


**GANDHI,
THE
MAHATMA**

J. G. ROWE



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BY

J. G. ROWE

AUTHOR OF

*Alexandra the Beloved; Baden-Powell; Captain Cook;
John Howard—Prison Reformer, &c.*

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. BIRTH AND PARENTAGE—CALLED TO THE ENGLISH BAR—ACTIVITIES IN NATAL— MOBBED AT DURBAN	9
II. SERVICES IN BOER WAR—THE PHŒNIX SETTLEMENT—‘PASSIVE RESISTANCE’— SENT TO GAOL THREE TIMES—HIS ‘STRIKE MARCH’	21
III. AWARDED THE KAISER-I-HIND MEDAL—HIS ‘ASHRAM’—THE CHAMPARAN TROUBLE AND AHMEDABAD STRIKE—ENCOURAGES RECRUITING FOR THE WAR	33
IV. THE ROWLATT ACTS—‘CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE’ —THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AMEND- MENT BILL—HIS ‘NON-CO-OPERATION’ SCHEME	45
V. THE BOYCOTT—THE SIMLA INTERVIEW— ‘DICTATOR!’—‘CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE’ AGAIN—ARRESTED	55
VI. SENTENCED TO SIX YEARS’ IMPRISONMENT— SWARAJIST OBSTRUCTIVE TACTICS— GANDHI RELEASED—RETIRES FOR A YEAR	67
VII. THE SIMON COMMISSION APPOINTED— GANDHI FINED—THE COMMISSION BOY- COTTED—CIVIL RESISTANCE ONCE MORE	82
VIII. SHOPS PICKETED—THE SALT REBELLION— GANDHI ARRESTED, AND DETAINED IN PRISON WITHOUT TRIAL—THE SIMON REPORT	94
IX. FIRST ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE—THE DELHI PACT—GANDHI TO COME TO LONDON—A HITCH AND FRESH NEGOTIA- TIONS—GANDHI IN LONDON	106

AUTHORITIES :—*Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi* (with introduction by Mr. C. F. Andrews and a Biographical Sketch), published by Natesan & Co., Madras : *Bapu Gandhi*, by Mr. Justice A. B. Piddington : *Gandhi's Letters on Indian Affairs* (Narayan & Co., Madras, 1923) : *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, by M. K. Gandhi : *Gandhi of India* (Macmillan), an autobiography of the Indian leader, edited by Chas. F. Andrews : *Mahatma Gandhi, his Mission and Message*, with a preface by A. Fenner Brockway, M.P., and an introduction by G. S. Dara : *The Encyclopædia Britannica* : *the Annual Register* : *Whitaker's Almanac* : *The Literary Digest* : and various daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, &c.

CHAPTER I

Birth and Parentage—Called to the English Bar— Activities in Natal—Mobbed at Durban.

By the average Englishman, Gandhi is looked upon as a firebrand, a stormy petrel, or a 'hot-air' agitator, but by millions of the Indian people, his own race and colour, he is regarded as a hero, a patriot, and a father. Against his own wish, he has had bestowed upon him the title of *Mahatma*, which is the Sanscrit for a sage or an adept in Theosophy, and especially one who acts as teacher or guide to aspirants.

An American weekly paper of some standing, the *Literary Digest*, in its issue of February 14, 1931, said very truly, 'A puzzle not only to Britain, but to the average intelligence of the entire Western world, we are told, is Mahatma Gandhi.' The Rev. Dr. Holmes, Minister of the Community Church, New York City, spoke thus of him: 'In all reverence and with due regard for historic fact, I match this man with Jesus Christ.'

Mr. Charles F. Andrews, a Cambridge University man, who was formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, but found that 'authority and sectarianism restricted him' and so became a British lay

missionary in India, writes in his Introduction to the *Speeches and Writings of M.K. Gandhi*: 'Whatever may be our previous opinion, whether we agree or disagree with Mr. Gandhi's position, he compels us to think anew, and to discard conventional opinion.'

Mr. Andrews is known in India, whither he went years ago to preach the gospel of Christ, as *Deenabandhu*, or 'Friend of the Lowly,' Andrews, and 'he persists in doing coolie service for Indians.'

Again, Mr. Justice A. B. Piddington, in his little book, entitled *Bapu Gandhi*, calls Gandhi 'this charming and famous Indian,' and says, 'In all that I saw of Gandhi there was nothing but the easy transparent kindness of an ordinary gentleman, English or Indian; never any effort to impress or captivate, still less any self-consciousness or pose.'

The word *Bapu* is an affectionate variation of the Indian *Bap*, 'Father,' giving it the signification of something like 'dear father' or 'revered father,' and is another of the unsought titles conferred upon Gandhi by many of his followers.

'The idol of millions of people in India—the *man of the hour*,' Mr. G. S. Dara, the editor of *United India*, in London, styled Gandhi in November, 1929, when writing the Introduction to a work, *Mahatma Gandhi, his Mission*, which work also contains a Preface by Mr. A. Fenner Brockway, the Labour M.P. and ex-Editor of the *New Leader*.

Gandhi's full name is Mohandas (or Mohandēsa) Karamchand Gandhi, and he was born on October

2, 1869. The 'a' in Gandhi is pronounced long, as if the name were spelt Gahndhi. He was the youngest son of an old Bania family, living in Kathiawar, the peninsula within the Gujarat division of the Presidency of Bombay. He is not a Brahmin. Politics were a heritage of the family, and his father was *Dewan*, or Chief Minister, for twenty-five years, of the Native State of Porbandar on the Kathiawar coast. The capital town, also called Porbandar, has considerable native boat trade, and contains some 20,000 people, the area of the State itself being 636 square miles and its population about 90,000.

Gandhi's ancestors, indeed, on the father's side, had always been Dewans of Porbandar; and his father was, moreover, Dewan of Rajkot, which is the headquarters of the Political Agent for the whole of Kathiawar, and was also Dewan for other petty Native States adjoining, so that the Gandhi family was both wealthy and influential. As a matter of fact, Gandhi *paterfamilias* was at one time, we are informed, a member of the Rajasthavik Sabha, or Supreme Council, of Kathiawar, being nominated thereto by the Governor of Bombay, and he 'had opposed the will at times of the Rana (or Rajah) of Porbandar and of the Political Agent' showing that his son's forensic ability is inherited.

His mother is described as having been 'an orthodox Hindu,' an exemplary wife and mother, whose chief care was that her children should grow up good, honest men and women.

Gandhi was first educated at Kathiawar High School, and was married, according to Indian custom, at the age of twelve to Kasturibai, the daughter of another Hindu family of means and position in the district. His wife has since shared all his troubles, hopes and aspirations, taken a prominent part in his political activities, and has even been sent to gaol with him and her sons on account of her strong views.

