

Johannesburg Jottings

(FROM OUR TRANSVAAL REPRESENTATIVE)

"REGISTRATIONS." As was to be expected, Nylstroom and Rustenburg have shown a clean slate, no one having registered at those places. This week, the "perambulator" is due at Heidelberg, Standerton, and Volksrust. Latest advices from these places show that the people there are as firmly resolved as elsewhere to abide by the September resolution and refuse to re-register under compulsion. In its slow, mechanical way, the Government has intimated that the "perambulator" is to be forwarded for inspection to Barberton, on the 4th and 5th prox., and Komati Poort on the 6th prox., for the Barberton District; Belfast, on the 4th and 5th prox., for the Lydenburg District; and Middelburg, on the 6th and 7th prox., for the Middelburg District. Those misguided Asiatics who have failed to avail themselves of the benefits accruing from compulsory piano-playing are invited to tour the country in the wake of the Governmental domestic paraphernalia until further notice. I don't anticipate that many will turn up foot-sore and weary.

SHAKING OFF THE DEBT. Mr. H. O. Ally, true to his word, has scornfully rejected the offer of a dog's life in the Transvaal under the new law, and has shaken the dust of Johannesburg from his feet. He left last Saturday by the Diamond Express for Capetown, accompanied by his family. He travelled third-class, the first fruits of his brave sacrifice of material prospects for the sake of a dear principle. Mr. Ally is a voter at the Cape. He has the full franchise, and is a man respected by the Government. Here he is esteemed a potential criminal, and his little children are to be similarly branded. The real loss in the Transvaal's and not Mr. Ally's. This Colony cannot afford to lose men who value their self-respect above all else. Another chapter has opened in our history here, and its beginning is full of dark portents for the future of the Colony. Undoubtedly the Transvaal is in the hollow of a great depression. There is a certain degree of poetic justice in this punishment of those who are deaf to the appeals for justice made by the coloured man, and blind to the injuries inflicted upon him. When will the white Colonists learn the real meaning of Karma?

CABS AND COLOUR. The Works Committee of the Johannesburg Municipality recommend that Article 4, Chap. III, E. (2) of the Traffic By-laws be altered to read as follows:—"Every cab plying for hire shall be rated as first class or second class. No native shall be allowed to

act as driver or conductor of a cab rated as first class, and no driver of a first class cab shall carry any native, Asiatic, or coloured person as a passenger thereon; provided, however, that a native, Asiatic, or coloured person may ride on the box-seat of any cab with the consent of his master (not being himself a native, Asiatic, or coloured person) and of the driver thereof, but any native, Asiatic, or coloured person so riding shall, unless in his master's company, be furnished with a written authority signed by his master, entitling him to so ride on the particular day in question, and shall produce the same when required by any member of the police or inspector of vehicles." Coloured people and Chinese will thus be debarred from riding in first class cabs. No doubt, if passed, Asiatics and coloured people will be expected to regard this prohibition as a still further safeguard of their present rights, *pace* General Smuts. When they have no rights left, of course, no further safeguards will be necessary.

A PROTEST. The Chairman of the B.I.A. has forwarded the following protest: C.W.V.H.—1907

The Committee of my Association has noticed in the papers the proposal of the General Purposes Committee that the Traffic By-laws may be so amended as to prevent British Indians, among others, from using first-class cabs. My Committee ventures to point out that such a by-law would draw an invidious distinction against British Indians, and would be an unnecessary insult to the community represented by my Association. I venture, therefore, to trust that the Town Council will be pleased not to accept the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee.

THE EDUCATION ACT. The Education Act, promulgated in the *Gazette* of the 26th inst., contains the following clause (29):—

No coloured child or person shall be admitted to or allowed to remain a pupil or member of any school class or institution mentioned in Chapters III. or IV. of this Act (relating to schools for white people) and the duty of carrying out the provisions of this section shall lie with the Board or with the governing or managing body established under section twenty-three.

So that the white children "or persons" are safe from contamination, any way!

SURREPTITIOUS CLASS LEGISLATION. We know now that the Imperial Government will not intervene where Municipalities obtain the Governor's sanction to by-laws specially and adversely affecting coloured people. The Transvaal Government has gone further, and has placed on the Statute Book an example of class legislation without the sanction of the Imperial Government. The Peace Preservation Ordinance, by the actual wording of the Immigrant's Restriction Act, now awaiting the Royal assent, has been specifically confined, in its operation, to Asiatics. As it was already on the Statute Book, it having a *general*

bearing, it did not need re-enactment, but though technically correct, the Transvaal Government, by withdrawing Europeans from its operation, have created colour legislation affecting one class alone of the community, contrary to the spirit of the constitution. Thus, apart from by-laws, there are now four distinct enactments deliberately aimed at Asiatics: the historic Law 3 of 1885, the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and the Immigrants' Restriction Act. Had the third measure come before the Secretary of State in its present scope and form, it would assuredly not have been assented to.

RESERVED LAWS. In addition to the Immigration Restriction Act, the Vrededorp Stands Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act have been reserved for the declaration of the Royal Assent, in terms of the provisions of the Letters Patent. These measures have, meanwhile, been assented to by the Governor.

The Registration Law

A German View

A correspondent favours us with an extract from a letter received by him from a German lady friend named Mrs. Carola Mayne. We give the text below:—

We Germans, living so far from India and Natal, have never heard of the Asiatic Ordinance of which you write and every man and woman of education and with a sense of righteousness, will condemn such a brutality as to ask educated Indian gentlemen to give their finger-marks on their respective passes. Such a thing can only be asked from a labouring man of the poorest caste who is not able to write his name. I can fully understand the indignation of you Indians at being asked to give finger-prints and also your refusal to so doing. Any educated man of any other nation would do as you Indians do and say on this subject:

However, Indians can only get redress and hearing by being united. Your complaints must be brought forward in England. I am sure that Indians have good and just friends abroad, who will do all they can to give you protection and help against a treatment so revolting as this is. Let me hope that there be no act of cruelty on either side, but by arguments of word and pen.

It might be better for all of you who are unhappy and involved in Natal, to sell off your property and go to America, even to California, with its lovely climate. Many Indians are there already. England has nothing to say there in the United States. After a stay of three years in the U.S. you become a citizen of these States and are well protected all over the world. Even in India and England you will be recognized as a citizen of "Uncle Sam's States," and no-one dare touch you with such papers in your hand. In the West of the United States, and in California, railroad-lands, farm-lands amounting to 160 acres are given free to farmers, building a homestead, however small, and cultivating the land within five years.