for you to consider whether the policy hitherto pursued is the right and proper one to continue. Your duty as Britons and leaders of public opinion cannot be to divide the two communities but to weld them together.

The Indians have many blemishes and they are themselves, no doubt, to blame to some extent for the present unsatisfactory state of feelings between the two peoples. My object is to induce you to believe that the blame does not entirely lie on one side alone.

Often and often have I read in the papers and heard that the Indians have nothing to complain about. I submit that neither you nor the Indians here are capable of forming an impartial judgment. I, therefore, draw your attention entirely to the outside public opinion, to the Press, alike in England and India, which is practically unanimous in coming to the conclusion that the Indians have a reasonable ground for complaint. And, in this connection, I beg to

deny the statement that has been often made that the outside opinion is based on exaggerated reports sent from South Africa by the Indians. I venture to claim to know something about the reports sent to England and India, and I have no hesitation in saying that the reports sent almost invariably err on the side of underestimation. Not a single statement has been made which cannot be substantiated by unimpeachable evidence. But the most remarkable fact is that there is no dispute as to facts which are admitted. The outside opinion based on those admitted facts is that the Indians are not fairly treated in South Africa. I will quote only one extract taken from a Radical newspaper, *The Star*. The opinion of the soberest journal in the world, *The Times*, is known to everyone in South Africa.

The Star of 21st October, 1895, commenting upon the deputation that waited on Mr. Chamberlain, says:

These particulars are enough to throw light upon the hateful persecution to which British Indian subjects are being subjected. The new Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which virtually proposes to reduce Indians to a state of slavery, is another example. The thing is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors, and a slight upon ourselves. Every Englishman is concerned to see that the commercial greed of the South African trader is not permitted to wreak such bitter injustice upon men who alike by Proclamation and by Statute are placed upon an equality with ourselves before the Law.

If I could but convince you that the 'greatest kindness' is not shown to the Indian in South Africa and that the Europeans are also to blame for the prevailing state of things, a way will have been paved for a dispassionate discussion of the whole Indian question, and perhaps it will be solved without any intervention from Downing Street to the satisfaction of both the parties concerned. Why should the Clergy remain silent on this momentous question, momentous because it affects the future of South Africa? They do take part in politics pure and simple. They do attend the meetings convened to urge the disfranchisement of the Indians. But this is not merely a political question. Will they see a race degraded and insulted because of the 'unreasoning' prejudice against it and sit still? Is such indifference sanctioned by Christ's Christianity?

I repeat again, it is not political power that the Indians want. It is degradation, it is many other consequences and measures that will flow from and will be based on the disfranchisement that they dread and resist.

In conclusion, I shall be deeply indebted to those who would read this and be kind enough to express their opinion about its subject-matter. Many Europeans have privately expressed their sympathy for the Indians and have strongly disapproved of the sweeping resolutions passed at the various meetings held in the Colony in connection with the Indian franchise and the bitter tone of the speeches made. If these gentlemen will come forward and have the courage of their convictions, I submit, they will have a fourfold reward. They will earn the gratitude of the 40,000 Indians in the Colony, indeed of the whole of India, and will render true service to the Colony by disabusing the minds of the Europeans of the notion that the Indian is a curse to the Colony; they will serve humanity by rescuing or assisting to rescue a portion of an ancient race from unwarranted persecution which they know exists in the whole of South Africa, and last but not least, in common with the noblest Britons, be the forgers of the links that will unite England and India in love and peace. I humbly submit that such an achievement is worth a little ridicule that the pioneers will be subjected to. To separate the two communities is easy enough, to unite them by the 'silken cord' of love is equally difficult. But then, everything that is worth having is also worth a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

The Natal Indian Congress has been mentioned in connection with this matter and has been much misrepresented. In a separate pamphlet¹ its objects and methods of working will be fully discussed.

While this was in course of preparation, Mr. Maydon made a speech at Bellair and a curious resolution was passed at the meeting. With the greatest deference to the honourable gentleman, I venture to take exception to his statement that the Indians have ever remained in a state of servitude and are, therefore, unfit for self-government. Although he invoked the aid of history in support of his statement, I venture to say that history fails to bear out the statement. In the first place Indian history does not date from the invasion of Alexander the Great. But I take the liberty to say that India of that date will compare very favourably with Europe of today. In support of that statement I beg to refer him to the Greek description of India at pp. 169-70 of Hunter's *Indian Empire*, partly quoted in my "Open Letter". What, however, of India of a period previous to that date? History says that

¹ This is not available.

the Aryans' home was not India but they came from Central Asia, and one family migrated to India and *colonized* it, the others to Europe. The government of that day was, so history says, a civilized government in the truest sense of the term. The whole Aryan literature grew up then. The India of Alexander's time was India on the decline. When other nations were hardly formed, India was at its zenith, and the Indians of this age are descendants of that race. To say, therefore, that the Indians have been ever under servitude is hardly correct. India certainly has not proved unconquerable. If that be reason for disfranchisement, I have nothing to say except this, that every nation will, unfortunately, be found wanting in this respect. It is true England "wafts her sceptre" over India. The Indians are not ashamed of that fact. They are proud to be under the British Crown, because they think that England will prove India's deliverer. The wonder of all wonders seems to be that the Indians, like the favoured nation of the Bible, are irrepressible in spite of centuries of oppression and bondage. And many British writers think that India is under England with her consent.

Professor Seeley says:

The nation of India have been conquered by an army, of which, on the average, a fifth part was English. In the early battles of the Company, by which its power was decisively established, at the siege of Arcot, at Plassey, at Buxar, there seems always to have been more Sepoys than Europeans on the side of the Company. And, let us observe further, that we do not hear of the Sepoys fighting ill, of the English as bearing the whole brunt of the conflict . . . But if once it is admitted that the Sepoys always outnumbered the English, and that they kept pace with the English in efficiency as soldiers, the whole theory, which attributes our success to an immeasurable natural superiority in valour, falls to the ground. —Digby's *India for the Indians and for England*

The honourable gentleman¹ is also reported to have said:

We (the Colonists) were entrusted with responsible Government in Natal under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your refusal to sanction our Bill. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger that it is our clear duty to hand back to you the authority which you gave us.

How contrary to facts is all this! It assumes that the Home Government are now trying to thrust the Indian franchise on the

¹ The reference is to Maydon; "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895

Colony, while the fact is that the Responsible Government is trying to materially alter the circumstances which existed at the time it was granted. Would not Downing Street be justified in saying, "We entrusted you with Responsible Government under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your Bill of last year. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger to the whole British Constitution and British notion of Justice that it is our clear duty not to allow you to trifle with the fundamental principles on which the British Constitution is based."?

The time when the Responsible Government was accepted was, I submit, the time when Mr. Maydon's objection might have been valid. Whether Responsible Government would ever have been granted, had the European Colonists insisted upon disfranchisement of the Indians is another question.¹

From a pamphlet printed by T. L. Cullingworth, Printer, 40 Field Street, Durban, 1895

83. *VEGETARIANISM IN NATAL*

It is an uphill battle to fight in Natal, and, indeed, in South Africa. Yet there are few places where vegetarianism would be more conducive to health, or more economical or practicable. Of course, at present, it is hardly economical and it certainly requires a great deal of self-denial to remain a vegetarian, To become one seems almost an impossibility. "It is all very well in London, where there are scores of vegetarian restaurants, but how can you become or remain a vegetarian in South Africa, where you find very little nourishing vegetarian food?" has been the invariable reply to my enquiries, in the course of conversation on the matter with scores of men. One would have thought such a reply would be impossible in South Africa, seeing that it enjoys a semi-tropical climate, and its vegetable resources are inexhaustible. Nevertheless, the reply is entirely justifiable. In the best of hotels you find, as a rule, potatoes the only vegetable at lunch-time, and that badly cooked. At dinner-time you find, perhaps, two vegetables, and the vegetable menu is hardly ever changed. It is little short of a scandal that in this Garden Colony of South Africa, where, at the proper time, you can get fruit for a song,

¹ For Press reactions to this pamphlet, *vide The Early Phase*, pp. 592-6.

you find very little fruit at the hotels. Pulses are conspicuous by their absence. A gentleman wrote to me to ask if it was possible to buy pulses in Durban; he could not procure them in Charlestown and the neighbouring townships. Nuts can only be bought at Christmas time. Such are the present circumstances. Vegetarian friends, therefore, need not wonder if I can report very little perceptible progress as a result of nearly nine months' advertising and quiet persuasion. Nor are the above the only difficulties in the way of vegetarian propaganda. People here think of very little else than gold. The gold fever is so infectious in these regions that it has smitten the highest and the lowest, the spiritual teachers included. They find no time for higher pursuits of life; they find no time to think of the beyond.

Copies of *The Vegetarian* are supplied regularly every week to most of the libraries. Occasional advertisements are inserted in the newspapers. Every opportunity is availed of to introduce the subject of vegetarianism. So far this has given rise to some sympathetic correspondence and enquiries. A few books have also been bought. Many more have been distributed. Correspondence and conversation have not been devoid of humour. A lady, who corresponded with me in connection with Esoteric Christianity, became angry on finding that Esoteric Christianity had anything to do with vegetarianism. She was so disgusted that she returned the books lent to her without reading them. One gentleman thought it disgraceful for a man to shoot or slaughter an animal. "He would not do it for the life of him." But he had no compunction in eating the meat prepared for him.

The possibilities of South Africa, and particularly of Natal, from a vegetarian standpoint, are too numerous to mention, only there are no vegetarian workers. The soil is so fertile that it would grow almost anything. Vast tracts of land await only a skilful hand to turn them into real mines of gold. If a few men could be induced to turn their attention from the Johannesburg gold to the quieter method of earning money by cultivation, and to get rid of their colour prejudice, there is no doubt that every variety of vegetable and fruit could be grown in Natal. The climate of South Africa is such that the Europeans alone will never be able to work the soil as much as is possible. They have got the Indians to help them, but they simply would not make use of them owing to the colour prejudice, which is so strong in South Africa. Even in Natal, where the prosperity of the Colony admittedly depends upon the Indian labour, the prejudice is

very strong. I have a letter from a gardener who, much as he would like to employ Indian labour, is handicapped owing to this prejudice. Vegetarians, therefore, have a scope for patriotic work. The line of marriage between white British subjects and Indians is getting thicker day by day in South Africa. The best English and Indian statesmen are of opinion that Britain and India can be indissolubly united by the chain of love. The spiritualists anticipate good results from such a union. The South African white British subjects are doing their utmost to retard, and, if possible, to prevent such a union. It may be that some vegetarians may come forward to arrest such a catastrophe.

I would venture to make one suggestion and then close this hurriedly written resume of the work in Natal. If some men of means, and well up in vegetarian literature, were to travel in different parts of the world, explore the resources of the different countries, report upon their possibilities from a vegetarian standpoint, and invite vegetarians to migrate to those countries which they may consider suitable for vegetarian propaganda, and, at the same time, worth settling in from a pecuniary point of view, much vegetarian work can be done, openings can be found for poor vegetarians, and real centres of vegetarianism can be established in various parts of the world.

But then vegetarianism, in order to do this, should be a religion, and not merely a hygienic convenience. The platform will have to be shifted much higher.

The Vegetarian, 21-12-1895.

84. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
February 3, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury
SIR,

As one interested in food reform, permit me to congratulate you on your leader in Saturday's issue on "The New Science of Healing", which lays so much stress on the adoption of the natural food, i.e., vegetarianism. But for the unfortunate characteristic of this "self-indulgent" age, in which "nothing is more common than to hear men warmly supporting a theory in the abstract without any intention of submitting to it in practice", we should all be vegetarians.

For, why should it be otherwise when Sir Henry Thompson calls it “a vulgar error” to suppose that flesh foods are indispensable for our sustenance, and the most eminent physiologists declare that fruit is the natural food of man, and when we have the example of Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, Porphyry, Ray, Daniel, Wesley, Howard, Shelley, Sir Isaac Pitman, Edison, Sir W. B. Richardson, and a host of other eminent men as vegetarians? The Christian vegetarian claim that Jesus was also a vegetarian, and there does not seem to be anything to oppose that view, except the reference to His having eaten broiled fish after the Resurrection. The most successful missionaries in South Africa (the Trappists) are vegetarians. Looked at from every point of view, vegetarianism has been demonstrated to be far superior to flesheating. The Spiritualists hold, and the practice of the religious teachers of all the religions, except, perhaps, the generality of Protestant teachers shows, that nothing is more detrimental to the spiritual faculty of man than the gross feeding on flesh. The most ardent vegetarians attribute the agnosticism, the materialism, and the religious indifference of the present age to too much flesheating and wine-drinking, and the consequent disappearance, partial or total, of the spiritual faculty in man. Vegetarian admirers of the intellectual in man point to the whole host of the most intellectual men of the world, who were invariably abstemious in their habits, especially at the time of writing their best works, to demonstrate the sufficiency, if not the superiority of the vegetarian diet from an intellectual standpoint. The columns of the vegetarian magazines and reviews afford a most decisive proof that where beef and its concoctions, with no end of physic thrown in, have lamentably failed, vegetarianism has triumphantly succeeded. Muscular vegetarians demonstrate the superiority of their diet by pointing out that the peasantry of the world are practically vegetarians, and that the strongest and most useful animal, the horse, is a vegetarian, while the most ferocious and practically useless animal, the lion, is a carnivore. Vegetarian moralists mourn over the fact that selfish men would—for the sake of gratifying their lustful and diseased appetite—force the butcher’s trade on a portion of mankind, while they themselves would shrink with horror from such a calling. They moreover lovingly implore us to bear in mind that without the stimulants of flesh foods and wine it is difficult enough to restrain our passions and escape Satan’s clutches, and not to add to those difficulties by resorting to meats and drinks which, as a rule, go hand in hand. For, it is claimed that vegetarianism, in which juicy fruits find the foremost place, is the safest and surest cure for drunkenness, while meat-eating induces or increases the habit. They also argue that since meat-eating is not only unnecessary but harmful

to the system, indulgence in it is immoral and sinful, because it involves the infliction of unnecessary pain on and cruelty towards harmless animals. Lastly, vegetarian economists, without fear of contradiction, assert that vegetarian foods are the cheapest diet, and their general adoption will go a long way towards mitigating, if not altogether suppressing, the rapidly growing pauperism side by side with the rapid march of the materialistic civilization and the accumulation of immense riches in the hands of a few. So far as I recollect, Dr. Louis Kuhne urges the necessity of vegetarianism on physiological grounds only, and does not give any hints for beginners, who always find it difficult to select the right kinds from a variety of vegetarian foods and to cook them properly. I have a selection of vegetarian cookery books (at from 1d to 1s), as also treatises on the subject dealing with its various aspects. The cheapest books are given away, and if any of your readers feel disposed, not merely to admire the new science of healing from a distance, but to put its tenets into practice, I shall be very glad to supply them with what pamphlets I possess on the subject, so far as it relates to vegetarianism. I submit the following for the consideration of those who believe in the Bible. Before the "Fall" we were vegetarians:

And God said : behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so.

There may be some excuse for the unconverted partaking of meat, but for those who say they are "born again", vegetarian Christians claim, there can be none; because their state surely should be equal, if not superior, to that of the people before the "Fall". Again, in times of Restitution:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

These times may be far off yet for the whole world. But why cannot those who know and can—the Christians—enact them for themselves at any rate? There can be no harm in anticipating them, and, may be, thereby their approach may be considerably hastened.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 4-2-1896

85. MEMORIAL TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
February 26, 1896

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS
HELY-HUTCHINSON, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE MOST
DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT
GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AN OVER
THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME,
AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION,
GOVERNOR OF ZULULAND, ETC., ETC ETC.,
PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN
BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Excellency's Memorialists, as representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby respectfully beg to approach Your Excellency with regard to the following portions of Rules and Regulations for the disposal of *erven*¹ in the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the Natal Government *Gazette*, dated the 25th February 1896, viz.:

Part of Section 4: Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale must give notice in writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand, Pietermaritzburg, or to the Government Secretary at Eshowe, Zululand, describing as far as practicable by numbers or otherwise the *erven* they are desirous of acquiring.

Part of Section 18: Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with the condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.

Rule 20: It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11 and 13 of these Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them or any portion thereof free of

¹ Plots for buildings in South African townships

rent to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such title-deed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

Your Memorialists interpret the rules to mean exclusion of Her Majesty's Indian subjects from owning or acquiring property in the Nondweni Township.

Your Memorialists beg respectfully but emphatically to protest against the invidious distinction thus drawn between European and Indian British subjects.

Nor can your Memorialists find any reason for such exclusion, unless it be another point among many yielded to the colour prejudice in South Africa.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that such preference given to one portion of Her Majesty's subjects over another is not only contrary to the British policy and justice, but, in the case of the Indian community, violates the terms of the Proclamation of 1858 which entitles British Indians to equal treatment with the Europeans.

Your Memorialists venture further to submit that, in view of the efforts of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the Indians residing in the Transvaal, the distinction drawn by the rules under discussion with regard to property rights is somewhat strange and inconsistent.

Your Memorialists would crave leave to mention that many Indians own freehold property in other parts of Zululand.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that, by virtue of the power reserved by Section 23 of the Regulations, Your Excellency will be pleased to order such alteration or amendment thereof as to do away with the above-mentioned distinction.

And for this act of justice and mercy your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.¹

ABDUL KARIM HAJEE
AND 39 OTHERS

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S.N. 755

¹ The memorial was rejected on February 27, on the ground that the Regulations were identical with those of September 28, 1891, in operation in regard to the Eshowe township; *vide* "Letter to C. Walsh", 4-3-1896.

86. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
March 2, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury
SIR,

In justice to the two defendants, Roberts and Richards, whom the worthy Superintendent of Police is pleased to call "upstarts" and other bad names, and in justice to the Indian community, I beg to encroach upon your space with reference to the partial report of the case in which the two defendants were charged under the Vagrancy Law and the Superintendent's views thereon that appeared in your issue of the 29th February. The report and the opinion would seem to show that Mr. Waller's decision¹ is a miscarriage of justice. To give colour to that view, the Superintendent has elected to give that portion of the evidence which I wished, and still wish, to use in order to win public sympathy for the two defendants, and what is more, for people placed in a similar position.

I humbly think that theirs was a very hard case, and that the police erred in arresting them, and, afterwards, in harassing them. I said in the Court, and I repeat, that the Vagrant Law would cease to be oppressive if the police showed some consideration for the Indians and used discretion in arresting them. The fact that both are sons of indentured Indians should not go against them, especially in an English community, where a man's worth, not birth, is taken into account in judging him. If that were not so, a butcher's son would not have been honoured as the greatest poet. The Superintendent, then, makes much of the fact that the second defendant changed his name about two years ago, and tries thereby to excuse the wanton insult² to which he was submitted by the constable who arrested him. It should

¹ Mr. Waller, Police magistrate, dismissed the case on the ground that so long as a coloured man, found out of doors after 9 p.m. without a pass, told the police he was going home, it was sufficient answer to clear himself, as the law stated that only a coloured person found wandering between the hours of 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. without a pass from his employer, or not giving a good account of himself, may be arrested.

² The constable laughed at him when the defendant gave his name as Samuel Richards.

be remembered that the constable in charge knew nothing whatever as to when the name was changed, and surely his very features were sufficient to betray his nationality had he attempted, as the Superintendent supposes he did, to cover his nationality in order to escape the operation of the Vagrant Law. Nor did he seem to be ashamed of his name or birth, for the answers came almost simultaneously with the questions as to birth and name, and seemed so much to please the amiable Superintendent as to extort the following expression from him: "Yes, my boy, if all were like you, the police would have no difficulty."

There can be nothing absolutely wrong in changing one's name unless it is wrong to change one's religion. To compare small things with great, Mr. Quilliam has become Haji Abdullah because he has become a Mahomedan. Mr. Webb, the late Consul-General of Manica, also adopted a Mahomedan name, on adopting the Mahomedan faith. Not only the Christian name but the Christian dress also is an offence for an Indian, according to the view of the constables. And now, according to the Superintendent's view, change of religion would render an Indian liable to suspicion. But why should this be so, assuming, of course, that the change is a result of honest belief and not a dodge to evade the law? In the present case I assume that both the defendants are honest Christians because I am told both are respected by Dr. Booth¹. Of course, the Superintendent will report, "But how is a man to know whether a man is an honest Christian or a Satan in the Christian garb?" This is a difficult question to answer. I submitted to the Court that each case could be judged on its own merits, and that the benefit of the ordinary presumptions should be given to the Indians, as it is given to other classes.

I submitted that two men, wearing a respectable dress, walking quietly along the main street at 9.30 p.m., stopping when questioned, protesting that they were returning from the gardens and were on their way home, which was not seven minutes' walk from the place where they were stopped, that one of them was a clerk and the other a teacher (as was the case with the two unfortunate boys), may be given the benefit of the ordinary presumption. I submitted further that in cases like this the police might, if they suspected, see their charge

¹ Head of St. Aidan's Mission, Durban, he supervised a small charitable hospital founded by Indians. In 1899, during the Boer War, Dr. Booth helped to train the Indian Ambulance Corps.

safely home. But, even if that could not be done, they might be treated as respectable men under custody and not be prejudged to be thieves and robbers. The remarks about dress and religion and name might conveniently be postponed till they could be proved to be hypocrites.

About a year ago I was travelling from Standerton to Durban. Two of my fellow-passengers were suspected to be thieves. Their luggage, and with theirs mine also, because I was in the same compartment, was examined at Volksrust, and a detective was placed in the compartment. They could offer a glass of whisky to the Landdrost¹, who came to examine the luggage and talk to the detective as gentlemen and on equal terms, presumably because they were respectably dressed and were first-class passengers. The detective did not prejudge them. I must not omit to mention that they were Europeans. The detective all the way through was sorry that he had to perform the unpleasant duty. May I plead for the same treatment in cases like that of the unfortunate boys? Instead of the cell they might have been given some other place to lie in. They might have been given clean blankets to lie on if the cell could not be avoided. The constables might have spoken to them kindly. Had this been done the case would never have come before the Magistrate.

I venture to take exception to the Superintendent's statement that "these young upstarts elected to be locked up all night in preference to bail". The reverse is the truth. They offered bail and it was refused during the night. The Magistrate was not pleased with this treatment. They renewed their request to be bailed out in the morning. The request of the second defendant was granted. The constable refused to bail out the first. Against his name was marked: "not to be released". The book containing that remark was produced in the Court. Later, he was released at the instance of Inspector Benny, who promptly remedied the mistake as soon as he came to know of it.

With deference to the Superintendent, I beg to say that the first defendant did not defy the law. The Magistrate made no order; but he, in his fatherly and kind manner, suggested that I should advise him to get the Mayor's Pass². I submitted that such was not necessary but said that in deference to his suggestion I would do so. The defendant has now received a reply from the Town Clerk that the pass will not be

¹ South African judge, also inspector or officer

² Of exemption

issued to him, a clerk and Sunday School teacher, having never been charged with any criminal offence. If he is not fit to be out after 9 p.m. he cannot be fit to be a Sunday School Teacher. One would think that it is less dangerous for him to be out after nine than for him to be a Sunday School teacher who would mould the character of tender children. The Superintendent says that his force “has never interfered with the Arab merchants or other respectable coloured men at night”. Were not these two boys fit to be ranked among “other respectable coloured men”? I appeal to him, and entreat him to consider well whether he himself would have arrested these two boys. I say in his own words, “If his whole force were as considerate and amiable as himself there would be no difficulty.”

I think, in dealing with my “Open Letter”, you were kind enough to say that cases of real grievance will readily command your sympathy. Do you consider this case a real grievance? If you do, I ask your sympathy so that cases like the above may not occur again. I have found it difficult to ask respectable Indian youths who may care for my advice to take out passes from their masters. I have asked them to take out the Mayor’s pass of exemption. But since the first application has been refused, it has dampened the zeal of the others. If the public approve of such arrests the police may be induced to repeat them in spite of the Magistrate’s opinion to the contrary. The Press, therefore, by its opinion can either make it easier for apparently respectable Indians to take out the Mayor’s pass of exemption, or else almost impossible for the police to repeat such arrests. There is the recourse to a suit against the Corporation. But that is a recourse to be had in the last resort.

I am, etc.,
M.K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 6-3-1896

87. LETTER TO C. WALSH

DURBAN,
March 4, 1896

C. WALSH, ESQ.
ACTING SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter dated 27th ultimo in reply to the Memorial¹ about the Nondweni Township Regulations, which I had the honour to forward to His Excellency the Governor of Zululand, conveying the information that the Regulations are a copy of the Eshowe Township Regulations which were published during His Excellency's predecessor's time.

Such being the case, I would, on behalf of the Memorialists, venture to request His Excellency to order the alteration or amendment to the Regulations with regard to both the Townships, so as to do away with the colour distinction. In any case I take the liberty to submit that the existence of similar Regulations for the Eshowe Township is, in my humble opinion, no justification for the Nondweni Township Regulations, regard being especially had to the events that are now happening concerning the position of the Indians as to property rights in other parts of South Africa.

I believe there are no such Regulations for the Melmoth Township.²

I beg, etc.,
M. K GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896.

² The request was turned down; *vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 7-3-1896.

88. *LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND*

CENTRAL WEST STREET
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 6, 1896

THE SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

May I enquire what led to the colour distinction being introduced in the Eshowe Township Regulations, seeing that none such exists with regard to the Melmoth Township Regulations, and also the date when the Melmoth Township Regulations were published?

I remain, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24

89. *LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

P.O. Box 66,
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

THE HON'BLE MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
LONDON

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Ministry propose to introduce next session and a Press copy of my letter to the Chairman of the British Committee.¹

The Governor of Zululand has refused to grant the request of the Memorialists regarding Nondweni. I am now preparing a Memorial² for the Home Government on the subject.

I beg to thank you for your letter about the Commando Memorial.

I remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 2254

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896.

90. LETTER TO W. WEDDERBURN

P. O. Box 66,
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BARONET, M. P., ETC.
CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
LONDON
SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Government proposes to introduce during the next session of the Legislative Assembly of Natal in April. This Bill replaces the Act of 1894 against which a Memorial¹ was sent to the Government. It is said that this Bill has been approved of by Mr. Chamberlain. If so it would place the Indian community in a very awkward position. The newspapers seem to think that India has representative institutions and that therefore the Bill will not affect the Indians. At the same time there can be no doubt that the Bill is meant to affect the Indian community. It is our intention to oppose the Bill. But in the meantime a question in the House of Commons, in my humble opinion, may be very useful and give an insight into Mr. Chamberlain's views. The Indian community will soon have to encroach upon your time and attention on other matters of pressing importance.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 2280

¹ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894.

91. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN, NATAL,
March 11, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HON'BLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
THE COLONIES,
LONDON
THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists hereby venture to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain Rules and Regulations in connection with the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the Natal Government *Gazette* dated the 25th February, 1896, in so far as the said Regulations affect the rights of Her Majesty's Indian subjects to own or acquire property in the Township of Nondweni, as also with regard to similar Regulations for the Township of Eshowe in Zululand.

The portion of the Regulations affecting the British Indians is as follows:

Part of Section 4—Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale (i.e., sale of *erven*) must give notice in writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand, etc.

Part of Section 18—Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with this condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.

Part of Section 20—It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11 and 13 of the Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them or any portion thereof free of rent, to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such titledeed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

The next day after the publication of the *Gazette* containing the Nondweni Regulations your Memorialists petitioned His Excellency the Governor of Zululand praying that the Regulations may be so altered or amended as to do away with the colour distinction therein.

In reply to the said Memorial¹ a copy whereof is annexed hereto, your Memorialists were informed that the Regulations were "the same as the Regulations in force for the Eshowe Township proclaimed by His Excellency's predecessor on 28th September 1891". Thereupon a request was made, on the 4th March, 1896, to the effect that both the Regulations should be altered or amended with regard to the British Indians.

A reply thereto was received on 5th March 1896, to the effect that the Governor did not feel justified in acting on the suggestion.

Your Memorialists confidently trust that the wrong inflicted upon the Indian community is so manifest that it has only to be brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government to be remedied. If such an invidious and, your Memorialists respectfully submit, unnecessary distinction cannot be permitted in self-governing colonies, much less should it be permitted in a Crown Colony.

Many of your Memorialists own property in Zululand. In the year 1889, when the Township of Melmoth was sold, the Indian community laid out nearly £2,000 in the purchase of *erven* in that Township.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit, it is absolutely necessary that the Indian community should be allowed to purchase land in Zululand freely, if only for the reason that they may be able to make their outlay of the £2,000 profitable.

Even the Government organ² in Natal considered the wrong so serious that, though as a rule hostile to the Indian aspirations, it viewed the Memorial to the Government of Zululand very favourably. The remarks are so apt that your Memorialists crave leave to quote them below:

Zululand is likely soon to have an Indian question all its own. The rules and regulations published in the Government *Gazette* last Tuesday for the disposal of *erven* in the newly-declared township of Nondwen include a

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896.

² The reference is to *The Natal Mercury* ; *vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain" 11-8-1895.

number of sections which specially prevent all but persons of European birth or descent from purchasing property in the township, or even occupying any property in the township. The Indians, ever to the fore in such matters, have promptly sent a protest to the Governor against the promulgation of such rules and regulations, and seeing that Zululand is still a Crown Colony, and, therefore, more under the direct eyes of the Imperial authorities, we cannot very well see how such rules can be enforced when there is evidently so strong a disposition on the part of the Home Government to prevent the Franchise Law Amendment Bill passed in Natal from becoming law. From the protest presented by the Indians, we gather that some of them already own freehold property in Zululand, and, if this be the case, apart from any other reason, it seems to us the Memorialists have a cause for consideration. There may be some special provision as regards the occupation of land in the Zulu country which prohibits Indians from becoming property-holders, but still the fact remains that the territory is a Crown Colony, and this being so, it seems strange that rules and regulations can be made for that country which are not permitted in Natal, a responsibly-governed Colony.

So frequently do the colour distinctions creep in into the rules and regulations, laws and bye-laws published in various parts of South Africa, that it is impossible for the Indian community, consisting, as it does, chiefly of traders and artisans with a knowledge sufficient only for the requirements of trade and, in many cases, even without it, to keep itself informed of all the legislation affecting its rights and bring it to the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

And things have come to such a pass that your Memorialists cannot expect redress from the local authorities, even in cases where the wrong complained of is a result of an oversight of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, as in the present instance.

Your Memorialists fear that, if a Crown Colony can refuse property rights to a portion of Her Majesty's subjects, the Governments of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State would in a greater measure be justified in doing likewise or even going further.

Your Memorialists submit that the existence of the colour distinction in the Regulations for Eshowe should not be a justification for similar Regulations for Nondweni. If those for Eshowe are bad, rather, your Memorialists submit, should both be altered and amended so as not to affect the just rights of the British Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists further venture to draw your attention to the fact that constant class legislation affecting Her Majesty's Indian subjects not only causes a great deal of anxiety to the Indian community in South Africa, but the petitions that have to be frequently made to have such legislation altered cause a great deal of expense which the Indian community, by no means in an over-prosperous condition can ill afford to incur, not to mention the fact that such a state of constant unrest and irritation seriously interferes with the business of the Indian community as a whole.

Nothing short of an enquiry into the position and status of the British Indians in South Africa, and a notification calling upon the authorities in South Africa to ensure the equality of treatment of Her Majesty's Indian subjects with all the other British subjects will, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, prevent the social and civil extinction of Her Majesty's loyal and law-abiding Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that Her Majesty's Government will order alteration or amendment of the Eshowe and Nondweni Townships Regulations so as to remove the disabilities that they, in their present form, entail on Her Majesty's Indian subjects, and further humbly suggest that orders may be issued forbidding future class legislation affecting them.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.¹

(SD.) ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat : S. N. 3620

92. LETTER TO "THE NATAL WITNESS"

DURBAN,
April 4, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness

SIR,

I would be much obliged if you could find space for the following by way of answer to "G.W.W.", who wrote to your under

¹ On April 10, in reply to a question by Mancherjee M. Bhawnaggee, in the House of Commons, Chamberlain promised to look into this memorial on receiving it. The Imperial Government ultimately removed the prohibition.

date 11th March last, and did me the honour to criticize my pamphlet¹ on the Indian franchise.

While I thank "G.W.W." for the personal fairness he has shown me in his treatment of the pamphlet, I wish he had treated the subject-matter of the "Appeal" as fairly. If he had read it with an unbiased mind, I think he would not have found any cause to differ from the views therein expressed. I have endeavoured to treat the subject from such a standpoint as would induce the European Colonists to extend ungrudgingly the hand of fellowship to the Indians without being elbowed out of their present position in so doing. I still maintain that there is no cause whatever for alarm, and if the European Colonists would only let the agitation die and consent to resume the *status quo*, they would find that their vote would not be swamped by the Indians. I further submit that, if ever such a contingency were to arise, it could be dealt with in anticipation, without the necessity of introducing colour distinction directly or indirectly. A real and reasonable educational test would perhaps for ever put a stop to the danger (if ever there be any) of the Indian vote swamping the European, and would, so far as possible, keep the Roll clear of the most objectionable European voters also, if any.

"G.W.W." takes exception to the arguments drawn from the relative strength of the true votes and "calls attention to what the next year's Roll may contain". I beg to call his attention to the fact that, although the Indians had every opportunity to "swamp" the List last year and the year before last, and every incentive to do so because of the fear as to the result of the Franchise Act, now about to be repealed, there were no additions to the number of Indian voters. It must have been either extraordinary apathy or want of qualifications that could account for such a result, But it could not have been any such apathy, for the "Agitation" has been on foot for the last two years.

I, however, do not propose to examine "G.W.W."s letter in detail, for want of time and space, and will merely give the information he asks for, and apply it to the new Bill to be introduced during the forthcoming session.

Mr. Curzon, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, in moving the second reading of the India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill, said, among other things:

¹ *Vide* "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895.

The object of the Bill, which it is my duty to expound to the House is to widen the basis and extend the function of the Government of India, to give further opportunity than at present exists to the non-official and the native element in Indian society to take part in the work of government and in this way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development, both in political industry and political capacity, which has been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown in 1858. This Bill is one to amend the Indian Councils Act of 1861. Legislative powers of some sort or other, but powers of a somewhat confused character and conflicting validity, have existed in India for a very long time. They existed with the rule of the old East India Company dating from the date of the Charters of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns; but the modern legislative system, under which India at present exists, owns its origin to the viceroyalty of Lord Canning and to the Secretaryship of State of Sir C. Wood, who was afterwards elevated to the peerage. Sir C. Wood, in 1861, carried through the House the India Councils Act of the year. . . . The Act of 1861 constituted three Legislative Councils in India—the Supreme Council of the Viceroy and the Provincial Councils of Madras and Bombay. The Supreme Legislative Council of the Viceroy consists of the Governor-General and his Executive Council, and is recruited by a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve additional members who are nominated by the Governor-General, of whom at least half must be non-official, whether they are drawn from the European or the native element. The Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay are also recruited by a minimum of four and a maximum of eight additional members, who are nominated by the Provincial Governor, of whom at least half must be non-official. Since the passing of that Act, Legislative Councils have also been called into existence in Bengal and the North-West Provinces. In the case of Bengal, the Council consists of the Lieutenant-Governor and twelve nominated Councillors and, in the case of the North-West Provinces, of the Lieutenant-Governor and nine nominated councillors, of whom one-third in each case must be non-official. . . . A number of native gentlemen of intelligence and capacity and public spirit have been persuaded to come forward and to lend their services to the function of government, and undoubtedly the standard of merit of these Legislative Councils has stood high.

The Amending Act gives the right to *discuss* the Budget and the right of interpellation (rights hitherto not enjoyed). It also increases the number of members of the Council, and provides (vaguely) for a system of election. Of course, the Act is merely permissive.

