

DELHI RIOTS KILL THOUSAND.

Delhi was a city stricken by civil warfare. The More cautious of the Muslim minority, anticipating a recurrence of the now all too familiar communal riots, took their leader's advice and made their way to the hastily prepared encampment in the Old Fort. Hindu refugees had fled in panic to Delhi from the Pakistan areas of ~~Bangal~~ Punjab. Their plight inflamed the Hindu population of Delhi and these Muslims here in the Old Fort thanked their stars they had escaped in time. It was camp life at its roughest, a famine in water and at first no food except what the Muslims brought with them.

At the Jama Mosque, one of the largest in the world, Muslims prayed that the war-clouds might pass over and no storm break. But all the time they knew that Hindu feeling against them was at danger-point. Nothing could now stay ~~its~~ ^{headlong} its headlong course, and next day it was fanned into flame. An orgy of Oriental savagery scourged large areas of Delhi. The pent-up fanaticism burst its bonds. Muslims trapped in their own parts of the city had no escape from its fury.

After that uncontrollable outburst a thousand lay dead, many more were in the overcrowded hospitals or were injured or dying in the homes of friends. And these events in Delhi were mild indeed, according to Pandit Nehru, by comparison with riots in the Punjab, an Pakistan territory where Muslims, not Hindus, had the upper hand. In the hour of her long-sought independence bloodshed, not happiness, had come to India.

By now the Old Fort was completely crowded. Though the rioting had died down the Muslims did not yet dare to ~~return to their now ruined quarters.~~

return to their now burned and looted quarters. It was at that sad moment that they were visited by the prophet of Indian freedom, the most respected man in the whole country, Mahatma Gandhi. Supported by a grand-daughter and wife of one of his grandsons, and clearly weakened by his recent fast, Gandhi came with a powerful plea for peace. His disciple Diwan ^{Chaman} ~~Shaman~~ Lal spoke the message which the Mahatma had not strength to deliver himself. Gandhi was too late in Delhi to repeat, had become known as the miracle of Calcutta, where by threatening to fast unto death he made his followers abandon violence.

From the Old Fort Gandhi went to the camp of Hindus escaped from Pakistan. He repeated, what he has said more than once in the past few weeks, that he was ashamed of all who caused bloodshed. At this camp there was desperate need of water. Cholera, already rampant in the

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Punjab began to threaten Delhi, but the immediate cry was for water. Only a little less imperative was the need for food. Supplies, hopelessly inadequate, but all that could be obtained were sent to both camps by each of the two governments now administering India.

Indian officers had a sharp way with the importunate. Over the camp flew birds of prey, their hopes of human carrion happily disappointed. Nevertheless where India's millions should be rejoicing over independence this was a scene of misery.

It is the earnest hope of all who wish well to India that the two Dominions will soon emerge from the Valley of the Shadow into the sunlit beginning of peaceful life.