In 1888, when only just turned nineteen, Gandhi's father decided to send him to England to qualify for the Bar. His mother strenuously opposed the idea at first, for crossing the sea meant in their religion loss of caste, but she was at last won round. She consented only on condition that he took a triple vow, namely, to avoid the use of flesh-meat, alcohol, and relations with women. This vow he made before a Jain priest. Jainism is an Indian faith closely connected with Buddhism, but to-day it is regarded as 'rather a degenerate than an improved form' of the latter, although it is believed to be the older creed. No doubt Gandhi's mother herself was a Jain or Jainist. The word 'jain' is derived from the Sanscrit *Jina*, which means 'victorious over all human passions and infirmities.'

Young Gandhi therefore came to England, and became an undergraduate of London University. He faithfully kept the triple vow he had taken, amid all the temptations of student life in London, with we understand, only one solitary lapse, when he was persuaded to taste of English roast beef because of some silly rhyme he heard from his fellow-students

glorifying beef, if not also beer, as the source of Englishmen's superiority over other races.

At first, too, in his new surroundings, he deemed it smart to copy his companions and pose as an English 'gentleman.' He dressed with meticulous care, and took lessons in elocution, violin-playing, and even dancing.

Many of his associates being thoughtless youths, he became somewhat infected with disbelief in God. He joined the Theosophist circle in London, and in the search for Truth went to services at the City Temple and other Christian churches. Then his opinions swung round to Christianity, and he was thinking of abjuring his Hindu creed and becoming a Christian, when he came under the influence of Rajchandra *Kavi*, a Gujarati poet, whose verses led him to remain true to the religion of his forefathers.

My authority for this states that 'the Kavi . . . died at the age of thirty-three,' and adds that Gandhi considered him 'the best Indian of his time,' ranking him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. 'Both Kavi and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached,' Gandhi is alleged to have said.

Gandhi would seem to have met and spoken with Tolstoy, or at least to have corresponded with him during these student days in London, and I understand that Tolstoy's '*Open Letter to a Hindoo*' was written owing to this meeting or correspondence. Undoubtedly, the great Russian author's religious

mysticism found an echo in young Gandhi's soul at this time. Anyhow, he now reverted, we are told, to a more serious frame of mind and lived more plainly, giving up all his previous notions of adopting and following the manners of an English gentleman.

From the London University, Gandhi went to the Inner Temple ; and in 1891, when he was twenty-three years of age, he was called to the English Bar. He did not practise at all as a barrister in England, but returned at once to India where he was promptly admitted as an advocate of the Bombay High Court. On returning to his native land, he had to undergo the *Paraschit*, or purification ceremony, in order to obtain re-admission to his own caste-group, owing to his having been across the seas.

He practised as a lawyer in Gujarat with such success that not two years after his return home, in 1893, a Moslem Indian firm of merchants in South Africa invited him to Natal to plead for them in a ' legal case of some difficulty.' In spite of the fact that the *Sheth*, or chief, of his caste threatened to excommunicate him if he went, he set sail for Durban, and was duly excommunicated.

On landing at Durban, he tells us in his autobiography, entitled, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, that he found himself looked upon, on account of his race and colour, as a pariah— ' scarcely better than a savage aboriginal of the soil,' to quote one of his biographers. He applied for admission to the Supreme Court of Natal as an Advocate, and the Law Society opposed his applica-

tion on the ground that the law of the colony 'did not contemplate a coloured person should be admitted to practise.'

The Supreme Court, however, granted his application, and he was allowed to plead, with the result that he achieved so much distinction that the Natal Indian community begged of him to remain with them, foreseeing further politico-racial troubles. At the time, there were 150,000 Indians in South Africa, the greatest number being in Natal, engaged on the sugar plantations or as gardeners and hawkers of fruit.

He agreed to stay, and in the following year, 1894, founded the Natal Indian National Congress, of which he became honorary secretary. He held that office for some years, drafting petitions and memorials, which are said to have been admirable in their construction, lucid and simple in their phraseology, and clear and concise in presentment.

The Natal Parliament brought in an Asiatics' Exclusion Act. He took the leading part in fighting it, and it was defeated. But another Bill disfranchising the Indians in the Colony was passed, in spite of his efforts to prevent it. He and those with him were so far successful, however, as to obtain the proviso from the Imperial Government that the disfranchisement was to be on non-racial lines.

Towards the end of 1895, the Natal and Transvaal Indians sent him as their representative to India to lay their grievances before the mass of their country-

men at home. Arrived back in his native land, he started a vigorous propaganda, making many public addresses and issuing a pamphlet on the matter.

The charges in this pamphlet aroused furious resentment and protests on the part of the European residents in Natal ; and, when Gandhi gave out that he was returning to Durban with his family and accompanied by some compatriots, the rumour preceded him that he was bringing to the Colony a number of skilled Indian workers to oust white workers. Thereupon, ' feeling ran so high ' in Natal that the Attorney-General felt it incumbent upon him to issue orders that the ship on its arrival should be detained in quarantine. The embargo was raised, however, when the ship-owners threatened to take legal action against the Government.

On the vessel going alongside the wharf, though, so hostile was the attitude displayed by a mob of Europeans who had collected that a police inspector went aboard and warned Gandhi that his life would be in danger were he to land then and there, urging him to wait until night. A Mr. Laughton, a member of the Natal Bar, with whom Gandhi had already come into intimate contact, being accustomed to consult him in difficult cases and often to engage him as a senior, offered his convoy.

Gandhi had expressed his full intention of landing straightway. ' I will trust,' said he, ' to the British sense of justice and fair play.'

It was early in January, 1897, and, to quote Gandhi's autobiography, Mr. Laughton ' was a brave

and powerfully built man. Our road lay through the principal street of Durban. It was about half-past four in the evening when we started . . . It would take a pedestrian at least one hour to reach Parsee Rustomji's house,' where Gandhi and his party meant to lodge.

As the only Indian wearing a turban of a particular type, Gandhi was immediately recognized on landing, and some of the mob shouted 'Here's Gandhi! here's Gandhi! Thrash him! Surround him!' The crowd surged around, throwing stones and growing in numbers rapidly. Mr. Laughton protested with the mob in vain, and signalled for a rickshaw. Gandhi tells us that up to then he had never ridden in a rickshaw, considering it 'thoroughly disgusting' to sit in a vehicle pulled by human beings. But he felt that it was his duty to make use of the conveyance on this occasion.

The mob, however, threatened to beat the Zulu who pulled the rickshaw and tear it to pieces, and so the 'boy' refused to take Gandhi in it.

'I was thus spared the shame of a rickshaw ride,' writes the Indian leader.

Continuing, therefore, on foot, Gandhi and his escort forced their way through the ever-increasing mob to West Street, where the crowd assumed gigantic proportions and Mr. Laughton was hustled or dragged away from the side of the man he was trying to protect. Gandhi now had his turban knocked off, was struck in the face, kicked, and pelted with stones and all manner of missiles.

‘I was about to fall unconscious, when I held on to the railings of a house near by,’ he writes.