According to the regulations issued under the above Act, out of eighteen seats for additional members for the Bombay Council, eight seats are filled by election. And the Corporation of Bombay (itself a

representative body), such Municipal Corporations, or group or groups thereof, other than the Bombay Corporation, as the Governor-in-Council may from time to time prescribe, District Local Boards, or groups as above prescribed, the Sardars of the Deccan, or such other class of large landholders as above prescribed, associations of merchants, tradesmen or manufacturers, prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay, have the power to elect those members by a majority of votes. Similar rules are published for the election by or “nomination on the recommendation of” the various representative bodies of the various provinces which have Legislative Councils.

There is no class or colour distinction as to the franchisee or the representatives elected. The member (Indian) for the Bombay Council in the Supreme Legislative Council having resigned, the candidates are Indians and a European. The result should be known by the next week’s mail.

I will only give one extract showing how this and municipal representation have been viewed by the most eminent men qualified to speak on such subjects with authority. Delivering a lecture before the Society of Arts, Sir William Wilson Hunter said on the 15th February, 1893.

The Indian Municipalities, to which our Chairman, Lord Ripon, gave so memorable an impulse, had under their administration in 1891 a population of 15,000,000 and of the 10,585 members who sat on their Boards or Councils, more than one-half were elected by the ratepayers. The representative principle is now being cautiously extended under Lord Cross’s Act of 1892 to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and Provincial Governments.

Portion of the Proclamation of 1858 runs:

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, . . . and it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge.

Looking at the new Franchise Bill in the light of these facts, it is very difficult to understand it. The question before the Colonists is very simple. Is it necessary to disfranchise the Indian community? If it is, I submit that the proof of the fact that they enjoy representative

institutions in India will not make it less so.¹ If it is not, why harass Indians by ambiguous legislation? If the answer to the question whether or not the Indians enjoy representative institutions in India is to decide the franchise question, I submit that the materials of knowledge about the subject are by no means so slender that the Colonists cannot decide the question now and for ever, without the necessity of an Act leaving it an open question to be decided hereafter in a Court of Law, involving a useless waste of money.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 17-4-1896

93. MEMORIAL TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

DURBAN,
April 27, 1896

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NATAL IN
PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED, PIETERMARITZBURG

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THIS COLONY

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists as representing and on behalf of the Indian community in Natal respectfully approach this Honourable House with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Memorialists assume that the Bill is meant chiefly, if not solely, to affect the Indian community in that it repeals and replaces

¹ There was some discussion in the Natal Assembly on April 9 whether Indians had "representative institutions". The Prime Minister's observation that they were not possessed of representative institutions "founded on the franchise" was considered inadequate. In draft Bill, the words "Parliamentary institutions" were substituted by "elective representative institutions"-words used in the Governor's address to the Assembly. The second reading of the Bill, which was to have been on April 22, was postponed for a break in order that relevant correspondence between the Colonial and Home Governments could be made available and assessed by them; *vide The Early Phase*, pp. 605-6

the Act 25 of 1894 which was intended to disfranchise the Indians in the Colony.

In the Memorial¹ that was presented to this Honourable House on behalf of the Indian community on the same subject when the Act 25 of 1894 was under consideration, it was contended that the Indians did possess elective representative institutions in India.

The present Bill disfranchises natives of countries, not being of European origin, which have not possessed elective representative institutions in their own native land.

The position of your Memorialists, therefore, is painfully awkward in opposing the present Bill.

Yet, seeing that the Bill tacitly proposes to deal with the Indian franchise, your Memorialists consider it to be their duty respectfully to express their views about the Bill and also to show further on what grounds they believe that the Indians possess elective representative institutions in India.

In moving the second reading of the “India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill” in the House of Commons on the 28th day of March, 1892, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, said:²

The Amending Act, besides increasing the number of nominated members in each Council, gives the power of discussing the financial statement every year and the power of “interpellation”. *It embodies the elective principle.* The Legislative Councils have from their inception enjoyed the representative character. The honourable mover of the second reading, with reference to the increase of nominated members, said:

The object of this addition is very easily stated and will, I think, be very easily understood by the House. It is simply by expanding the area of selection, in which case you are adding to the strength of the representative character of the Councils.

But now these Councils, your Memorialists venture to submit, enjoy the representative character “founded on the franchise”.

Speaking on an Amendment by Mr. Schwann, M.P., to the Bill to the effect that “no reform of Councils that does not embody the elective principle will be satisfactory”, Mr. Curzon said:

¹ This was dated June 28, 1894.

² Not reproduced here. For the text of the speech, *vide* “Letter to “The Natal Witness”, 4-4-1896

I should like to point to him that our Bill does not necessarily exclude some such principle as the method of selection, election or delegation. With the permission of the House, I will read the words of the sub-section of Clause I. It runs as follows: The Governor-General-in-Council may from time to time on the approval of the Secretary of State-in-Council make regulations as to the conditions under which such nominations or any of them shall be made by the Governor-General, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, respectively, and prescribe the manner in which such regulations shall be carried into effect. . . .”

Lord Kimberley¹ has expressed himself about that clause. He said:

I am bound to say that I express my whole satisfaction with regard to this elective principle.

The opinions expressed by Lord Kimberley are shared by the Secretary of State under this Act:

It would be in the power of the Viceroy to invite representative bodies in India to elect or select or delegate representatives of those bodies of their opinion to be nominated to these Councils and by elective measures

The Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, speaking on the same subject, after explaining the speeches of the honourable mover of the Second Reading of the Bill and its amendment, said:

I think I may fairly say that the speech of the Under-Secretary appears to me to embody the elective principle in the only sense in which we should expect it to be embodied. . . . It is evident that the great question—and it is one of great and profound interest—before the House is that of the introduction of the elective element into the Government of India. What I wish is that their first steps shall be of a genuine nature and that whatever scope they give to the elective principle shall be real; there is no difference of principle. I think that the acceptance of the elective principle by the honourable gentleman (Mr. Curzon) though guarded was not otherwise than a frank acceptance.

Turning to the Regulations made and published in accordance with the above Act, your Memorialists submit that the remarks herebefore quoted are fully borne out. To take the Bombay Legislative Council, for instance, out of the eighteen nominated members, eight are elected by, or as it is put in the Regulations, “nominated on the recommendation of” the various representative bodies which are enfranchised for the purpose of Legislative Councils. The Corporation of Bombay (itself an elective body), Municipal Corporations other than the Bombay Corporation in the Bombay

¹ Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1894-5

Presidency prescribed by the Governor-in-Council, District Local Boards prescribed as above, the Sardars of the Deccan or other class of large landholders prescribed as above, associations of merchants, tradesmen, etc., prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay recommend or elect these eight members by a majority of votes or in the case of associations not established by law in the manner laid down in their rules for carrying resolutions or recording decisions upon questions of business brought before such associations.

In the Sardars of the Deccan, this Honourable House will notice, there are even direct voters for the election of members of the Council.

The regulations for the other Councils are much the same.

Such is the character of the Legislative Councils in India and the political franchise. The difference, therefore, your Memorialists beg respectfully to point out, is not one of kind but of degree only. The reason is not because the Indians do not know or understand the representative principle. Your Memorialists cannot do better than quote again from the speech of the Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, partly quoted above; he thus explained the reasons for the restrictive character of the elective principle:

Her Majesty's Government ought to understand that it will be regarded as a most grave disappointment if, after all the assurances we have received that an attempt will be made to bring into operation this powerful engine of Government (i.e., the elective principle), there should not be some result such as we anticipate from their action. I do not speak of its amount, I speak more of its quality. In an Asiatic country like India, with its ancient civilization, with its institutions so peculiar, with such a diversity of races, religions and pursuits, with such an enormous extent of country, and such a multitude of human beings as probably except in China were never before under a single Government, I can understand that there should be difficulties in carrying out what we desire to see accomplished. But great as the difficulties are the task is a noble one, and will require the utmost prudence and care in conducting it to a successful consummation. All these things induce us to look forward cheerfully to a great future for India, and to expect that a real success will attend the genuine application, even though it may be a limited one, of the elective principle to the government of that vast and almost immeasurable country.

The opinion of those who are qualified to speak on Indian subjects seems to be unanimous as to the representative character of the Indian Councils.

Sir William Wilson Hunter, the greatest living authority on Indian subjects, says:

The representative principle is now being cautiously extended, under Lord Cross's Act of 1892, to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and the Provincial Governments.

The Times, dealing with the Indian franchise in Natal, says:

The argument that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India and that he has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with the facts. The Indian has precisely the same franchise in India which the Englishman enjoys.

After dealing with the Municipal franchise the article goes on to say:

A similar principle applies, with the modification incidental to our system of government in India, to what may be called the Higher Electorate. The elected members of the Supreme and the Legislative Councils, which deal with 221 millions of British subjects are mainly elected by native bodies. Apart from the official representatives of Government in the Supreme and Provincial Legislatures about one-half the members are natives. It would be wrong to push this analogy too far. But it answers the argument against allowing British Indian subjects a vote in British Colonies on the ground that they have no vote in India. So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing and, like in the Municipal, the Provincial and the Supreme Councils, the native interests are powerfully represented.

The Municipal franchise is very broad in India, and almost the whole of British India is studded by Municipal Corporations and Local Boards.

Speaking of the class of Indians already on the Voters' Rolls in Natal, *The Times* article, referred to above, says:

It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. Throughout the 750 municipalities of India the British and the native voters have equal rights, and 9,790 Municipal Commissioners (Councillors) in 1891 were natives as against 839 Europeans. The European vote on the Indian Municipal Boards was therefore only one to 8 Indian votes, while in the Natal Electorate there are 37 European votes to one British Indian. . . . It must be remembered that Indian Municipalities administer a population of 15 millions and an expenditure of 50 million rupees.

As to the acquaintance of the Indian with the nature and responsibilities of representative institutions, the same article says:

There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. Every caste, every trade, every village in India had for ages its council of five which practically legislated for and conducted the administration of the little community which it represented. Until the introduction of the Parish Councils' Act last year, there was no such rural system of self-administration even in England.

Mr. Schwann., M.P., on the same subject says:

Do not suppose that the question of election is a new one in India. . . . There is no question which is more specially Indian than the question of election. Most of our civilization has come from India. And there is not the slightest doubt that we ourselves are practising a development of the Eastern principle of election.

Under such circumstances the Indian community whom the Bill is intended to affect find it most difficult to understand it.

Your Memorialists submit that the vagueness and ambiguity of the Bill are very undesirable and fair neither to the European community nor the Indian. They leave both in a state of suspense which is painful to the latter.

Your Memorialists respectfully draw the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that according to the present Voters' Roll, there is one Indian to every 38 Europeans, and that the Indian voters belong to the most respectable element in that community and are residents of long standing with large stakes in the Colony.

It is said, however, that the present List is no guide to what proportions the Indian vote may assume in future. But the fact that, during the two years that the disfranchisement of the Indian community has been threatened, no more Indians have had their names placed on the Voters' Roll, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, sufficiently disposes of the argument.

The truth is, and your Memorialists venture to speak from personal experience, there are not very many Indians in the Colony who have got the legal property qualification, low as it is.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit that the Bill under discussion is open to more objections than one. In your Memorialists' humble opinion, it introduces the colour distinction in a most invidious manner. For, while natives of other countries not enjoying elective representative institutions may not become voters, natives of the States of Europe, even though they may not enjoy such institutions in the countries they come from, may become voters under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

It would make the sons of non-European women of questionable reputation eligible as voters so long as the father is a European, while it would prevent the son of a European lady of noble birth, should she choose to marry a nobleman belonging to a non-European race, from becoming a voter under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

Assuming that the Indians come under the scope of the Bill, the method by which they may get themselves placed on the Voters' Roll will be a source of constant irritation to the Indian community, and may give rise to a system of favouritism and cause serious dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

The Bill is moreover calculated to involve the Indian community in endless litigation in order to enable them to vindicate their rights, which your Memorialists think, are capable of definition without any recourse to the law-courts of the Colony.

Above all, it will transfer the agitation from the hands of the Europeans, who now wish to see the Indians disfranchised, into those of the Indian community. And the agitation, your Memorialists fear, has to be perpetual.

It is most humbly submitted that such a state of things is very undesirable in the interests of all the communities inhabiting this Colony.

Your Memorialists, after a careful investigation for over a year, have ventured to come to the conclusion that the fear about the Indian vote swamping the European is absolutely imaginary, and, therefore, fervently pray and venture to hope that this Honourable House, before assenting to any Bill specially restrictive of the Indian vote or directly or indirectly introducing any colour distinction, would institute an inquiry into the real state of affairs which would show how many resident Indians there are in this Colony who possess the legal property qualification necessary for being placed on the Voters' Roll. And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.¹

ABDUL CAREEM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy : S. N. 980

¹ On the presentation of this petition the second reading of the Bill was put off by another week and completed only on May 6. On May 18, the Bill was committed to a joint committee of the Legislatures which then had its third reading. The Governor then forwarded the Bill to the Secretary of State for Colonies for securing the Royal assent. *Vide The Early Phase*, pp. 609-15.

94. CABLE TO J. CHAMBERLAIN¹

DURBAN,
May 7, 1896

INDIAN COMMUNITY EARNESTLY REQUEST YOU NOT TO ACCEPT
NATAL FRANCHISE BILL OR MINISTERIAL ALTERATION
THEREOF PROPOSED LAST NIGHT. MEMORIAL PREPARING.²

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 196

95. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER

DURBAN,
May 14, 1896

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

You are reported to have said the following with reference to the Natal Indian Congress on the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill:

Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress.

May I venture to enquire if that portion of your speech is correctly reported, and if so, whether there are any grounds for the belief that the Congress is “practically a secret body”? I may be

¹ Similar cables were sent to Wedderburn, Hunter and Dadabhai Naoroji. Writing on May 13, Hunter acknowledged the cable and promised “careful consideration on receipt of the Memorial”. Hunter had interviewed Chamberlain a fortnight earlier and the latter had “expressed his sympathy but mentioned the difficulty of adding further elements of disturbance at the present moment to our complications in South Africa”. “Justice will be done” Hunter added, but “somewhat slowly”, as it was “mixed up in English opinion with the monotone of complaint made by the Indian Congress party. . . .” Hunter concluded with the advice: “You have only to take up your position strongly in order to be successful” (S.N. 948). He wrote again on May 22 that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had assured that the Memorial of the Natal Indians would receive his full consideration (S.N. 985).

² Acknowledging this cable, Dadabhai Naoroji wrote on May 21 that Wedderburn had passed on the cable to him on behalf of the British Committee; referring to his correspondence with Chamberlain on the subject he observed, “I am glad that your Memorial will be considered and no action or decision will be taken before it is received or considered” (S.N. 973).

permitted to draw your attention to the fact that when the intention of forming such a body was made it was announced in the papers, that when it was actually formed its formation was noticed by the *Witness*, that the annual report and list of members and rules have been supplied to and commented upon by the Press, and that these papers have also been supplied to the Government by me in my capacity as Honorary Secretary to the Congress.¹

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy : S. N. 981

96. LETTER TO C. BIRD

DURBAN,
May 18, 1896

C. BIRD, ESQ.
PRINCIPAL UNDER-SECRETARY
COLONIAL OFFICE
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter 2837/96, dated the 16th instant, in reply to my letter to the Honourable the Prime Minister with reference to the Natal Indian Congress.

I beg to state with regard to the matter that the Congress meetings are held always with open doors, and they are open to the Press and public. Certain European gentlemen who, the Congress members thought, might be interested in the meetings, were specially invited. One gentleman did accept the invitation and attended

¹ On May 16, C. Bird replied to this letter: In answer to your letter to the Prime Minister of the 14th instant, respecting certain words reported as having been made use of by him, on the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill, with reference to the Natal Indian Congress, I am desired by Sir John Robinson to state that speaking of that Congress as practically a secret body he did so under the belief that meetings of the Congress are not open to the public and the Press. If the Prime Minister has been misinformed on this point, I am to state that he will be glad to be corrected on the subject (S.N. 981).

Congress meetings. Uninvited European visitors also have attended the Congress meetings once or twice.

One of the Congress rules provides that Europeans may be invited to become Vice-Presidents. According thereto, two gentlemen were asked if they would accept the honour, but they were not disposed to do so. Minutes of the Congress proceedings are regularly kept.¹

I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy : S. N. 983

97. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN,
May 22, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE
COLONIES, LONDON
THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Memorialists hereby respectfully beg to lay before your Honour the following for your consideration with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill introduced by the Natal Government in the Natal Legislative Assembly, which was read a third time on the 13th day of May, 1896, with certain amendments.

The following is the text of the Bill as it appeared in the Natal Government *Gazette* dated the 3rd March, 1896:

To amend the Law relating to the Franchise:

¹ Referring to this letter, Sir John Robinson said in Parliament that he had no explanation to offer and furnished a gist of the correspondence.

Whereas it is expedient to amend the law relating to the Franchise,

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Act No. 25, 1894, shall be and the same is hereby repealed.

2. Save those who come under the operation of Section 3 of this Act, no persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll, or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly, who (not being of European origin) are Natives, or descendants in the male lines of Natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed *active representative* institutions, unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of this Act.

3. The provisions of Section 2 of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

The Act repealed by Section I of the above Bill is as follows:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Save as in Section 2 of this Act excepted, persons of Asiatic Extraction shall not be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly.

2. The provisions of Section I of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

3. This Act shall not come into operation unless and until the Governor notifies by Proclamation in the Natal Government *Gazette* that it is Her Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same, and thereafter it shall come into operation upon such day as the Governor shall notify by the same or any other Proclamation.

A Memorial¹ setting forth the views of the Indian community in reference to the Bill under discussion was presented to the Legislative

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly", 27-4-1896

Assembly on the 28th day of April, 1896. A copy thereof is hereto annexed marked 'A'.

On the 6th day of May, 1896, the Bill was read a second time. During the course of his speech, the Prime Minister, the Honourable Sir John Robinson, said that the Ministers had taken steps to ascertain whether you would be agreeable to an insertion in the aforesaid Bill of the words "founded on the franchise" after "Elective representative institutions" and that you were so agreeable.

Thereupon, on the 7th day of May, 1896, your Memorialists sent to Your Honour a cablegram to the following effect:

The Indian community earnestly request you not to accept Natal Franchise Bill or Ministerial alteration thereof proposed last night; memorial preparing.

In Committee, however, the Honourable Sir John Robinson announced on the 11th day of May, 1896, that Your Honour had agreed to a further addition viz, 'Parliamentary' between 'the' and 'franchise'.

The Bill, therefore, as to representative institutions would now read "elective representative institutions *founded on the Parliamentary franchise*".

Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that the present Bill, so far as the Indian community and, indeed, all the communities are concerned, is worse than the Act it repeals.

Your Memorialists, therefore, feel aggrieved that you have been pleased to approve of the Bill, but they trust that the facts and arguments placed before you hereinbelow are such as would induce you to reconsider your views.

Your Memorialists have all along contended that the Indians did enjoy "elective representative institutions" in India. But the papers published in connection with the franchise question seem to show that you do not think that the Indians possess such institutions. With the greatest deference to Your Honour's view, your Memorialists crave leave to draw your attention to the extracts quoted in the annexure 'A' upholding the opposite view.

Your approval of the present Bill, coupled with the view held by Your Honour regarding "elective representative institutions" in India, places the Indian community in Natal in a very painful and awkward position. Your Memorialists venture to submit:

1. That no legislation restrictive of the Indian franchise in Natal is necessary.

2. That, if there be any doubt with regard to this point, an enquiry should be first instituted as to whether such a necessity does exist.

3. That, assuming that the necessity exists, the present Bill is not calculated to meet the difficulty in a straightforward and open manner.

4. That, if her Majesty's Government are absolutely satisfied that the necessity exists and that no Bill could be conceived that would solve the difficulty without a resort to class legislation, it is better that in any Franchise Bill the Indians should be specially named.

5. That the present Bill is likely to give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity and vagueness.

6. That it would involve the Indian community in expenses almost beyond their control.

7. That assuming the Bill affects the Indian community, the method provided in the Bill whereby any member thereof may be exempted from its operation is, your Memorialists respectfully submit, arbitrary, unfair, and likely to create dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

8. That the Bill, like the Act repealed, makes an invidious distinction between Europeans and others.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that the present condition of the Voters' List in Natal renders it absolutely unnecessary to embark on any legislation to restrict the Indian franchise. There seems to be needless hurry about passing a measure that affects a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects. It is admitted that as against 9,309 European voters there are only 251 Indian voters; 201 are either traders or clerks, assistants, schoolmasters, etc., and 50 are gardeners and others, and that most of these voters are settlers of long standing. These figures, your Memorialists submit, do not warrant any restrictive legislation. The Bill under discussion is intended to deal with a remote and probable and possible danger. A danger is really assumed which does not exist. His Honour, Sir John Robinson, in moving the second reading of the Bill, based his fears about the danger of the European vote being swamped by the Indian vote on three grounds, viz.:

1. The fact that the petition to Her Majesty's Government in connection with the Franchise Act, repealed by the present Bill, was signed by nearly 9,000 Indians.

2. The approaching general election in the Colony.

3. The existence of the Natal Indian Congress.

As to the first ground, even in the correspondence on the subject, the Natal Government have argued that the 9,000 signatories wanted to be placed on the Voters' Roll. The first paragraph of that petition is a sufficient answer to the argument. The Petitioners, your Memorialists humbly submit, never contended for any such thing. They certainly protested against the wholesale disfranchisement of the Indians. Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that every Indian, whether he had the property qualifications or not, was very materially affected by that Bill. Your Memorialists admit that the fact show a degree of organizing power among the Indians, alluded to by the Hon. mover, but your Memorialists respectfully contend that no matter how powerful the organizing power might be, it cannot overcome the natural barriers. Out of the 9,000 signatories, not a hundred, besides those who were already on the Voters' Roll, possessed the legal property qualifications.

With regard to the second ground, the Hon. mover said:

He might remind members that before long there must be a general election, and they would have to consider upon what register that general election was to take place. It was not for him to say how many Indian electors might or might not be on the ensuing electoral roll, but the Government thought it was high time that no further delay should take place in seizing this question by the throat and *setting it once for all*, without further delay.

Your Memorialists submit, with all due respect to the Hon. mover, that all these fears have no foundation in fact. According to the *Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1895*, out of 46,343 Indians in the Colony, only 30,303 are free Indians. To that may be added the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000. Thus there are only 35,000 Indians, as against over 45,000 Europeans, who can at all compete with the latter. The 16,000 indentured Indians, it is easy to see, never can vote, while they are under indenture. But a large majority of the 30,303 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians. And your Memorialists venture to say from personal experience that there are in this Colony thousands of Indians who do not pay £10 per year in rents. In fact, there are thousands who have to

drag on their existence on that amount. Where then, your Memorialists ask, is the fear of the Indians swamping the Voters' List next year?

The disfranchisement has been threatened for the last two years. The Electoral Roll has twice undergone revision since. The Indians had every incentive to add to the Indian vote, lest many may be shut out. And yet there has been not a single addition to the Voters' List from the Indian community.

But the Hon. mover went on to say:

Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress. That was a body which possessed large funds, it was a body presided over by very active and very able men, and it was a body the avowed object of which was to exercise strong political power in the affairs of the Colony.

Your Memorialists venture to say that this estimate of the Congress is not justified by facts. The charge of secrecy, as would appear from the correspondence between the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal and the Honorary Secretary of the Congress, was made under an erroneous impression (Appendices B,C, D¹). A statement with regard to the matter also was made by him in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th instant.

Nor has the Congress in any shape or form intended or attempted to “exercise strong political power”. The following are the objects of the Congress, which were published in almost every paper in South Africa last year:

“1. To bring about a better understanding and promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

“2. To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing, etc.

“3. To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the Colony about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

¹Vide “Letter to Prime Minister” 14-5-1896, and “Letter to C. Bird”, 18-5-1896.

“4. To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

“5. To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

“6. To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

“7. And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically.”

It would thus appear that the object of the Congress is to resist degradation, not to gain political power. As to funds the Congress has a property worth £1,080 and a balance of £148-7s 8d in the Bank, at the time of writing this. These funds have to be used in charity, printing memorials and working expenses. In your Memorialists' humble opinion they are hardly sufficient to fulfil the objects of the Congress. The educational work is greatly hampered owing to want of funds. Your Memorialists, therefore, venture to submit that the danger which the present Bill is intended to guard against does not exist at all.

Your Memorialists, however, do not request Her Majesty's Government to accept the above facts as correct on their *ipse dixit*. If there is any doubt about any of them—and the most important fact is that there are thousands who do not possess the necessary property qualifications for becoming voters—then the proper course, your Memorialists submit, is to enquire about them, particularly to enquire how many Indians there are in the Colony who possess immovable property of the value of £50 or who pay a yearly rent of £10. To prepare such a return would neither cost much time nor much money, and would be a very material help towards a satisfactory solution of the franchise question. The hot haste to pass *some* measure is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, detrimental to the best interests of the Colony as a whole. Your Memorialists, so far as they, as representatives of the Indian community, are concerned and speaking authoritatively for the organization of which they have the honour to be members, hereby beg to assure Her Majesty's Government that they have no intention to endeavour to place a single Indian voter on the Voters' List for the general election next year.

The Government organ, dealing with the present Bill in a presumably inspired article, supports the view that the danger is “a chimerical one”. It says:

Moreover, we feel sure that should the Asiatic vote ever endanger the stability of European rule in this Colony, the Imperial Government will find ways and means out of such a difficulty. The new Bill imposes certain limitations on the acquirement of the franchise by all who are not of European origin, and as now even with the franchise open to British subjects of all races and classes, except the Natives under Native law, there are only some 250 Indians on the Voters' Roll out of a total of 9,560 registered voters, or in the proportion of one Indian voter to every 38 Europeans in possession of the franchise, we think the new Bill will fully meet the requirements of the case for very many long years at all events, if not for all time. In South Carolina, for instance, the Negroes over 21 years old number 132,949, while the whites over 21 only number 102,567, yet the whites have retained the dominant power, although in the minority. The fact of the matter is that apart from numbers altogether the superior race will always hold the reins of Government. *We are inclined to the belief, therefore, that the danger of the Indian vote swamping the European is a chimerical one.* From what we know of the matter, we are inclined to think that it will be held that India is a country possessing "Elective representative institutions". In fact, the argument so often advanced that the Indian is unacquainted with their nature and responsibilities is really wide off the mark, as in India there are some 750 municipalities in which British and native voters have equal rights, and in 1891, there were 9,790 native municipal commissioners (councillors) as against 839 Europeans. . . . Even assuming, however, that natives of India will be held as coming from a country possessing "elective representative institutions", *we do not consider that the danger of being swamped is at all a likely one, as past experience has proved that the class of Indians coming here, as a rule, do not concern themselves about the franchise, and further, the majority of them do not even possess the small property qualification required.* In addition to all this, the obligations of the Empire of which we form a part do not permit of Indians as Indians being excluded from the exercise of such a privilege as the franchise. So far as we are concerned, therefore, such attitude is a *non possumus* and may, therefore, be dropped. Should the restrictions of the new law not prevent the introduction of an undesirable element onto the Voters' Roll, there is nothing at all to prevent us raising the franchise qualification. At present it is very low. The property qualification could, therefore, be easily increased, even doubled and an educational test imposed which, while it would not remove a single European from the Voters' Roll, would have a sweeping effect on Indian voters. The number of the later possessing immovable property of the value of say, £100 or paying a rent of £20 per annum and able to read and write English must be exceedingly small, and should this fail, there would be nothing to hinder us from adopting the Mississippi plan, or a modification of it to suit the circumstances (5th March, 1896).

It is clear, therefore, that according to the Government organ the present property qualifications are sufficiently high to prevent any undue influx of Indian voters on the Roll, and that the only object of the present Bill is to harass the Indian community—to land them in expensive litigation.

According to the *Mauritius Almanac* for 1895, the population of that island in 1894 was 259,224 Indians as against 106,995 persons under the heading ‘general population’. The franchise qualification there is as follows:

Every male person shall be entitled to be registered in any year as a voter for any electoral district and, when, registered, to vote at the election of a member of the Council for such district who is qualified as follows, that is to say:

1. That he has attained the age of twenty-one years.
2. Is under no legal incapacity.
3. Is a British subject by birth or naturalization.
4. Has resided in the Colony for three years at least previous to the date of registration and possesses some one of the following qualifications:
 - (a) Is on the 1st day of January in each year, and has, during the preceding six calendar months, been the owner of immovable property within such district of the annual value of Rs. 300 or the monthly value of Rs. 25 above all charges and encumbrances affecting the same.
 - (b) Is at the date of registration paying, and has for the six calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year paid, rent in respect of immovable property situate within such district at the rate of at least Rs. 25 per month.
 - (c) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is the owner of movable property within the Colony of the value of at least Rs. 3,000.
 - (d) Is the husband of a wife, or the eldest son of a widow, possessing any one of the above qualifications.
 - (e) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is in receipt of a yearly salary of at least Rs. 600, or a monthly salary of at least Rs. 50.
 - (f) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or has his principal place of business or employment within such district, and pays licence duty to the amount of at least Rs. 50 per annum.

Provided—

1. That no person shall be registered as a voter, or be entitled to vote for the election of a member of the Council who has been convicted of perjury in any Court in our Dominions or who has been sentenced by any such Court to death, or penal servitude, or imprisonment with hard labour, or for a term exceeding twelve months, and has not either suffered the punishment to which he was sentenced or such other punishment as by competent authority may have been substituted for the same or received a free pardon from us.

2. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year who has, within twelve calendar months immediately preceding the first day of January in that year, received any relief from public or parochial funds.

3. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year unless he shall, in the presence of the registering officer or of a magistrate, with his own hand subscribe his name to his claim to be registered and write thereon the date of such subscription and the qualification, in respect of which he claims to be registered.

4. That no person claiming to be registered in the district in which he resides in respect of any of the qualifications (c), (d), (e) and (f), shall be registered in respect of the same qualification in the district in which he has his principal place of business or employment or *vice versa*.

With these qualifications there is evidently no trouble in Mauritius, although the Indian population is twice as large as the general population, and the Indians in Mauritius belong to the same class as the Indians in Natal. Only, there they are far more prosperous than their Natal brethren.

Assuming, however, that the necessity to deal with the Indian franchise does exist, your Memorialists respectfully beg to say that the present Bill is not calculated to meet it in a straightforward and open manner. The Honourable and learned Attorney-General of Natal, referring to a suggestion to slightly alter the existing law in course of the debate on the Second Reading, is reported to have said:

The reason why he refused to do this was because it was apparently doing it by a side-wind and quietly, and the Government intended to do it in the full light of day.

It is difficult to conceive a better mode of doing a thing by a “side-wind and quietly” than that of passing the present Bill, which leaves everybody in the dark. *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May, 1896, says:

. . . What is the present Bill if not a side-wind? Its whole object is to endeavour quietly and by a side-wind to effect that which the measure of last session failed to accomplish. Mr. Escombe admitted that the measure was brutally blunt and to this he rightly ascribed its failure to obtain acceptance by the Imperial Government. He further admitted that the present Bill has precisely the same object in view as the "brutal" Bill, only it does not state its object honestly and straightforwardly; in other words, it seeks quietly and by a side-wind to reach the goal apparently unattainable by plain sailing.

If Her Majesty's Government are convinced that a real necessity exists for legislation restricting the Indian franchise in Natal, and if Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that the question cannot be dealt with but by class legislation, and if Her Majesty's Government further accept the Colonial view that Indian British subjects, in spite of the gracious Proclamation of 1858, may be treated on a different footing from that on which the European British subjects are treated, then, your Memorialists submit that it would be infinitely better and more satisfactory to exclude the Indians by name from any rights and privileges that they in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, should not be allowed to enjoy, than that by ambiguous legislation the door should be left open for litigation and trouble.

That the Bill, if assented to, would give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity is an admitted fact. It is admittedly also of the first importance that the question of the Indian franchise should be "settled once for all". to quote the words of the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal. And yet, in the opinion of the majority of the leaders of opinion in Natal, the Bill will not settle the question once for all.

Mr. Binns, the leader of the Opposition in the Natal Assembly, after quoting chapter and verse to show that the Indians in India did possess elective representative institutions, founded on the parliamentary franchise, is reported to have said this:

He hoped he had shown clearly that on that ground this Bill was wrong. There were representative institutions and the elective principle was acknowledged in India. They had a Parliamentary franchise and there was an enormous municipal franchise which affected local government, and if this was the case, what was the use of their passing this Bill? The facts he had stated to the Assembly were taken from the best authorities he could find and they proved most conclusively that these institutions did exist. There was no doubt on one point, that if a Bill of this kind passed into law *it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulties, and trouble. The Bill was not*

sufficiently clear or definite. They wanted something more clear and definite. He wanted to see this question settled and he would do all he could to assist at a settlement. But he thought *this Bill was framed on wrong lines, contained a fact that was not correct, and it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulty, and trouble. It would be impossible for him to vote for the second reading of this Bill.*

Mr. Bale, a leading member of the Assembly and a leading lawyer in Natal, agreeing with Mr. Binns' views, opposed as he is to the Indians retaining the franchise rights under the general law of the Colony, thus feelingly appealed to the House, as well on behalf of the Indians as for the Colony generally, not to pass the Bill:

It would give rise to litigation and produce a feeling of hostility and create a ferment amongst the Indians themselves. It would also have the further effect of inducing appeals to the Privy Council and would prejudice the election of members to this House. Having regard to the great issues involved in this measure he hoped the second reading of this Bill would not be carried.

The Natal Witness of the 8th May thus sums up the situation:

Our warning that, if the Bill passes into law as it stands, the Colony will be involved in serious litigation, had the support of Mr. Binns and Mr. Bale, and Mr. Smythe's half loaf, which is better than, nothing, would be dearly purchased at that price. What leads us to think the Bill has not been considered by the legal advisers of the Crown are the exceedingly delicate questions which it raises and which will undoubtedly be fought out unless the wording be altered so as not to leave the possibility of a resort to law. Amongst these questions are the following: Can a Colony make laws which contravene the Naturalization Law of England? Are British Indians British subjects or not? In other words *the Bill raises the whole question of the position of the British Indians in the Empire.* Can special laws be passed in Natal, since the issue of the Proclamation of 1858, [to] take away any part of the privileges conferred by that document?

After deploring the ambiguity and vagueness of the Bill, *The Natal Advertiser*, in its leader of the 8th May, says:

The truth of the position is [that] each line of the present Bill is an ambushade of disputes, which will all come out in the open some day, to perpetuate for years, and probably with increased bitterness, the struggle between the Indians and the Europeans in this Colony with regard to the vote.

Your Memorialists appeal to Her Majesty's Government to save the Indian community, if not the whole Colony, from such a dismal

outlook—from perpetual agitation—and all this to avoid a danger that does not exist.

That the expenses of such a struggle to the Indian community must be beyond their control needs no argument to prove. The whole struggle is unequal.

Now, assuming further, that the highest legal tribunal has recorded its opinion that the Indians do not possess “elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise”, the method provided in the Bill whereby the Indians may be placed on the Voters’ Roll is, in your Memorialists’ humble opinion, in every way unsatisfactory.

The disapproval of that portion of the Bill which confers the power on the Governor is very emphatic on the part of the Europeans also. *The Natal Witness*, in dealing with that branch of the subject, says:

It attacks great constitutional principles, and further introduces into the working of representative institutions in Natal what may be termed an unknown quantity—that is to say, the effect which the third clause, providing for an electorate of six to choose fit and proper Asiatics for the Voters’ Roll, will have upon them. . . . The Ministry appeared to have caught on to the idea (i.e., of indirect election), but in making themselves and the Governor an indirect electorate, they are not only doing what is decidedly preposterous but highly improper.