The wife of the superintendent of police, Mrs. Alexander, happened to be taking a walk and coming from the opposite direction. She heroically rushed to his succour, and opening her sunshade over his head to shield him, took his arm and told the cowardly ruffians around what she thought of them. Shame-faced, they desisted from their violence, for they must have injured her if they had aimed further blows at the object of their resentment; and, next, a party of constables arrived from the police-station to escort Gandhi safely thither.

Mr. Alexander, the Superintendent of Police, entreated the Indian leader to remain at the station; but he declined the offer of that asylum with thanks, saying that he must go on to Rustomji’s house and that he still had faith in the fair play of the citizens of Durban. And, as it turned out, he reached the parsee’s home without further annoyance. A doctor attended to his injuries, one of which ‘in particular was very painful.’

But although the mob had suffered him to reach his destination, it was not disposed to forgo its fury against him, and thousands of Europeans, including many of the worst type, assembled in front of Rustomji *Sheth’s* house and howled that they would burn it and all within it unless Gandhi was given up to them to vent their spleen upon. Superintendent Alexander came, and, after posting police all round the house, harangued the mob from a

bench in front of the doorway, thus preventing any one forcing a way in. He had already sent a subordinate, disguised as an Indian trader, into the house with the following message to Gandhi :—

‘ If you wish to save your friend, his guests and property, and your own family, I advise you to disguise yourself as an Indian constable, come out through Rustomji’s go-down, steal with my man through the crowd and go to the police-station. A carriage is awaiting you at the corner of the street.’

The message went on to say that the crowd was so excited that Mr. Alexander was not able to control it, and that, if Gandhi did not follow his directions at once, he was afraid the mob would raze Rustomji’s house to the ground, and it was impossible for him to imagine how many lives would be lost and how much property destroyed.

Gandhi saw the force of the superintendent’s arguments, and, assuming the disguise of a native constable, slipped out of the house, unnoticed, with the police-officer. Then, when Mr. Alexander knew that the Indian leader had got safely away, he told the mob that its intended victim was no longer in the house, but had escaped. On some of the crowd crying out that they did not believe him, the superintendent told them to appoint a committee of three or four men to search the premises. The committee was duly appointed, and allowed to enter the house and look all over it ; and, on its report that Gandhi was not inside, the crowd dispersed in bitter disappointment.

On the next day the reporter of a Durban newspaper who had interviewed Gandhi aboard the steamer wrote a vindication of him, as regarded the charge levelled against him that he meant to flood Natal with Indian coolies ; and the press of the Colony generally apologized, on behalf of the decent citizens of Natal, for the treatment meted out to him.

‘ This enhanced my reputation, as well as the prestige of the Indian community,’ Mr. Gandhi wrote.

And years afterwards, we are told, Mr. Escombe, the Attorney-General, meeting the Indian leader, expressed regret at the action he had taken saying in self-exculpation that he did not know what manner of man he was dealing with, or words to that effect.

CHAPTER II

*Services in Boer War—The Phœnix Settlement—
‘Passive Resistance’—Sent to Gaol Three Times—
His ‘Strike March.’*

IN May of that same year, 1897, Sir Alfred Milner, who had been appointed Governor of Cape Colony, was also created High Commissioner in South Africa, and Mr. Gandhi and the Indian community in Natal and the Transvaal rightly concluded that, where they were concerned, matters would now improve. A better feeling, too, arose thanks to the celebration on June 22, of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Sir Alfred Milner was raised to the peerage in 1901, and advanced to a viscountcy the year following.

But in 1899, the Anglo-Boer or South African War broke out on October 11, and Gandhi, who was still practising in Natal, proposed to the British Government that he should raise an Indian Ambulance Corps. After some delay his offer was accepted, and he organized a corps of 1,100 of his compatriots. He himself accompanied the corps into the firing-line, and saw active service repeatedly.

He was present at the famous battle of Spion Kop, where, on January 24, 1900, General Sir Redvers

Buller was repulsed with severe losses. One who saw Gandhi at this battle wrote that he came across him in the early morning sitting by the roadside, eating a regulation army biscuit, and that in the heat of the action the Indian mule-train carried water to the distressed soldiers.

The mules had huge bags of water, one on either side of them, and Indians marched at the head of the procession, leading it. The Boers kept up a ceaseless rifle-fire, which was so heavy that our artillery was practically put out of action. Several of the Indians fell under the fire, but as one fell another took his place.

Gandhi's ambulance corps it was which recovered and removed the dead body of Lord Roberts' only son from under fire ; and ' their dauntlessness ' on this occasion and on other battlefields during the Natal campaign ' cost them (the Indians) many lives.' So heavy was their loss, indeed, that the Corps was ultimately prohibited from going into the firing-line.

Mr. Gandhi was not only personally mentioned in despatches, but awarded the war medal.

Queen Victoria died on January 22, 1901, and her son, Edward VII, was proclaimed King. Mr. Gandhi suffered a breakdown in health owing to his privations and exertions during the war, and he and his family decided to return to India. Before he left Natal the Indian residents there made him, his wife, and his children a presentation of costly gold plate and jewellery. But he refused to accept

the munificent gift and directed it to be 'put aside for public purposes, should need arise.'

Sir John Robinson, the Prime Minister of Natal, had been invited to attend the ceremony. Unable to do so, he wrote that 'it would have given him great pleasure to be present on the occasion of so well-earned a mark of respect to our able and distinguished fellow-citizen, Mr. Gandhi.'

Satisfied that the new order of things in South Africa would mean the alleviation of the conditions of the Indians there, Mr. Gandhi took up legal practice once more in the Presidency of Bombay, and, his health having considerably improved, he attended the Indian National Congress at Calcutta. Shortly afterwards, in 1902, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, our Colonial Secretary, visited South Africa in order to complete the arrangements for the government of the annexed Transvaal and Orange River State. The Natal Indians cabled Mr. Gandhi, begging him to return there and draft a memorial which they proposed submitting to Mr. Chamberlain. He at once answered the call, and in Natal he was put at the head of the deputation that waited on the Colonial Secretary.

Proceeding to the Transvaal at the invitation of some of its Indian residents, he was there refused permission, as an outsider, to head another deputation to Mr. Chamberlain; so the other members of the deputation went without him. He decided to remain in the Transvaal, and applied for and was granted leave to practise as an Attorney of the

Supreme Court of that country. In the following year, 1903, he founded the Transvaal British Indian Association, and became its honorary secretary.

He now, too, established a newspaper devoted to the interests of Indians everywhere and named *Indian Opinion*, furnishing from his own purse most of the capital required. Mr. M. H. Nazar was the editor, and the paper was published in alternate columns of English, Gujarati, Hindi, and Tamil. To the Gujarati and English columns, Gandhi himself contributed voluminously and regularly year in, year out. Subsequently the Hindi and Tamil columns were discontinued.