Reverting to the same question again, it says:

The Assembly has not gained in public estimation by passing a Bill which most of the leading members are distrustful of, which they can see is a compromise and a compromise which may prove quite ineffectual and which, as we pointed out when it was first published, is a most dangerous invasion of the privileges of the Assembly as well as an attack upon constitutional principles which it might have been assumed that every member would have held himself to be under a solemn obligation to maintain unimpaired. There was no need to remind some of the members of the last objection. Mr. Bale said that the Franchise ought to be vested in the people alone, to be exercised of course by their representatives. . . . But what the press is concerned about is not the present Parliament but all future ones. . . . When a great constitutional principle is once broken through, however slightly it may be, there is the imminent risk of the breach being widened by a Government greedy of power.

That is the objection from the European point of view. Your Memorialists, while agreeing with that view, have a yet more

formidable objection to the principle of the clause. It is not so much the number of Indian voters that the Indian community wish to see on the Voters' Roll as the vindication of their rights and privileges as British subjects and the equal *status* with European British subjects that is assured to the British Indians by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress on more occasions than one, and that has been specially assured to the Indian community in Natal by Her Majesty's Government in a special despatch by the Right Honourable the late Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. If other British subjects having certain qualifications can claim the franchise as of right, why, your Memorialists humbly ask, should not the Indian British subjects?

The method is cumbrous and will tend to keep up the franchise agitation for ever. It would, moreover, transfer the agitation from the Europeans to the Indians. The speeches in the Assembly on the second reading show that the power will be exercised very sparingly, if at all, by the Governor-in-Council.

It is calculated to create dissensions among the Indian community, for the applicant who is rejected may resent the favour granted to a brother applicant if the one considers himself as good as the other.

Education, intelligence, and stake, are mentioned in Your Honour's despatch relating to the franchise question as entitling the Indians to the franchise. Your Memorialists submit that if a certain amount of education, intelligence or stake is to be sufficient to qualify an Indian to become a voter in the Colony, then such a test could be introduced instead of leaving the power in the hands of the Governor-in-Council. Hereon, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to a portion of the leading article in *The Natal Mercury* hereinbefore quoted. If the necessary qualifications for those coming under the operation of that Bill were stated, it would do away with the contentious character of that part of the Bill, and those coming under its operation will then know exactly what qualifications would entitle them to a vote. The position is well summed up in *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May.

A still further proof of the duplicity of the present Bill lies in its provision that the Governor-in-Council shall have the power to place certain Indians on the Voters' Roll. This clause is obviously inserted with the idea of leading the Imperial Government to suppose that this power of exemption would

occasionally be used—sparingly perhaps, but still used. Yet the Attorney-General declared that “the power of inclusion given in such circumstances under the present Bill could not, however, he wished to point out, be attained, except through the Governor-in-Council. Every section of the community had begun to realize what the true meaning was of the responsibility of Ministers and knew quite well that no Ministers could hold office for fourteen days if they took upon themselves the responsibility of watering the constituencies by the introduction of Indian electors.” Further on he said, “There would be no other voice throughout South Africa than that the electoral rolls of the country should be absolutely confined to persons of the European race. That was the starting point from which they began and the goal they had in view all along.” . . . if these ministerial declarations mean anything, it is that this Government have no intention to exercise their right of exemption. Then why is it placed on the Bill? Is there not at least an appearance of dissembling, or utilizing a side-wind, if the phrase is more expressive, in inserting a provision in a measure, which its framers declare in submitting it for adoption, they mean to treat as a dead letter?

It would be hardly pleasant for a wealthy Indian merchant to have to apply for a permit to be exempted from the operation of the Bill and also to risk the rejection of his application. It is difficult to understand why Europeans, not coming from countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise, should exercise the right of voting, while the non-Europeans similarly placed cannot under the general law of the Colony.

The present Bill, according to the view of the Government, is an experimental measure,. “If”, said the honourable and learned Attorney-General on the second reading, “contrary to their belief, and their firm belief, the Bill should fall short of what was intended, then there never would be rest in the Colony,” etc. The Bill, therefore, is not finite. Under such circumstances, your Memorialists submit that unless all the resources, without resort to class legislation, are tried and have failed (i.e., assuming that there is a danger of the Indian vote swamping the European), a Bill like the present one should not be passed. Your Memorialists venture to submit that this is not a question that affects a mere handful of Her Majesty’s subjects, but it affects 300,000,000 of Her Majesty’s loyal subjects. The question is not how many or what Indians shall have the vote, but the question, your Memorialists humbly submit, is what *status* the British Indians shall occupy outside India and in the Colonies and allied States. May a respectable Indian venture out of India in pursuit of trade or other

enterprise and hope to have any *status*? The Indian community do not want to shape the political destiny of South Africa, but they may be allowed to carry on their peaceful avocations quietly without any degrading conditions being imposed upon them. Your Memorialists, therefore, submit that if there is the slightest danger of the Indian vote preponderating, a simple educational test may be imposed on all alike, either with or without an increase in property qualifications. That would, in the opinion of the Government organ also, effectually remove all fear and if such a test failed, a more severe test may be imposed, which would tell. Against the Indians without materially affecting the European vote. If nothing short of a total exclusion of the Indians from the franchise would be acceptable to the Natal Government, and if Her Majesty's Government are inclined to favour such a demand, then your Memorialists submit that nothing short of specific exclusion of the Indians by name would satisfactorily meet the difficulty.

Your Memorialists, however, beg to draw your attention to the fact that the European Colonists as a body make no such demand. They seem to be absolutely indifferent. *The Natal Advertiser* thus rebukes the indifference:

Perhaps the manner in which this all-important subject has been treated by Parliament also brings out a fourth point—the indifference of the Colony to its own politics. It would be highly interesting to discover, if such could be done, how many of the Colonists have taken the trouble even to read the Bill in question. Perhaps the proportion who have not read it would be a striking one. The general unconcern of Colonists in this matter is demonstrated by the fact that meetings have not been held in every centre—not to say every nook and corner of the Colony for its ventilation, and to formulate a demand that Parliament should only pass such a Bill as would render abortive all further controversy over the subject. Had the Colony been fully alive to the real gravity of the issue, the columns of the newspaper would also have teemed with a serious and intelligent correspondence on the question. Neither of these things, however, has happened. As a consequence, the Government have been able to get through a measure supposed to effectually deal with the matter, but which in reality puts it in a far worse and dangerous position than ever it was before.

It would appear from the extracts quoted above that the present Bill satisfies neither party. With the utmost deference to the Natal Ministry and to both the Legislative bodies here, your Memorialists submit that the fact that the Bill has been accepted by them does not

signify much. The very members who refrained from any active opposition to the measure are, as *The Natal Witness* puts it, distrustful of it.

Your Memorialists hope that they have shown to your satisfaction that the danger referred to above is imaginary and that the present Bill is unsatisfactory from the point of view of those who wish to see the Indians disenfranchised as also from that of the Indians themselves. In any case, however, your Memorialists claim that sufficient facts and arguments have been brought out to show that the question should not be hastily disposed of, and that there is no necessity for so doing. *The Natal Witness* thinks that “no explanation, at least no satisfactory one, has been given for the anxiety to rush the Bill through.” *The Natal Advertiser* opines that “this Indian franchise question is a most vital one and there should be no haste in settling it for ever. Indeed the best course would be to postpone the proposed Bill and have the whole matter for the consideration of the constituencies when they have accurate information before them” (28-3-1896)

The feelings of the Indian community may be well expressed in the words of the London *Times*. *The Times* (Weekly edition, 20th March, 1896) says:

If the Indians are allowed to carry with them their *status* as British subjects to foreign countries and British Colonies whither they go in quest of work, the opening up of Africa holds out new possibilities to Indian labour. The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in South Africa that this question of their *status* must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it will be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere. They readily acknowledge that Indian labourers who accept a contract of service for a period of years, as the price of aided immigration, must fulfil the conditions of their contract, however it may curtail their rights. But they hold that after the period of contracted labour has expired, they are entitled to the *status* of British subjects in whatever Colony or country they have fixed their abodes.... The Indian Government may reasonably ask that after Indian labourers have given their best years to South Africa they should not be forced back upon India by denying to them the *status* of British subjects in their adopted homes. Whatever the decision may be, it will seriously affect the future development of emigration in India.

Dealing particularly with this question of franchise and the figures compiled from the Natal Government *Gazette* and now accepted as correct, the same paper says, under date 31st January, 1896 (Weekly edition):

According to this return, there are in the Colony 9,309 European registered voters against 251 registered voters of British Indian origin. . . . Nor, if Mr. Gandhi's statements are correct, does it seem possible that the Indian vote can swamp the European at any period within the range of practical politics. . . . Not only are all Indian immigrants under labour contracts excluded but also all British Indians whatsoever, except an extremely small class, who, by intelligence and industry, have raised themselves to the position of well-to-do citizens. . . .

The returns show that even under the existing law it takes a long time for a British Indian to attain the franchise in Natal. With the exception of 63 British Indians, many of whom started with capital, and whose residence in the Colony is under ten years, the rest of the 251 voters seem to have resided during more than 10 years and the majority over 14. An analysis of the British Indian Voters' List according to occupation yields equally encouraging results to those who wish to see this question settled. . . .

It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. The argument that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India and that he has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with the facts. . . . So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing, and alike in the Municipal, the Provincial, and the Supreme Councils the native interests are powerfully represented. Nor does the plea that the British Indian is unacquainted with the nature and responsibilities of representative government bear inspection. There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. . . .

The question now before Mr. Chamberlain *is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of racefeeling. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858 gave the full rights of British subjects to the Indians and they vote in England and sit in the British Parliament on the same terms as Englishmen.* But these questions are inevitable in a vast Empire made up of many peoples and as the steamship brings the component population of Greater Britain into closer contact they will present themselves in more acute forms. Two things are clear. Such questions will not settle themselves by being ignored, and a strong Government at home affords the best Court of Appeal to adjudicate upon them. *We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects.* It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting off the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to

deny the rights of citizenship to British Indian subjects, who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual *status* of citizens (the italics throughout are your Memorialists’).

Your Memorialists now leave their case in your hands, and in so doing earnestly pray, and confidently hope, that the Royal assent to the Bill hereinbefore referred to will be withheld, and, if there be any fear as to the European vote being swamped by the Indian, an enquiry be ordered to ascertain whether there actually exists any such danger under the existing law, or such other relief will be granted as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.¹

ABDUL KAREEM HAJI ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy: S. N. 979-83

98. *SPEECH AT INDIANS’ MEETING*²

June 4, 1896

After the presentation of an address, Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the kindness, said the occasion showed that whatever castes the Indians in Natal represented they were all in favour of being cemented in closer union. With regard to the objects of the Congress, he did not think any differences existed, else they would not have met as they had done to make its secretary a presentation. If this surmise were correct, he would repeat the request he made the other evening³ urging the attendance of the Madras Indians at the Congress. Up to the present that attendance had not been satisfactory, but he hoped that henceforth, they would rally in greater numbers. He regretted his inability to speak Tamil, but was sure that what he said with reference to Madras Indians keeping aloof would not be construed into any reflection upon them or any other portion of the Indian community. The objects of the

¹ On September 25, 1896, C. Bird communicated to the Memorialists Chamberlain's decision, that "Her Majesty's Government has carefully considered their representations, but has not felt justified in advising Her Majesty to disallow the Act" (S.N. 160)

² A day before Gandhiji sailed for India, the Tamil and Gujarati Indians of Durban along with other communities met at the Natal Indian Congress Hall for the purpose of recognizing his service and presented to him an address. The attendance was large and much enthusiasm prevailed. Dada Abdulla presided.

³ This refers to an earlier meeting of June 2, where he was presented an address on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress. A report of this meeting or of his speech, however, is not available.

Congress they all knew. Those objects were not to be attained by mere talk, and he, therefore, asked them to show their interest in its common ends by deeds, not words. He would particularly impress upon the audience to send delegates to Maritzburg, Ladysmith and other centres, where Indians of every class resided, and who were not yet represented at the Congress, and endeavour to get them to become members.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-6-1896

99. INTERVIEW TO “THE NATAL ADVERTISER”¹

[June 4, 1896]

In reply to various questions Mr. Gandhi said the present membership of the Congress was 300. The annual subscription was £3, payable in advance. The Congress aimed at enrolling members who were not only able to pay their subscriptions, but who would also work for the objects of the Congress. They wanted to collect a large fund which would be invested in property so that a permanent income might be available to carry on the objects of the Congress.

“What are these objects?” asked the interviewer.

They are of twofold character—political and educational. As to the educational part, we want to teach the Indians born in the Colony by inducing them with the offer of scholarships to study all subjects pertaining to their welfare as a community, including Indian and Colonial history, temperance, etc.

Is there any other qualification for membership in the Congress?

Yes, one is that members should be able to read, write and speak English, but this condition has not been strictly enforced of late.

Financially how does the Congress stand?

There is a balance in hand of £194, and it possesses, besides, a property in Umgeni Road. I want the members to raise this balance to £1,100, during my absence, and see no reason why it should not be done. This would do much to make it a permanent institution.

What is the attitude of the Congress politically?

It does not want to exercise any strong political influence, the present object being to ensure that the promises made in the

¹ On the eve of Gandhiji's departure for India a reporter of *The Natal Advertiser* called upon him to ascertain his view on the state of Indian affairs then prevailing in the Colony generally.

Proclamation of 1858 are fulfilled. When the Indians enjoy the same status in the Colony as they do in India, the Congress will have attained its end politically. It has no intention to become a political force to swamp any other party.

What is the number of Indian voters in the Colony?

There are only 251 on the Voters' Roll, as against 9,309 Europeans. Of the former 143 are in Durban, and the Congress could not put forward more than 200 more in its best efforts. The end of its ambition, as I said, is an equal status with the Europeans, and we don't object to any qualification that may be required. We are even willing that the property qualifications should be increased so long as it applies equally.

What will your future programme be?

What it has always been. The Congress will continue to ventilate the grievances of the Indian community by the publication of literature throughout the Colony, in India and England, and to write to the newspapers on any Indian questions as they come prominently before the public, and to collect funds for its propaganda. Hitherto the Congress has not invited the Press to any of its meetings, but it has now been decided to do this occasionally, and furnish it with information concerning its efforts. The Congress first wished to be assured of a permanent existence before it invited the Press to its meetings. There is one matter I would like to correct. The address presented to me stated that the various objects of the Congress had been fulfilled. That was not so. They were under consideration, and the Congress would continue to work for their attainment by every legitimate means, and it will resist any attempt to introduce colour distinctions in the legislation for the Indian community; for these, if introduced, might be used in other Colonies, and other parts of the world.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-6-1896

100. THE CREDENTIALS¹

We, the undersigned, representing the Indian community in South Africa, hereby appoint M. K. Gandhi, Esq., of Durban, Advocate, to represent the grievances the Indians are labouring under in South Africa before the authorities and public men and public bodies in India.

Dated at Durban, Natal, this 26th day of May 1896.

ABDOOL CARIM HAJI ADAM

(DADA ABDOOLLA & Co.)

ABDUL CADER

(MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN)

P. DAWAJEE MAHOMED

HOUSEN CASSIM

A. C. PILLAY

PARSEE RUSTOMJI

A. M. TILLY

HAJEE MAHOMED H. DADA

AMOD MAHOMED PARUK

ADAMI MIANKHAN

PEERUN MAHOMED

A. M. SALOOJEE

DOWD MAHOMED

AMOD JEEWA HOUSEN MEERUM

K. S. PILLAY & Co.

AHMEDJI DOWJI MOGRARIA⁶

MOOSA HAJEE CASSIM

G. A. BASSA

MANILAL CHATURBHAI

M. E. KATHRADA

D. M. TIMOL

DAVJEE M. SEEDAT²

ISMAIL TIMOL

SHAIK FAREED & Co.

SHAIKHJEE AMOD

MAHOMED CASSIM HAFFIJI³

AMOD HOUSEN

MAHOMED AMOD BASSA

V. A. ESSOP

MAHOMED SULEMAN⁴

DAWJEE MAMAD MUTALA

SULEMAN VORAJI

EBRAHIM NOOR MAHOMED

MAHOMED SULEMAN KHOTA⁵

CHOOHURMAL LUCHERAM

NARAYAN PATHER

VIJAYA RAGAVALOO

SULIMAN DAWJEE

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa

¹ This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji. Although it is dated May 26 it is nevertheless included in this volume as it forms part of the Green Pamphlet, having been reproduced on its last page. *Vide* the following item.

² These signatures are in Gujarati as well as in English.

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ This signature is in Gujarati.

⁶ These signatures are in Gujarati as well as in English.

*101. THE GRIEVANCES OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN
SOUTH AFRICA : AN APPEAL TO THE INDIAN PUBLIC¹*

RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR,

August 14, 1896

This is an appeal to the Indian public on behalf of the 100,000 Indians in South Africa. I have been commissioned by the leading members representing that community in South Africa to lay before the public in India the grievances that her Majesty's Indian subjects are labouring under in that country.

South Africa is a continent by itself and is divided into many States of which the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope, Zululand, a Crown Colony, the South African Republic of the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Chartered Territories, are inhabited, more or less, by the Indians together with the Europeans and the natives of those countries. The Portuguese territories, viz., Delagoa Bay, Beira and Mozambique, have a large Indian population, but there the Indians have no grievances, apart from the general population.

NATAL

From an Indian standpoint, Natal is the most important portion of South Africa. It has a native population of about 400,000, a European population of nearly 50,000 and an Indian population of about 51,000, of whom about 16,000 are those at present serving their indenture, about 30,000 are those who, having once been under indenture, are freed therefrom and have settled in the Colony on their own account, and about 5,000 belong to the trading community. These latter, of course, came to the Colony on their own means and some of them brought capital also into the country. The indentured Indians are drawn from the labouring population of Madras and Calcutta and are nearly equally divided. Those from Madras speak, as a rule, the Tamil language, and those from Calcutta, the Hindi. Most of them are Hindus, a good few are Mahomedans. Strictly speaking, they do not observe caste restrictions. After becoming free, they either take to gardening or hawking vegetables and earn from 2 to 3 pounds

¹ This was brought out as a pamphlet which later became known as the Green Pamphlet on account of the colour of its cover.

sterling per month. A few become petty storekeepers. That business, however, is practically in the hands of the 5,000 Indians, who are drawn chiefly from the Mahomedan community in the Bombay Presidency. Some of these latter are doing well. Many are large landowners, two are now shipowners also. One of them has a small oil machine worked by steam. They come either from Surat, or districts surrounding Bombay, or Porbandar. Many merchants from Surat have settled in Durban with their families. Most of them, including the assisted immigrants, can read and write their own language to a greater extent than one would think they do.

I venture to quote the following from my ‘Open Letter’¹ to the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of Natal to show what treatment the Indian receives at the hands of the general run of Europeans in the Colony:

The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the foot-path. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples. “The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community”, “these parasites”, “wily, wretched semi-barbarous Asiatics”, “A thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindoo”, “He is chock-full of vice and he lives upon rice. I heartily cuss the Hindoo”, “Squalid coolies with truthless tongues and artful ways”. The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name. He is “Ramysamy”. He is “Mr. Samy”.² He is “Mr. Coolie”. He is “the black man”. And these offensive epithets have become so common that they (at any rate, one of them, “Coolie”) are used even in the sacred precincts of the courts, as if “the Coolie” were the legal and proper name to give to any and every Indian. The public men, too, seem to use the word freely. I have often heard the painful expression “coolie clerk” from the mouths of men who ought to know better.³ The tramcars are not for the Indians. The railway officials may treat the Indians as beasts, No matter how clean, his very sight is such an offence to every White man in the Colony that he would object to sit, even for a short time, in the same compartment with the Indian. The hotels shut their doors against them.⁴ Even the public baths are not for the Indians no matter who they are. . . . The vagrant law is needlessly oppressive and often puts respectable Indians in a very awkward position.

¹ For the full text of this, *vide* “Open Letter”, 19-12-1894

² The original has “Ramsamy” and “Sammy”.

³ Two sentences following this, in the original, have been omitted in the Green Pamphlet. *Vide* “Open Letter”, 19-12-1894

⁴ A sentence following this has been omitted. *Vide* “Open Letter”, 19-12-1894

I have quoted this because the statement has been before the South African public for nearly one year and a half, has been commented upon freely by almost every newspaper in South Africa and remains practically uncontradicted (indeed, it has even been endorsed by one newspaper with approval) and because, during the interval that has elapsed, I have seen nothing to change that view. The Right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain¹, however, while in full sympathy with its object, in his reply to the deputation headed by the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhai² is said to have stated that our grievances were more sentimental than material and real and that, if he could be shown any instances of real grievance, he should deal with them effectively. *The Times of India*, which has done us much service and has laid us under deep obligation to it by its persistent advocacy on our behalf, rebuked Mr. Chamberlain for calling our grievances sentimental. To give, however, proof of real grievances and to strengthen the position of the advocates of our cause in India, I shall beg leave to cite my own testimony and that of those who have undergone grievances personally. Every word of every statement to be made immediately can be established beyond the shadow of a doubt.

In Dundee last year, during the Christmas time, a gang of White men set fire to the Indian stores without the slightest provocation, in order to enjoy themselves. Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, a shipowner and one of the leading members of the Indian community in South Africa, was travelling with me as far as Krantzklouf Station. He alighted there to go by postal cart to Natal. No one there would sell him even bread. The hotelkeeper would not allow him a room in his hotel and he had to sleep in the coach, shivering the whole night with cold. And the winter in that part of Africa is no joke. Mr. Haji Mohamed Haji Dada, another leading Indian gentleman, was travelling in a coach some time ago from Pretoria to Charlestown. He was forced out of the coach and had to walk a distance of three miles because he had not got a pass—whatever that may mean.³

A Parsee gentleman, Mr. Rustomjee, whose generosity goes much further than his purse would allow, has been unable to take a Turkish bath for the sake of his health in Durban, although the public

¹ Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914); Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895-1902

² Dadabhai Naoroji

³ For a fuller account of the incident, *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895

baths are the property of the Durban Corporation, to which Mr. Rustomjee pays his rates just as well as the other ratepayers. In Field Street, Durban, last year during Christmas time, some youths threw burning crackers in the Indian stores doing some damage. Three months ago, in the same street, some youths shot lead bullets into an Indian store with a sling, hurting a customer who nearly lost his eye. Both these matters were brought to the notice of the Superintendent of Police who promised to do all he could. Nothing more has been heard of the matter. Yet the Superintendent is an estimable gentleman, anxious to protect all the communities in Durban. But what could the poor man do against the tremendous odds? Will his subordinates take the trouble to find out the miscreants? When the aggrieved gentleman saw the constables at the police station, they first laughed and then asked him to get a warrant from the Magistrate for their arrest. No warrant is required in such cases when a constable wants to do his duty. Only the day before I left Natal, the son of an Indian gentleman, spotlessly dressed, was walking along the pavement in the principal street in Durban. Some Europeans pushed him off the pavement without any reason but to amuse themselves. Last year, the Magistrate at Estcourt, a village in Natal, had an Indian who was a prisoner in the dock forced out of it. His cap was forcibly removed and he was brought back bare-headed, in spite of the protest from the man that the removal of the cap was contrary to Indian custom and it offended his religious feeling also. A civil action was brought against the Magistrate. And the judges held that the Magistrate was not civilly liable for acts done by him in his capacity as such. When we went to law, we knew that such would be the decision. Our object was to have the matter thoroughly thrashed out. This question at one time was a very great question in the colony.

An Indian official, whenever he accompanies his superior during his periodical tours, is unable to secure accommodation in the hotels. He is obliged to sojourn in huts. The grievance had reached such a stage, when I left Natal, that he was seriously thinking of sending in his resignation.

A Eurasian gentleman, Mr. DeSilva by name, who was for some time employed in a responsible position in Fiji, happened to come to Natal to seek fortune. He is a certified chemist. He received an appointment as chemist by letter. When, however, his employer saw that he was not quite White, he dismissed him. I know other Eurasians

who, being fair enough to pass as “White men”, are not molested. This last instance I have quoted to show how unreasonable the prejudice is in Natal. I could go on relating such instances. But, I hope, I have adduced sufficient instances to show that our grievances are real and as one of our sympathizers in England says in a letter, “They have only to be known to be removed.”

Now, what is our mode of action in such cases? Are we to go to Mr. Chamberlain in every case and turn the Colonial Office into one for hearing petty complaints from Indians in South Africa? I have used the word “petty” advisedly, for I admit that most of these cases are cases of petty assault and inconvenience. But when they occur pretty regularly, they assume a sufficiently big shape to be a source of constant irritation to us. Just picture a country where you never know you are safe from such assaults, no matter who you are, where you have a nervous fear as to what would happen to you whenever you undertake a journey, where you cannot be accommodated in a hotel even for a night and you have a picture of the state we are living in Natal. I am sure I am not exaggerating when I say that, if any of the Indian High Court Judges came to South Africa, I doubt very much whether any hotel would admit him, unless he took extraordinary precautions, and I am almost positive that he will have to travel from Charlestown to Pretoria in a Kaffir compartment, unless he is dressed in European clothing from top to toe.

I am aware that in some of the instances cited above Mr. Chamberlain could not very well afford relief, as for example the case of Mr. DeSilva, but the fact is clear that such instances occur because of the rooted prejudice against the Indians in South Africa, which is due to the indifference of the Home and the Indian Governments to the complaints of the Indians. In all the cases of assault, our mode of action, as a rule, is not to take any notice of them. We follow the principle, so far as we can, of going two miles when we are asked to go one. Sufferance is, really and sincerely, the badge of the Indians in South Africa, especially in Natal. I may state, however, that we follow this policy not from philanthropic but from purely selfish motives. We have found by painful experiences that to bring the offenders to justice is a tedious and expensive process. The result is often contrary to our expectations. The offender would either be discharged with a caution or fined “five shillings or one day”. The very man, after getting out of the box, assumes a more threatening attitude and puts

the complainant in an awkward position. And the publication of such acts incites others to similar ones. We, therefore, do not, as a rule, even mention them before the public in Natal.

Such a feeling of deep-seated hatred towards the Indians is reproduced all over South Africa, in special legislation for Indians, which has for its object the degradation of the Indian community in that country. The Attorney-General of Natal wants to keep the Indians for ever “hewers of wood and drawers of water”. We are classed with the natives of South Africa—Kaffir race. He defines the status of the Indians in the following words: “These Indians were brought here for the purpose of supplying labour for development of local industries and were not intended to form portion of the South African nation which was being built up in the various States.” The policy of the Orange Free State, which, in the words of its leading organ, “has made the British Indian an impossibility by simply classifying him with the South African natives”, is cherished by the other States as a model policy. What that State has completely accomplished, the other States would accomplish within a very short time but for the vigilance of the Indian public. We are passing through a crisis now. We are hemmed in on all sides by restrictions and high-handed measures.

I shall now show how the feeling of hatred above described has been crystallized into legislation. An Indian cannot leave his house after 9 o’clock at night unless he has a pass signed by someone showing that he is out under instructions or can give a good account of himself. This law applies to the natives and Indians only. The police use their discretion and do not, as a rule, trouble those who are dressed in the Memon costume, as that dress is supposed to be the Indian trader’s dress. Mr. Aboobaker, now deceased, was the foremost Indian trader in Natal and much respected by the European community. He, with his friend, was once arrested by the police. When he was brought to the police station for being out after 9 p. m., the authorities knew at once that they had committed a mistake. They told Mr. Aboobaker that they did not want to arrest gentlemen like himself, and asked him if he could point out any distinguishing mark between a trader and a labourer. Mr. Aboobaker pointed to his robe, and, ever since, it has been a tacit understanding between the police and the public that those wearing the flowing robe should not be arrested, even though they may be out after 9 p.m. But there are Tamil and Bengali traders, equally respectable, who do not wear the

robes. There are, again, the Christian Indian educated youths—a most sensitive class—who do not wear robes. They are constantly molested. A young Indian, well educated and a Sunday school teacher, another a schoolmaster, were arrested only four months ago and locked up in a dungeon the whole night, in spite of their protestations that they were on their way home. They were discharged by the Magistrate but that was a poor consolation. An Indian lady, a teacher, the wife of the Indian Interpreter at Ladysmith, was a short time ago on her return from the church on a Sunday evening, arrested by two Kaffir policemen and roughly handled, so much so that her dress was soiled, not to speak of all sorts of bad names she was called. She was locked up in a cell. She was promptly released when the Superintendent of Police came to know who she was. She was carried home senseless. The bold lady sued the Corporation for damages for wrongful arrest and got £20 and costs from the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice remarked that her treatment was “unjust, harsh, arbitrary and tyrannical”. The result, however, of these three cases is that the Corporations are now clamouring for more powers and an alteration of the law, in order that they may, to put it bluntly, subject all Indians, irrespective of their position, to restrictions so that, as a member of the Legislative Assembly said on the occasion of the passing of the Immigration Bill of 1894, “the intention of the Colony to make the Indian’s life more comfortable in his native land than in the Colony of Natal” may be fulfilled. In any other country, such instances would have excited the sympathy of all right-minded people and the decision quoted above would have been hailed with joy.

Some eight months ago, about 20 Indians, pure labourers on their way to the Durban market with vegetable baskets on their heads, a sufficient indication that they were not vagrants, were arrested at 4 o’clock in the morning under the same law. The police prosecuted the case vigorously. After a two days’ trial, the Magistrate discharged them, but at what cost to the poor people! They were carrying their day’s earnings in prospect on their shoulders. These were gone. They were, I believe, detained for two days in gaol and had to pay their attorney’s fees in the bargain, for having ventured to be up and doing in the early morning, a fitting reward for industry! And Mr. Chamberlain wants instances of real grievances!

There is a system of passes in Natal. Any Indian who, whether in the day-time or the night-time, does not show a pass as to who he is,

is liable to arrest. This is meant to prevent desertion by the indentured Indians and to facilitate identification and is thus far, I believe, necessary, but the working of the law is extremely irritating and a crying grievance. But for the cruel feeling, no injustice need occur under that law. Let the papers speak for themselves as to the working of the law. *The Natal Advertiser* of the 19th June, 1895, has the following on the subject:

I wish to bring before your notice a few facts regarding the manner in which the Cato Manor¹ tenants are arrested under section 31, Law 25 of 1891. When they are walking on their grounds, the policemen come and arrest them and ask for their free passes. When they call out for their wives or relatives to produce the passes, before they can be produced the policemen begin to drag the Indians to the police-station. When the passes are produced on the road to the station, the policemen simply look at them and throw them to the ground. The Indians are taken to the police-station, detained for a night and made to wash the cell out in the morning and are then brought before the Magistrate. The Magistrate, without taking their pleas, fines them. When they reported this to the Protector², he told them to go to the Magistrate, yet (adds the correspondent) he is appointed to protect the Indian immigrants. If such things exist in the Colony (continues the writer), to whom are they to appeal?

The statement that the Magistrate does not take pleas must, I think, be a mistake.

The Natal Mercury, the Government organ in Natal, of 13th April, 1895, has the following from the Editor:

A point of considerable importance to respectable Indians and which causes much heart-burning, is their liability to arrest. Let me give a case in point. A well-known Durban Indian who has property in various parts of the town, a well-educated and exceedingly intelligent man, was the other night, with his mother, visiting Sydenham, where also he has property. Met by two native constables, the young man and his mother were taken into custody and marched off to the police-station, though it is only fair to say the native police conducted themselves admirably. The young Indian referred to explained who he was and gave references and the trooper at length bade him begone, warning him, however, that if he did not have a pass next time he would be detained and prosecuted. Being a British subject in a British Colony, he objects to being treated in this way, though, of course, he recognizes the necessity of watchfulness in general. He makes a very strong point, however, and one which the authorities should certainly consider.

¹ A suburb of Durban

² Protector of Indian Immigrants

It will be only fair to state what the authorities have to say. They admit the grievance but ask how they are to distinguish between an indentured Indian and a free Indian. We, on the other hand, submit that nothing can be easier. The indentured Indian never is dressed in a fashionable dress. The presumption should be in favour of, not against, the Indian, especially an Indian of the type I am referring to. There is no more reason to presume a man to be a thief than to presume an Indian to be a deserter. Even if an Indian did desert and made preparations to look decent, it will be difficult for him to remain undetected for a long time. But, then, the Indian in South Africa is not credited with any feelings. He is a beast, "a thing black and lean", "the Asian dirt to be heartily cursed".

There is, again, a law which says that natives and Indians, when driving cattle, must be provided with certain passes; also a bye-law in Durban which provides for the registration of native servants and "others belonging to the uncivilized races of Asia". This presupposes that the Indian is a barbarian. There is a very good reason for requiring registration of a native in that he is yet being taught the dignity and necessity of labour. The Indian knows it and he is imported because he knows it. Yet, to have the pleasure of classifying him with the natives, he too is required to be registered. The Superintendent of the Borough Police has never, so far as I know, put the law in motion. Once I raised an objection, in defending an Indian servant, that he was not registered. The Superintendent resented the objection and said he never applied the law to Indians and asked me if I wanted to see them degraded. The law, however, being there, may at any time be used as an engine of oppression.

But we have not attempted to have any of these disabilities removed. We are doing what we can to have their rigour mitigated locally. For the present, our efforts are concentrated towards preventing and getting repealed fresh legislation. Before referring to that, I may further illustrate the proposition that the Indian is put on the same level with the native in many other ways also. Lavatories are marked "natives and Asiatics" at the railway stations. In the Durban Post and Telegraph Offices, there were separate entrances for natives and Asiatics and Europeans. We felt the indignity too much and many respectable Indians were insulted and called all sorts of names by the clerks at the counter. We petitioned the authorities to do away with the

invidious distinction and they have now provided three separate entrances for natives, Asiatics and Europeans.

The Indians have, up to now, enjoyed the franchise rights under the general franchise law of the colony, which requires ownership of immovable property worth £50 or payment of an annual rental of £10 to qualify an adult male to be placed on the Voters' Roll. There is a special franchise law for the natives. Under the former, in 1894, there were 9,309 European voters and 251 Indians, of whom only 203 were living at the time, the populations being equal. Thus the European vote in 1894 was 38 times as strong as the Indian vote. Yet, the Government thought or pretended to think that there was a real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the Europeans. They, therefore, introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Natal a Bill disfranchising all Asiatics save those who were then rightly contained in any Voters' List, the preamble of the Bill stating that the Asiatics were not acquainted with elective representative institutions. Against this Bill we memorialized both the Legislative Assembly¹ and the Legislative Council² of Natal but to no purpose. We then memorialized Lord Ripon³ and forwarded copies of the memorial to the Press and the public in India and England, with a view to enlist their sympathy and to secure their active support which, we are thankful to say, we received to some extent.

As a result, that Act has now been repealed and replaced by an Act which says "no persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any list of electors who (not being of European origin) are natives or descendants in the male line of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council, exempting them from the operation of the Act." It also exempts from its operation those persons that are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was first submitted to Mr. Chamberlain who has practically approved of it. We, yet, thought it advisable to oppose it and, with a view to secure its disallowance,

¹ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

² *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894 and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

³ George Frederick Samuel Robinson (1827-1909), 1st Marquis of Ripon; Governor-General of India, 1880-84; Colonial Secretary, 1892-95. For the text of the petition, *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894

have sent a memorial¹ to Mr. Chamberlain and hope to secure the same measure of support that has been extended to us hitherto. We believe that the real reason for all such legislation is to accord a different treatment to the Indian in South Africa, such that, under it, a respectable Indian in that country may become an impossibility. There is no real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European or the Asiatic ruling South Africa. Yet this was the main point urged in support of the Bill. The whole question has been well thrashed out in the Colony and Mr. Chamberlain has got all the materials before him to judge. Here are the Government giving their own view in their organ, *The Natal Mercury*, of the 5th March, 1896, dealing with the present Bill and supporting it. After quoting the figures from the Voters' List it says:

The fact of the matter is that apart from numbers altogether the superior race will always hold the reins of Government. We are inclined to the belief therefore that the danger of the Indian vote swamping the European is a chimerical one. We do not consider that the danger of being swamped is at all a likely one, as past experience has proved that the class of Indians coming here, as a rule, do not concern themselves about the franchise and further that the majority of them do not even possess the small property qualification required.

This admission has been reluctantly made. The *Mercury* supposes, and we believe, that the Bill will fail in its purpose if it is to debar the Asiatic from the franchise and says that it would not matter if it does. What, then, is the object if it be not to harass the Indian community? The real reason why the Bill has been introduced is thus guardedly but frankly stated by the *Mercury* of the 23rd April, 1896:

Rightly or wrongly, justly or unjustly, a strong feeling exists among the Europeans in South Africa, and especially in the two Republics, against Indians or any other Asiatics being allowed unrestricted right to the franchise. The Indian argument, or course, is that there is only one Indian to every 38 European voters on the Roll at present with the open franchise and that the danger anticipated is imaginary. Perhaps it is, but we have to deal with it as if it were a real danger, not altogether, as we have explained, because of our views, but because of the views we know to be strongly held by the rest of the Europeans in the country. We do not want isolation again under the far greater and more fatal ban of being a semi-Asiatic country out of touch and out of harmony with the other European Governments of the country.

¹*Vide* "Memorial To J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896

This, then, is the naked truth. In obedience to the popular outcry, justly or unjustly, the Asiatic must be put down. This Bill has been passed after a secret meeting was held by the Government at which they explained the real reasons for passing the Bill. It has been condemned by the Colonists' and the other newspapers as inadequate from their point of view and by the very members who voted for it. They hold that the Bill will not apply to the Indians because they possess in India "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise and that it will involve the Colony in endless litigation and agitation". We, too, have taken up the same ground. We have urged that the Legislative Councils in India are "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise". Of course, in the popular sense of the term, we have no such institutions, but in the opinion of the London *Times* and an able jurist in Durban our institutions can well be legally classified under those described in the Bill. *The Times* says "the argument that he (the Indian) has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with facts." Mr. Laughton, an eminent lawyer in Natal, writing to a newspaper on the subject, says:

Is there, then, a Parliamentary (or legislative) franchise in India, and what is it? There is, and it was created by the Acts 24 and 25 Victoria, Chapter 67, and 55 and 56 Victoria, Chapter 140, by the regulations made under Section 4 of the latter Act. It may not be founded on what we call a liberal basis, it may indeed be founded on a very crude basis, but it is the Parliamentary franchise nevertheless and, under the Bill it is on it that elective representative institutions of India have to be founded.

This is also the opinion of other eminent men in Natal. Mr. Chamberlain, however, in his despatch¹ in connection with the matter says:

I also recognize the fact that the natives of India do not possess representative institutions in their own country and that they themselves, in those periods of their history when they were exempt from European influence, have never set up any such system themselves.

The opinion, as will be noticed, is opposed to the view expressed by *The Times* partly quoted above and has naturally frightened us. We are anxious to know what the best legal opinion here is. We cannot, however, too often urge that it is not political power that we want but it is the degradation which these Franchise Bills involve that we resist. If

¹ Dated September 12, 1895

a Colony is allowed to treat the Indians on a different footing from the Europeans in one respect, there would be no difficulty in going further. Their goal is not merely disfranchisement. Their goal is total extinction of the Indian. He may be allowed to exist there as a pariah, as an indentured labourer, at the most a free labourer, but he must not aspire higher. At the time the first Franchise Bill was introduced, in response to the clamour for Municipal disfranchisement of the Indians, the Attorney-General said that would be dealt with in the near future. The Natal Government, about a year ago, wished to convene what was called a "Coolie Conference", so that there might be uniformity in Indian legislation throughout South Africa. At that time also, the Deputy Mayor of Durban moved a resolution that the Asiatics should be induced to live in separate locations. The Government are vexing themselves to find out how they can directly and effectively check the influx of the Indian traders, whom Mr. Chamberlain describes to be "peaceable, law-abiding, meritorious body of persons whose undoubted industry and intelligence and indomitable perseverance", he hopes, "will suffice to overcome any obstacles which may now face them in pursuit of their avocations". The present Bill, therefore, we humbly think, has to be taken in connection with these facts and treated accordingly. The *London Times* has put the franchise question in this form:

The question now before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting off the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to deny the rights of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens.

The Second Bill that has been passed by the Natal Legislature proposes to keep the indentured Indians always under indenture, or if they do not relish it, to send them back to India at the end of the first indenture of five years, or if they would not go back, then to compel them to pay an annual tax of £ 3.¹ How, in a British Colony, such a measure could even be thought of passes our comprehension. Almost all the public men in Natal are agreed that the prosperity of the Colony depends upon the Indian labour. In the words of a present

¹ *Vide* "Petition To Natal Legislative Council" and "Memorial To J. Chamberlain"

member of the Legislative Assembly, “at the time the Indian immigration was decided upon the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance!” But in the words of another eminent Natalian,

Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better. If we look to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue which increased fourfold within a few years. Mechanics who could not get a wage and were earning 5 shillings a day and less found their wages more than doubled and progress gave encouragement to everyone from the Burgh to the Sea.

Yet they want to tax these industrious and indispensable people who, in the words of the present Chief Justice of Natal, have turned out to be “trustworthy and useful domestic servants”, after having taken the very life-blood out of them. The following opinion was held by the present Attorney-General ten years ago. He is now the framer of this Bill which a Radical newspaper in London says “is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors and a slight upon ourselves”.

With reference to the time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported. I hear a great deal of this question. I have been asked again and again to take a different view but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without. He gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones perhaps, establishes a home here and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away.

But now that which was meritorious 10 years ago in the Indian, namely, his service to the Colony for 5 years for a paltry wage, has become a crime for which he would deserve transportation to India, if the Natal Attorney-General be allowed to do so by the Indian and the Home Governments. I may mention that the Indian Government, on the representation of an *ex parte* Commission¹ that visited India from Natal in 1893, have accepted the principle of compulsory indenture. We, however, are hoping confidently that the facts brought out in the

¹ The Binns-Mason Commission; *vide* “Speech at Farewell Dinner”, 11-6-1891

memorials to the Home and the Indian Governments¹ are sufficient to induce the latter to alter their views.

Although we have not moved in the matters specially affecting the Indians now serving their indenture, one may well presume that their lot will not be practically comfortable on the estates. We think that the alteration in the Colony's tone with regard to the general population will affect the masters also of the indentured Indians. One or two matters, however, I have been asked to especially bring to the notice of the public. A representation was made, even as far back as 1891, by an Indian Committee headed by Mr. Haji Mohamed Haji Dada, one of the prayers whereof being that the Protector of Immigrants should be a man knowing the Tamil and the Hindustani languages and should, if possible, be an Indian. We have not receded from that position, but the interval has merely confirmed that opinion. The present Protector is an estimable gentleman. His ignorance of the languages, however, cannot but be a serious drawback. We humbly consider also that the protector should be instructed to act as an advocate for the Indian more than as Judge between the employers and the immigrants. I shall illustrate what I say. An Indian named Balasundaram was, in 1894, so ill-treated by his master that two of his teeth were nearly knocked out; they came out through his upper lip causing an issue of blood sufficient to soak his long turban in it. His master admitted the fact but pleaded grave provocation, denied by the man. On receiving the punishment, he seems to have gone to the Protector's house which was close by his master's. The Protector sent word that he must go to his office the next day.

The man went, then, to the Magistrate who was much moved at the sight. The turban was kept in court and he was at once sent to the hospital for treatment. The man after having been kept in the hospital for a few days was discharged. He had heard about me and came to my office. He had not recovered sufficiently to be able to speak. I asked him, therefore, to write out his complaint in Tamil which he knew. He wanted to prosecute the master so that his contract of indenture might be cancelled. I asked him if he would be satisfied if his indenture was transferred. On his nodding consent to what I said, I wrote to his master asking if he would consent to transfer the services of the man. He was at first unwilling but subsequently consented. I

¹ For memorials to the Indian Government, *vide* "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 11-8-1895

sent the man also to the Protector's office with a Tamil clerk of mine who gave the man's version to the Protector. The Protector desired the man to be left in his office and sent word that he would do his best. The master, in the mean while, went to the Protector's office and changed his mind, saying his wife would not agree to the transfer because his services were invaluable. The man was then said to have compromised and to have given the Protector a written document to the effect that he had no complaint to make. He sent me a note to the effect that as the man had no complaint to make and his master did not consent to transfer the services he would not interfere in the matter. I ask if this was right. Was it right for the Protector to have taken such a document from the man? Did he want to protect himself against the man? To proceed, however, with the painful story, naturally the note sent a shock through my body. I had hardly recovered when the man came to my office crying and saying the Protector would not transfer him. I literally ran to the Protector's office and inquired what the matter was. He placed the written document before me and asked me how he could help the man. He said the man should not have signed the document. And this document was an affidavit attested by the Protector himself. I told the Protector that I should advise the man to go to the Magistrate and lodge a complaint. He said the document would be produced before the Magistrate and it would be useless. He advised me, therefore, to drop the matter. I returned to my office and wrote a letter to his master imploring him to consent to the transfer. The master would do nothing of the kind. The magistrate treated us quite differently. He had seen the man while the blood was yet dripping from his lips. The deposition was duly made. On the day of hearing, I explained the whole circumstances and again appealed to the master in open court and offered to withdraw the complaint if he consented to the transfer. The Magistrate then gave the master to understand that, unless he considered my offer more favourably than he seemed to do at the time, consequences might be serious for him. He went on to say that he thought the man was brutally treated. The master said he gave provocation. The Magistrate retorted: "You had no business to take the law in your own hands and beat the man as if he were a beast." He adjourned the case for one day in order to enable the master to consider the offer made by me. The master, of course, came down and consented. The Protector then wrote to me that he would not agree to transfer unless I submitted a European name he could approve of.

Happily, the Colony is not quite devoid of benevolent men. A Wesleyan local preacher and solicitor, out of charity, undertook to take over the man's services, and thus ended the last act of this painful drama. Comment is superfluous as to the procedure adopted by the Protector. This is only a typical instance showing how hard it is for the indentured men to get justice.

We submit that no matter who he is, his duties should be clearly defined as are those of judges, advocates, solicitors and others. Certain things, for the sake of avoiding temptations, he should not be able to do in spite of himself. Just fancy a judge being the guest of a criminal who is being tried before him. Yet, the Protector, when he goes to the estates to enquire about the condition of the men and to hear complaints, can and does often become the guest of the employers. We submit that this practice is wrong in principle, no matter how high-minded the Protector may be. As a Surgeon-Superintendent of Immigrants remarked the other day, the Protector should be easily approachable to the meanest coolie, but he should be unapproachable to the lordliest employer. He may not be a Natal man. It also looks a strange procedure to appoint as Protector a member of a Commission whose object is to induce the Indian Government to consent to pass harsher laws for the indentured Indians. When the Protector has to perform such a conflicting duty, who is to protect the indentured men?

It should be easy for the immigrant to have his services transferred. There are in the gaol some Indians who have been there for years because they refuse to go to their employers. They say they have complaints which, owing to the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, they cannot substantiate. A Magistrate was so much disgusted with the business that he wished he had not to try such cases. *The Natal Mercury* of 13th June, 1895, thus comments on such a case:

When a man, even a coolie immigrant, prefers to go to prison rather than work for the master to whom he has been indentured, the natural inference is that something is wrong somewhere, and we are not surprised at Mr. Dillon's remarks on Saturday, when he had three coolies before him, all charged with the same offence of refusing to work, all giving the same excuse, viz., that they were ill-treated by their masters. Of course, it is just possible that these particular coolies prefer gaol work to plantation work. On the other hand, it is just possible that the coolies have some ground for their complaint as to their treatment and the matter is one that ought to be investigated, and at

least these men who complain in this way should be transferred to another master and, if they again refuse to work, it can be readily seen that they do not want to work. If a coolie is ill-treated it may be said that he can complain to the Magistrate, but it is not an easy matter for any coolie to prove such cases. It is a matter altogether for the Protector of Immigrants to inquire into and remedy, if possible.

There is an Immigration Trust Board that consists of employers of Indians. They have now received very wide powers. And seeing the position they occupy, their acts will have to be very jealously watched by the Indian Government. The punishment for desertion is heavy enough, and yet they are now seriously considering whether some stiffer mode of dealing with such cases could not be devised. It should be remembered, however, that, in at least 9 cases out of 10, the so-called deserters complain of ill-treatment, and such deserters are protected under the law from punishment, but as the poor fellows cannot establish their complaints, they are treated as real deserters and sent by the Protector to the Magistrate for punishment accordingly. Under such circumstances, any alteration for the worse in the law about desertion should, we submit, require careful consideration.

There is a sad mortality among these people from suicides. They are not satisfactorily accounted for. I cannot do better than quote the *Advertiser* of the 15th May, 1896:

A feature of the annual report of the Protector of Immigrants, to which more public attention should be given than is the case, is that referring to the number of suicides which take place every year among the indentured coolies on the estates. This year the number recorded is six out of a total of 8,828. A large number occurred in 1894. It is, however, a very high percentage and raises the suspicion that on some estates a system of treatment exists towards the coolie labourers much akin to slave-driving. It is extremely significant that so many suicides should occur on certain estates. This is a point which calls for investigation. Apparently, no inquiry of any kind is held into the cases with a view to ascertain whether the treatment meted out to unfortunate wretches, who prefer death to life, is such as to render existence an intolerable misery. The matter is one which is apt to pass unnoticed. It, however, ought not to do so. In a recent case of desertion on the part of several coolies from an estate down South, the prisoners openly declared in Court that they would rather kill themselves than return to their employer. The Magistrate said he had no option but to order them back to serve out their indentures. It is time the Colony took steps to afford such complainants an opportunity of bringing the facts in connection with their complaints before some Court of Inquiry and the public. It is also desirable that a Secretary of Indian Affairs

should be added to the Ministry. As matters stand at present, the indentured Indian has no effectual mode of appeal against whatever brutality may be inflicted on him on the plantations.

We, however, wish to guard ourselves against being understood to say that the life of the indentured Indians in Natal is harder than in any other country, or that this is a part of the general grievances of the Indians in the Colony. On the other hand, we know that there are estates in Natal where the Indians are very well treated. At the same time, we do humbly submit that the lot of the indentured Indians is not all that it might be and that there are points which require attention.

When an indentured Indian loses his free pass, he is charged £3 for the duplicate. The reason for this is the alleged fraudulent sale by the Indians of their passes. But, surely, such fraudulent sale can be criminally punished. A man who has sold his pass should never be able to get a duplicate even on a payment of £30. On the other hand, it should be as easy for an ordinary Indian to get a duplicate as the original. They are supposed to carry their passes about their persons. No wonder if they are frequently lost. I know a man who could not get a duplicate because he had not £3 with him. He wanted to go to Johannesburg and he could not go. The practice in the Protector's department in such cases is to issue temporary passes so that the men may be able to make a present of their first £3 earned to the Protector's office. In the case I am referring to, the man had a temporary pass issued for six months. He could not earn £3 during that time. There are dozens of such cases. I have no hesitation in saying that this is nothing but a system of blackmail.

ZULULAND

In the Crown Colony of Zululand there are certain townships. There are regulations published with reference to the sale of land in these townships, and the regulations for the townships of Eshowe and Nondweni prevent the Indians from owning or acquiring land¹ although the Indians own land worth nearly £2,000 in the township of Melmoth in the same country. We have sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain² and it is now engaging his attention. The Colonists in Natal say that, if such disabilities can be placed on Indians in a Crown Colony, a responsibly governed Colony such as Natal should be

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896

² *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896

allowed to do what it liked with regard to the Indians. Our position in Zululand is no better than in the Free State. It is so dangerous to go to Zululand that the one or two who ventured to go there had to return back. There is a good opening for the Indians there, but the ill-treatment comes in the way. This is a matter that we are earnestly hoping will be set right without much delay.

THE CAPE COLONY

In the Cape Colony, the Mayoral Congress has passed a resolution signifying its desire for legislation prohibiting the influx of Asiatics in that Colony and hoping that prompt action will be taken. The Cape Legislature has, lately, passed a measure which gives the East London Municipality in that Colony the power to make bye-laws compelling natives and Indians to remove to and reside in certain locations and prohibiting them from walking on foot-paths. It is difficult to conceive a better instance of cruel persecution. The following is the position of the Indians in East Griqualand under the Cape Government, according to the *Mercury* of 23rd March, 1896:

An Arab, named Ismail Suliman, erected a store in East Griqualand, paid customs duty upon goods and applied for a licence, which the Magistrate refused. Mr. Attorney Francis, on the Arab's behalf, appealed to the Cape Government who upheld the Magistrate and have issued instructions that no coolies or Arabs are to have trading licences in East Griqualand and the one or two that have licences are to be closed up.

Thus, in some parts of Her Majesty's Dominions In South Africa, even the vested rights of her Indian subjects are not to be protected. What happened to the Indian in the end I was unable to ascertain. There are many cases where Indians have been unceremoniously refused licences to trade. There is a Bluebook on Native Affairs published in Natal. One of the Magistrates therein says he simply refuses to issue trading licences to Indians and thus prevents Indian encroachments.

CHARTERED TERRITORIES

In the Chartered Territories, the Indians are receiving the same kind of treatment. Only lately, an Indian was refused a licence to trade. He went to the Supreme Court who decided that the licence could not be refused to him. Now the Rhodesians have sent a petition to the Government requesting them to alter the law so as to prevent the Indians from getting licences under the request of the petitioners. This

is what the correspondent of the South African *Daily Telegraph* has to say about the meeting that sent the petition:

It affords me pleasure to be able to say, and say truthfully, that the meeting was in no way a representative one. Had it been so, little credit would thereby have been reflected on the inhabitants of the town. Some half a dozen leading storekeepers, the editor of a paper, a sprinkling of minor Government officials and a fairly large collection of prospectors, mechanics and artisans made up the assembly which those under whose direction it was held would have us believe represented the voice of the police of Salisbury. The resolutions, which I have already wired you with the [names of] proposers and seconders, were nicely cut and dried before the meeting commenced and the figures were set in order and worked in their places when the time arrived. There were no Indians present and no one ventured a word on their behalf. Why, it is hard to say, for it is certain that the feeling of by far the majority in this town is altogether adverse to the one-sided, selfish and narrow-minded opinion expressed by those who essayed to speak on the question. . . . I cannot help thinking that little, if any, harm need be feared from the advent of a race who are industrious and steady and who, in higher sphere, have on occasion given evidences of their capabilities in upholding positions which they maintain ably and honourably side by side with their lighter-skinned brother.

THE TRANSVAAL

Coming now to the non-British States, i.e., the Transvaal and the Free State, there were in the Transvaal nearly two hundred traders in 1894 whose liquidated assets would amount to £100,000. Of these, about three firms imported goods directly from England, Durban, Port Elizabeth, India and other places, and had thus branches in the other parts of the world whose existence mainly depended upon their Transvaal business. The rest were small vendors having stores in different places. There were, then, nearly two thousand hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about. Of the labouring Indian population, who are employed as general servants in European houses or hotels, there were about 1,500 men, of whom about 1,000 lived in Johannesburg. Such, roughly, was the position at the end of 1894 A.D. The numbers have now considerably increased. In the Transvaal, the Indians cannot own landed property; they can be ordered to reside in locations. No new licences to trade are issued to them. They are made to pay a special registration fee of £3. All these restrictions are unlawful, being in contravention of the London

Convention¹ which secures the rights of all Her Majesty's subjects. But the previous Secretary of State for the Colonies having consented to a departure from the Convention, the Transvaal has been able to impose the above restrictions. They were the subject of an arbitration in 1894-95 which has decided against the Indians, that is to say, which has declared that the Republic was entitled to pass those laws. A memorial against the award of the arbitrator was sent to the Home Government.² Mr. Chamberlain has now given his decision on the memorial and, while sympathizing with the prayer thereof, has accepted the award of the Arbitrator. He has, however, promised and retained the right to make friendly representations to the Transvaal Government from time to time. And, if the representations are emphatic enough, we have no doubt that we shall get justice in the end. We, therefore, implore the public bodies to exert their influence so that these representations may be such as to have their desired effect. I shall venture to quote an instance in point. When, during the Malaboch war,³ the British subjects were being commandeered, many protested against it and asked for the interference of the Home Government. The reply first sent was to the effect that they could not interfere with the affairs of the Republic. The papers, however, were enraged and memorials strongly worded were repeated. At last came the request to the Transvaal Government not to commandeer British subjects. It was not an interference, yet the request had to be granted and the commandeering of British subjects was stopped. May we hope for such a request which carries with it its fulfilment? If we are not as important a community as that concerned with the commando movement our grievances, we submit, are much more so.

Whether such or any representations are made or not, there will arise questions out of the award that will engage Mr. Chamberlain's attention. What shall be done with the hundreds of Indian stores in the Transvaal? Will they all be closed up? Will they all be made to live in locations, and if so, what locations? The British Agent has thus described the Transvaal locations with reference to the removal of the Malays in Pretoria, the metropolis of the South African Republic:

¹ Signed on February 27, 1884, between the Boers and the British.

² For details of the award and the memorial, *vide* 'Petition to Lord Ripon', 5-5-1895

³ Commando action carried out by the Transvaal Government in 1894 against a tribe in the north called Malaboch after its chief.

To be forced into a small location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered. (Green book No. 2, 1893, page 72)

Will they or will they not receive any compensation if they are made to sell off? Again, the very law is ambiguous. The Arbitrator was called upon to decide upon the interpretation which he has now left to the High Court of the Transvaal. We contend that by the law the State can only compel us to reside in locations. The State contends that residence includes trading stores also and that, therefore, we may not, under that law, even trade except in specified locations. The High court is said to favour the State interpretation.

Nor are these the only grievances in the Transvaal. These were the subject of the arbitration. But there is a law which prevents the railway authorities in the Transvaal from issuing first or second-class tickets on the railways. There is a tin compartment reserved for natives and other coloured people in which we are literally packed like sheep, without regard to our dress, our behaviour or our position. In Natal, there is no such law but the petty officials give trouble. The hardship is not insignificant. In Delagoa Bay, the authorities so respect the Indian that they would not allow him to travel 3rd class, so much so that, if a poor Indian could not afford the 2nd-class fare, he is allowed to travel 2nd class under a 3rd-class ticket. The same Indian, as soon as he reaches the Transvaal border, is compelled to put his dignity into his pocket, asked to produce a pass and then unceremoniously thrust into the third-class compartment, no matter whether he has a first-class or a second-class ticket. The journey is long enough to be felt like a month's journey in those uncomfortable quarters. The same thing happens on the Natal side. Four months ago, an Indian gentleman got a second-class ticket for Pretoria at Durban. He was assured that he would be all right, yet he was not only forcibly put out at Volksrust, a station on the Transvaal border, but could not proceed by that train because it did not carry any third-class compartment. These regulations seriously interfere with our carrying on our trade also. There are many who, owing to such inconveniences, would not move from place to place unless they could not possibly avoid it.

Then, in the Transvaal, an Indian, like the native of South Africa, has to carry a travelling pass which costs a shilling. This is the

Indian's permit to travel about. It is, I believe, available only for a single journey. Thus, Mr. Haji Mahomed Haji Dada was put out of his post-cart and had to walk a distance of three miles, at the point of the policeman's sjambok, which serves the purpose of the bayonet, in order to get the pass. The pass master, however, knew him and so would not issue any pass to him. All the same, he had to miss his coach and walk from Volksrust to Charlestown.

The Indians cannot, as of right, walk on the foot-path in Pretoria and Johannesburg. I use the word "as of right" advisedly, because the traders are, as a rule, not interfered with. In Johannesburg, there is a bye-law to that effect passed by the Sanitary Board. A gentleman, named Mr. Pillay, a graduate of the Madras University, was violently pushed off the foot-path in Pretoria. He wrote about it to the papers. The attention of the British Agent also was drawn to the matter. But, sympathetic as he was towards the Indians, he declined to interfere.

The gold-mining laws of Johannesburg prevent Indians from taking out mining licences and render it criminal for them to sell or possess native gold.

The treaty, exempting the British subjects from commando service, has been accepted by the Transvaal with the reservation that British subjects therein shall mean only "whites". That is now the subject of a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain.¹ Under it, apart from the serious disability it places upon the Indian subjects of Her Majesty, we might, as the London *Times* puts it, "now see a levy of British Indian subjects driven at the point of the Transvaal bayonets against the bayonets of British Troops".

THE ORANGE FREE STATE

The Orange Free State, as I have already quoted from a newspaper, has made the British Indian an impossibility. We are driven away from that State causing to us a loss of £9,000. Our stores were closed up and no compensation was given to us. Will Mr. Chamberlain consider this a real grievance and get us our £9,000 from the Orange Free State, not to speak of the future blighting of the prospects of the traders particularly concerned? I know them all, and most of them have not been able to regain their former position, although at the time they were thus driven out they were supposed to be the wealthiest

¹ For the text of this, *vide* "Memorial To J. Chamberlain", 26-11-1895

firms. The law, which is entitled “the law to prevent the inrush of Asiatic coloured persons”, prevents any Indian from remaining in the Orange Free State for more than 2 months, unless he gets the permission from the President of the Republic who cannot consider the application to reside before thirty days have elapsed after the presentation of the petition and other ceremonies have been performed. He can, however, on no account, hold fixed property in the State or carry on any mercantile or farming business.

The President may or may not, “according to the state of things”, grant such mutilated permission to reside. Any Indian resident, moreover, is subject to an annual poll-tax of £10. The first contravention of the section relating to mercantile and farming business renders the delinquent liable to a fine of £25 or three months’ imprisonment, with or without hard labour. For all subsequent contraventions, the punishment is to be doubled.¹

Such then is the position of the Indians in South Africa, except Delagoa Bay where the Indians are very much respected, labour under no special disability and are owners of nearly half the fixed property in the principal streets of that city. They are all of them mostly traders. Some of them are in Government employment also. There are two Parsee gentlemen who are Engineers. And there is another Parsee gentleman whom, perhaps, even a child in Delagoa Bay knows by the name of “Senhor Edul”. The trading class, however, chiefly consists of Mahomedans and Baniyas, mostly from Portuguese India.

It yet remains for me to examine the cause of this deplorable state of things, as also the remedy. The Europeans say that the habits of the Indians are insanitary, they spend nothing and that they are untruthful and immoral. These are the objections according to the most moderate journals. Others, of course, simply abuse us. The charge as to insanitary habits and untruthfulness is partially true, that is to say, the sanitary habits of the Indian community as a whole, in South Africa, are not as good as they might be from the highest point of view. The charge as laid against us by the European community and used in the way it has been, we totally deny, and we have quoted the opinions of doctors in South Africa to show that “class

¹ In the second edition of the “Green Pamphlet”, brought out in November, Gandhiji has inserted here an extract from his Madras speech delivered on October 26. This answered the Natal Agent-General’s refutation of Gandhiji’s charges. The extract from the speech begins “But, gentlemen, ...” and ends “in spite of the persecution”.

considered, the lowest-class Indian lives better and in better habitation and with more regard to sanitary measures than the lowest-class white". Dr. Veale, B.A., M.B.B.S. (Cantab.), finds the Indians "to be cleanly in their persons and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits" and finds also that "their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them."¹ But we do not say we are beyond improvement in this matter. We may not live quite satisfactorily if there were no sanitary laws. Both the communities err equally in this respect, as the newspaper records would show. That, however, cannot be a reason for all the serious disabilities that are imposed upon us. The cause lies elsewhere, as I shall presently show. Let them enforce the sanitary law very strictly, and we shall be all the better for that. Those of us who are lazy will be properly aroused from our lethargy. As to untruthfulness, the charge, to a certain extent, is true, with regard to the indentured Indians, utterly exaggerated with regard to the traders. But the indentured Indians, placed in the position they are, I venture to say, have done much better than any other community would do in a similar position. The very fact that they are liked as servants by the Colonists and called "useful and trusty", shows that they are not the incorrigible liars they are made out to be. However, the moment they leave India, they are free from the healthy checks that keep them on the narrow path. In South Africa, they are without any religious instruction, though they need it badly. They are called upon to give evidence against their masters for the sake of a fellow brother. This duty they often shirk. Gradually, therefore, their faculty for adhering to the truth, under all circumstances, becomes perverted and they become helpless afterwards.

I submit that they are more the objects of pity than of contempt. And this view I ventured to place before the public in South Africa two years ago, and they have not excepted to it. The fact that the European firms in South Africa give hundreds of Indians large credit practically on their word of honour, and have no cause to regret having done so, and that the banks give Indians almost unlimited credit, while the merchants and bankers would not trust Europeans to that extent, conclusively prove that the Indian traders cannot be so dishonest as they are made out to be. I do not, of course, mean to convey that the European firms believe the Indians to be more

¹*Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895

truthful than the Europeans. But I do humbly think that, while they would perhaps trust both equally, they rely upon the Indian's thrift, his determination not to ruin his creditor and his temperate habits. A bank has been giving credit to an Indian to a very large extent. A European gentleman, known to the bank and a friend of this Indian, wanted £300 credit for speculation. The bank refused to give him credit without guarantee. The Indian friend pledged his honour, and that was all he had to pledge, and the bank accepted that security, although at the time, too, he was heavily in debt to the bank. The result is the European friend has failed to refund the £300 to the bank, and the Indian friend, for the present, has lost the money. The European, of course, lives in a better style and requires some drink for his dinners, and our Indian friend drinks only water. The charges that we spend nothing and are immoral, i.e., more than those who bring the charges against us, we repudiate entirely. But the real cause is the trade jealousy, in the first instance, and want of knowledge about Indian and the Indians, in the second.

The hue and cry against the Indians was first raised by the traders and then taken up by the populace till, at last, the prejudice permeated the high and the low. This can be seen from the South African legislation affecting Indians. The Orange Free Staters have frankly stated that they hate the Asiatic because he is a successful trader. The Chambers of Commerce in the different States were the first movers. And they, of course, came out with the statements that we believed the Christians a natural prey, and that we believed our women to be soulless and were propagators of leprosy and syphilis and other diseases. The matters have now reached such a stage that for a good Christian gentleman it is as natural to see nothing unjust in the persecution of the Asiatic as it was in the olden days for the *bonafide* Christians to see nothing wrong or un-Christian in slavery. Mr. Henry Bale is a legislator in the Natal Assembly, a typical English gentleman, and is dubbed Bale the Conscientious because he is a converted Christian and takes a prominent part in religious movements and brings his conscience often into play on the floor of the Assembly House. Yet, this gentleman is one of the most powerful and uncompromising opponents of Indians, and gives his certificate that an annual poll-tax of £3 on a body of men who have been the mainstay of the Colony, and compulsory return of such men, are just and humane measures.

Our method in South Africa is to conquer this hatred by love. At any rate, that is our goal. We would often fall short of that ideal but we can adduce innumerable instances to show that we have acted in that spirit. We do not attempt to have individuals punished but as a rule, patiently suffer wrongs at their hands. Generally, our prayers are not to demand compensation for past injuries, but to render a repetition of those injuries impossible and to remove the causes. Our grievances have been laid before the Indian public in the same spirit. If we have quoted instances of personal injuries, that we have done not for the purpose of seeking compensation but for that of laying our position vividly before the public in India. We are trying to remove any causes that may be in us for such treatment. But we cannot succeed without the sympathy and support of the public men in India, and without strong representations from the Home and Indian Governments. The want of knowledge about India is so great in South Africa that the people would not even believe us if we said that India is not dotted by huts only. The work done on our behalf by the *London Times*, the British Committee¹ of the Congress and by Mr. Bhownaggee² and in India by *The Times of India*, has borne fruit already. Of course, the question of the position of the Indians has been treated as an Imperial question, and almost every statesman whom we have approached has expressed his full sympathy to us. We have letters of sympathy from both the Conservative and Liberal members of the House of Commons. The *Daily Telegraph* has also extended its support to us. When the Franchise Bill was first passed³ and there was some talk of its disallowance, the public men and the newspapers in Natal said the Bill would be passed over and over again till Her Majesty's Government were tired. They rejected the British subject "humbug", and one paper went so far as to say that they would throw over their allegiance to the Queen if the Bill was disallowed. The Ministers openly declared that they would decline to

¹ Set up in London by the Indian National Congress in 1889, with Sir William Wedderburn as chairman. Dadabhai Naoroji was one of its members.

² Sir Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggee (1851-1933), Indian Parsi barrister settled in England. Elected on the Unionist Party ticket, he was a member of Parliament for ten years. He was also a member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

³ This was on July 7, 1894. For Indian representations and petitions demanding withdrawal of the Bill, *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

govern the Colony if the Bill was disallowed. This was the time when the writer of the "Colonial Affairs" in the London *Times* favoured the Natal Bill. But the *Thunderer*, when it dealt with the matter, specially changed its tone. The Colonial Secretary seemed to be decisive and the despatch with reference to the Transvaal Arbitration arrived in time. This changed the whole tone of the Press in Natal. They protested but they were a part and parcel of the British Empire. *The Natal Advertiser*, which at one time proposed the formation of an anti-Asiatic League, thus dealt with the Indian question in a leading article, dated the 28th February, 1895. After alluding to the then reported disallowance of the Franchise Bill and the resolution of the Mayoral Congress in the Cape Colony before referred to, the article goes on:

The problem, therefore, when looked at as a whole from the imperial to the purely local standpoint, is a very large and complex one. But however prone localities may be to regard the subject simply from the local standpoint, it should be apparent to all who wish to study the matter in all its bearings (the only way in which a sound and healthy judgment can be arrived at), that the wider or Imperial considerations must also be taken into account. And further, as regards the purely local aspect of the case, it is quite as necessary, and perhaps as difficult, to discover whether a comprehensive view of the position is being taken or whether imperfect opinions are being formed on one side or the other through the acceptance of only such data as prejudice or self-interest may find acceptable. The general opinion existing throughout South Africa, as regards Indian emigration, may be summed up in the words, "We don't want them".

The first point to be weighed is this that, in belonging to the British Empire, we have to take whatever may be evil as well as whatever may be good as arising from that connection, provided, of course, it is inseparable therefrom. Now, as regards the destinies of India's population, it may be taken for granted that the Imperial Government will not readily permit of legislation in any British dependency which has for its avowed object the repulsion of India's surplus population from any part of the British dominions; or, to put it the other way, which embodies the principle, so far as the particular legislating State is concerned, that India's teeming and fast increasing millions must be confined, and ultimately smothered, within India itself. On the contrary, the desire of the British Government is to remove from India the possibilities of such congestion, and to thereby render it a prosperous and happy, instead of a dangerous and discontented, portion of the British Empire. If India is to be retained as an advantageous part of the Empire, then it is absolutely necessary that means shall be found for relieving it of much of its present population, and it may be taken to be a part of the

Imperial policy that India's surplus population is to be encouraged, rather than discouraged, to find fresh outlets in those other portions of the Empire which are in need of a labouring population. It will thus be seen that the question of coolie immigration into the British Colonies is one which reaches down to the deepest amelioration and salvation of India; it may even mean the inclusion or exclusion of that great possession in or from the British Empire. That is the Imperial aspect of the question, and is one which points directly to a desire on the part of the Imperial Government to do all in its power to prevent the raising, in other portions of the Empire, of barriers for the prevention of Indian immigration.