In the winter of 1904, Mr. Gandhi read John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, a little work comprising four essays on the first principles of political economy and taking its title from the line in Scripture, 'I will give unto this last, even as unto thee' (Matt. xx. 14). Ruskin had then been dead four years, and this book of his originally appeared serially in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1860 and was first published in book form in 1862. Ruskin himself says in the preface that the essays 'were reprobated in a violent manner, as far as I could hear, by most of the readers they met with' in the *Cornhill Magazine*.

The book inspired Mr. Gandhi to found a settlement in Natal that would give the Indian community more interest in the land of their adoption, bind them more closely to it, as well as ameliorate the conditions of their lives in it materially. He chose a place called Phoenix, some twelve miles from

Durban and situate in a district chiefly concerned with sugarcane cultivation. At this spot with what money he had he bought the freehold of an estate of a hundred acres, two miles distant from the railway station.

There he proceeded to erect buildings to accommodate all the machinery necessary for the production of his paper, *Indian Opinion*, and he issued invitations to a number of Indians and Europeans, whom he chose, to form the settlement. These settlers were to have the assets of the press and land, but had to lead a life of poverty or 'the simple life.' No one was to receive or accept more than £3 a month, but all were to share equally in the profits, if any. Furthermore, the head of every family was to have a house built for him, which he was to pay for when or as he was able, and to have also two acres of ground for cultivation. All in the settlement must work for the public good, and particularly the prosperity of the paper, *Indian Opinion*. The education of the children was provided for later.

Meanwhile, the plague had broken out in the Indian Location at Johannesburg, in the Transvaal, owing to the bad sanitary conditions. Mr. Gandhi petitioned the Government on the matter, and it is alleged that his statements were denied until the circumstances could no longer be ignored. When he found his warning discarded, he took it on himself to organize a private hospital and nursing home for the sufferers. More than that, he went to Johannesburg and 'personally tended the plague

patients.' The Municipal authorities subsequently approved his work, and bestirred themselves to remedy the evil.

In 1906, the Zulus in Natal rebelled under a chief named Bambaata. Mr. Gandhi sent his family to the Phoenix Settlement and organized an Indian stretcher-bearer corps, which he accompanied to the seat of action. This meant marching sometimes as much as thirty miles a day through the most difficult rocky or bush-entangled country. And it is said that he and his corps did not gain the good graces of some of their white comrades by the trouble they took to find and attend to wounded rebels.

On June 8, Bambaata, the Zulu chief, was killed in battle and the rebellion collapsed. Mr. Gandhi and every member of his stretcher-bearer corps were awarded the special medal struck.

After his return to Johannesburg, the Transvaal Government brought forward a Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, which imposed a tax of £3 on all Asiatic workers in the country with a view to check Indian immigration. Mr. Gandhi was up in arms at once, of course, against such a measure, although he himself might object to our figurative use of the word 'arms,' for he then, as always, advocated 'peaceful' or non-violent measures of opposition.

He called on the Indian community everywhere to adopt 'passive resistance'—to refuse to pay the £3 tax—and on September 11, 1906, he took a public oath that he personally would not submit to the new

law. The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, who had been Liberal Viceroy of India from 1894 to 1899, was Colonial Secretary, at this time and Mr. Gandhi came to England to try to induce him and the Cabinet to prevent the threatened measure coming into force. Mr. Gandhi's mission failed, King Edward was persuaded to give his assent to the Ordinance and it became law in South Africa.

Thereupon, returning to the Transvaal, Gandhi wrote and spoke bitterly against the objectionable legislation, urging all who were affected by it to join his crusade of passive resistance. He stated at either this time or subsequently, 'If I did not believe that racial equality was to be obtained within the British Empire, I should be a rebel.'

Eventually, towards the latter part of 1907, he and other leaders of the Passive Resistance Movement were arrested. Some of his fellow-prisoners had been more violent in their opposition to the law than he had been, and upon these was passed the maximum sentence of six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Thereupon he asked the magistrate to impose the same penalty on him. 'For I am the leader and inspirer of this transgression of the law,' he said.

He was sent to gaol for two months' simple imprisonment, and either on this or a later occasion, he went on hunger strike in prison and was forcibly fed.

Within little more than a fortnight of his being sent to gaol, however, General Smuts, who was

Minister of Finance and Colonial Secretary in General Botha's cabinet, agreed to accept the voluntary registration of Asiatics, and is said to have had a personal interview with Gandhi. At this interview, General Smuts is also alleged to have specifically, in the presence of official witnesses, promised repeal before long of the obnoxious law. Be that as it may, Gandhi was released, and an agreement seemed to have been arrived at.

Mr. Gandhi was on his way to the Registration Office, to fulfil the promise he had made General Smuts, when he was set upon by some irreconcilables of his compatriots who considered he had broken faith with them and let them down, and he was very badly maltreated—again nearly killed, in fact.

General Smuts denied having given any such promise as the ultimate repeal of the objectionable law ; and, charging him with deception, Mr. Gandhi again called on all Indians to wage anew the campaign of passive resistance. On March 3, he was again arrested and committed to Pretoria gaol on a fairly light sentence, along with his wife. One of his sons at the time was undergoing six months' imprisonment at Volksrust for a similar offence.

On the expiration of his term of imprisonment, unbroken in spirit, Mr. Gandhi renewed his campaign, with the result that he was again arrested in September, 1908, this time in Natal. He was transported to Johannesburg to serve his sentence, and it is alleged that he was sent the two hundred miles in the garb of a South African native convict

in charge of a prison-warder in uniform, without any provision being made for his obtaining food on the way.

He was described on this occasion as 'a small, slim, dark, active man with calm eyes and a serene countenance,' and his convict attire as a 'small military cap; loose coarse jacket, bearing a numbered ticket and marked with the broad arrow; short trousers, one leg dark, the other light, similarly marked; thick woollen socks; and leather sandals.'

After his release this time, we are informed, the Government left him severely alone—free to do his worst, apparently—but continued to clap the more violent of his followers into prison.

In 1909, therefore, he came again to England as the representative and protagonist of the South African Indian community to try and awaken sympathy with it, and especially during the Conference of the South African premiers in July. On December 21, of that same year, Mr. Herbert Gladstone (afterwards Viscount Gladstone) was appointed the first Governor-General of South Africa, and in the new year, when the Union of South Africa came into being, Mr. Gandhi had the great satisfaction of seeing certain suggestions he had made recommended by the Imperial Government in their despatch to Viscount Gladstone.

Relations between the Indians in South Africa and the Government were not much improved, however, although in 1911, a second provisional settlement was come to. Gandhi, therefore, in 1912,

invited the great Indian statesman, the Hon. Mr. Gopal K. Gokhale, to visit South Africa to use his influence with the Union Ministers. Mr. Gokhale is alleged to have obtained a promise from the Ministry to repeal the detested £3 tax ; but in the following year, as the tax was still enforced, Mr. Gandhi refused to abide any longer by the provisional settlement, and in September reinaugurated Passive Resistance, extending the movement to Natal.