As regards the local aspect of Indian immigration, what has to be considered is whether and if so, how far, does this Imperial policy conflict with what is desirable for this particular locality? There are those who absolutely condemn Indian immigration into this Colony, but it is doubtful whether these have given full consideration on all the bearings of the case. In the first place, those who so oppose Indian immigration have to answer the question: What would this Colony have done without them in those departments of industry in which they have undoubtedly proved useful? There is unquestionably much that is undesirable about the coolie, but before his presence here is condemned as an unmixed evil, it has to be shown that the Colony would have been better without him. This, we think, would be somewhat difficult to prove. There can be no question that the coolie is the best fitted, under existing local conditions, for the field labour required in connection with the agriculture of the Colony. Such work can never be undertaken in this climate by white men; our natives show little disposition or aptitude for it. This being so, who is ousted by the presence of the coolie as an agricultural labourer? No one. The work had either to be done by him or left undone altogether. Again, the coolie is largely employed by Government especially on the railway. What is the objection to him there? It may be said he is taking the place of the white man there; but is he? There may be a few isolated cases in which this contention could afford to replace all the Indians employed in the Government service by white men. Further, the towns in Natal are almost entirely dependent for their supply of vegetables upon the coolies, who farm plots of ground in the vicinity. With whom does the coolie interfere in this direction? Certainly not with the white man. Our farmers, as a body, have not yet acquired a taste for kitchen gardening sufficient to keep the market fully supplied. Neither does he interfere with the native, who, being the incarnation of indolence, does not, as a rule, trouble about the cultivation of anything except mealies¹ for himself. Our own natives ought to have been our labouring class, but the fact has to be faced that, in this respect, they are almost a dead failure. Consequently, coloured labour of a more active and

¹ Maize or Indian corn

reliable kind had to be procured from some other source, and India has offered the necessary supply. The debt which the white man owes to these coloured labourers is this that they, by occupying the lowest stratum of society in those mixed communities of which they form a part, raise the white man one stratum higher right through the social scale than he otherwise would have occupied, had the menial offices been discharged by a European class. For instance, the white man, who is 'boss' over a gang of coolies, would have had himself to form one of the gang of labourers, had there been no black labourer. Again, the man who, in Europe, would have been that man's foreman, in this country develops into a master tradesman. And as in every other direction, by the presence of a black labouring class, the whites are set free to throw their efforts into higher planes than they could have done, had the majority of them had to devote their lives to the arduous labours of toilers of the lowest order. It will, therefore, probably yet be found that the removal of the drawbacks, at present incidental to the immigration of Indians into British Colonies, is not to be effected so much by the adoption of an obsolete policy of exclusion as by an enlightened and progressive application of ameliorating laws to those Indians who settle in them. One of the chief objections to Indians is that they do not live in accordance with European rules. The remedy for this is to gradually raise their mode of life by compelling them to live in better dwellings and by creating among them new wants, it will probably be found easier, because more in accord with the great onward movement of mankind, to demand to such settlers that they shall rise to their new conditions, than to endeavour to maintain the *status quo ante* by their entire exclusion.

Such articles (and they can be quoted by the dozen from the various newspapers) show that application of sufficient pressure from the Home Government can bring about a healthy change in the Indian policy of the Colonies, and that, even in the worst places, British love of justice and fair play can be roused. These two are the sheet-anchor of our hope. No amount of spreading information about India on our part can do any good without the much-needed application of the pressure.

The following article, from the pen of a veteran journalist in South Africa, shows also that there are men in South Africa who would rise above their surroundings and disclose the true British character:

It sometimes happens in life that men are called upon to decide decisively between the claims of justice and the claims of self. With men of honourable inclination, the task is, of course, a far heavier one than with men whose natures have long ago cast overboard any conscientious scruples with which they may have been endowed at the outset of their unlovely existence.

From men who will puff rotten companies at the very moment they are selling out and individuals of a like character, it is, of course, perfectly absurd to expect any other result than that self will predominate, but with the average commercial man, justice is more often the victor in the ethical conflict. Amongst the causes of these conflicts, as they affect South Africans generally and British Transvaalers in particular, is the question of the 'coolie traders', as our Indian and Arab fellow citizens are designated. It is the position of these merchants, for so they really are, which has aroused so much attention and which is still productive of no little interest and hostility to this day. And it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sought to inflict upon them, through the medium of the State, what looks, on the face of it, something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

The outcry which was raised in the capital of the Transvaal against the coolie trader some little time ago is brought to the mind by occasional paragraphs in the morning papers regarding the doings of the Indian and Arab dealers.

In the face of such reminders as these, one may reasonably expect to be pardoned for referring, for a few moments, to a body of respectable, hard-working men, whose position is so misunderstood that their very nationality is overlooked, and a name labelled to them which tends to place them on an exceedingly low level in the estimation of their fellow creatures.

In the face, too, of financial operations, the success of which many of their detractors would envy one fails to understand the agitation which would place the operators in the same category as the half-heathen native and confine them to locations and subject them to the harsher laws by which the Transvaal Kaffir is governed. The impression, which is but too prevalent both in the Transvaal and this Colony, that the quiet and altogether inoffensive 'Arab' shopkeeper, and the equally harmless Indian, who carries his pack of dainty wares from house to house, is a 'coolie', is due largely to an indolent ignorance as to the race whence they sprang. When one reflects that the conception of Brahminism, with its poetic and mysterious mythology, took its rise in the land of the 'coolie trader', that in that land, twenty-four centuries ago, the almost divine Buddha taught and practised the glorious doctrine of self-sacrifice, and that it was from the plains and mountains of that weird old country that are derived the fundamental truths of the very language we speak, one cannot but help regretting that the children of such a race should be treated as the equals of the children of black heathendom and outer darkness. Those who, for a few moments, have stayed to converse with the Indian trader have been, perhaps, surprised to find they are speaking to a scholar and a gentleman. In the schools of Bombay, Madras, and even from under the very shadows of the Himalayas and from the plains of the Punjab, these unassuming individuals have drunk deep the springs of knowledge, it may be, unsuited to our requirements, foreign to our taste, and savouring too

much of the mythical to be of use in our practical lives, but, nevertheless, a knowledge the acquisition of which requires as much application, as much literary application, and a far more sensitive and poetic nature than is required in the highest schools of Oxford or Cambridge. The philosophy of India, obscured by the dust of ages and the traditions of generations, was taught with delight, when the ancestors of the Superior Boer and the Superior Englishman were content to find their highest pleasures in the pursuit of the bear and the wolf over the marshes and through the forests of their native lands. When these same ancestors has had no thought of a higher life, when self-preservation was their first law, and the destruction of their neighbour's village and the capture of his wife and infant their keenest enjoyment, the philosophers of India had grown weary with a thousand years' conflict with the problems of existence. And it is the sons of this land of light who are despised as coolies and treated as Kaffirs.

It is about time that those who cry out against the Indian merchant should have pointed out to them who and what he is. Many of his worst detractors are British subjects enjoying all the privileges and rights of membership in a glorious community. To them the hatred of injustice and the love of fair play is inherent, and when it affects themselves, they have a method of insisting upon their rights and liberties, whether under a foreign government or under their own. Possibly, it has never struck them that the Indian merchant is also a British subject and claims the same liberties and rights with equal justice. To say the very least of it, if we may be permitted to employ a phrase of Palmerston's days, it is very un-English to claim rights one would not allow to others. The right of trade as an equal privilege has, since the abolition of the Elizabethan monopolies, become almost a part of the English Constitution, and were anyone to interfere with that right, the privilege of British citizenship would very suddenly come to the front. Because the Indian is more successful in competition and lives on less than the English merchant, is the unfairest and weakest of arguments. The very foundation of English commerce lies in the fact of our being able to compete more successfully with other nations. Surely, it is Protection running to madness when English traders wish the State to intervene to protect them against the more successful operations of their rivals. The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives, simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level. (*Cape Times*, 13-4-1889)

The question resolves itself into this: "May the British Indians when they leave India," in the words of the London *Times*, "have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they or

may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?" Says the same journal again:

The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in Southern Africa that this question of their status must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it will be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa, it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere.

Thus, then, the decision of the question will affect not only the Indians at present settled in South Africa but the whole future emigration of Indians and, also, the position of Indian immigrants in other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions and allied States. In Australia they are endeavouring to pass laws to restrict, the influx of Indians in those parts. Temporary and local relief, while absolutely necessary for the cases now before the two Governments for consideration, will be of no avail, unless the whole question is decided once for all, for "the whole body is rotten and not parts only". Mr. Bhownagree has questioned Mr. Chamberlain "whether he will take immediate steps to arrest legislation of this description by the Government of Natal and other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions in Africa". There may yet be laws and regulations besides what have been alluded to herein and which may not be known to us. Unless, therefore, all such past legislation is declared illegal and further legislation stopped, we have a very dismal outlook before us, for the struggle is unequal, and how long are we to go on troubling the Colonial Office and the Indian Government? *The Times of India* has been our advocate when we were almost without any. The British Committee of the Congress has always worked on our behalf. The powerful aid of the London *Times* has, by itself, raised us a step higher in the estimation of the South Africans. Mr. Bhownagree has been incessant in his efforts on our behalf ever since he entered Parliament. We know we have the sympathy of the public bodies in India, but our object in laying our grievances specially before the Indian public is to enlist the very active sympathy of all the public bodies in India. That is my commission, and our cause is so great and just that I have no doubt I shall return to Natal with satisfactory result.

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

If any gentleman is anxious to study further the Indian question in South Africa and requires the various memorials referred to herein, an effort will be made to supply him with copies of the same.

M. K. GANDHI

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : An Appeal to Indian Public

102. NOTES ON THE GRIEVANCES OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

RAJKOT,
September 22, 1896

South Africa, for our purposes, consists of the two British Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, the two Republics, viz., the South African Republic or the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, the Crown Colony of Zululand, the Chartered Territories and the Portuguese territories comprising Delagoa Bay or Lorenzo Marques and Beira.

NATAL

Natal is a British self-governing Colony enjoying Responsible Government since 1893 A.D. Before September of 1893, Natal was a Crown Colony having a Legislative Council of 12 elective and 4 executive members, with a Governor representing the Queen, a Constitution not very unlike the Indian Legislative Councils. In 1893, Responsible Government was granted, whereby an upper and a lower chamber were created. The upper chamber, called the Legislative Council, consists of 11 members nominated by His Excellency the Governor of the colony, and the lower chamber, styled the Legislative Assembly, consists of 37 members elected by the Colonists possessing the legal qualifications to be hereafter described. There is a movable ministry of five members based on the model of the British Cabinet. Sir John Robinson is the present Prime Minister and the Honourable Mr. Harry Escombe, Q.C., the present Attorney-General.

The Constitution Act provides that no Acts, which have for their object class legislation and which curtail the rights of non-European British subjects, shall have the force of law unless they are sanctioned

by Her Majesty. The Royal instructions to the Governor also include such prohibitory clauses.

Natal has an area of 20,851 square miles¹ and a European population of about 50,000, a native population of about 400,000, and an Indian population of about 51,000, according to the latest census. The 51,000 Indians include 30,000 free Indians, i.e., those that have finished their indentured service and are engaged in the Colony in various pursuits of life as household servants, petty farmers, vegetable hawkers, fruiterers, goldsmiths, artisans, petty storekeepers, schoolmasters, photographers, attorneys' clerks, etc., 16,000 who are at present serving their indenture, and 5,000 traders who came to the Colony on their own means and are either traders or shopkeepers' assistants, the trade consisting in soft goods suitable to the natives of South Africa, called Zulus or Kaffirs, hardware, soft goods and groceries suitable to the Indian population. The soft goods and groceries for the Indians are imported from Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The free and indentured Indians come from Madras and Calcutta and are pretty equally divided. Indian emigration was resorted to when, as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, Mr. Garland, says, "the existence of the Colony hung in the balance". The terms of the contract briefly are that the indentured man has to serve his employer for a period of 5 years, the monthly wages for the first year being £10² to be increased by £1³ every succeeding year, with food, clothing and lodging during the period and the passage to Natal also paid by the employer. If, after the first five years, he serves in the Colony as a free labourer for another five years, he becomes entitled to a free passage back to India for himself, his wife and children, if any. The immigrants are imported to work on the sugar fields and tea estates and replace the Kaffirs who were found by the Colonists to be indifferent and unsteady. They are also largely employed by the Government on the railways and for the sanitation of the Colony. The Colonists at first assisted the sugar and tea industries of the Colony by granting Rs. [£?] 10,000 towards the cost of the importation of the Indian immigrants. Almost the first act of the

¹ The area of Natal in 1960 according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was 33, 578 sq. miles.

² 'Pounds' here is evidently a slip for 'shillings'.

³ *ibid*

Responsible Government was to abolish this grant under the plea that the industries no longer required such support.

FIRST GRIEVANCE IN NATAL — FRANCHISE

The Royal Charter, dated the 15th July, 1850, provides that any adult male, not being a native of South Africa, possessing property to the value of £50 or who rents any such property of the yearly value of £10, shall be entitled to be placed on the Voters' Roll. There is a separate law governing the Native Franchise which requires, among other things, 12 years residence on the part of the native in a particular electoral district and exemption from the native law of the Colony.

Under the general franchise law of the Colony, i.e., the Royal Charter referred to above, the Indians as British subjects enjoyed full electoral rights till after 1893. In 1894, in the Second Parliament under the Responsible Government, an Act was passed, No. 25 of 1894, disqualifying persons of Asiatic extraction from having their names inserted in any Voters' List, exempting those whose names were then already rightly contained in any Voters' List. The preamble of the Act stated that such persons were not accustomed to the Franchise rights.

The real reason for passing such an Act was to lower the status of the Indian and gradually to bring him down to the level of the South African natives so that, in time to come, the respectable Indian may become an impossibility. A petition was presented to the Legislative Assembly combating the view that the Indians were not accustomed to representative institutions and asking for the withdrawal of the Bill, or an enquiry as to whether or not the Indians were fit to exercise the franchise. (Enclosure I, App. A)¹.

The petition was rejected. Another was sent to the Legislative Council when the Bill came before it. That too was rejected and the Bill was passed. (Enclosure I, App. B)².

It, however, required Her Majesty's sanction before it could come into force. The Indian community sent a memorial to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, protesting

¹ The enclosures mentioned in the text are not reproduced here. For petition to the Natal Assembly, *vide* "Petition to Natl Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

² *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894 and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

against the measure and requesting him either to disallow the measure or to institute an inquiry of the nature above indicated. The memorial was signed by nearly 9,000 Indians. (Enclosure I)¹.

A good deal of correspondence went on between Her Majesty's Government and the Natal Ministry. The result was that in the April of this year, the Franchise Act was withdrawn by the Natal Ministry and replaced by the following:

No persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any list of electors who (not being of European origin) are natives or descendants in the male line of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise, unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of this Act.

The measure also excepts those whose names are already rightly contained in any Voters' Lists.

A memorial² was presented to the Legislative Assembly, showing that India contained, in its Legislative Councils, "elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise" and that, therefore, the Bill was a harassing measure. (Enclosure II, App. A). Though our institutions cannot popularly be termed such as to satisfy the requirement of the above measure, it is respectfully submitted that legally they are so, and this is the opinion of the London *Times*, as also of an able jurist in Natal³ (Enclosure III, p. 11). Mr. Chamberlain himself, in his despatch dated 12th September, 1895⁴, signifying his inability to approve of the first Franchise Bill above referred to, in answer to the Natal Ministers' arguments, says, among other things:

I also recognize the fact that the Natives of India do not possess representative institutions in their own country and that they themselves, in those periods of their history when they were exempt from European influence, have never set up any such system among them. (Enclosure IV)

A memorial⁵ has been sent to Mr. Chamberlain (Enclosure II), and private advice from London states that the matter is engaging his attention. Mr. Chamberlain has already approved of the principle of

¹ *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894. where Gandhiji says he obtained over 10, 000 signatures for this petition.

² Dated April 27, 1896.

³ *Vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888

⁴ The source has '1885', obviously a typographical mistake.

⁵ Dated May 22, 1896, *vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896

this Bill which was submitted to him by the Ministers, before it was introduced into the Natal Parliament. (Enclosure IV). The Indians in South Africa, however, believe that the facts brought out in the memorial should induce Mr. Chamberlain to alter his views.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that there can be no comparison between the condition of the Indians in India and that of those in South Africa. Here it is political persecution and very little class legislation. There it is class legislation pure and simple and degradation of the Indian to the level of a pariah.

The London *Times* has put the franchise question in this form, in dealing with the first bill above referred to:

The question now put before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting all the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to deny the right of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens. (London *Times*, 27th June, 1896).

This article deals with the various arguments brought forward by the Colonists in support of disfranchisement of the Indians and shows that there is no question of swamping the European electors, because, out of nearly 10,000 electors, according to latest lists published, there are only 251 Indian electors and that there are very few Indians in the Colony who can command the necessary property qualifications (*see* Enclosure V¹). The present Bill is meant merely to harass the Indian community and to involve them in endless litigation. (Enclosure II.)

SECOND GRIEVANCE — INDIAN IMMIGRATION

In the year 1893, a Commission consisting of Mr. Binns, a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, and Mr. Mason, the present Protector of Indian Immigrants in Natal, was sent by the Government of Natal to India in order to induce the Indian Government to consent to the following alterations in the terms of indenture entered into by the Indians at present and referred to above, that is to say:

¹ This enclosure contained the Viceroy's despatch referred to in the following pages.

(1) To raise the period of indenture from five years to an indefinite period, with a corresponding increase in wages up to twenty shillings per month.

(2) In the event of the Indian refusing to enter into such further indentures after the first five years' indenture, to compel him to return to India at the Colony's expense.

The present Viceroy, in his despatch to the Governor of Natal, says that, although personally he regrets that such a course should be desired by the Colonists, subject to the approval of the Home Government he would be prepared to consent to the alterations on the understanding that the breach of the clause about compulsory return should never become a criminal offence. (Enclosure V.)

On the lines of the report of the Commission that visited India, the Natal Government, in the year 1895, introduced the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which provides, amongst other things, for the indefinite period of indenture or the compulsory return of the immigrants, and further provides that any such immigrant failing to enter into the further terms of indenture or to return to India shall be liable to take out an annual licence costing £3 yearly. Thus it would appear that this Bill goes further than the terms laid down in the Viceroy's despatch above alluded to. Memorials¹ were presented to both the Houses in Natal taking exception to this Bill but to no purpose. (Enclosure V, App. A and B.) A memorial has also been addressed to Mr. Chamberlain as well as to the Indian Government praying either that the Bill should be disallowed or that further Indian immigration to Natal should be stopped. (Enclosure VI.)² These prayers have been strongly supported by the London *Times* in a leading article dated 3-5-95 [96?].

Over ten years ago, a Commission was appointed by the then Governor of Natal to report upon various matters connected with Indian immigration. Evidence has been cited from this report to show that, at that time, the Commissioners as well as the best men of the day, including the present Attorney-General, thought that any such measure would be a cruel wrong to the Indians and a disgrace to the British name.

¹ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly" and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 26-6-1895

² *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895

The memorial is still engaging Mr. Chamberlain's and the Indian Government's attention. (Enclosure VI.)

THIRD GRIEVANCE — THE CURFEW

There is a Law in Natal (No. 15 of 1869), which provides that, in the boroughs, no 'coloured person', unless he can give a good account of himself or unless he can produce a pass from his employer, shall be out at night after 9 o'clock. This Law is, perhaps, not absolutely unnecessary, but its working is often oppressive. Respectable Indians, such as schoolmasters and others, have often been locked up in horrible dungeons for having ventured out after 9 p.m., no matter on what business.

FOURTH GRIEVANCE — THE PASS LAW

The Law provides that every Indian can be asked to produce a pass. It is really meant to detect indentured Indians who have deserted their masters, but is also used as an engine of oppression towards the Indians generally. The Indian community in Natal have not yet moved with regard to the last two matters, but they may be brought under the general grievances and can be used to show the tendency of the Colonists to make it as uncomfortable as possible for the Indians in Natal. As for the working of these two Laws, see Enclosure III, pp. 6 and 7.¹

ZULULAND

This country is a Crown Colony governed by the Governor of Natal in the Queen's name. The Natal ministry or the Governor of Natal as such has nothing to do with Zululand. There is a small European and a large native (Kaffir) population in it. There are townships established in Zululand. The township of Melmoth was the first to be established. In that township, in the year 1888, the Indians bought *erven*, i.e., specified pieces of land, worth about £2,000. The township of Eshowe was proclaimed in 1891 and that of Nondweni in 1896. The regulations for the purchase of *erven* in both these township are the same and they provide that only persons of European birth and descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites, (Enclosure VII.)²

¹ *Vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888

² The enclosure is not available.

A memorial¹ protesting against these regulations was presented to the Governor of Zululand last February, who declined to interfere.

Thereupon a memorial² was sent to Mr. Chamberlain, and the question is now engaging his attention. These regulations, it will be noticed, go much further than what the Colonists in the self-governing Colonies have been allowed to do, and follow the policy of total exclusion adopted by the Orange Free State.

Zululand gold mining laws make it criminal for an Indian to buy or possess native gold.

CAPE COLONY

The Colony of the Cape of Good Hope is, like the Colony of Natal, a responsibly governed Colony with a Constitution similar to Natal's. Only, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council contain a greater number of members, and the franchise qualifications are different, viz., the property qualification is occupation for 12 months of a building worth £75, the salary qualification is £50 per annum. The person claiming to be registered must be able to sign his name and write his address and occupation. This Act was passed in 1892 and was really passed to check the Indian and the Malay vote. There would be no objection on the part of the Indian community to such educational qualifications being imposed or property qualifications being increased in Natal. This Colony contains an area of 276,320 square miles and a total population of about 1,800,000 persons, of whom not more than 400,000 are Europeans. The Indian population of the Colony would be roughly 10,000, consisting of traders, hawkers and labourers. They are to be found chiefly in the ports, viz., Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town and also in the mines in Kimberley.

All the information relating to the disabilities placed on the Indians is not available. In 1894, the Parliament passed a Bill authorizing the East London Municipality to frame bye-laws prohibiting the Indians from walking on the foot-paths and compelling them to live in specified locations. No special representation on this head has been made to Mr. Chamberlain from South Africa. But the matter was touched upon by the Indian deputation that waited upon Mr. Chamberlain last year.

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896

² *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896

In the various parts or districts of the Cape Colony, it is extremely difficult for an Indian to get trading licences. In many cases the magistrates simply refuse the licences, declining to give reasons for so doing. The Magistrates are within their rights in declining to give reasons, but it has been found almost invariably that the licences have been granted to Europeans when they have been withheld from the Indian. The following is the position of the Indians in East Griqualand, a district in the Cape Colony, according to *The Natal Mercury* dated 3rd March, 1896:

An Arab named Ismail Suliman erected a store in East Griqualand, paid customs duty upon goods and applied for a licence which the magistrate refused. Mr. Attorney Francis on the Arab's behalf (as the Indians are sometimes called in South Africa) appealed to the Cape Government, who upheld the Magistrate and have issued instructions that no coolies or Arabs are to have trading licences in East Griqualand and one or two that have licences are to be closed up.

This is outdoing the Transvaal.

CHARTERED TERRITORIES

These territories include Mashonaland and Matabeleland. About 100 Indian waiters and labourers have settled there. A few traders have also gone, but they are refused licences to trade, in the first instance. The law being in favour of the Indians, one enterprising Indian last year succeeded in securing a trading licence through the Superior Court at Cape Town.

The Europeans in the Chartered Territories have now applied for an alteration of the law so that the Indians may, henceforth, be prevented from getting trading licences in those territories. The newspapers in South Africa say that the Cape Government favour such an alteration.

THE TRANSVAAL OR THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

This is an independent republic governed by the Dutch or the Boers. There are two chambers called the Volksraad, with an executive Government with the President at the head. It contains an area of about 113,642 square miles and a white population of 119,228. Its black population is said to be 653,662. The chief industry of the Republic is gold mining in Johannesburg, the largest town in the Transvaal. The total Indian population may be roughly put down at 5,000. They are traders, shopkeepers' assistants, hawkers, cooks,

waiters or labourers, mostly settled in Johannesburg and Pretoria, the capital of the Republic. Of the traders, there are nearly 200, whose liquidated assets would amount to nearly £100,000. Some of these traders have branches in other parts of the world whose existence mainly depends upon their Transvaal businesses. There are nearly 2,000 hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about. About 1,500 are employed as general servants in European hotels or houses. This estimate was formed in 1894. The numbers have since considerably increased in every department.

The Transvaal is subject to the Queen's suzerainty. There are two Conventions between the Governments of England and the Transvaal.

Article 14 of the London Convention of 1884 and Article 26 of the Pretoria Convention of 1881¹ provide as follows:

All persons, other than natives of South Africa, conforming themselves to the laws of the Transvaal State will have full liberty with their families to enter, travel or reside in any part of the Transvaal State. They will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, premises. They may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents they may think fit to employ. They will not be subject, in respect of their persons and property, in respect of their commerce and industry, to any taxes, whether general, or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon the Transvaal citizens.

This Convention, thus, completely secures the trading and property rights of British Indian. In January 1885, the Transvaal Government wanted so to interpret the word "natives", occurring in the Art. 14 of the Convention, as to include Asiatics. Sir Hercules Robinson, the then High Commissioner for South Africa, after consultation with Sir Henry de Villiers, the Chief Justice of the Colony, considered that the interpretation put upon the word "native" by the Transvaal Government could not be sustained and "that Asiatics were persons other than natives".

Negotiations then went on between the Transvaal Government and the Home Government with a view to an alteration in the Convention so as to except the Indians from the privileges secured to

¹ Following the British defeat at Majuba this Convention gave the Transvaalers a qualified independence and was thus a prelude to the London Convention of 1884 which granted the Transvaal full internal autonomy except in its relations with foreign States.

“all persons other than natives”. Sir Hercules Robinson was favourably disposed towards the Transvaal Government and, in response to his suggestion, received the following reply from Lord Derby¹ under date 19th March 1885:

I have carefully considered your suggestion as to the amendment of the Convention, and if you are of opinion that it would be preferable and more satisfactory to the Government of the South African Republic to proceed as you propose, Her Majesty's Government will be willing to amend the Convention as suggested. It seems to deserve consideration, however, whether it would be more correct for the Volksraad to legislate in the proposed sense, having received an assurance that Her Majesty's Government will not desire to insist upon any such construction of the terms of the Convention as would interfere with reasonable legislation in the desired direction.

In accordance with Lord Derby's suggestion, the Transvaal Volksraad passed bye-law No. 3 of 1885, which applies to all Indians and other coloured people, and provides that none of them could obtain the franchise, that they could not be owners of fixed property, that such coloured people, who settle in the Republic for the purpose of trading, must be separately registered within 8 days after the day of their arrival and that they should pay a registration fee of £25. Any contravention of this law subjects the defaulter to a fine of from £30 to £100 or, in default, from 1 to 6 months' imprisonment. It also provides that the Government shall have the right to point out to such coloured people streets, wards and locations for habitation. In 1886, this law was amended so as to reduce the £25 fee to £3 and the other sections were kept as they were. That now is the law with regard to the Indians in the Transvaal. After the law was passed, the Indians sent representations, telegraphic and otherwise, to the Indian and the Home Governments protesting against the Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment and pointing out that they were in direct violation of the London Convention. This brought out some representations from Lord Knutsford² on behalf of the Indians. There has been voluminous correspondence between the two Governments with regard to the interpretation of the word 'habitation'. The Home Government insisted that the word 'habitation' meant residence only. The Transvaal Government insisted that it included not only residence but trading stores also. The ultimate result was that the whole became

¹ Edward Henry Smith Stanley (1826-93), 15th Earl of Derby; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1882-85

² Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1887-92

“confusion worse confounded”, and it was agreed between the two Governments that the question of the validity of the Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment, as also interpretation, should be submitted to arbitration. The Chief Justice of the Orange Free State was selected as the sole arbitrator who gave his award last year and decided that the Transvaal Government was justified in passing Law 3 of 1885 and its amendments, but he left undecided the question of interpretation and held that, if the parties could not agree to interpretation, the Courts of the Transvaal were the proper tribunals to decide that question. (Enclosure VIII.)

The Indians in the Transvaal sent memorials¹ to the Home and Indian Governments. Mr. Chamberlain has given his decision and has reluctantly accepted the award of the arbitrator, but sympathizes with the Indians and terms them “a peaceable, law-abiding, meritorious body of persons” whose undoubted industry, intelligence and indomitable perseverance perhaps will suffice to overcome any obstacles which may now face them in the pursuit of their avocations, and reserves to himself the liberty, later on, to make friendly representations to the Transvaal Government.

The question rests there at present. Although the award has been accepted, it will have been seen from what has preceded that there are many questions still undecided. Where will the Indians be now in the Transvaal? Will their stores be closed up? If so, what will 200 or 300 traders do to earn a living? Will they have to trade also in locations? This, however, does not complete the list of disabilities in the Transvaal.

Act 25 (10th January 1893), section 38, says:

That it is not permitted to natives and other coloured people to travel in the carriage intended for the Whites, viz., the first and second class.

The most respectable Indian, spotlessly dressed, cannot, as of right, travel first or second class on the Transvaal Railways. He is huddled together with the natives of all sorts and conditions in a third-class compartment. This is a cause of very great inconvenience to the Indian community in the Transvaal.

¹*Vide* “Petition to Lord Ripon”, 5-5-1895 and “Petition to Lord Elgin”, 5-5-1895

There is a system of passes in the Transvaal which requires that any Indian, like the native, should take a shilling travelling pass when he moves about from one place to another.

In 1895, the Commandos Treaty was entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Transvaal Government, exempting the British subjects from compulsory military service. This treaty came up before the Transvaal Volksraad for ratification in the same year.

The Volksraad ratified the treaty with the modification or reservation that the words "British subjects" shall mean "Whites" only. The Indians promptly telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain and a memorial was also sent. (Enclosure IX.)¹ The question is now engaging his attention.

The London *Times* gave a very sympathetic and strong leading article on the subject. (Weekly Edn. 10-1-'96.)

The Gold Mining laws of Johannesburg make it criminal for the Indians to possess native gold.

The curfew prevails also in the Transvaal, absolutely unnecessarily, so far as the Indians are concerned.

It may be as well to state here that those who wear the Memon costume are not, as a rule, molested under this Law, for certain reasons. (Enclosure III, p. 6.)

There is a footpath bye-law in Johannesburg and there are instructions issued to the police in Pretoria to the effect that the Indians should not be allowed to walk on the footpaths. A graduate of the Madras University was violently kicked off a footpath in 1894.

ORANGE FREE STATE

This is an independent Dutch Republic without any suzerain power to the Queen.

The Commission is very similar to that of the Transvaal. Mr. Steyn is the President of the Republic and Bloemfontein is the capital. Its area is 72,000 square miles² and the total population 207,503. Of these the Europeans number 77,716, and the coloured population 129,787. There are a few Indians employed there as general servants. In 1890, there were about 3 Indian stores in that Republic having liquidated assets over £9,000. These were driven out and their stores

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 26-11-1895

² The area of Orange Free State in 1960 according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was 49, 866 sq. miles.

were closed up without any compensation. They were given a year's notice to clear. Representations were made to the British Government without any avail.

The Law of 1890, Chapter XXXIII, which is entitled the Law to prevent the inrush of the Asiatic coloured persons, prevents any Indian from remaining in that country for more than 2 months, unless he gets the permission from the President of Republic, who cannot consider the application to reside before 30 days have elapsed after the presentation of the application and other ceremonies have been performed. The applicant can, however, on no account hold fixed property in the State or carry on any mercantile or farming business. The President may or may not, according to the state of things, grant such mutilated permission to reside. Any Indian resident moreover is subject to an annual poll-tax of £10. The first contravention of the section relating to mercantile or farming business renders the delinquent liable to a fine of £25 or 3 months' imprisonment with or without hard labour. For all subsequent contraventions, the penalty is to be each time doubled. (Enclosure X.)¹

This practically finishes the list of grievances.

These notes are not intended to replace the various enclosures. It is respectfully submitted they are necessary for a proper study of the memorials and pamphlets which contain valuable information collected from various sources.

The whole question has been thus put by the London *Times*:

May the British Indians, when they leave India, have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?

Again:

The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in Southern Africa that this question of their status must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it would be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa, it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere.

The question has been treated as an Imperial question and all parties without distinction have supported the British Indians in South Africa.

¹ This probably was the text of the Law of 1890.

The following are the dates of the articles dealing with the question in the London *Times* :

28th June 1895	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Edition</i>
3rd August 1895	”	”
13th September 1895	”	”
6th September 1895	”	”
10th January 1896	”	”
7th April 1896	<i>The Times</i>	
20th March 1896	<i>Weekly Edition</i>	
27th January 1896	<i>The Times</i>	

In the Portuguese territories of Delagoa Bay there are no grievances. They serve as a favourable contrast (Enclosure III).

GANDHI

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 1145

103. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY*¹

September 26, 1896

I stand before you, today, as representing the signatories to this document², who pose as representative of the 100,000 British Indians at present residing in South Africa—a country which has sprung into sudden prominence owing to the vast gold fields of Johannesburg and the late Jameson Raid³. This is my sole qualification. I am a person of few words. The cause, however, for which I am to plead before you this evening is so great that I venture to think that you will overlook the faults of the speaker or, rather, the reader of this paper. The interests of 100,000 Indians are closely bound up with the interests of the 300 millions of India. The question of the grievances of the Indians in South Africa affects the future well-being and the future

¹ The meeting was held under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association at the Framji Cowasji Institute. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta presided. The printed text no longer being available, what follows has been collated from the reports of the speech published in *The Times of India* and *Bombay Gazette*.

² The reference is to “The Credentials”.

³ So called after Leander Starr Jameson who led it, it was actually inspired by Rhodes, the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and had the tacit support, in the initial stages, of the British Government. Jameson led the raid into the Transvaal on December 29, 1895, and four days later surrendered. The Jameson raid was among the incidents that led to the Boer War.

immigration of Indians of India. I, therefore, humbly venture to think that this question should be, if it is not already, one of the questions of the day in India. With these preliminary remarks, I shall now place before you, as shortly as possible, the whole position of affairs in South Africa as affecting the British Indians in that country.

South Africa, for our present purposes, is divided into the following States: the British Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the British Colony of Natal, the British Colony of Zululand, the Transvaal or the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, the Chartered Territories or Rhodesia, and the Portuguese Territories of Delagoa Bay and Beira.

In South Africa, apart from the Portuguese Territories, there are nearly 100,000 Indians, of whom the greater part belong to the labouring class, drawn from the labouring population of Madras and Bengal, speaking the Tamil or Telugu and the Hindi languages respectively. A small number belongs to the trading class, chiefly drawn from the Bombay Presidency. A general feeling throughout South Africa is that of hatred towards Indian, encouraged by the newspapers and connived at, even countenanced by, the legislators. Every Indian, without exception, is a coolie in the estimation of the general body of the Europeans. Storekeepers are “coolie storekeepers”. Indian clerks and schoolmasters are “coolie clerks” and “coolie schoolmasters”. Naturally, neither the traders nor the English-educated Indians are treated with any degree of respect. Wealth and abilities in an Indian count for naught in that country except to serve the interests of the European Colonists. We are the “Asian dirt to be heartily cursed”. We are “squalid coolies with truthless tongues”. We are “the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community”. We are “parasites, semi-barbarous Asiatics”. We “live upon rice and we are chock-full of vice”. Statute-books describe the Indians as belonging to the “aboriginal or semi-barbarous races of Asia”, while, as a matter of fact, there is hardly one Indian in South Africa belonging to the aboriginal stock. The Santhals of Assam will be as useless in South Africa as the natives of that country. The Pretoria Chamber of Commerce thinks that our religion teaches us to “consider all women as soulless and Christians a natural prey”. According to the same authority, “the whole community in South Africa is exposed to the dangers engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people.” Yet, as a

matter of fact, there has happened not a single case of leprosy amongst the Indians in South Africa. And Dr. Veale of Pretoria thinks that “the lowest class Indians live better and in better habitations and with more regard to sanitation than the lowest class Whites”, and he, furthermore, puts on record that “while every nationality had one or more of its members at some time in the lazaretto, there was not a single Indian attacked.”

In most parts of South Africa, we may not stir out of our houses after 9 p.m.— unless we are armed with passes from our employer. An exception, however, is made in favour of those Indians who wear the memon costume. Hotels shut their doors against us. We cannot make use of the tram-cars unmolested. The coaches are not for us. Between Barberton and Pretoria in the Transvaal, and Johannesburg and Charlestown, when the latter were not connected by railway, the Indians, as a rule, are and were not allowed to sit inside the coaches, but are and were compelled to take their seats by the side of the driver. This, on a frosty morning in the Transvaal, where winter is very severe, is a sore trial apart from the indignity which it involves. The coach-travelling involves long journeys and, at stated intervals, accommodation and food are provided for passengers. No Indian is allowed accommodation or a seat at the dining table in these places. At the most, he can purchase food from behind the kitchen-room and manage the best way he can. Instances of untold miseries suffered by the Indians can be quoted by hundreds. Public baths are not for the Indians. The high schools are not open to the Indians. A fortnight before I left Natal, an Indian student applied for admission to the Durban High School and his application was rejected. Even the primary schools are not quite open to the Indians. An Indian Missionary schoolmaster was driven out of an English Church in Verulam, a small village in Natal. The Government of Natal have been pining to hold a “coolie conference”, as it has been officially called, in order to secure uniformity in Indian legislation throughout South Africa, and in order to present a united front against the blandishments of the Home Government on behalf of the Indian. Such is the general feeling against the Indian in South Africa, except the Portuguese Territories, where he is respected and has no grievance apart from the general population. You can easily imagine how difficult it must be for a respectable Indian to exist in such a country. I am sure, gentlemen, that if our President went to South Africa, he would find it, to use a colloquial phrase, “mighty hard” to secure

accommodation in a hotel, and he would not feel very comfortable in a first-class railway carriage in Natal, and, after reaching Volksrust, he would be put out unceremoniously from his first-class compartment and accommodated in a tin compartment where Kaffirs are packed like sheep. I may, however, assure him that if he ever came to South Africa, and we wish our great men did come to these uncomfortable quarters, if only to see and realize the plight in which their fellow-countrymen are, we shall more than make up for these inconveniences, which we cannot help, by according him a right royal welcome, so united, so enthusiastic we are, at any rate for the present. Ours is one continual struggle against a degradation sought to be inflicted upon us by the Europeans, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw Kaffir whose occupation is hunting, and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with and, then, pass his life in indolence and nakedness. The aim of the Christian Governments, so we read, is to raise people whom they come in contact with or whom they control. It is otherwise in South Africa. There, the deliberately expressed object is not to allow the Indian to rise higher in the scale of civilization but to lower him to the position of the Kaffir; in the words of the Attorney-General of Natal, "to keep him for ever a hewer of wood and drawer of water", "not to let him form part of the future South African nation that is going to be built"; in the words of another legislator in Natal, "to make the Indian's life more comfortable in his native land than in the Colony of Natal". The struggle against such degradation is so severe that our whole energy is spent in resistance. Consequently, we have very little left in us to attempt to make any reforms from within.

I must now come to the particular States and show how the Governments in the different States have combined with the masses to persecute the Indians to make "the British Indian an impossibility". The Colony of Natal, which is a self-governing British Colony with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 37 members elected by the voters, and a Legislative Council consisting of twelve members nominated by the Governor, who comes from England as the Queen's representative, has a European population of 50,000, a native or Zulu population of 400,000, and an Indian population of 51,000. Assisted immigration of Indians was decided upon in 1860, when, in the words of a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, "the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance", and when the Zulu was found to be too indolent to work. Now the chief industries and

sanitation of the whole Colony of Natal are entirely dependent upon the Indian labour. The Indians have made Natal “the garden of South Africa”. In the words of another eminent Natalian, “Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song”. Of the 51,000 Indians, 30,000 are those that have served out their indenture and are now variously engaged as free labourers, gardeners, hawkers, fruiterers, or petty traders. A few have, also, by their industry, educated themselves into fitness for the posts of schoolmasters, interpreters and general clerks in spite of adverse circumstances; 16,000 are at present serving their indenture, and about 5,000 are traders and merchants or their assistants who came first on their own means. These latter belong to the Bombay Presidency and most of them are Memon Mahomedans. A few are Parsees also, notable among whom is Mr. Rustomjee of Durban, who in his generosity would do credit to Sir Dinshaw¹. No poor man goes to his doors without having his inner man satisfied. No Parsee lands on the Durban shores but is sumptuously treated by Mr. Rustomjee. And even he is not free from molestation. Even he is a coolie. Two gentlemen are ship-owners and large landed proprietors. But they are coolie ship-owners and their ships are called “coolie ships”.

Apart from the common interest that every Indian feels in every other Indian, the three chief Presidencies are specially interested in this question. If the Bombay Presidency has not sent an equally large number of her sons to South Africa, she makes up for that by the greater influence and wealth of her sons who have really constituted themselves the guardians of the interests of their less fortunate brethren from the sister Presidencies. And it may be that in India also Bombay will lead in endeavouring to help the Indians in South Africa out of their hardships.²

The preamble of the Bill of 1894 stated that Asiatics were not accustomed to representative institutions. The real object of the Bill, however, was not to disfranchise Indian because they were not fit, but because the European Colonists wanted to degrade the Indians and to assert their right to enter into class legislation, to accord a treatment to

¹ The reference is to Sir Dinshaw M. Petit.

² The Bombay Presidency Association later forwarded a memorial to the Secretary of State for India, calling for redress of the grievances of the South African Indians.

the Indians different from that accorded to the Europeans. This was patent not only from the speeches made by the members on the second reading of the Bill but also from the newspapers. They also said it was expedient to disfranchise the Indian under the plea that the Indian vote might swamp the European. But even this plea is and was untenable. In 1891, there were only 251 Indian voters as against nearly 10,000 European voters. The majority of Indians are too poor to command property qualifications. And the Indians in Natal have never meddled in politics and do not want political power. All these facts are admitted by *The Natal Mercury*, which is the Government organ in Natal. I must refer you to my little pamphlet¹ published in India for corroborative extracts. We memorialized the local Parliament and showed that the Indians were not unacquainted with the representative institutions. We were, however, unsuccessful. We then memorialized Lord Ripon, the then Secretary of State of the Colonies. After two years' correspondence, the Bill of 1894 was withdrawn this year and has been replaced by another which, while not so bad as the once repealed, is bad enough. It provides that "the natives or descendants, in the male line, of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise, shall not be placed on any Voters' List unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of the Act." It also exempts from its operation those persons that are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was submitted to Mr. Chamberlain for approval before being introduced in the Legislative Assembly. In the papers published, Mr. Chamberlain seems to be of opinion that India does not possess elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise. With the greatest deference to these views, we submitted to Mr. Chamberlain in a memorial, for we did not succeed before the Natal Parliament, that for the purposes of the Bill, that is, legally speaking, India did and does possess elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise. Such is the opinion expressed by the London *Times*, such is the opinion of the newspapers in Natal and such is also the opinion of the members who voted for the Bill, as also of an able jurist in Natal. We are very anxious to know the opinion of the legal luminaries here. The object in passing such a Bill is to play a game of 'Toss up' to harass the Indian community.

¹ The Green Pamphlet

Many members of the Natal Assembly, otherwise hostile to the Indian, thought that the Bill would involve the Indian community in endless litigation and cause a ferment among them.

The Government organ says in effect: "We can have this Bill and no other. If we succeed, that is, if India is declared a country not possessing the institutions referred to in the Bill, well and good. If not, then, too, we lose nothing. We shall try another, we shall raise the property qualification and impose an educational test. If such a Bill is objected to, even then we need not be afraid, for, where is the cause? We know that the Indians can never swamp us." If I had the time, I could give you the exact words which are much stronger. Those who take a special interest can look them up from the Green Pamphlet. Thus, then, we are a proper subject for vivisection under their Natal Pasteur's deadly scalpel and knife. The only difference is that the Paris Pasteur did it with a view to do good. Our Natal Pasteur does it for the sake of amusement to be derived from the operation out of sheer wantonness. This memorial is now under consideration by Mr. Chamberlain.

I cannot lay too much stress on the fact that the position in India is entirely different from the position in Natal. Eminent men in India have asked me the question, "Why do you want the franchise in Natal when you have only a visionary franchise in India, if, at all?" Our humble reply is that in Natal it is not we who want the franchise, it is the Europeans who want to deprive us of the right we have been enjoying in Natal. That makes all the difference. The deprivation will involve degradation. There is no such thing in India. The representative institutions in India are slowly, but surely, being liberalized. Such institutions are being gradually closed against us in Natal. Again, as the London *Times* puts it, "The Indian in India has precisely the same franchise as the Englishman enjoys." Not so in Natal. What is sauce for the European goose is not sauce for the Indian gander there. Moreover, the disfranchising in Natal is not a political move but a merely commercial policy—a policy adopted to check the immigration of the respectable Indian. Being a British subject, he should be able to claim the same privileges as the other British subjects enjoy in a certain British State or Colony, just as an Indian going to England would be able to avail himself of the institutions of England to as full an extent as any Englishman. The fact, however, is that there is no fear of the Indian vote swamping the

European; what they want is class legislation. The class legislation with regard to franchise is only the thin end of the wedge. They contemplate depriving the Indians of the Municipal franchise also. A statement to that effect was made by the Attorney-General, in reply to the suggestion made by a member that the Indians should be deprived of the municipal franchise, too, at the time the first Franchise Bill was introduced. Another member suggested that, while they were dealing with the Indian question, Civil Service in the Colony should be closed to the Indians.

In the Cape Colony also, which has a Government exactly similar to Natal's, the condition of the Indians is growing worse. Lately, the Cape Parliament has passed a Bill which authorizes the East London Municipality to frame bye-laws prohibiting Indians from walking on the footpaths and compelling them to live in specific locations which, as a rule, are unhealthy swamps unfit for human habitation and certainly useless for purposes of trade. In Zululand, a Crown Colony and, therefore, directly under the control of the Home Government, regulations have been passed with regard to the townships of Nondweni and Eshowe to the effect that the Indians cannot own or acquire land in those townships, although, in that of Melmoth in the same country, the Indians own property worth £2,000. In the Transvaal, which is a Dutch Republic, the seat of the Jameson Raid and the El Dorado of the gold-hunters of the Western World, there are over 5,000 Indians, many of whom are merchants and storekeepers. Others are hawkers, waiters and household servants. The Convention¹ between the Home Government and the Transvaal Government secures the trading and property rights of "all persons other than natives" and under it the Indians were trading freely up to 1885. In that year, however, after some correspondence with the Home Government, the Transvaal Volksraad passed a law which took away from the Indians the right of trading, except in specified locations, and owning landed property, and imposed a registration fee of £3 on every Indian intending to settle in that country. I must again beg to refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet for the whole history of the protracted negotiations which culminated in the matter being entrusted to an arbitrator. The decision of the arbitrator being virtually against the Indians, a memorial was addressed to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the result that

¹ The London Convention of 1884

the award of the arbitrator has been accepted, though the justice of the complaint of the Indians has been fully admitted. The system of passes prevails in the Transvaal in a very cruel form. While, in other parts of South Africa, it is the railway officials who make the lot of the 1st and 2nd class passengers on the railway intolerable, the Transvaal people have gone one better in that there the law prohibits the Indians from travelling 1st or 2nd class. They are, irrespective of position, huddled together in the same compartment with the natives of South Africa. The Gold Mining laws make it criminal for the Indians to buy native gold. And if the Transvaal Government are allowed to have their own way, they would, while treating them as mere chattels, compel the Indians to render military service. The thing is monstrous on the face of it, for, as the London *Times* puts it, "we might now see a levy of British Indian subjects driven at the point of the Transvaal bayonets against the bayonets of British troops." The Orange Free State, the other Dutch Republic in South Africa, beats the record in showing its hatred towards Indians. It has, to put it in the words of its chief organ, simply made the "British Indian an impossibility by classing him with the Kaffir". It denies the Indian the right not only to trade, farm or own landed property, but even to reside there, except under special, insulting circumstances.

Such, very shortly, is the position of the Indians in the various States in South Africa. The same Indian, who is so much hated in the various States above mentioned, is very much liked and respected only 300 miles from Natal, i.e., in Delagoa Bay. The real cause of all this prejudice may be expressed in the words of the leading organ in South Africa, namely, the *Cape Times*, when it was under the editorship of the prince of South African journalists, Mr. St. Leger:

It is the position of these merchants which is productive of no little hostility to this day. And, it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sought to inflict upon them, through the medium of the State, what looks, on the face of it, something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

Continues the same organ :

The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives (i.e., of South Africa), simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level.

If this was true in 1889, when the above was written, it is doubly so now, because the Legislatures of South Africa have shown phenomenal activity in passing measures restricting the liberty of the Queen's Indian subjects.

To stem the tide of this opposition against us, we have formed an organization¹ on an humble scale so that we may take the necessary steps to have our grievances removed. We believe that much of the ill-feeling is due to want of proper knowledge about the Indians in India. We, therefore, endeavour, so far as the populace is concerned, to educate public opinion by imparting the necessary information. With regard to the legal disabilities, we have tried to influence the English public opinion in England and the public opinion here by placing our position before it. As you know, both the Conservatives and the Liberals have supported us in England without distinction. The London *Times* has given eight leading articles to our cause in a very sympathetic spirit.² This alone has raised us a step higher in the estimation of the Europeans in South Africa, and has considerably affected for the better the tone of the newspapers there.

I may state our position a little more clearly as to our demands. We are aware that the insults and indignities, that we are subjected to at the hands of the populace, cannot be directly removed by the intervention of the Home Government. We do not appeal to it for any such intervention. We bring them to the notice of the public, so that the fair-minded of all communities and the Press may, by expressing their disapproval, materially reduce their rigour and, possibly, eradicate them ultimately. But we certainly do appeal, and we hope not vainly, to the Home Government for protection against reproduction of such ill-feeling in Colonial legislation. We certainly beseech the Home Government to disallow all the Acts of the Legislative bodies of the Colonies restricting our freedom in any shape or form.

And this brings me to the last question, namely, how far can the Home Government interfere with such action on the part of the Colonies and the allied States. As for Zululand, there can be no question, since it is a Crown Colony directly governed from Downing Street through a Governor. It is not a self-governing or responsibly-governed Colony as the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope are. With regard to the latter, Clause 7 of the Constitution Act of Natal enacts that Her Majesty may disallow any Act of the local

¹ The Natal Indian Congress

² *Vide* "Application for Enrolment as Advocate", 16-11-1891

Parliament within two years, even after it has become law having received the Governor's assent. That is one safeguard against oppressive measures by the Colonies. The Royal instructions to the Governor enumerate certain Bills which cannot be assented to by the Governor without Her Majesty's previous sanction. Among such are Bills which have for their object class legislation. I shall venture to give an instance in point. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill referred to above has been assented to by the Governor, but it can come into force only after her Majesty has sanctioned it. It has not yet been sanctioned. Thus, then, it will be noticed that Her Majesty's intervention is direct and precise. While it is true that the Home Government is slow to interfere with the Acts of the Colonial Legislatures, there are instances where it has not hesitated to put its foot down on occasions less urgent than the present one. As you are aware, the repeal of the first Franchise Bill was due to such wholesome intervention. What is more, Colonists are ever afraid of it. And as a result of the sympathy expressed in England and the sympathetic answer given by Mr. Chamberlain to the deputation that waited on him some months ago, most of the papers in South Africa, at any rate in Natal, have veered round or think that the Immigration and other such Bills will not receive the Royal assent. As to the Transvaal there is the Convention. As to the Orange Free State, I can only say that it is an unfriendly act on the part of a friendly State to shut her doors against any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. And as such, I humbly think it can be effectively checked.

Gentlemen, the latest advice from South Africa show that the Europeans there are actively canvassing the ruin of the Indians. They are agitating against the introduction of Indian artisans and what not.¹ All this should serve as a warning and an impetus. We are hemmed in on all sides in South Africa. We are yet infants. We have a right to appeal to you for protection. We place our position before you, and now the responsibility will rest to a very great extent on your shoulders, if the yoke of oppression is not removed from our necks. Being under it we can only cry out in anguish. It is for you, our elder and freer brethren, to remove it. I am sure we shall not have cried out in vain.

The Times of India, 27-9-1896, and Bombay Gazette, 27-9-1896

¹ The Europeans held mass meetings in Durban and protested against the Indian Immigration Trust Board's decision to permit the importation of Indian artisans to work on the Tongaat Sugar Estates in Natal. A 'European Protection Association' and a 'Colonial Patriotic Union' were set up to resist what was described as the 'Asiatic Invasion'.

104. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

C/O MESSRS REVASHANKER JAGJIVAN & CO.,
CHAMPAGALI,
BOMBAY,
*October 10, 1896*¹

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN²,

I am sure you would be good enough to excuse me for my inability to write to you earlier and send you the names of the chief men of South Africa. The reason is that I have been very busy with domestic business. I am writing this at midnight.

I leave for Madras by tomorrow evening's Mail (Sunday). I expect to stay there not more than a fortnight. If I am successful there I would thence proceed to Calcutta and return to Bombay within a month from today. I would then take the first boat to Natal.

The latest papers received from Natal show that there is still much fight ahead. And that alone is sufficient to absorb the attention of two men of your activity if full justice is to be done to the cause. I sincerely hope that you will be able to see your way clear to join me in Natal. I am sure it is a cause worth fighting for.

If you wish to write to me you may write to me at the above address and your letters will be redirected to me at Madras. I do not know at which hotel I shall put up there. The Natal hotels have made me quite nervous.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy : R.F.S. Taleyarkhan

¹ The source has 10-8-1896, obviously a slip, for Gandhiji mentions his plan to leave for Madras "by tomorrow evening's mail (Sunday)". He left for Madras on October 11, which was a Sunday.

² A Bombay pleader who had been called to the bar in the same year as Gandhiji and had returned to India in the same steamer with him.

105. A LETTER

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,
MADRAS,
October 16, 1896

DEAR SIR,

I beg to send per book-post the draft memorial with appendices. I am sorry I could not get it ready last Saturday. I am more sorry because it is not written in a nice hand. That I could not very well help.

Of course it will depend upon the Hon'ble Mr. Mehta whether the accompanying Memorial or rather letter or a simple covering letter is sent.

In any case I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the first Franchise memorial, the Immigration Law Amendment memorial and the Transvaal Arbitration memorial have been disposed of. The commandos, the Zululand and the 2nd Franchise memorials are still engaging Mr. Chamberlain's attention. The grievances in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony as well as the 9 o'clock rules and the pass law in both the Transvaal and the colony of Natal and the railway law and the foot-path bye-law have not been yet made the subject of a memorial. And these are matters to which the attention of the Home Government in my humble opinion ought to be drawn.

I beg to thank you for the letters you sent me through the Editor of the *Madras Standard*.

*I remain,
Yours faithfully,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : Pherozeshah Mehta Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

106. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

MADRAS,
October 17, 1896

THE EDITOR
The Times of India

SIR,

I shall be obliged to you if you will be good enough to find space for the following in your influential paper.

The Natal Agent-General has, it appears, told Reuter, with reference to my pamphlet on the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, that it is not true to say that the railway and tramway officials treat the Indians as beasts, that the fact that the indentured Indians do not avail themselves of the return passage is the best answer to my pamphlet, and that the Indians are not denied justice in the law-courts. In the first place, the pamphlet deals with the grievances of the Indians in the whole of South Africa. In the second place, I adhere to the statement that the railway and tram-car official treat the Indians as beasts in Natal. If there are exceptions, they prove the rule. I have been witness myself to not a few such cases. What is it if it is not being treated as a beast, to be removed three times during a single night journey from one compartment to another, to suit European passengers? To see Indians, apparently respectable, kicked, pushed, and sworn at by the station-master is not an extraordinary sight on the railway stations. The Western station in Durban is the dread of the Indians, so over-polite is the station-master at that station, and this is not the only station where the Indians are kicked about like footballs. Here is an independent testimony from *The Natal Mercury* (24-11-'93) :

On our railway, we have noticed on more than one occasion that coloured passengers are not by any means killed with civility; and, although it would be unreasonable to expect that the White employees of the N.G.R. should treat them with the same deference as is accorded to European passengers, still, we think it would be in no way derogatory to their dignity if the officials were a little more *suaviter in modo* when dealing with the coloured travellers.

On the tram-cars the Indians fare no better. Spotlessly dressed and well-behaved Indians have been pushed about from one place to

another to suit the fancy of European passengers. Indeed, as a rule, the tram-car officials compel "Sammy" to go "upstairs". Some would not allow them to take front seats. Respect is out of the question. An Indian official was compelled to stand on the tram-car board, although there was ample room to accommodate him. Of course, he was addressed as "Sammy" in the peculiarly offensive tone prevalent in Natal.

My statement has been before the public in Natal for the last two years, and the *first* contradiction comes *now* from the Agent-General! Why so late? As to the unwillingness of the Indians to avail themselves of the return passage, I beg to say, with due deference to the Agent-General, that the statement has been repeated *ad nauseam* in the Press, and the official dignity now given to it will not enable it to prove more than it actually can. At the most it can prove that the lot of the indentured Indian cannot be very unhappy; and that Natal is a very good place for such Indians to earn their livelihood. I am prepared to admit both. That does not, moreover, disprove the existence of the Colonial legislation restricting the freedom of the Indians in various ways. That does not disprove the existence of the terrible ill-feeling towards the Indians in the Colony. If the Indians remain in Natal, it is in spite of such treatment. It proves their marvellous forbearance, which has been so eloquently praised by Mr. Chamberlain in his despatch in connection with, to use a South African phrase, "the coolie arbitration".

The latest papers received from South Africa, unfortunately for the Natal Government, lend additional weight to my statement that the Indian is a cruelly persecuted being in South Africa. In August last, there was a meeting of European artisans, held to protest against the intended introduction of Indian artisans. The speeches made would form interesting reading for the Agent-General of Natal. The Indians were called "black vermin". A voice in the meeting said, "We will go to the Point¹ and stop them." A picnic party of European children used Indian and Kaffir boys as targets and shot bullets into their faces, hurting several inoffensive children. So deep-seated is the hatred that children have begun instinctively to look down upon Indians. Moreover, it should be remembered that the return passage story has nothing to do with the trading class, who go to Natal on their own account, and who feel the hardships the most. The thing is, one fact is stronger than a hundred statements of belief. And the pamphlet

contains very little of my own. It bristles with facts. Mainly taken from European sources, to prove my assertion as against the naked statement of Mr. Peace the Agent-General's opinion. If Mr. Peace's statement is all that is to be said in reply to the pamphlet, then there remains much to be done before Natal can become a tolerably comfortable place for Indians. As to the Indians receiving justice in the law-courts, I do not wish to say much. I have never stated that the Indians do not get justice in the law-courts, nor am I prepared to admit that they get it at all times and in all courts.

Sir, I am not given to exaggerate matters. You have asked for an official inquiry; we have done the same. And if the Natal Government are not afraid of unpleasant revelations, let there be such an inquiry as soon as possible. And I think I am safe in promising that much more will be proved than is mentioned in the pamphlet. I have given therein only those instances which can be proved most easily. Sir, our position is very precarious, and we will need your active support, which has been so liberally given to us till now, yet for a long time to come. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which you and your contemporaries condemned last year in such forcible language, has received the Royal assent, as appears from the papers received this week. To remind your readers, the Bill raises the period of indenture from the original period of five years to an indefinite period and, in default of re-indenture after the completion of the first five years, makes it compulsory for the Indian to return to India, of course, at the employer's expense, and, in case of non-compliance with that term of his contract, renders the defaulter liable to an annual poll-tax of £3, nearly half a year's earnings on the indenture scale. This Bill was, at the time it was passed, unanimously pronounced to be an iniquitous measure. Even the Natal papers were doubtful whether the Bill would receive the Royal sanction. Yet the Bill has been promulgated and it came into force on the 8th August.

Publicity is our best and perhaps the only weapon of defence. "Our grievances," says one of our sympathizers, "are so serious that they have only to be known in order to be removed." I have now to beseech you and your contemporaries to express your opinion with regard to this action on the part of the Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Office, we thought, was our safe resting-place. We may yet have to be undeceived. We have prayed for suspension of State-aided

immigration to Natal if the Bill could not be vetoed.¹ That prayer has been supported by the public. May we now rely upon the public to renew their support in our fresh efforts to have that prayer granted?

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 20-10-1896

107. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,

MADRAS,

October 18, 1896

PROFESSOR GOKHALE

POONA

SIR,

I promised to leave with Mr. Sohoni some further papers in connection with the Indian question in South Africa. I am sorry I forgot all about it. I beg now to send them per book post and hope they will be of some use.

We very badly need a committee of active, prominent workers in India for our cause. The question affects not only South African Indians but Indians in all parts of the world outside India. I have no doubt you have read the telegram about the Australian Colonies legislating to restrict the influx of Indian immigrants to that part of the world. It is quite possible that legislation might receive the Royal sanction. I submit that our great men should without delay take up this question. Otherwise within a very short time there will be an end to Indian enterprise outside India. In my humble opinion that telegram might be made the subject of a question in the Imperial Council² at Calcutta as well as in the House of Commons. In fact, some enquiry as to the intention of the Indian Government should be made immediately.

Seeing that you took very warm interest in my conversation I thought I would venture to write the above.

I remain,

Sir,

Yours obediently,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 3716

¹ *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 26-6-1895

² The Viceroy's Legislative Council, of which Gokhale was a member

108. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,
MADRAS,
October 18, 1896

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

I have your important letter for which I thank you.

Your inquiry is certainly very pertinent. And you may depend upon it that I shall answer it most frankly.

I start with the assumption that we work in partnership. Starting on your own account at once will be out of the question.

There are cheques lying in my safe at Durban for about £300, the retainer¹ for 1897, ending 31st July. These I propose to withdraw from the partnership to pay liabilities incurred here and if possible to pay the expenses that are now being incurred in connection with my office. I say if possible, because the balance may not cover the expenses at Durban.

If past experience is any guide for the purpose, then I think I am safe in saying that the joint earnings for the first six months will be at the rate of £70 per month. As against that I place the joint expenses at £50 per month, i.e., if we share the same house. That would leave a clear profit of £120 to be divided equally between us after six months. This is the lowest estimate. And I should expect to earn that amount single-handed doing the Indian work side by side. It would not surprise me however if we earned £150 per month.

This much I can promise. You should pay your own passage to Natal. Your expenses of admission will be paid out of the office. The expenses of your board and lodging also will be defrayed out of the office earnings. That is to say, if there is any loss during the six months' trial it shall be borne by me. On the other hand if there are any profits you share them.

Thus at the end of six months if you do not gain in money you will have gained considerably in experience of a different kind from that available in India. You will have realized the position of our countrymen in that part of the world and you will have seen a *new*

¹ The reference is to the professional fees Gandhiji received from Indian merchants in respect of their personal legal work.

country. I have no doubt that your connection in Bombay is such that a six months' absence from Bombay would not mar your future career there if you are disappointed in Natal. The six months' loss in Bombay will be requited by what I have stated above.

In any case, I cannot be too plain in saying that no one in our position should go to South Africa with a view to pile money. You should go there with a spirit of self-sacrifice. You should keep riches at an arm's length. They may then woo you. If you bestow your glances on them, they are such a coquette that you are sure to be slighted. That is my experience in South Africa.

As for work, apart from pecuniary considerations, I promise that there will be more than sufficient to feed your activity—that too legal work.

Boarding together might present a slight difficulty. If you could manage with vegetarian food, I could place on the table most palatable dishes cooked both in the English as well as the Indian style. If, however, that be not possible, we shall have to engage another cook. At any rate that cannot be an insurmountable difficulty. I trust I have stated the position clearly. If there are any points requiring elucidation you have only to mention them. I do hope you will not allow pecuniary considerations to come in your way. I am sure you will be able to do much in South Africa—more indeed than I may have been instrumental in doing.

I have been seeing here the great men. *The Madras Times* has given its full support and it came out with a rattling good leading article on Friday last. *The Mail* has promised it. The meeting¹ probably comes off on Friday. After the meeting I go to Calcutta and thence probably to Poona. Professor Bhandarkar has promised his full support and I think he can do some good. I halted for a day at Poona on my way here.

I think I wrote to you that the Immigration Bill has received the Royal assent. (Events follow in such quick succession that I forget them soon.) This is an unexpected and terrible blow. I am now renewing the prayer for suspension of State-aided immigration. The Natal Agent-General's diplomatic contradiction, about which you

¹ The meeting that Gandhiji addressed on October 29; *vide* "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 10-10-1896

must have read in the papers, shows the necessity of the agitation in London also. There I am positive you can do much more than I can.

It will be a very good thing if you could accompany me to Natal. I may mention that if the s.s. *Courland* is available by that time I might secure you a free passage.

*I remain,
yours truly,*

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I received your letter only today.

M. K. G.

From the original. Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

109. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

October 26, 1896

I had the honour to visit this excellent institution.¹ I was highly delighted with it. Being a Gujarati Hindu myself, I feel proud to know that this institution was started by Gujarati gentlemen. I wish the institution a brilliant future which I am sure it deserves. I only wish that such institutions will crop up all over India and be the means of preserving the Aryan religion in its purity.

The Hindu, 28-10-1896

110. SPEECH AT MEETING, MADRAS²

October 26, 1896

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

I am to plead before you this evening for the 100,000 British Indians in South Africa, the land of gold and the seat of the late Jameson Raid. This document³ will show you that I have been deputed to do so by the signatories to it, who profess to represent the 100,000 Indians. A large majority of this number are people from Madras and Bengal. Apart, therefore, from the interest that you would take in them as Indians, you are specially interested in the matter.

¹ The Hindu Theological High School

² The meeting, held in Pachaiyappa's Hall, was organized by the Mahajana Sabha.

³ *Vide* "The Credentials", Vol. I. "The Credentials"

South Africa may, for our purposes, be divided into the two self-governing British Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope, the Crown Colony of Zululand, the Transvaal or the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, the Chartered Territories and the Portuguese Territories comprising Delagoa Bay and Beira.

South Africa is indebted to the colony of Natal for the presence of the Indian population there. In the year 1860, when, in the words of a member of the Natal Parliament, "the existence of the Colony hung in the balance", the Colony of Natal introduced indentured Indians into the Colony. Such immigration is regulated by law, is permissible only to few favoured States, e.g., Mauritius, Fiji, Jamaica, Straits Settlements, Damarara and other States, and is allowed only from Madras and Calcutta. As a result of the immigration, in the words of another eminent Natalian, Mr. Saunders:

Indian Immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better.

The sugar and tea industries, as well as sanitation and the vegetable and fish supply of the Colony, are absolutely dependent on the indentured Indians from Madras and Calcutta. The presence of the indentured Indians, about sixteen years ago, drew the free Indians in the shape of traders, who first went there with a view to supply the wants of their own kith and kin; but afterwards found a very valuable customer in the native of South Africa, called Zulu or Kaffir. These traders are chiefly drawn from the Bombay Memon Mahomedans and, owing to their less unfortunate position, have formed themselves into custodians of the interests of the whole Indian population there. Thus, adversity and identity of interests have united in compact body the Indians from the three Presidencies, and they take pride in calling themselves Indians rather than Madrases or Bengalees or Gujaratees, except when it is necessary to do so. That, however, by the way.

These Indians have now spread all over South Africa. Natal, which is governed by a Legislative Assembly consisting of 37 members elected by the voters, a Legislative Council represents the 11 members, nominated by the governor who represents the Queen, and a movable Ministry consisting of 5 members, contains a European population of 50,000, a native population of 400,000 and an Indian population of 51,000. Of the 51,000 Indians, about 16,000 are at present serving their indenture, 30,000 are those that have completed their indenture and are now variously engaged as domestic servants,

gardeners, hawkers and petty traders, and about 5,000 are those who emigrated to the Colony of their own account and are either traders, shopkeepers, assistants or hawkers. A few are, also, schoolmasters, interpreters and clerks.

The self-governing Colony of the Cape of Good Hope has, I believe, an Indians population of about 10,000, consisting of traders, hawkers and labourers. Its total population is nearly 1,800,000, of whom not more than 400,000 are Europeans. The rest are natives of the country and Malaya.

The South African Republic of the Transvaal, which is governed by two elective Chambers called the Volksraad and an Executive with the President at its head, has an Indian population of 5,000, of whom about 200 are traders with liquidated assets amounting to nearly £100,000. The rest are hawkers and waiters or household servants, the latter being men from this Presidency. Its White population is estimated at roughly 120,000 and the Kaffir population at roughly 650,000. This Republic is subject to the Queen's suzerainty. And there is a Convention¹ between Great Britain and the Republic which secures the property, trading and farming rights of all persons other than natives of South Africa, in common with the citizens of the Republic.

The other States have no Indian population to speak of, because of the grievances and disabilities, except the Portuguese territories which contain a very large Indian population and which do not give any trouble to the Indians.

The grievances of the Indians in South Africa are twofold, i.e., those that are due to popular ill-feeling against the Indians and, secondly, the legal disabilities placed upon them. To deal with the first, the Indian is the most hated being in South Africa. Every Indian without distinction is contemptuously called a "coolie". He is also called "Sammy", "Ramasammy", anything but "Indian". Indian schoolmasters are called "coolie schoolmasters". Indian storekeepers are "coolie storekeepers". Two Indian gentlemen from Bombay, Messrs Dada Abdulla and Moosa Hajee Cassim, own steamers. Their steamers are "coolie ships".

There is a very respectable firm of Madras traders by name, A. Colandaveloo Pillay & Co. They have built a large block of buildings

¹ The reference is to the London Convention of 1884.

in Durban; these buildings are called "coolie stores", and the owners are "coolie owners". And I can assure you, gentlemen, that there is as much difference between the partners of that firm and a "coolie" as there is between anyone in this hall and a coolie. The railway and tram officials, in spite of the contradiction that has appeared in official quarters which I am going to deal with presently, I repeat, treat us as beasts. We cannot safely walk on the foot-paths. A Madras gentleman, spotlessly dressed, always avoids the foot-paths of prominent streets in Durban for fear he should be insulted or pushed off.

We are the "Asian dirt" to be "heartily cursed", we are "chock-full of vice" and we "live upon rice", we are "stinking coolie" living on "the smell of an oiled rag", we are "the black vermin", we are described in the Statute books as "semi-barbarous Asiatics, or persons belonging to the uncivilized races of Asia". We "breed like rabbits" and a gentleman at a meeting lately held in Durban said he was sorry we could not be shot like them. There are coaches running between certain places in the Transvaal. We may not sit inside them. It is a sore trial, apart from the indignity it involves and contemplates, to have to sit outside them, either in deadly winter morning, for the winter is severe in the Transvaal, or under a burning sun, though we are Indians. The hotels refuse us admission. Indeed, there are cases in which respectable Indians have found it difficult even to procure refreshments at European places. It was only a short time ago, that a gang of Europeans set fire to an Indian store in a village called Dundee in Natal, doing some damage, and another gang threw burning crackers into the Indian stores in a business street in Durban.