The two previous years, 1911 and 1912, had been record ones, for strikes at home in England. In 1912, the coal-miners first went out, to the number of a million men, and then the London dock-labourers. On December 23, 1912, too, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, was nearly assassinated by a bomb being thrown into the howdah of the elephant on which he and Lady Hardinge were making the State entry into Delhi. He was only slightly wounded by the explosion, but an attendant was killed.

The seat of the Indian Government had been transferred from Calcutta to Delhi, which was chosen as the new capital for historical and political, as well as geographical reasons.

Apparently taking his cue from the strikes in England, Gandhi now organized a great one in South Africa, and led an army of two thousand Indian strikers from the coal-mines of Northern Natal, where they worked under indenture, in an amazing 'march of protest' to the Transvaal.

They marched from Newcastle to Volksrust, near Johannesburg, 'on a handful of rice, bread and sugar' daily, each man. Before setting forth, Mr. Gandhi took a solemn vow that he would eat only one meal a day until the £3 tax was repealed; and an account of the march pictures him at the head of the procession, as 'a small, limping, bent, but dogged man, coarsely dressed and using a staff.'

The march was stopped by the police and many of those participating in it were arrested as 'prohibited immigrants.' Huge mass meetings of Indians were next convened at Durban, Johannesburg, and other towns, and thousands of Asiatics were arrested and imprisoned.

The indignation spread to India, where large sums of money were raised by subscription for the support of the movement in South Africa, and the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, in a speech he delivered at Madras, called for a Commission of Inquiry to be instituted.

A committee was formed, presided over by Baron Ampthill, who had been Viceroy and Acting Governor-General of India in 1904-5 during Lord Curzon's absence, and the Imperial Government intervened and appointed a Commission. The Indian leaders were not represented on it, and, although those in prison were now released, its sittings were vain and the Passive Resistance movement continued unabated. Two English gentlemen, Messrs. C. F. Andrews and W. W. Pearson, did great service, however, in bringing about friendlier relations

between the opposing parties, and then, on the outbreak of a big strike by Europeans in South Africa on January 13, 1914, necessitating the proclamation of martial law, Gandhi agreed to drop his Passive Resistance so as not to add to the worries of the Government, as he declared. He had fought the different South African authorities for eight years.

The Commission's Report was adopted by the Government, which then brought in the Indians' Relief Act. This Act was some little time in passing through the two Houses of Parliament, but it did pass, and General Smuts, in certain correspondence he had with Mr. Gandhi, promised further reforms not covered by the New Act.

CHAPTER III

*Awarded the Kaiser-I-Hind Medal—His ' Ashram '—
The Champaran Trouble and Ahmedabad Strike—
Encourages Recruiting for the War.*

IMMEDIATELY after scoring his signal triumph in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi returned to India, where he learned, to his infinite distress, that his great friend and compatriot, the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale, was on the point of death in England. He therefore packed up again and sailed for London, in the hope of seeing his friend before the end came.

To his relief and joy, on arriving in England, he found Mr. Gokhale slowly mending. But the Great War had just started ; Great Britain had declared war against Germany. He determined to aid by organizing a volunteer Red Cross ambulance corps among the Indians in London. His wife fell ill, however, and was seriously indisposed for some weeks.

On her recovery he proceeded to raise his Red Cross corps, getting together 250 Indian students from the English universities, and enrolling both himself and his wife. He now suffered a slight breakdown in health himself, and so, instead of proceeding to the seat of war, he and Mrs. Gandhi returned to India. There he received a great

welcome from his fellow-countrymen, and was recommended by the Viceroy for the Kaiser-I-Hind gold medal.

This mark of esteem was founded in 1900 as a reward to any person, of either sex, who rendered useful public service for or in India. It was conferred upon Mr. Gandhi by King George in the 1915 New Year honours. But his pleasure at its bestowal was somewhat dashed by the news of the death of his friend, Mr. Gokhale. This gentleman had drawn up an important memorandum on the extension of provincial autonomy in India. It was not published, however, until August, 1917.

Mr. Gandhi now started on a tour of all the leading industrial centres of his native land, in accordance with a promise he had given his deceased friend that he would make himself thoroughly acquainted with its public life before making any statement of a political nature. Gokhale had wrung this promise from him, it is said, because of certain rather advanced views he had expressed in a pamphlet entitled *Hind Swaraj* (Indian Home Rule), which had been interdicted by the Indian Government.

He had decided to interest himself in the improvement of the lot of the ryots, or Indian industrial and agricultural labourers, and at Sabarmati, on the bank of that river, four miles from Ahmedabad, the capital of his own province of Gujarat, he founded a sort of monastery called the *Ashram*, or to give it its full title, *Satyagrahashram*. This name was made up of two Indian words, *satyagraha*, meaning

literally 'persistence in seeking for truth' but which he expressed as 'soul force' and *ashram*, an asylum or retreat.

In this monastery of the *Ashram* his purpose was to train public servants from childhood upon an austere native life. There were to be no fees, and the inmates were to support themselves by working at the handloom or spinning-wheel and other manual labour.

Mr. Justice Piddington, who personally visited the *Ashram*, describes its working in his little book entitled *Bapu Gandhi*. There were well-kept kitchen-gardens and flower-gardens, and Mr. Piddington saw little children pottering about with tiny watering-cans as well as planting seeds in their own little plots. The adults were engaged in making *khadi* or *khadder* cloth for garments, and coarse carpets and mats, using the old-fashioned spinning-wheel and hand-carding, Mr. Gandhi having set his face against the use of all machinery. There were 'weavery' and 'carpentry' shops, and the use of imported cloth was prohibited within the establishment. The bedrooms were like monastic cells, most barely furnished.

On his tour of his native land, Mr. Gandhi everywhere was well received and expressed loyalty to the British Empire. At Bangalore he unveiled a portrait of the late Mr. Gokhale; and he was given the chair at the anniversary function, when he spoke on several native religious topics, but avoided all allusion to politics. He was invited to address

the gathering at the Hindu University celebrations, on February 4, 1916, and other meetings, at which he referred to his Ashram. Then, on December 22, he delivered what has been termed a remarkable speech on 'Economic *versus* Moral Progress' at the Muir College, Allahabad, a Mr. Stanley Jevons occupying the chair.

At the Lucknow Congress, also in December of that same year, 1916, he was asked to express his opinion upon the alleged grievances of the ryots working on the indigo plantations in Behar. He declined to do so until, as he said, he had had an opportunity of inquiring into them first hand.

Accordingly, he received a largely signed request on behalf of the ryots of Champaran, a district of the Patna division of Behar, to proceed thither and examine the conditions of the indigo workers. He answered the call in April, 1917, but was stopped by the police on the 16th of the month and served with a notice from the District Magistrate of Champaran to quit the neighbourhood by the next available train, as the local authorities feared that his action might lead to serious disturbance.

He refused to depart, and wrote to the Magistrate as follows :—'The Commissioner of the District has misinterpreted the position in asserting that my object is likely to be agitation.'