This feeling of intense hatred has been reproduced into legislation in the various States of South Africa restricting the freedom of Indians in many ways. To begin with, Natal, which is the most important from an Indian point of view, has, of late, shown the greatest activity in passing Indian legislation. Till 1894, the Indians had been enjoying the franchise equally with the Europeans under the general franchise law of the Colony, which entitles any adult male, being a British subject, to be placed on the Voters' List, who possesses immovable property worth £50 or pays an annual rent of £10. There is a separate franchise qualification for the Zulu. In 1894, the Natal Legislature passed a Bill disfranchising Asiatics by name. We resisted it in the local Parliament, but without any avail. We then memorialized the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, as a result,

that Bill was, this year, withdrawn and replaced by another which, though not quite so bad as the first one, is bad enough. It says that no natives of countries (not being of European origin) which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions, founded on the parliamentary franchise, shall be placed on the Voters' Roll unless they shall first obtain an exemption from the Governor-in-Council. This Bill excepts from its operation those whose names are already rightly contained in any Voters' List. Before being introduced, it was submitted to Mr. Chamberlain, who has approved of it. We have opposed it on the ground that we have such institutions in India, and that, therefore, the Bill will fail in its objects if it is to disfranchise the Asiatics and that, therefore, also it is a harassing piece of legislation and is calculated to involve us in endless litigation and expense. This is admitted on all hands. The very members who voted for it thought likewise. The Natal Government organ¹ says in effect:

We know India has such institutions and therefore the Bill will not apply to the Indian. But we can have that Bill or none. If it disfranchises Indians, nothing can be better. If it does not, then too we have nothing to fear! For the Indian can never gain political supremacy and, if necessary, we can soon impose an educational test or raise the property qualifications which, while disfranchising Indians wholesale, will not debar a single European from voting.

Thus, the Natal legislature is playing a game of "Toss up" at the Indians' expense. We are a fit subject for vivisection under the Natal Pasteur's deadly scalpel and knife, with this difference between the Paris Pasteur and the Natal Pasteur that, while the former indulged in vivisection with the object of benefiting humanity, the latter has been indulging in it for the sake of amusement out of sheer wantonness. The object of this measure is not political. It is purely and simply to degrade the Indians; in the words of a member of the Natal Parliament: "To make the Indian's life more comfortable in his native land than in Natal"; in the words of another eminent Natalian: "To keep him for ever a hewer of wood and drawer of water". The very fact that at present there are only 251 Indian, as against nearly 10,000 European, voters shows that there is no fear of the Indian vote swamping the European. For a fuller history of the question, I must refer you to the Green Pamphlet. The *London Times*, which has uniformly supported us in our troubles, dealing with the franchise

¹ The reference is to *The Natal Mercury*.

question in Natal, thus puts it, in its issue of the 27th day of June of this year:

The question now put before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting all supply of immigrants, as it would be for Natal to deny the right of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens.

If there is any real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European, we should have no objection to an educational test being imposed or the property qualifications being raised. What we object to is class legislation and the degradation which it necessarily involves. We are fighting for no new privilege in opposing the Bill. We are resisting the deprivation of the one we have been enjoying.

In strict accordance with the policy of degrading the Indian to the level of a raw Kaffir and, in the words of the Attorney-General of Natal, "that of preventing him from forming part of the future South African nation that is going to be built", the Natal Government, last year, introduced their Bill to amend the Indian Immigration Act which I regret to inform you, has received the Royal sanction in spite of our hopes to the contrary. This news was received after the Bombay meeting¹, and it will, therefore, be necessary for me to deal with this question at some length, also because this question more immediately affects this Presidency and can be best studied here.

Up to the 18th day of August, 1894, the indentured immigrants went under a contract of service for five years in consideration for a free passage to Natal, free board and lodging for themselves and their families, and wages at the rate of ten shillings per month for the first year, to be increased by one shilling every following year. They were also entitled to a free passage back to India if they remained in the Colony another five years as free labourers. This is now changed and, in future, the immigrants will have either to remain in the Colony for ever under indenture, their wages increasing to 20 shillings at the end of the 9th year of indentured service, or to return to India or to pay an annual poll-tax of £ 3 sterling, equivalent to nearly half a years' earnings on the indentured scale. A Commission consisting of two

¹ Held on September 26; *vide* "Speech At Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896

members was sent to India in 1893 by the Natal Government to induce the Indian Government to agree to the above alterations with the exception of the imposition of the poll-tax. The present Viceroy, while expressing his reluctance, agreed to alteration subject to the sanction of the Home Government, refusing to allow the Natal Government to make the breach of the clause about compulsory return a criminal offence. The Natal Government have got over the difficulty by the poll-tax clause.

The Attorney-General, in discussing that clause, said that, while an Indian could not be sent to gaol for refusing to return to India or to pay the tax, so long as there was anything worth having in his hut it will be liable to seizure. We strongly opposed that Bill in the local Parliament and failing there, sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain, praying either that the Bill should be disallowed or emigration to Natal should be suspended.

The above proposal was mooted 10 years ago and it was vehemently opposed by the most eminent Colonists in Natal. A Commission was then appointed to inquire into various matters concerning Indians in Natal. One of the Commissioners, Mr. Saunders, says in his additional report:

Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many who now advocate the plan, when they realize what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian emigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.

What is it but taking the best of our servants (the good as well as the bad) and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward, forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit? Where to? Why, back to face prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting Shylock's reward.

The Colony can stop Indian immigration, and that, perhaps, far more easily and permanently than some 'popularity seekers' would desire. But force men off at the end of their service, this the Colony cannot do. And I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

The Attorney-General of Natal, who introduced the Bill under discussion, expressed the following views while giving his evidence before the Commission:

With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported. I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, *in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent*, he gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know: in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years.

And Mr. Binns, who came to India as one of the Natal Commissioners to induce the Indian Government to agree to the above-mentioned alterations, gave the following evidence before the Commission ten years ago:

I think the idea which has been mooted, that all Indians should be compelled to return to India at the end of their term of indenture, is most unfair to the Indian population and would never be sanctioned by the Indian Government. In my opinion, the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community.

But, then, great men may change their views as often and as quickly as they may change their clothes, with impunity and even to advantage. In them, they say, such changes are a result of sincere conviction. It is a thousand pities, however, that, unfortunately for the poor indentured Indian, his fear or, rather, the expectation, that the Indian Government will never sanction the change was not realized.

The London *Star* thus gave vent to its feelings on reading the Bill:

These particulars are enough to throw light upon the hateful persecution to which British Indian subjects are being subjected. The new Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which virtually proposes to reduce Indians to a state of slavery, is another example. The thing is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors, and a slight upon ourselves. Every Englishman is concerned to see that the commercial greed of the South African trader is not permitted to wreak such bitter injustice upon men who, alike by proclamation and by statute, are placed upon an equality with ourselves before the Law.

The London *Times*, also, in supporting our prayer, has compared the state of perpetual indenture to a “state perilously near to slavery”. It also says:

The Government of India has one simple remedy. It can suspend indentured immigration to South Africa as it has suspended such immigration to foreign possessions until it obtains the necessary guarantees for the present well-being and the future status of the immigrants. . . . It is eminently a case for sensible and conciliatory action on both sides. . . . But the Indian Government may be forced to adopt measures in connection with the wider claim now being urged by every section of the Indian community and which has been explicitly acknowledged by Her Majesty’s Government at home, namely, the claim of the Indian races to trade and to labour with the full status of British subjects throughout the British Empire and in allied States.

The letters from Natal, informing me of the Royal sanction to this Bill, ask me to request the Indian public to help us to get emigration suspended. I am well aware that the idea of suspending emigration requires careful consideration. I humbly think that there is no other conclusion possible in the interests of the Indians at large. Emigration is supposed to relieve the congested districts and to benefit those who emigrate. If the Indian, instead of paying the poll-tax, return to India, the congestion cannot be affected at all. And the returned Indians will rather be a source of difficulty than anything else, as they must necessarily find it difficult to get work and cannot be expected to bring sufficient to live upon the interest of their capital. It certainly will not benefit the emigrants as they will never, if the Government can possibly help it, be allowed to rise higher than the status of labourers. The fact is that they are being helped on to degradation. Under such circumstances, I humbly ask you to support our prayer to suspend emigration to Natal unless the new law can be altered or repealed.

You will naturally be anxious to know the treatment of the Indians while under indenture. Of course, that life cannot be bright under any circumstances; but I do not think their lot is worse than the lot of the Indians similarly placed in other parts of the world. At the same time, they, too, certainly come in for a share of the tremendous colour prejudice. I can only briefly allude to the matter here and refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet, wherein it has been more fully discussed. There is a sad mortality from suicides on certain estates in Natal. It is very difficult for an indentured Indian to have his services transferred on the ground of ill-treatment. An indentured Indian, after

he becomes free, is given a free pass. This he has to show whenever asked to do so. It is meant to detect desertion by the indentured Indians. The working of this system is a source of much irritation to poor free Indians and often puts respectable Indians in a very unpleasant position. This law really would not give any trouble but for the unreasonable prejudice. A sympathetic Protector of Immigrants, preferably an Indian gentleman of high standing and knowing the Tamil, Telugu and Hindustani languages, would certainly mitigate the usual hardships of the indentured life. An Indian immigrant who loses his free pass is, as a rule, called upon to pay £3 sterling for a duplicate copy. This is nothing but a system of blackmail.

The 9 o'clock rule in Natal, which makes it necessary for every Indian to carry a pass, if he wants to be out after 9 p.m., at the pain of being locked up in a dungeon, causes much heart-burning, especially among the gentlemen from this Presidency. You will be pleased to hear that children of many indentured Indians receive a pretty good education and they wear, as a rule, the European dress. They are a most sensitive class and yet, unfortunately, most liable to arrest under the 9 o'clock rule. The European dress for an Indian is no recommendation in Natal. It is rather the reverse, for the flowing robe of a Memon free the wearer from such molestation. A happy incident, described in the Green Pamphlet, led the police in Durban, some years ago, to free Indians thus dressed from liability to arrest after 9 p.m. A Tamil schoolmistress, a Tamil schoolmaster and a Tamil Sunday school-teacher were, only a few months ago, arrested and locked up under this law. They all got justice in the law-courts, but that was a poor consolation. The result, however, was that the Corporations in Natal are clamouring for an alteration in the law so that it might be impossible for such Indians to get off scot-free in the law-courts.

There is a bye-law in Durban which requires registration of coloured servants. This rule may be, and perhaps is, necessary for the Kaffirs who would not work, but absolutely useless with regard to the Indians. But the policy is to class the Indian with the Kaffir whenever possible.

This does not complete the list of grievances in Natal. I must beg to refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet for further

information.¹

But, gentlemen, you have been told lately by the Natal Agent-General that the Indians are nowhere better treated than in Natal; that the fact that a majority of the indentured labourers do not avail themselves of the return passage is the best answer to my pamphlet, and that the railway and tram-car officials do not treat the Indians as beasts nor do the law-courts deny them justice.

With the greatest deference to the Agent-General, all I can say as to the first statement is that he must have very queer notions of good treatment, if to be locked up for being out after 9 p.m. without a pass, to be denied the most elementary right of citizenship in a free country, to be denied a higher status than that of bondman and, at best, a free labourer, and to be subjected to other restrictions referred to above, are instances of good treatment. And if such treatment is the best the Indians receive throughout the world, then the lot of the Indians in other parts of the world and here must be very miserable indeed, according to the commonsense view. The thing is that Mr. Walter Peace, the Agent-General, is made to look through the official spectacles and to him everything official is bound to appear rosy. The legal disabilities are condemnatory of the action of the Natal Government, and how can the Agent-General be expected to condemn himself? If he, or the Government which he represents, only admitted that the legal disabilities mentioned above were against the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, I should not stand before you this evening. I respectfully submit that statements of opinions made by the Agent-General cannot be allowed to have greater weight than those of an accused person about his own guilt.

The fact that the indentured Indians, as a rule, do not avail themselves of the return passage we do not dispute, but we certainly dispute that it is the best answer to our complaints. How can that fact disprove the existence of the legal disabilities? It may prove that the Indians, who do not take advantage of the return passage, either do not mind the disabilities, or remain in the Colony in spite of such disabilities. If the former be the case, it is the duty of those who know better to make the Indians realize their situation and to enable them to see that submission to them means degradation. If the latter be the

¹ About 6 pages of text that follow (to end of para "Quoting statistics . . . in spite of the persecution", p. 85) later formed part of the second edition of the Green Pamphlet. *Vide* also footnote on p. 26.

case, it is one more instance of the patience and the forbearing spirit of the Indian Nation which was acknowledged by Mr. Chamberlain in his Despatch in connection with the Transvaal arbitration. Because they bear them is no reason why the disabilities should not be removed or why they should be interpreted into meaning the best treatment possible.

Moreover, who are these people who, instead of returning to India, settle in the Colony? They are the Indians drawn from the poorest classes and from the most thickly populated districts, possibly living in a state of semi-starvation in India. They migrated to Natal with their families, if any, with the intention of settling there, if possible. Is it any wonder, if these people, after the expiry of their indenture, instead of returning "to face semistarvation", as Mr. Saunders has put it, settle in a country where the climate is magnificent and where they may earn a decent living? A starving man, generally, would stand any amount of rough treatment to get a crumb of bread.

Do not the Uitlanders make out a terribly long list of grievances in the Transvaal? And yet, do they not flock to the Transvaal in thousands in spite of the ill-treatment they receive there, because they can earn their bread in the Transvaal more easily than in the old country?

This, too, should be borne in mind that, in making his statement, Mr. Peace has not taken into account the free Indian trader who goes to the Colony on his own account and who feels most the indignities and disabilities. If it does not do to tell the Uitlander that he may not go to the Transvaal if he cannot bear the ill-treatment, much less will it do to say so to the enterprising Indian. We belong to the Imperial family and are children, adopted it may be, of the same august mother, having the same rights and privileges guaranteed to us as to the European children. It was in that belief that we went to the Colony of Natal, and we trust that our belief was well founded.

The Agent-General has contradicted the statement made in the pamphlet that the railway and tram-car official treat the Indians as beasts. Even if the statements I have made were incorrect, that would not disprove the legal disabilities which, and which alone, have been made the subject of memorials and to remove which we invoke the direct intervention of the Home and the Indian Governments. But I venture to say that the Agent-General has been misinformed, and beg

to repeat that the Indians *are* treated as beasts by the railway and the tram-car officials. That statement was made now nearly two years ago in quarters where it would have been contradicted at once. I had the honour to address an ‘Open Letter’¹ to the members of the local Parliament in Natal. It was widely circulated in the Colony and noticed by almost every leading newspaper in South Africa. No one contradicted it then. It was even admitted by some newspapers. Under such circumstances, I ventured to quote it in my pamphlet published here. I am not given to exaggerate matters, and it is very unpleasant to me to have to cite testimony in my own favour, but since an attempt has been made to discredit my statements and, thereby, the cause I am advocating, I feel it to be my duty, for the sake of the cause, to tell you what the papers in South Africa thought about the ‘Open Letter’, in which the statement was made.

The Star, the leading newspaper in Johannesburg, says:

Mr. Gandhi writes forcibly, moderately and well. He has himself suffered some slight measure of injustice since he came into the Colony, but that fact does not seem to have coloured his sentiment, and it must be confessed that to the tone of the open letter no objection can reasonably be taken. Mr. Gandhi discusses the questions he has raised with conspicuous moderation.

The Natal Mercury, the Government organ in Natal, says:

Mr. Gandhi writes with calmness and moderation. He is as impartial as anyone could expect him to be and probably a little more so than might have been expected, considering that he did not receive very just treatment at the hands of the Law Society when he first came to the Colony.

Had I made unfounded statements, the newspapers would not have given such a certificate to the ‘Open Letter’.

An Indian, about two years ago, took out a second-class ticket on the Natal railway, In a single night journey he was thrice disturbed and was twice made to change compartments to please European passengers. The case came before the Court and the Indian got £10 damages. The following is the plaintiff’s evidence in the case:

Deponent got into a second-class carriage in the train, leaving Charlestown at 1.30 p.m. Three other Indians were in the same compartment, but they got out at Newcastle. A white man opened the door of the compartment and beckoned to witness, saying: “Come out, Sammy.” Plaintiff asked: “Why”, and the white man replied: “Never mind, come out, I want to

¹Vide “Open Letter”, 19-12-1894

place someone here.” Witness said: “Why should I come out from here when I have paid my fare?” ... The white man then left and brought an Indian who, witness believed, was in the employ of the railway. The Indian was told to tell plaintiff to get out of the carriage. Thereupon the Indian said: “The white man orders you to come out and you must come out.” The Indian then left. Witness said to the white man: “What do you want to shift me about for? I have paid my fare and have a right to remain here.” The white man became angry at this and said: “Well, if you don’t come out, I will knock hell out of you.” The white man got into the carriage and laid hold of witness by the arm and tried to pull him out. Plaintiff said: “Let me alone and I will come out.” The witness left the carriage and the white man pointed out another second-class compartment and told him to go there. Plaintiff did as he was directed. The compartment he was shown into was empty. He believed some people who were playing a band were put into the carriage from which he was expelled. This white man was the District Superintendent of Railways at Newcastle. To proceed, witness travelled undisturbed to Maritzburg. He fell asleep, and when he awoke at Maritzburg he found a white man, a white woman and a child in the compartment with him. A white man came up to the carriage and said: “Is that your boy?” speaking to the white man in the compartment. Witness’s fellow-traveller replied: “Yes”, pointing to his little boy. The other white man then said: “No, I don’t mean him. I mean the damned coolie in the corner.” This gentleman with the choice language was a railway official, being a shunter. The white man in the compartment replied: “Oh, never mind him, leave him alone.” Then the white man outside (the official) said: “I am not going to allow a coolie to be in the same compartment with white people.” This man addressed plaintiff, saying: “Sammy, come out.” Plaintiff said: “Why, I was removed at Newcastle to this compartment.” The white man said: “Well, you must come out” and was about to enter the carriage. Witness, thinking he would be handled as at Newcastle, said he would go out and left the compartment. The white man pointed out another second-class compartment which witness entered. This was empty for a time but, before leaving, a white man entered. Another white man (the official) afterwards came up and said: “If you don’t like to travel with that stinking coolie, I will find you another carriage” (*The Natal Advertiser*, 22nd November, 1893, Wednesday).

You will have noticed that the official at Maritzburg maltreated the Indian passenger although his white fellow-passenger did not mind him. If this is not bestial treatment, I should very much like to know what it is, and such occurrences take place often enough to be irritating.

It was found during the case that one of the witnesses for the defendant was coached. In answer to a question from the Bench whether the Indian passengers were treated with consideration, the

witness, who was one of the officials referred to, replied in the affirmative. Thereupon, the presiding magistrate who tried the case is reported to have said to the witness: "Then you have a different opinion to what I have and it is a curious thing that people who are not connected with railway observe more than you."

The Natal Advertiser, a European daily in Durban, made the following remarks on the case:

It was indisputable from the evidence that the Arab had been badly treated and seeing that second-class tickets are issued to Indians of this description, the plaintiff ought not to have been subjected to unnecessary annoyance and indignity Some definite measures should be taken to minimize the danger of trouble arising between European and coloured passengers, without rendering the carrying out of such measures annoying to any person, whether black or white.

In the course of its remarks on the same case, *The Natal Mercury* observed:

There is, throughout South Africa, a tendency to treat all Indians as coolies pure and simple, no matter whether they be educated and cleanly in their habits or not. On our railways we have noticed, on more than one occasion, that coloured passengers are not by any means treated with civility, and although it would be unreasonable to expect that the white employees of the N.G.R. should treat them with the same deference as is accorded to European passengers, still we think it would not be in any way derogatory to their dignity if the officials were a little more *suaviter in modo* when dealing with coloured travellers. (24-11-1893)

The Cape Times, a leading newspaper in South Africa, says:

Natal presents the curious spectacle of a country entertaining a supreme contempt for the very class of people she can least do without. Imagination can only picture the commercial paralysis which would inevitably attend the withdrawal of the Indian population from that Colony. And yet the Indians is the most despised of creatures; he may not ride in the tram-cars, nor sit in the same compartments of a railway carriage with the Europeans, hotel-keepers refuse him food or shelter and he is denied the privilege of the public bath! (5-7-1891)

Here is the opinion of an Anglo-Indian, Mr. Drummond, who is intimately connected with the Indians in Natal. He says, writing to *The Natal Mercury*:

The majority of the people here seem to forget that they are British subjects, that their Maharani is our Queen and, for that reason alone, one would think that they might be spared the opprobrious term of 'coolie' as it is here applied. In India, it is only the lower class of white men who calls native

a 'nigger' and treats him as if he were unworthy of any consideration or respect. In their eyes, as in the eyes of many in this Colony, he is treated either as a heavy burden or a mechanical machine . . . It is a common thing, and a lamentable thing, to hear the ignorant and the unenlightened speak of the Indians generally as the scum of the earth, etc. It is depreciation from the white man and not appreciation that they get.

I think I have adduced sufficient outside testimony to substantiate my statement that the railway officials treat the Indians as beasts. On the tram-cars, the Indians are often not allowed to sit inside but are sent 'upstairs', as the phrase goes. They are often made to remove from one seat to another or prevented from occupying front benches. I know an Indian officer, a Tamil gentleman, dressed in the latest European style who was made to stand on the tram-car board, although there was accommodation available for him.

As to the statement that the Indians get justice in the lawcourts, I beg to say that I have never said they do not, nor am I prepared to admit that they get it at all times and in all courts.

Quoting statistics to prove the prosperity of the Indian community is quite unnecessary. It is not denied that the Indians who go to Natal do earn a living and that in spite of the persecution.

In the Transvaal we cannot own landed property, we may not trade or reside except in specified locations which are described by the British Agent "as places to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town". We may not, as of right, walk on the foot-paths in Johannesburg and Pretoria, we may not be out after 9 p.m. We may not travel without passes. The law prevents us from travelling first or second class on the railways. We are required to pay a special registration fee of £3 to enable us to settle in the Transvaal, and though we are treated as mere "chattels" and have no privileges whatever, we may be called upon to render compulsory military service, if Mr. Chamberlain disregards the memorial which we have addressed to him on the subject. The history of the whole case, as it affects the Indians in the Transvaal, is very interesting, and I am only sorry that for want of time I cannot deal with it now. I must, however, beg you to study it from the Green Pamphlet. I must not omit to mention that it is criminal for an Indian to buy native gold.

The Orange Free State has made "the British Indian an impossibility by simply classifying him with the Kaffir", as its chief

organ puts it. It has passed a special law whereby we are prevented from trading, farming or owning property under any circumstances. If we submit to these degrading conditions, we may be allowed to reside after passing through certain humiliating ceremonies. We were driven out from the State and our stores were closed, causing to us a loss of £9,000. And this grievance remains absolutely without redress.

The Cape Parliament has passed a Bill granting the East London Municipality in that Colony the power to frame bye-laws prohibiting Indians from walking on the foot-paths and making them live in locations. It has issued instructions to the authorities of East Griqualand not to issue any trading licences to the Indians. The Cape Government are in communication with the Home Government with a view to induce them to sanction legislation restricting the influx of the Asiatics.

The people in the Chartered Territories are endeavouring to close the country against the Asiatic trader.

In Zululand, Crown Colony, we cannot own or acquire landed property in the townships of Eshowe and Nondweni. This question is now before Mr. Chamberlain for consideration. As in the Transvaal, there also it is criminal for an Indian to buy native gold.

Thus, we are hemmed in on all sides by restrictions. And, if nothing further were to be done here and in England on our behalf, it is merely a question of time when the respectable Indian in South Africa will be absolutely extinct.

Nor is this merely a local question. It is, as the London *Times* puts it, "that of the status of the British Indian outside India". "If", says the *Thunderer*, "they fail to secure that position (that is of equal status) in South Africa, it will be difficult for them to attain it elsewhere." I have no doubt you have read in the papers that Australian Colonies have passed legislation to prevent Indians from settling in that part of the world. It will be interesting to know how the Home Government deal with that question.

The real cause of all this prejudice may be expressed in the words of the leading organ in South Africa, namely, the *Cape Times*, when it was under the editorship of the prince of South African journalists, Mr. St. Leger:

It is the position of these merchants which is productive of no little hostility to this day. And it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sought to inflict upon them through the medium of the State

what looks on the face of it something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

Continues the same organ :

The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives (i.e., of South Africa), simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level.

If this was true in 1889, when the above was written, it is doubly so now, because the legislatures of South Africa have shown phenomenal activity in passing measures restricting the liberty of the Queen's Indian subjects.

Other objections also have been raised to our presence there, but they will not bear scrutiny, and I have dealt with them in the Green Pamphlet. I venture, however, to quote from *The Natal Advertiser*, which states one of them and prescribes a statesman-like remedy also. And so far as the objection may be valid, we are in perfect accord with the *Advertiser's* suggestion. This paper, which is under European management, was at one time violently against us. Dealing with the whole question from an Imperial standpoint, it concludes:

It will, therefore, probably yet be found that the removal of the drawbacks at present incidental to the immigration of Indians into British Colonies is not to be effected so much by the adoption of the obsolete policy of exclusion as by an enlightened and progressive application of ameliorating laws to those Indians who settle in them. One of the chief objection to Indians is that they do not live in accordance with European rules. The remedy for this is to gradually raise their mode of life by compelling them to live in better dwellings and by creating among them new wants. It will probably be found easier, because more in accord with the great onward movements of mankind, to demand of such settlers that they shall rise to their new conditions than to endeavour to maintain the *status quo ante* by their entire exclusion.

We believe, also, that much of the ill feeling is due to the want of proper knowledge in South Africa about the Indians in India. We are, therefore, endeavouring to educate public opinion in South Africa by imparting the necessary information. With regard to the legal disabilities we have tried to influence in our favour the public opinion both in England and here. As you know, both the Conservatives and Liberals have supported us in England without distinction. The London *Times* has given eight leading articles to our cause in a very

sympathetic spirit. This alone has raised us a step higher in the estimation of Europeans in South Africa and has considerably affected for the better the tone of newspapers there. The British Committee of the Congress has been working for us for a very long time. Ever since he entered Parliament, Mr. Bhownagree has been pleading our cause in season and out of season. Says one of our best sympathizers in London:

The wrong is so serious that it has only to be known in order, I hope, to be remedied. I feel it my duty on all occasions and in all suitable ways to insist that the Indian subjects of the Crown should enjoy the full status of British subjects throughout the whole British Empire and in allied States. This is the position which you and our Indian friends in South Africa should firmly take up. In such a question compromise is impossible. For any compromise would relinquish the fundamental right of the Indian races to the complete status of British subjects—a right which they have earned by their loyalty in peace and by their services in war, a right which was solemnly guaranteed to them by the Queen's Proclamation in 1858 and which has now been explicitly recognized by Her Majesty's Government.

Says the same gentleman in another letter:

I have great hopes that justice will in the end be done. You have a good cause. . . . You have only to take up your position strongly in order to be successful. That position is that the British Indian subjects in South Africa are, alike in our own colonies and in independent friendly States, being deprived of their status as British subjects guaranteed to them by the Sovereign and the British Parliament.

An ex-Liberal member of the House of Commons says:

You are infamously treated by the Colonial Government and you will be so treated by the Home Government if they do not compel the Colonies to alter their policy:

A Conservative member says:

I am quite aware that the situation is surrounded with many difficulties, but some points stand out clear and, as far as I can make out, it is true to say that breaches of what in India is a civil contract are punishable in South Africa as though they were criminal offences. This is beyond doubt contrary to the principles of the Indian Code and seems to me an infringement of the privileges guaranteed to British subjects in India. Again, it is perfectly evident that in the Boer Republic and possibly in Natal, it is the direct obvious intention of the Government to "hunt" natives of India and to compel them to carry on their business under degrading conditions. The excuses which are put forward to defend the infringements of the liberties of British subjects in the Transvaal are too flimsy to be worth a moment's attention.

Yet another Conservative member says:

Your activity is praiseworthy and demands just. I am, therefore, willing to help you as far as lies in my power.

Such is the sympathy evoked in England. Here, too, I know we have the same sympathy, but I humbly think that our cause may occupy our attention still more largely.

What is required in India has been well put by the *Moslem Chronicle* in a forcibly-written leader:

What with a strong and intelligent public opinion here and a well meaning Government, the difficulties we have to contend with are not at all commensurate with those that retard the well-being of our countrymen in that country. It is, therefore, quite time that all public bodies should at once turn their attention to this important subject to create an intelligent public opinion with a view to organize an agitation for the removal of the grievances under which our brethren are labouring. Indeed, these grievances have become and are day by day becoming so unbearable and offensive that the requisite agitation cannot be taken up one day too soon.

I may state our position a little more clearly. We are aware that the insults and indignities that we are subjected to at the hands of the populace cannot be directly removed by the intervention of the Home Government. We do not appeal to it for any such intervention. We bring them to the notice of the public so that the fair-minded of all communities and the Press may, by expressing their disapproval, materially reduce their rigour and, possibly, eradicate them ultimately. But we certainly do appeal, and we hope not vainly, to the Home Government for protection against reproduction of such ill feeling in legislation. We certainly beseech the Home Government to disallow all the Acts of the Legislative bodies of the Colonies restricting our freedom in any shape or form. And this brings me to the last question, namely, how far can the Home Government interfere with such action on the part of the Colonies and the allied States. As for Zululand, there can be no question, since it is a Crown Colony directly governed from Downing Street through a Governor. It is not a self-governing or a responsibly-governed Colony, as the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope are. With regard to the last two, their Constitution Act provides that Her Majesty may disallow any act of the local Parliament within two years, even after it has become law having received the Governor's assent. That is one safeguard against oppressive measures by the Colonies. The Royal instructions to the Government, as also the Constitution Act, enumerate certain Bills which cannot be assented to

by the Governor without Her Majesty's previous sanction. Among such are Bills which have, for their object, class legislation, such as the Franchise Bill or Immigration Bill. Her Majesty's intervention is, thus, direct and precise. While it is true that the Home Government is slow to interfere with the Acts of the Colonial legislatures, there are instances where it has not hesitated to put its foot down on occasions less urgent than the present one. As you are aware, the repeal of the first Franchise Bills was due to such wholesome intervention. What is more, the Colonists are ever afraid of it. And as a result of the sympathy expressed in England and the sympathetic answer given by Mr. Chamberlain to the Deputation that waited on him some months ago, most of the papers in South Africa, at any rate in Natal, have veered round considerably. As to the Transvaal, there is the Convention. As to the Orange Free State, I can only say that it is an unfriendly act on the part of a friendly State to shut her doors against any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. And as such, I humbly think it can be effectively checked.

It may not be amiss to quote a few passages from the London *Times* articles, bearing on the question of intervention as well as the whole question generally:

The whole question resolves itself into this. Are Her Majesty's Indian subjects to be treated as a degraded and an outcaste race by a friendly Government or are they to have the same rights and status as other British subjects enjoy? Are leading Mohammedan merchants, who might sit in the Legislative Council at Bombay, to be liable to indignities and outrages in the South African Republic? We are continually telling our Indian subjects that the economic future of their country depends on their ability to spread themselves out and to develop their foreign trade. What answer can our Indian Government give them if it fails to secure to them the same protection abroad which is secured to the subjects of every other dependency of the Crown?

It is a mockery to urge our Indian fellow-subjects to embark on external commerce if the moment they leave India they lose their rights as British subjects and can be treated by foreign governments as a degraded and an outcaste race.

In another article it says:

The matter is eminently one for good offices and for influence for that "friendly negotiation" which Mr. Chamberlain promises, though he warns the deputation that it may be tedious and will certainly not be easy. As to the Cape Colony and Natal, the question is to a certain extent simplified since, of course, the Colonial office can speak to them with greater authority.

The incident is one of those which suggest wider questions than any that directly offer themselves for official replies. We are at the centre of a world-wide Empire at a period when locomotion is easy and is everyday becoming easier, both in time and cost. Some portions of the Empire are crowded, others are comparatively empty, and the flow from the congested to the under-peopled districts is continuous. What is to happen when subjects differing in colour, religion and habits from ourselves or from the natives of a particular spot emigrate to that spot for their living? How are race prejudices and antipathies, the jealousies of trade, the fear of competition to be controlled? The answer, of course, must be by intelligent policy at the Colonial Office.

Small as are the requirements of the Indians, the steady growth of the population of India is such that certain outward movement is inevitable, and it is a movement that will increase. It is very desirable that our white fellow-subjects in Africa should understand that there will, in all probability, be this current flowing from India, that it is perfectly within the rights of the British Indian to seek his subsistence at the Cape, and that he ought, in the common interest of the Empire, to be well treated when he comes there. It is indeed to be feared that the ordinary Colonist, wherever settled, thinks much more of his immediate interests than of those of the great empire which protects him, and he has some difficulty in recognizing a fellow-subject in the Hindu or the Parsee. The duty of the Colonial office is to enlighten him and to see that fair treatment is extended to British subjects of whatever colour.

Again:

In India, the British, the Hindu and the Mussalman communities find themselves face to face with the question as to whether at the outset of the new industrial movements which have been so long and anxiously awaited, Indian traders and workers are or are not to have the same status before the law as all other British subjects enjoy. May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied states? Or are they to be treated as outcaste races subjected to a system of permits and passes when travelling on their ordinary business avocations and relegated, as the Transvaal Government would relegate them, to a ghetto at the permanent centres of their trade? These are questions which apply to all Indians who seek to better their fortunes outside the limits of the Indian Empire. Mr. Chamberlain's words and the determined attitude taken up by every section of the Indian Press show that to such questions there can be but one answer.

I shall take the liberty to give one more quotation from the same journal:

The question with which Mr. Chamberlain was called upon to deal cannot be so easily reduced to concrete terms. On the one hand, he clearly laid

down the principle of the “equal rights” and equal privileges of all British subjects in regard to redress from foreign States. It would, indeed, have been impossible to deny that principle. Our Indian subjects have been fighting the battles of Great Britain over half the old world with a loyalty and courage which have won the admiration of all British men. The fighting reserve which Great Britain has in the Indian races adds greatly to her political influence and prestige, and it would be violation of the British sense of justice to use the blood and the valour of these races in war and yet to deny them the protection of the British name in the enterprise of peace. The Indian workers and traders are slowly spreading across the earth from Central Asia to the Australian Colonies and from the Straits Settlements to the Canary Islands. Wherever the Indian goes he is the same useful, well-doing man, law-abiding under whatever form of Government he may find himself, frugal in his wants and industrious in his habits. But these very virtues make him a formidable competitor in the labour markets to which he resorts. Although numbering in the aggregate some hundreds of thousands, the immigrant Indian labourers and small dealers have only recently appeared in the foreign countries or British Colonies in numbers sufficient to arouse jealousy and to expose them to political injustice. But the facts which we brought to notice in June, and which we urged on Mr. Chamberlain by a deputation of Indians last week, show that the necessity has now arisen for protecting the Indian labourer from such jealousy and for securing to him the same rights as other British subjects enjoy.

Gentlemen, Bombay has spoken in no uncertain terms. We are yet young and inexperienced, we have a right to appeal to you, our elder and freer brethren, for protection. Being under the yoke of oppression, we can merely cry out in anguish. You have heard our cry. The blame will now lie on your shoulders if the yoke is not removed from our necks.¹

From a printed copy of the speech circulated at the meeting

¹ The meeting later adopted a resolution protesting against the ill-treatment of South African Indians and calling for relief.

111. LETTER TO "THE HINDU"

MADRAS,
October 27, 1896

THE EDITOR, *THE HINDU*

MADRAS

SIR,

It would be ungrateful on my part if I did not thank the Madras public for rallying round the cause of the British Indians in South Africa as they did so admirably last evening. Indeed, all seemed to have vied with one another in making the meeting a huge success which it evidently was. I beg to thank you for your cordial support to the movement. It, perhaps, shows the absolute righteousness of the cause and the reality of our grievances. My special thanks are due to the courteous Secretaries of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, who worked with unremitting zeal in organizing the meeting and made the cause their own. I only hope that the sympathy and support, thus far extended, will be continued and we shall not be long in securing justice. I beg to assure you and the public that the news of the last night's meeting, when it reaches South Africa, will fill the hearts of the Indians with gladness and joy and thankfulness. Such meetings will form a silver lining to the cloud of distress that is hanging over our heads. As it was very late last evening I was unable to give expression to the above sentiments. Hence this letter.