He was therefore taken into custody, and on the 18th he appeared before the Magistrate, when he stated that he had come in response to a pressing invitation to help the ryots, who urged that they were

not fairly treated by the indigo planters. 'I must study the problem,' said he, 'and I have disregarded the order in obedience to the higher law of our being—the voice of conscience.'

The magistrate received instructions from the Imperial authorities not to proceed with his prosecution; and he wrote about his investigations in *Young India* with the result that in June a Commission was instituted to inquire into the matter, he himself being appointed one of the members of the Commission. In that body's Report, the Hon. Mr. Maude, who presided over it, 'made frank statements of the scandals which necessitated the inquiry,' and acknowledged Mr. Gandhi's services in the most handsome terms. The Hon. Mr. Maude stigmatized the whole system of the employment of the ryots on the plantations as 'inherently wrong and impossible' and as 'rotten and open to abuse.' The indigo planters, particularly a Mr. Irwin, bitterly attacked Mr. Gandhi in consequence in the pages of the *Pioneer* newspaper, but he replied 'with quiet humour,' we are told.

During the next couple of months, he devoted himself to making the Gujarat *Sabha*, or Council, 'a well-equipped organization for effective social service,' we are also informed, and in August, when it was announced that the new Secretary of State for India, Mr. M. E. S. Montagu, was about to pay the country a visit, Mr. Gandhi induced this council to prepare a monster petition upon a Congress League Scheme. He himself went throughout

Gujarat getting signatures, and his suggestion was taken up by the Congress and also by the *Swaraj*, or Home Rule League.

On September 17, he found time to preside over the Bombay Co-operative Conference; and on November 3, he spoke in a way that attracted considerable attention at the Gujarat Political Conference, over which he also presided, and at the Gujarat Educational Conference. 'The piles of books containing the monster signatures were duly presented to Mr. Montagu,' who arrived in Bombay on November 9; and in December the Champaran Agrarian Bill, intended to remedy the evils of the indigo plantations and based on the recommendations of the Commission, was moved in the Behar Legislative Council.

Mr. Gandhi was described at this time as 'a past master in the art of political controversy,' bringing 'to bear upon the discussion of public questions, not only an acute dialectical skill but a most engaging spirit of gentleness and courtesy which leave no bitterness behind in the process of converting his political adversaries.' This quotation is from *Gandhi's Letters on Indian Affairs*, a work published by Messrs. Narayan and Co. in Madras, in 1923, the anonymous author or compiler of which also states that he possessed a 'sweet reasonableness and persuasive candour that disarm criticism.'

He made a point of always travelling third-class on the native railways, and on September 25, he wrote a letter to the press, upon the grievances of

the third-class passengers. During Congress week in Calcutta, in December, he was the president at the first sitting of the Social Service League and in a speech he made he drew attention to the same subject. On the 15th of the month, he also wrote to his own old paper in South Africa, *Indian Opinion*, to the effect that 'half his time was passed in the Indian trains,' and regretting that his South African brethren were 'not yet free from differences about trade licences and leaving certificates.' There was, he averred, no remedy like Passive Resistance against such evils, but he added that he had heard that many of the Indians in South Africa were mixed up with illicit traffic. 'We who seek justice must be above suspicion,' he said.

At the end of 1917, and the beginning of 1918, a famine occurred in the Kaira or Kheda district of Gujarat, some twenty miles north-west of Ahmedabad, greatly depopulating the neighbourhood, and he bitterly denounced the state of affairs in the stricken area at a meeting held in Bombay on February 5. The starving people, he said, were even obliged to sell their cattle to pay taxes, and that although the Sabha (Council) had asked that the collection of dues be suspended until negotiations could be made for relief. A deputation had been sent to the Commissioner of the Division, and if that official, he declared, 'had talked politely to its members, such crises would not have happened,' and he very pertinently added, 'Public men have every right to advise the people of their rights.'

In March, 1918, the mill hands of Ahmedabad, where he had settled on account of his *Ashram*, went on strike to the number of 10,000 men, and he was asked by both the mill-owners and the people to try and arrange matters. He and a native lady, who was also endeavouring to settle the dispute—a Miss Anusuyabhai—saw fit to take a fasting vow, and this action on their part was considered, for some obscure reason, as an attempt to intimidate the mill-owners, and estranged his friends among them. He defended himself by saying that it was preferable he should take such a vow than that ten thousand men, the mill-hands, should break the vow *they* had taken.

Whether his action had anything to do with the readjustment of matters it is not easy to say, but the dispute *was* settled shortly afterwards.

March 27, 1918, was styled 'Our Day,' when the immense sum of something like £815,000 was collected in India to help the Home Government to carry on the War; and at the beginning of April, an invitation was extended to Mr. Gandhi to sit on the Delhi War Conference. He at first declined to do so as the invitation was not also extended to his four friends, Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Annie Besant, and the Messrs. Ali brothers. Mrs. Besant was an English lady who had been President of the Theosophical Society from 1907, and had since been closely associated with Theosophical and other projects in India. In the previous year (1917), she and her party had started the agitation, 'Home Rule for India,' and

she had been arrested for seditious writings, but had been released.

The Viceroy himself, however, had a personal interview with Mr. Gandhi, and persuaded him to attend the War Conference, which opened at Delhi, on April 27, with a message from the King-Emperor foreshadowing a development of constitutional progress and the realization of responsible government in India as a part of the British Empire.

Mr. Gandhi spoke at the Conference in support of the resolution of loyalty to the Imperial Government. 'We must give ungrudging support,' said he, 'to the Empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions Overseas. Nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule, to be realized in the shortest possible time, will satisfy the Indian people. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire, we have in that very act secured Home Rule.'

Subsequently, he wrote to the Viceroy as follows:—

'As a Hindu, I cannot be indifferent to their cause'—he was referring to the Mohammedan section of the Indian people. 'Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of these States, and for the Muslim sentiment as to the places of worship, and in your just and timely treatment of the Indian claim to Home Rule, lie the safety of the Empire.'

He now went about the country, calling on the Indian people to enlist in the Army in their thousands and thus make an adequate response to the British

Prime Minister's appeal for a million Indian recruits to help in the war against the Central European Powers. He particularly called on the peasants of Kaira to join the army, and wrote numerous letters to the press, as well as spoke at meetings, in favour of recruiting.

This was materially helped forward by a resolution framed by the Government on May 25, containing the outlines of its policy for more complete local self-government. But on June 10, something of a hitch occurred. Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay, presiding at the War Conference there, made some disparaging remark about the *Swarajists*, or Home Rulers, to which the Mr. Tilak before mentioned took violent exception. Mr. Tilak, persisting in objecting and making what was practically a political speech, was ruled out of order; and on that he and all his fellow Home Rulers walked out of the Conference.

Mr. Gandhi had not yet actually joined the *Swaraj* League, although he was in sympathy with it. He was asked to preside over a protest meeting convened in Bombay on June 16. He took the chair at the meeting, and said that he 'could not conceive the existence of an Indian who was not a Home Ruler.'