The scramble for the copies of the pamphlet was a scene I will not easily forget. I am issuing a second edition of the pamphlet, and as soon as the copies are ready, they can be had from the obliging Secretaries of the Sabha.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 28-10-1896

112. PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF
THE GREEN PAMPHLET

The rush for copies of this pamphlet at the Madras meeting¹ in Pachaiyappa's Hall has necessitated the issue of the second edition. It was a scene never to be forgotten.

The demand proved two things—the importance of the question of the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, and the interest shown by the Indian public in the welfare of their countrymen beyond the waters.

It is to be hoped that the second edition will be disposed of as soon as the first, showing the continuance of the interest. Publicity is perhaps the chief remedy for the grievances and the pamphlet is one of the means to that end.

The appendix is an addition to the 1st edition and is a part of the address read before the Madras meeting, being a reply to the Natal Agent-General's statement to Reuter.

The Natal Immigration Law Amendment Act referred to in the pamphlet has, unfortunately for the poor Indians in South Africa, received the Royal assent. It is respectfully submitted that the question requires the closest study by our public men and there should be no rest till the Act is repealed or State-aided emigration to Natal suspended. The Madras meeting has passed a resolution requesting suspension of such emigration if the repeal of the Act cannot be brought about.

M. K. GANDHI

Calcutta, 1-11-1896

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public

¹ *Vide* the preceding item

113. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

GREAT EASTERN HOTEL, CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1896

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

Your last letter was redirected to me here. I wrote¹ to you from Madras informing you of my address in Calcutta and wrote² to you after my arrival here. I hope you received both the letters.

It is quite true that you will be making a pecuniary sacrifice in going to Natal. But I am sure the cause is worth the sacrifice.

I shall endeavour to catch the *Courland* which is expected to leave before the 20th instant. I wish you could be ready by that time.

Will you consider the new Franchise Law of Natal and get the opinion of the eminent lawyers in Bombay if they would do so *gratis*? You will find the text of the Bill in the Franchise memorial and one legal opinion on it in the pamphlet. Any opinion obtained here will be very useful to us in Natal.

I believe the meeting here will come off Friday week. The matter will be finally decided tomorrow.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

114. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

CALCUTTA,
November 10, 1896

[REPORTER:] Will you please tell me, Mr. Gandhi, in a few words, something of the grievances of the Indians in South Africa?

[GANDHI:] There are Indians in many parts of South Africa—in the Colonies of Natal, the Cape of Good Hope, the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, and elsewhere, in all of which, more

¹ *Vide* Vol.I, "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 18-10-1896

² The letter is not traceable.

or less, they are denied the ordinary rights of citizenship. But I more particularly represent the Indians in Natal, who number about fifty thousand. The first Indians were, of course, the coolies who were taken over under indentures from Madras and Bengal for the purpose of labouring in the various plantations. They were mostly Hindus, but a few of them were Mohammedans. They served their contract time, and on obtaining their freedom they elected to stay in the country, because they found that, as market gardeners or hawkers of vegetables, they could earn from three to four pounds sterling per month. In this way, there are, at present, about thirty thousand free Indians settled in the Colony, while some sixteen thousand others are serving their indentures. There is, however, another class of Indians, numbering about five thousand, Mohammedans from the Bombay side who have been attracted to the country by the prospects of trade. Some of the latter are doing well. Many are landowners in a large way, while two own ships. The Indians have been settled in the country for twenty years and more, and, being prosperous, were contented and happy.

[R.] What then, was the cause of all the present trouble, Mr. Gandhi?

[G.] Simply trade jealousy. The Colony was desirous of securing all possible benefit from the Indians as labourers, because the natives of the country do not work in the fields, and the Europeans cannot. But the moment the Indians entered into competition with the European as a trader, he found himself thwarted, obstructed, and insulted by a system of organized persecution. And gradually, this feeling of hatred and oppression has been imported into the laws of the Colony. The Indians had been quietly enjoying the franchise for years, subject to certain property qualifications, and, in 1894, there were 251 Indian voters on the register against 9,309 European voters. But the Government suddenly thought, or pretended to think, that there was danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European, and they introduced into the Legislative Assembly a Bill disfranchising all Asiatics save those who were then rightly contained in any Voters' List. Against this Bill, the Indians memorialized both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council; but to no purpose, and the Bill was passed into law. The Indians then memorialized Lord Ripon, who was in those days at the Colonial Office. As a result, that Act has now been repealed and replaced by an Act which says: 'The natives, or descendants in the male line of natives, of countries which have not

hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise shall not be placed on any Voters' List unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of the Act.' It also exempts from its operation those persons who are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was first submitted to Mr. Chamberlain who has practically approved of it. We have yet thought it advisable to oppose it, and with a view to secure its rejection, we have sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain, and hope to secure the same measure of support that has been extended to us hitherto.

[R.] Then are we to understand that the Indians in Natal—the great bulk of whom are coolies, who would never have aspired to free institutions in their own country—are desirous of wielding political power in Natal?

[G.] By no means. We are most careful to put out, in all our representations to the Government and the public, that the object of our agitation is merely the removal of vexatious disabilities devised, as we believe, to degrade us as compared to the European population. With the object of still further discouraging Indian colonization, the Natal Legislature has passed a Bill to keep indentured Indians under contract for the whole term of their stay in the Colony; and if they object to renew their contract at the end of their first term of five years, to send them back to India, or, if they decline to return, to compel them to pay an annual tax of £3 per head. Unfortunately for us, the Indian Government, on the *ex parte* representation of a Commission that visited India from Natal in 1893, have accepted the principle of compulsory indenture; but we are memorializing both the Home and the Indian Governments against it.

[R.] We have heard much, Mr. Gandhi, of daily annoyances to which Indians in Natal are said to be subjected at the hands of the white Colonists.

[G.] Oh, yes! And the law supports the Europeans in this system of persecution, either openly or covertly. The law says that an Indian must not walk on the foot-paths but pass along the middle of the road; that he must not travel either first or second class on the railways; that he must not be out of his house without a pass after 9 o'clock at night; that he must take out a pass if he wishes to drive cattle; and so on. Imagine the tyranny of these special laws! For the infraction of them, Indians—men of the highest respectability who might sit in your Legislative Councils—are daily insulted, assaulted, and taken up by the police. And in addition to these legal disabilities, there are

social disqualifications. No Indian is permitted in the tramcars, in the public hotels, in public baths.

[R.] Well, but, Mr. Gandhi, suppose you succeed in having the legal disabilities removed, what about the social disqualifications? Will they not pinch and gall and fret you a hundred times oftener than the thought that you cannot return a member to the Legislative Assembly?

[G.] We hope that when the legal disabilities are removed, the social persecution will gradually disappear.

The Statesman, 12-11-1896

115. LETTER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"¹

CALCUTTA,
November 13, 1896

THE EDITOR, *The Englishman*

CALCUTTA

SIR,

"Send Mohandas² (my Christian name) road enforcing Indians to locations." These are the words of a telegram received yesterday from Natal by the agents, at Bombay, of Messrs Dada Abdulla and Co., a leading Indian firm in South Africa. The Agents very kindly telegraphed the message to me. This renders it absolutely necessary for me to leave Calcutta abruptly.

"Road" is an error. I believe it means "Rhodes",³ meaning the Cape Government. The message means, therefore, that the Cape Government are enforcing Indians to locations. And it is not unlikely, as the Cape Parliament has empowered the East London Municipality to remove the Indians to locations. Yet, seeing that the whole Indian question is now pending before Mr. Chamberlain, such active operations might have been suspended for a time.

The message shows the tremendous importance of the question as well as the feeling of the Indian community in South Africa about the matter. Had they not felt the indignity keenly they would not have

¹ This appeared under the title "The Indians in South Africa."

² The source has "Mohanlal", evidently a misprint.

³ Later, Gandhiji discovered that the word used in the original telegram was 'Raad', the Dutch equivalent for the Legislative Assembly; *vide* "Letter to *The Englishman*", 30-11-1896

sent an expensive message. The removal may even mean ruin to the Indian traders affected. But who cares for the welfare of the Indian in South Africa?

The London *Times* says as follows:

In India the British, the Hindu and the Mussalman communities find themselves face to face with the question as to whether, at the outset of the new industrial movements which have been so long and anxiously awaited, Indian traders and workers are or are not to have the same status before the law as all other British subjects enjoy. May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States? Or are they to be treated as outcaste races, subjected to a system of permits and passes when travelling on their ordinary business avocations, and relegated, as the Transvaal Government would relegate them, to a ghetto at the permanent centres of their trade? These are questions which apply to all Indians who seek to better their fortunes outside the limits of the Indian Empire. Mr. Chamberlain's words and the determined attitude taken up by every section of the Indian Press show that to such questions there can be but one answer.

It is clear therefore, that the question affects not only the Indians at present residing in South Africa but all who may wish to seek fortunes outside India, and that there can be but one answer to the question. I hope there will be only one answer.

If all the Associations, Anglo-Indian and Indian, were to protest against the disabilities that are being heaped upon the Indians in that country, and if every important town in India were to hold meetings to express disapproval of the ill-treatment, I venture to think that it will not be doing too much.

It is necessary that the public here should know what activity the various Governments in South Africa are showing and what pressure is being placed upon the Colonial Office at home to bring the matter to a successful issue from their standpoint. Public meetings are being held all over the country asking the Governments to put a stop to the 'coolie' immigration. Mayors of the different towns have been meeting in congress and passing resolutions desiring the restriction of the Asiatic influx. Sir Gordon Sprigg, the Cape Premier, is in active communication with the Colonial Office about the matter and is hopeful of a satisfactory result. Mr. Maydon, a prominent politician in Natal, has been telling his audiences that the friends of the Colony in England are doing every thing to vigorously put forward the Colonial

view before Mr. Chamberlain. Sir John Robinson, the Natal Premier, has gone to England to recoup his health and to discuss important State matters with Mr. Chamberlain. Almost all the newspapers in South Africa have been discussing the matter from the Colonial point of view. These are only some of the forces that are at work against us. As an ex-member of Parliament says in a letter of sympathy: "The whole struggle is unequal," but, "justice is on our side." Were not the cause absolutely just and righteous it would have received its death-blow long ago.

One thing more. The matter demands immediate attention. The question is now pending. It cannot long remain undecided. And if it is decided unfavourably to the Indians it will be difficult to have it reopened. Now, therefore, is the time for the Anglo-Indian and the Indian public to work on our behalf. Or it will be never. "The wrong," says a distinguished Conservative¹, "is so serious that it has only to be known, I hope, to be remedied."

Yes, Sir, I implore the Anglo-Indian public also to help us actively. We have not restricted our advances to one body or only one section of the community. We have ventured to approach all and so far we have received sympathy from all. The London *Times* and *The Times of India* have been advocating our cause for a long time. All the newspapers in Madras have fully supported us. You have given us your ungrudging support and laid us under deep obligation. The British Committee of the Congress has rendered us invaluable help. Ever since he entered Parliament, Mr. Bhownaggee has been on the alert on our behalf. He has been ventilating our grievance in season and out of season. Many other Conservative members of the House of Commons have extended their support to us. It is not therefore simply a matter of form that we appeal to the Anglo-Indian public. I venture to ask all your contemporaries to copy this letter. Had I been able, I would have sent copies to all the papers.

M. K. GANDHI

The Englishman, 14-11-1896

¹ Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggee

116. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

[On or before *November 13, 1896*]¹

There has always been a dislike of the Indian from the first days of their migration to Africa, but it was only when our people began to trade that the antipathy became marked and took shape in the imposition of disabilities.²

[Q.] Then all these grievances you speak of are the outcome of commercial jealousy and prompted by self-interest?

[A.] Precisely. That is just the root of the whole matter. The Colonists want us cleared out because they do not like our traders competing with them.

[Q.] Is the competition a legitimate one? I mean, is it entered into and conducted on a fair and open basis?

[A.] The competition is an open one and conducted by the Indians in a perfectly fair and legitimate manner. Perhaps a word or two as to the general system of trading may make matters clear. The bulk of Indians engaged in trafficking are those who get their goods from the large European wholesal houses, and then go about the country hawking them. Why, I may say that the Colony of Natal, of which I speak particularly from knowledge and experience, is practically dependent for its supplies on these travelling traders. As you know, shops are scarce in those parts, at least away from the towns, and the Indian gets an honest livelihood by supplying the deficiency. It is said that the petty European trader has been displaced. This is true to a certain extent; but then it has been the fault of the European trader. He has been content to stop in his shop, and customers have been compelled to come to him. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that when the Indian, at no small trouble, takes the goods to the customers, he readily finds a sale. Moreover, the European trader, no matter in however small a way, will not hawk his goods about. Perhaps the strongest proof of the trading capabilities of the Indian and, generally speaking, of his integrity, is to be found in the fact that the great houses will give him credit, and, in fact, many of them do the bulk of their trade through his agency. It is no secret that

¹ Gandhiji left Calcutta for Bombay on this date.

² The question was when the antipathy of the South African whites to Indians first began to manifest itself

the opposition to the Indian in Natal is but partial, and by no means represents the real feelings of a good portion of the European community.

[Q.] What, briefly, are the legal and other disabilities placed upon the Indian residents in Natal?

[A.] Well, first there is the 'curfew' law which prohibits all 'coloured' persons being out after 9 o'clock at night without a permit from their master, if indentured servants, or unless they can give a good account of themselves. The great cause of complaint on this score is that this law may be used by the police as an engine of oppression. Respectable, well-dressed, educated Indians are sometimes subjected to the humiliation of arrest by a policeman, being marched to the lock-up, incarcerated for the night, brought before the magistrate next morning and dismissed without a word of apology when their *bona fides* have been established. Such occurrences are by no means rare. Then there is the deprivation of the franchise, which was brought out in the article you published. The fact is the Colonists do not want the Indian to form part of the South African nation—hence the taking away from him of franchise rights. As a menial he can be tolerated, as a citizen never.

[Q.] What has been the attitude of the Indians on this question of the exercise of political rights in an alien country?

[A.] Simply that of the person who claims to enjoy the same rights and privileges in a country as those who are not native to the country freely enjoy. Politically speaking, the Indian does not want the vote; it is only because he resents the indignity of being dispossessed of it that he is agitating for its restitution. Moreover, the classifying of all Indians in one category and the non-recognition of the just place of the better class is felt to be a great injustice. We have even proposed the raising of the property qualifications and the introduction of the education test, which would surely give the hallmark of fitness to every Indian voter, but this has been contemptuously rejected, proving that the sole object is that of discrediting the Indian and depriving him of all political power, so that he will be forever helpless. Then there is the crippling imposition of the £3 poll tax per annum on all who remain in the country after fulfilling their indenture. Again, the Indian has no social status; in fact, he is regarded as a social leper—a pariah. Indignities of all kinds are heaped upon him. No matter what his station may be, an Indian

throughout South Africa is a coolie, and as such he is treated. On the railway he is restricted to a certain class, and, although in Natal he is permitted to walk on the foot-path, this is refused to him in other States.

[Q.] Will you tell me something about the treatment of Indians in these States?

[A.] In Zululand no Indians can buy landed property in the townships of Nondweni and Eshowe.

[Q.] Why was the prohibition imposed?

[A.] Well, in the township of Melmoth, which was the first established in Zululand, there were no regulations and the Natal Indians availed themselves of the right to buy landed property, which they did to the extent of over £2,000 worth. Then the prohibition was passed and made to apply to townships subsequently founded. It was purely trade jealousy, the fear being that the Indians would enter Zululand for trade purposes as they had done in Natal.

In the Orange River Free State, the purchase of any property by an Indian has been made impossible by simply classifying him with the Kaffir. It is not permitted him to hold immovable property, and every Indian settler in the State has to pay an annual tax of ten shillings. The injustice of these arbitrary laws may be gauged from the fact that when they were promulgated the Indians, mostly traders, were compelled to leave the State without the slightest compensation, causing losses to the extent of £9,000. Matters in the Transvaal are hardly any better. Laws have been passed which prohibit the Indian from engaging in trade or residing otherwise than in specific localities. On the latter point, however, proceedings are pending in the law-courts. A special registration fee of £7 has to be paid, the 9 o'clock rule is operative, walking on the foot-path is forbidden (at least this is so in Johannesburg), and travelling first and second class on the railways is not permitted. So you will see that the Indian's life in the Transvaal is not altogether a pleasant one. And yet, in spite of all these disabilities, nay, unwarrantable indignities and insults, the Indian, unless Mr. Chamberlain interferes, will be liable to compulsory military service. According to the Commandeering Treaty, all British subjects were exempted from this service, but, when the Transvaal Volksraad was considering the point, they added a resolution to the effect that the British subjects means "whites" only. The Indians, however, memorialized the Home Government on this question. Cape

Colony, following on the same lines, has recently empowered the East London Municipality to prohibit trading by Indians, walking on the foot-paths and limiting them to residence in certain locations. So you see almost everywhere in South Africa there is a dead set against the Indians. Yet we ask no special privileges, we only claim our just rights. Political power is not our ambition, but to be let alone to carry on our trading, for which we are eminently suited as a nation, is all we ask. This is, we think, a reasonable demand.

[Q.] So much for these grievances, which seem to be general through out South Africa. Now tell me, Mr. Gandhi, how do Indian advocates fare in the law-courts?

[A.] Oh! there is no distinction between advocates and attorneys of whatever race; in the courts, it is only a question of ability. There are many lawyers in the Colony, but, on the whole, forensic talent cannot be said to be of a very high order. A good many European pleaders are to be found, and it goes without saying that those with English training and degrees monopolize the practice of the courts. But I suppose it is the English degree, for those of us who have taken it, which places us more on a level footing. Those with an Indian degree only would be out of place. There is scope, I believe, for Indian lawyers in South Africa, if at all sympathetically disposed to their fellow-countrymen.

As to the political aspect of affairs in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi preferred not to commit himself.

The Englishman, 14-11-1896

117. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POONA*¹

November 16, 1896

The lecture consisted chiefly of extracts read from a pamphlet² on the subject, with here and there running comments thereon. This pamphlet contains an account of

¹ The meeting, organized by the Sarvajanic Sabha, was held at Joshi Hall. R. G. Bhandarkar presided. After Gandhiji had spoken, the meeting passed a resolution moved by Lokamanya B. G. Tilak, sympathizing with the Indians in South Africa and authorizing a committee, composed of Dr. Bhandarkar, Lokamanya Tilak, Professor G. K. Gokhale and six others to submit a memorial to the Government of India on the disabilities imposed on the Indians. The full text of the speech is not available.

² The Green Pamphlet

the various ways in which natives of India are treated in South Africa, and winds up with the names of people, said to represent the Indian community in South Africa, who have appointed Mr. Gandhi to represent their grievances to the authorities and the general public.

The lecturer asked his audience to do all they could to bring about an amelioration of the lot of the South African Indians by representations and applications to Government.

Bombay Police Abstracts, 1896, p. 405

118. STATEMENT OF EXPENSES¹

Dr. to M. K. Gandhi
The Natal Indian Congress

Out-of-pocket expenses in connection with the movement in India with regard to the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa.

[RS. A.P.]

5th July (1896)

Carriage from morning to afternoon and previous evening at Allahabad	
visiting editors , etc.	6-0-0
Hotel bill	5-8-0
Papers	2-12-6
Gratuity	0-80

[?...August]

Luggage containing pamphlets, etc.	4-8-0
Half-fare return ticket—Bombay to Rajkot	20-1-6

1st to 7th August

Stamps for pamphlets	41-8-0
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7th August

Thacker's Directory	25-0-0
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¹ Gandhiji had been given a draft for £75 to cover the travelling, printing and other expenses incurred by him in connection with his South African work in India. He submitted this statement of expenses to the Natal Indian Congress on his return to South Africa. The last entry being dated November 29, the item is placed under that date.

<i>17th August</i>	
Telegram Bombay	1-4-0
Thakersi: gratuity re. pamphlet work	13-0-0
Parcel and packing 500 books	3-10-0
Note paper	2-12-0
Pickwick pens	0-6-0
Pencils	0-3-0
One ream paper for pamphlet posting	2-0-0
Water at Wadhwan	0-2-0
Porter	0-4-0
Poor man	0-1-0
Telegraph boy	0-1-0
Station peon	0-4-0
<i>19th August</i>	
Carriage to G[rant] Road	0-5-0
G. Road to Bandra and back	0-12-0
G. Road to Pydhuni	0-4-0
<i>20th August</i>	
Carriage—house to Fort	0-5-0
Fort to G.B.K. Road	0-10-0
House to Apollo Bunder	0-12-0
Apollo Bunder to market	0-1-0
Market to house	0-2-0
<i>21st August</i>	
Carriage	0-5-0
Stamps	1-0-0
<i>22nd August</i>	
Carriage	1-7-0
Fruit	2-0-0
<i>24th August</i>	
Carriage	0-4-0
<i>25th August</i>	
Carriage	0-4-0
<i>27th August</i>	
Carriage	0-1-0
Lalu—gratuity	1-0-0
<i>31st August</i>	
Blacking Ink	0-1-0
<i>1st September</i>	
Tram fare	0-4-0

<i>3rd September</i>	
Ink	0-4-0
Washerman	0-8-0
Paper	0-2-0
<i>4th September</i>	
Stamps	1-0-0
<i>11th September</i>	
Cards	1-4-0
Carriage	0-12-0
Boy	0-2-0
Carriage to station	0-6-0
Congress report	1-0-0
Ticket to Rajkot and back	48-3-3
Passes	0-2-0
Gratuity to cook & servant	2-0-0
Pencil	0-3-0
Papers	1-0-0
Telegram	1-0-0
Fruit	0-10-6
Carriage	0-4-0
<i>23rd September</i>	
Porterage at Wadhwan	1-0-0
<i>24th September</i>	
Driver—gratuity	0-8-0
Stamps	1-0-0
Paper	0-14-0
Luggage	13-8-0
Porters	0-12-0
Water and peon	0-6-0
Stamps for pamphlets	30-0-0
Water	0-0-6
Telegram	1-0-0
<i>25th September</i>	
Carriage from station to house	1-4-0
Carriage and tram	0-9-0
<i>26th September</i>	
Carriage	0-4-0
<i>27th September</i>	
Carriage	0-8-0

<i>28th September</i>	
Papers	1-4-0
Platform pass	0-0-6
Carriage	0-5-0
<i>30th September</i>	
Carriage	0-10-0
<i>9th October</i>	
Carriage	0-4-0
Carriage and papers	0-8-6
<i>Champion</i>	0-4-0
Photograph	0-15-0
<i>10th October</i>	
<i>Times</i>	0-8-0
Tram	0-2-0
Soap	0-1-0
<i>11th October</i>	
Fare to Madras	49-11-0
Guide	0-1-0
Telegram to Mr. Sohoni ¹	2-0-0
Luggage	5-8-0
Soap	0-4-0
Carriage	0-4-0
Porter	0-4-0
Pass	0-2-0
<i>12th October</i>	
Carriage at Poona	1-0-0
Porter	0-4-0
Charity	0-8-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-8-0
Porters	1-0-0
Mr. Sohoni's son	1-0-0
Coffee	0-6-0
Paper	0-2-0
Boy	0-2-0
<i>13th October</i>	
Breakfast	0-14-0
Luncheon	1-14-0

¹ A colleague of Gokhale; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 18-10-1896

Dinner	2-2-0
Fruit	0-2-0
Water	0-1-0
<i>14th October</i>	
Railway station, Madras	0-4-0
Guide	0-4-0
Porter	0-2-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-2-3
Trickman	0-0-6
Papers and envelopes	2-10-0
Carriage for station	1-8-0
<i>15th October</i>	
Carriage	4-6-0
Letter carrier	0-10-0
Paper	0-4-0
Tram	0-1-0
<i>16th October</i>	
Stamps	1-0-0
Carriage	2-3-0
Paper	0-8-0
Dhobi	1-0-0
<i>17th October</i>	
Papers	0-14-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-3-0
<i>18th October</i>	
Carriage (half day)	2-3-0
Andrews donation	7-0-0
Sulphur ointment	0-2-0
<i>19th October</i>	
Tram fare	0-9-0
Telegram to Wacha ¹	1-6-0
Papers	1-0-0
<i>20th October</i>	
Dhobi	0-4-0
Papers	0-12-0
Punkah coolie	0-2-0

¹ Dinshaw Wacha, (1884-1936), A prominent Indian leader. He presided over the Indian National Congress session in 1901. The telegram is not traceable.

<i>21st October</i>	
Note paper	0-14-0
Ink and pins	0-3-0
Tape	0-1-0
Magician	0-8-0
Papers	0-10-0
Lace	0-1-0
<i>22nd October</i>	
Carriage	2-4-0
Sweets	0-5-3
Photograph	0-6-0
Papers	0-12-0
Tram	0-13-0
<i>23rd October</i>	
Carriage	5-0-0
Tram	0-10-0
Stamps	0-8-0
<i>24th October</i>	
Boys at school	0-13-0
Carriage	2-10-0
Andrews	0-8-0
Tram	0-1-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Papers	0-10-0
Dhobi	0-12-0
East Indian Assam coolies	1-0-0
L. Councils	0-6-0
Local Govt. returns	5-0-0
Councils Act	0-6-0
Foreign reports	2-0-0
S.A.R. ¹ papers [re:] grievances	0-8-0
Statement moral & [material] progress ²	1-12-0
Madras District [Municipal Act.]	1-0-0
Madras Local Boards [Act]	0-10-0
Tamil books	4-12-6
Andrews for books	1-9-0

¹ South African Republic, the Transvaal

² *Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the Year*, issued annually for presentation to Parliament by the then Government of India

<i>26th October</i>	
Tamil books assortment	7-0-7
Carriage	0-8-0
Tram fare	0-4-0
Papers	0-8-0
Carriage	2-4-0
<i>27th October</i>	
Carriage	3-4-0
Inland telegrams	18-12-0
<i>Madras Standard</i> a/c. telegrams & address	30-0-0
Butler's gratuity	9-0-0
Waiter	1-0-0
Bhangi	0-8-0
Cook	1-0-0
Gardener	0-2-0
Keeper	0-2-0
Luggage to Calcutta	3-0-0
Andrews	5-0-0
Hotel bill	74-4-0
Papers	0-10-0
Dhobi	0-12-0
Punkah coolies (14 days)	3-4-0
Fare to Calcutta	122-7-0
Guide	0-2-0
Stamps	0-4-0
Dinner at Arkonam	1-0-0
<i>28th October</i>	
Breakfast	1-6-0
Luncheon	1-13-0
Papers	0-10-0
Water	0-0-6
Guard	0-8-0
Dinner	2-8-6
Porter	0-2-0
<i>29th October</i>	
Breakfast	1-10-0
Coffee	0-4-0
Porter at Manmad	0-3-0
Porter at Bhusaval	0-3-0
<i>Pioneer</i>	0-4-0
Luncheon	0-11-0

Dinner	2-6-0
Porter at Nagpur	0-4-0
<i>30th October</i>	
Carriage at Nagpur	1-8-0
Hotel	3-4-0
Porter, waiter, etc.	1-15-0
Tiffin	0-6-0
Dinner	1-11-0
Paper	0-4-0
<i>31st October</i>	
Tea and bread on way to Calcutta	0-9-0
Breakfast	1-15-0
Tiffin	0-7-0
Paper	0-2-0
Porter at station	0-6-0
Porter at Asansol	0-2-0
Porter at hotel	0-4-0
Carriage to hotel	1-0-0
Carriage & theatre	4-12-0
<i>1st November</i>	
Dhobi	0-10-6
Blacking ink, brown leather paste, brushes	1-9-6
Carriage	3-0-0
Stamps, regd. letter	0-5-0
<i>Standard</i> telegram	0-8-0
<i>2nd November</i>	
Carriage	3-0-0
Stamps	0-4-0
Parcel—books for Bombay	4-12-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
<i>3rd November</i>	
Carriage	3-8-0
Hair cutting & shaving	0-10-0
Stamps	0-8-0
Parcel men	0-2-0
Charity	0-0-6

<i>4th November</i>	
Dhobi	0-8-0
Grinding razor	0-8-0
Telegram <i>Standard</i>	0-8-0
Carriage	1-10-0
<i>5th November</i>	
Carriage	2-0-0
Dhobi	0-4-0
Butler	4-0-0
<i>6th November</i>	
Carriage	5-4-0
<i>7th November</i>	
Theatre	4-0-0
Carriage	1-4-6
<i>8th November</i>	
Dhobi	0-4-0
<i>9th November</i>	
Hindi & Urdu books	0-12-6
Urdu & Bengali books	4-8-0
Blue books	2-8-0
Carriage	1-2-0
Stamps	0-8-0
Telegram [to] P.N. Mukerjee	2-6-0
Dhobi	0-4-0
<i>10th November</i>	
Blue books Bengal Sectt.	11-12-0
Carriage	1-13-6
Telegram <i>Standard</i> , Abdulla Coy.	4-14-0
Dhobi	0-3-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Paper	0-1-0
Carriage	1-0-0
<i>11th November</i>	
Papers	0-5-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Municipal Laws	0-12-0
Porter	0-1-0
Carriage	1-0-0

13th November

Ticket to Bombay	91-11-0
Telegram to Tilak ¹	2-0-0
<i>Bengali</i>	11-10-0
Carriage	2-2-0
Porters	0-10-0
Water pot, water	0-4-0
Butler	6-0-0
Cook—gratuity	1-0-0
Door-keepers	1-4-0
Sweeper	0-4-0
Bathman	0-12-0
Stamps	0-12-0
Abba Mian for parcel	3-0-0
Hotel bill	100-14-0

14th November

Breakfast and gratuity	1-10-0
Luncheon	2-0-0
Coffee	0-5-0
Dinner	2-2-0
Thread	0-4-0
Apples	0-2-0
Coachman Moosa Hussein	1-0-0
Dhobi	0-8-0
Telegram—Tilak ²	1-2-0

15th November

Breakfast	1-10-0
Luncheon	1-2-0
Telegram—Abba Mian ³	0-8-0
Telegraph boy	0-0-9
Dinner	2-6-0

¹ These telegrams are not traceable.

² These telegrams are not traceable.

³ *ibid*

Stamps	0-2-0
<i>16th November</i>	
Bombay to Poona fare	14-14-0
Porter	0-4-0
Carriage	1-8-0
Carriage at Poona	1-10-0
Lemonade	0-6-0
Telegram to Poona	1-0-0
<i>17th November</i>	
Porter	0-3-0
Carriage	0-4-0
<i>18th November</i>	
Stamps	1-0-0
<i>19th November</i>	
Carriage	0-10-0
Barber	0-4-0
<i>20th November</i>	
Tram	0-1-0
<i>21st November</i>	
Carriage	0-9-0
<i>27th November</i>	
Stamps	0-2-0
Papers	1-8-0
<i>28th November</i>	
Carriage	0-1-6
<i>Champion subs.</i>	6-0-0
<i>Bombay Gazette</i>	1-0-0
Bombay Dist. Boards Act	2-0-0
Cart	0-8-0
Cook—gratuity	5-0-0
<i>30th November</i>	
Ghati gratuity	2-0-0
Servant Lalu	10-0-0
Stamps—posting & regd. 20 letters	2-0-0
Envelopes	0-4-0
Pens	0-3-0
Paper for pamphlet as per bill	84-0-0

<i>23rd September</i>	
Zululand Petition ¹	15-7-0
Immigration petition ²	42-4-0
Notes on the grievances ³	20-0-0
<i>8th September</i>	
Bombay address (120 copies)	50-0-0
Regd. for Rs. 300 to Madras	0-3-9
Package for sending books to Calcutta	0-4-0
Registration--Calcutta Rs. 200	0-3-3
<i>17th September</i>	
Printing 6000 copies pamphlet	110-0-0
<i>September</i>	
<i>Times of India Directory</i>	10-15-0
<i>October</i>	
Sending Rs. 100 by money order	2-1-0
Telegrams—Madras	2-0-0
<i>November</i>	
Note Paper	0-3-3
<i>30th November</i>	
Telegram to Secy. of Viceroy ⁴	5-4-0
<i>27th September</i>	
Telegram to Durban ⁵	99-6-0
<i>21st September</i>	
Telegram to Sir W. W. Hunter ⁶	113-2-0
Bhimbhai for copying, assisting, etc., etc.	20-0-0
Fruit	2-6-0
Pens	0-4-0
Stamps	0-8-0

¹ *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896 and "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896

² *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895

³ *Vide* "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896

⁴ This item is not traceable.

⁵ These are not traceable.

⁶ *ibid*

Porter for taking books to Institute	0-1-3
<i>28th November</i>	
Congress stamp	1-8-0
<i>17th August</i>	
Rajkot to Wadhwan	4-13-0
Telegram—Bombay	1-4-0
Total:	Rs. 1,666-6-1
<i>29th November</i>	
Paid <i>Madras Standard</i> on A/c Pamphlet	100-0-0
	1,766-6-1 ¹
Paid customs for pamphlets	0-6-6

From a handwritten office copy: S.N. 1310

119. TELEGRAM TO THE VICEROY²

November 30, 1896

I RECEIVED WIRE FROM INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA SAYING THAT TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT IS ENFORCING INDIANS TO LOCATIONS. THIS IS APPARENTLY DESPITE MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S REQUEST TO STAY ACTION UNTIL TEST CASE TRIED. I VENTURE TO THINK THAT THIS ACTION BY TRANSVAAL IS BREACH OF INTERNATIONAL COURTESY IF NOTHING MORE AND PRAY THAT IMMEDIATE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN TO STAY REMOVAL TO LOCATIONS. THE EXISTENCE OF HUNDREDS OF BRITISH INDIANS IS AT STAKE.

The Bengalee, 1-12-1896

¹ Totals carried forward from page to page in the source have been omitted.

² This was also published in *The Times of India*, 30-11-1896, with minor changes and without the last sentence.

120. LETTER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"¹

BOMBAY,
November 30, 1896

THE EDITOR, *The Englishman*
CALCUTTA

SIR,

With reference to my letter in connection with the grievances of the Indians in South Africa, dated the 13th instant,² I happened to read the original telegram received from South Africa. It reads "raad" and not "road" as in the message received by me in Calcutta. The meaning is now quite clear. It is that the Transvaal Government are enforcing Indians to locations. This makes the matter still more serious, if possible.

The High commissioner for South Africa, in accepting the award of the arbitrator in connection with the Indian question in that Republic, writes as follows in a telegram, dated the 24th June, 1895, A.D. :

The Secretary of State has received a telegram from the Indians stating that they have received notice to remove and praying that action may be stayed. I therefore urge Your Honour's Government to stay action until the resolution and circular of 1893 have been cancelled and the law brought in harmony with the award when a test case can be tried in the courts of the South African Republic.

The resolution and the circular referred to have been cancelled, but so far as I know, and I have been receiving here the South African papers regularly, a test case has not been tried. Evidently, therefore, the action of the Transvaal Government is premature, and, I venture to think, constitutes a breach of international courtesy, if nothing more. I venture to remind you that the assets of the Indians in the Transvaal amount to over £100,000, and that removal to locations would practically mean ruin to the Indian traders. The question, therefore, in its immediate aspect involves the very existence of hundreds of Her

¹ This appeared under the title "The Indians in South Africa".

² Vide " Letter to "The Englishman", 13-11-1896.

Majesty's subjects whose only fault is that they are "sober, thrifty and industrious".

I submit that the matter demands the most urgent and immediate attention of the whole public in India.

M. K. GANDHI

The Englishman, 8-12-1896