Nevertheless, he continued to exert himself to help on the recruiting campaign, writing or stating that 'it behoves us to learn the use of arms and to acquire the ability to defend ourselves, and it is our duty to enlist in the army . . . The easiest and

straightest way to win *Swarajya* (Home Rule) is to participate in the defence of the Empire . . . If every village'—he specified the Kaira District—'gave at least twenty men, the District would be able to raise an army of 12,000 men.'

The Report of the proposed Montagu Reforms was issued in July, and Mr. Gandhi wrote with regard to it to the *Servant of India* :—

'For me, even law and order and good government would be too dearly purchased by the grinding poverty of the masses. The watchword of our Reform Councils will have to be not the increase of taxation for the growing needs of a growing country, but a decrease of financial burdens that are sapping the foundation itself of organic growth. British interests will be as secure in Indian hands as in their own. We must press for immediate granting to Indians of fifty per cent of the higher posts in the Civil Service.'

According to Baron Meston, K.C.S.I., LL.D., who was Governor of India from 1906 to 1912 and Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh from 1912 to 1917, and who writes on India in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Supplementary Edition), the Indian Civil Service is limited to about 1,000 members, who used to be chosen exclusively by open competition in England, the ages of competitors being between 21 and 24. Baron Meston states :—

'Nearly all the higher appointments, administrative and judicial, are appropriated by statutes to

this service. Other services which used to be nearly all or wholly recruited in England are the education, police, engineering, public works, telegraph, forest and superior railway services. A quarter of a century ago it was estimated that out of 1,370 appointments drawing a salary of £800 a year and upwards, 1,263 were held by Europeans, while the vast majority of the lower posts were occupied by Indians. All this is now changing fast. A pronouncement of August, 1917, adumbrated "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration." "

Lord Willingdon was transferred to the Governorship of Madras, and Major Sir G. A. Lloyd, M.P., D.S.O., K.C.I.E., was appointed Governor of Bombay in his place, on September 30.

The Report already referred to, and known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Joint Report—owing to Mr. Montagu's association, of course, as Secretary of State, with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford—was actually dated April 22, 1918.

At the end of 1918, it was announced that the number of Indians who had been recruited during the Great War numbered 1,161,789, and with the army in India on the outbreak of war 1,172,908 men had been sent over seas. This was a great feather in India's cap.

CHAPTER IV

The Rowlatt Acts—'Civil Disobedience'—The Government of India Amendment Bill—His 'Non-Co-operation' Scheme.

INFLUENCED by the Rowlatt Committee's finding that conspiracy and crime were rife throughout the land, the Indian Government now at the beginning of 1919, brought forward two Bills or Acts, which became known as the Anarchist Crimes or Rowlatt Acts, and from their formulation may be dated Mr. Gandhi's quarrel with, and open defiance of, the Imperial Government.

Mr. Gandhi declared them an insult to himself and his fellow-Indians, and as deliberately designed 'to discredit the Indian people on the eve of ostensible political reforms and curb their liberties still further.'

Following on this, though Mr. Gandhi had apparently no hand in it, the largest strike hitherto known in India began at Bombay on January 9, no fewer than 100,000 cotton mill-hands turning out in a demand for an increased bonus. The strike lasted until the first of the following month. Then, on February 18, another strike by 15,000 workers occurred in Bombay.

The Government Crimes Bill provided for the trial of seditious crime by three judges of the highest status, who might dispense with the aid of a jury, if they considered it liable to consist largely of disaffected persons, and invested the Provincial Governments with certain limited powers of internment. When the Bill was brought in, it was opposed by the public press, which was practically united on the matter, and it was even severely impugned in the Imperial Council itself. 'The whole country was solid against it,' we are informed; and the Government bowed somewhat to the storm, agreeing that the duration of the 'emergency powers' conferred by the Bill should be limited to three years after the conclusion of the War. On March 17, the Bill passed the Viceregal Council. It was in two sections, or Acts.

Mr. Gandhi, at his headquarters, 'Udoga Mandir,' in Ahmedabad, denounced the new acts 'as instruments of oppression,' and in order to resist the Bill he inaugurated what he called the *Satyagraha* Movement. *Satyagraha*, as already explained, means literally 'insistence on truth,' but it now meant non-violent civil disobedience to the law. Later, it came to include, as we shall see, 'non-co-operation' with the Government.

With his usual energy and vigour, Mr. Gandhi travelled all over the land, counselling the people everywhere by word of mouth and his writings to join his crusade of 'Satyagraha.' He published on February 28, a form of pledge for all Indians to sign and observe as a covenant.

This pledge was worded as follows :—

‘ Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, Number 1 of 1919, and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill, No. 11 of 1919, are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming law, and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit, and further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person, or property.’

Among the places he spoke at in the following month were Bombay, Allahabad, Madras, Tanjore, Tuticorin, and Negapatam, and everywhere thousands joined his movement and signed the pledge required. The Central *Satyagraha* Committee elected him President, and he issued a leaflet entitled *Satyagrahi*. He announced Sunday, April 6, as ‘*Satyagraha Day*’ and called on all his followers to observe it as a *hartal*, or ‘day of mourning,’ when prayers would be offered up and vows taken.

Government proclaimed his leaflet, *Satyagrahi*, seditious, and riots occurred at Delhi on April 1, in protest against the Crimes Bill. Mr. Gandhi was on his way to Delhi four days after the *hartal*, namely on April 10, when he was arrested at a place

called Kosi, and served with an order that he must not enter the Punjab and Delhi District, but confine his activities to Bombay.

He told the police-officers that *his* duty was to disobey the injunction, but that *their* duty was to carry it out, and he dictated a letter to his secretary, Mr. Desai, urging his followers not to resent his arrest. He was sent back to Bombay, and thereupon in spite of his letter counselling peace and order by his followers, riots attended with bloodshed occurred in several places, including Ahmedabad, his native city. The military had to be called out to deal with the situation.

He wrote condemning the violence of his followers and appealed to them to disperse quietly when ordered to do so by the authorities. But this was in contradiction to the generally accepted idea of civil disobedience and the riotous outbreaks continued, buildings being burned down, weapons forcibly seized, money extorted, and shops and houses sacked, many innocent persons also being killed.

In July, 1919, a Bill embodying a scheme advanced in the Montagu-Chelmsford Joint Report, 'with certain modifications,' was introduced by the Secretary of State for India in the British House of Commons. The Joint Report had 'conceded the justice of the demand by the Indians for administrative power and proposed that responsible government, in the sense of government by ministers primarily responsible to an elected assembly, should be conferred on India by progressive stages,' as it

recognized that India was not yet ready for full responsible government; that an electorate had first to be created and that its representatives would at first be inexperienced. It proposed, therefore, to confine the first stage of advance to the major provinces, and in these to set up a dual form of government, called 'dyarchy.' (See under 'India', *Encyclopædia Britannica*.)

This diarchical form of government would mean the division of the provincial field into two sections, 'one of which would be transferred to the control of ministers chosen by the Governor from the elected members of his legislative council.' (*ibid.*)

The British House of Commons read the Bill a second time and referred it to a Joint Select Committee of both Houses, presided over by Lord Selborne. Passed eventually by both Houses, the Bill, which was called the Government of India Amendment Act, left the Imperial Government with powers of supervision and authority over the Provincial Governments, which were to derive their revenue from the departments under their control. The Imperial Government was to take the yield of merely its own departments, the railways, customs, income-tax, salt, and opium.

These sources of income, as a matter of fact, did not enable the Central Government to balance its Budget, and it was obliged to levy subsidies from the provinces, but it pledged itself to forgo these subsidies as soon as it was practicable to do so.

By this new 1919 Bill, some five million of the

adult male population of India were at once given votes, and ultimately a female suffrage, more or less restricted in character, was also granted in certain provinces. The Central or Imperial Government had power to stop any Bill or Act introduced into the Provincial Legislatures that it might consider 'dangerous' and reserve it for the consideration of the Governor-General.

The 'dyarchical' form of government only applied to the Provincial Legislatures—did not appertain to the Imperial sphere, where the Governor-General and his Executive Council would still be supreme. But the Central Legislature would now consist of a Lower House, or Legislative Assembly, of 144 members, 103 of whom would be elected by constituencies larger in area and of higher property qualifications than the Provincial bodies, and an Upper House, or Council of State, consisting of 60 members, 33 of whom would be elected on a still more restricted franchise.

This great change would not assure a majority for the Imperial Government, and so, as safeguards against any deadlock, joint sittings of both Houses might be convened, or the Governor-General could veto a Bill and refer it to His Majesty the King. Any Bill which he recommended, if it were accepted by one Chamber and rejected by the other, he could treat as enacted. If both Houses rejected such a Bill, he might make it an Act on his own responsibility, but must then lay it before Parliament at Westminster, and effect might not be given to it,

except in a case of emergency, until the King-Emperor assented to it. The Governor-General might also sanction vital expenditure in any emergency case. (India, *Encyclopædia Britannica*.)

It was likewise stated in this Bill that ten years after it came into force a Parliamentary Commission was to be sent to India to examine the working of its reforms and report on the advisability of 'establishing the principle of responsible government, to the country, or of extending, modifying, or restricting the degree of responsible government already existing.'

Mr. Gandhi, and his party refused to accept the new Government of India Amendment Act. Nothing short of Home Rule now would satisfy them, and in that same month of July, 1920, they started a boycott of the Reformed Councils or a Non-Co-operation campaign against the Government. Gandhi called on all Indian Home Rulers to take no part in the formation or proceedings of the various Legislative Councils; and he joined sides with the Khilāfat or Caliphate section of the Indian community.

This section was the Mohammedans or Muslims, who were incensed by the peace terms offered to Turkey by the Treaty of Sèvres. They took the name of the Khilāfat party from their claim that the Sultan, as Caliph or Khilafa of Islam, should not be deprived of any of his temporal possessions, and they urged that the British Prime Minister had given his solemn pledge that after the Great War the

integrity of the Ottoman Empire would not be disturbed, as a concession to their loyalty throughout the War and also to the principle he had advocated of self-determination.

‘We did not fight to inflict punishment upon our own Khilāfa,’ they exclaimed, ‘and the Sèvres Treaty flouts Mussulman sentiment.’

As Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband wrote some ten years later, it was not so very surprising that India should demand self-rule. We ourselves had ‘been patiently and painfully leading India along the path toward self-rule for generations,’ Sir Francis pointed out, in the London *Spectator*, and the revolution ‘began when Indians flocked to Europe and the United States in large numbers, and came home with new ideas. It increased in pace after the Japanese war with Russia, and the World War has only accelerated what was already under way.’

Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband was in command of the British Mission to Tibet in 1903-1904, and went out with the Chitral Expedition as correspondent for the *Times*. He has also written books on Tibet, India, the Himalayas, and Africa.

Indian self-government ‘is, indeed,’ he wrote, ‘the very thing we have been working for these hundred years past. For with what other object did we deliberately educate the Indians and associate them with us in the administration and in the Law Courts in higher and higher positions, take them on to the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and Gover-

nors, give them seats on Imperial Conferences and on the League of Nations, declare that responsible self-government was the goal of our policy in India, and set up miniature parliaments as a first step in that direction ? ’

Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-*Swarajists*, however, had not the patience to wait ten years when the Parliamentary Commission promised by the 1919 Bill would consider the question of establishing the principle of responsible government, and would not see that such a measure was on trial, and, to a certain extent, already afforded them in the new reforms.

The ‘ Non-Co-operation ’ Scheme which Mr. Gandhi now advocated to his following, in order to force the British Government straightway to concede Indian self-government, was to be non-violent and was divided into four heads or tables. In the first place, all who joined it and agreed with it were called upon to relinquish any titles or honorary positions or offices they held under the State. Secondly, all were to refuse to serve the Government in paid appointments, or to give up such appointments, and not to participate or assist in any way ‘ the working of the existing machinery of civil and judicial administration.’ Thirdly, all were to refuse to pay taxes. Fourthly, all in the native police and military were to refuse co-operation with the Government.

How the police and military obeying such an injunction were to avoid the charge of mutiny does

not appear clear, though, of course, those services would plainly suffer if no more recruits were to be obtained.

As all violence was discountenanced, the scheme proposed the organization of volunteers to maintain peace (not *law*, apparently) and order.

Naturally, the promulgation of this scheme created a furore even among the Indian leaders themselves. Those who held titles and honorary offices under the State, did not relish the idea of giving these up; it needed a great deal of self-sacrifice and ardent patriotism to do so. Mr. Gandhi was asking too much of human nature. There could not be wanting, too, aspirants after the proffered Council honours, who would deem the refusal of such as 'political suicide.'

There was at once a great outcry and something of a split in the National Congress, the moderate party in it declaring that such a campaign must inevitably lead to anarchy and chaos.

CHAPTER V

*The Boycott—The Simla Interview—‘ Dictator ! ’—
‘ Civil Disobedience ’ Again—Arrested.*

IMMEDIATELY after launching his new scheme, that is on the first of August, 1920, Mr. Gandhi returned his Kaiser-I-Hind gold medal to the Viceroy, writing that ‘ in his opinion the Imperial Government had acted in the Khilāfat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral, and unjust manner, and that he could retain neither respect nor affection for such a Government.’

In his letter he also referred to the Amritsar ‘ atrocity ’—a collision between the people and military.

‘ Above all,’ he wrote, ‘ the shameful ignorance of the Punjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of Indians betrayed in the House of Lords have filled me with the gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, and have disabled me from rendering—as I have hitherto wholeheartedly tendered—my loyal co-operation.’

He added that ‘ In European countries condonation of such grievous wrongs as the Khilāfat and the Punjab would have resulted in a bloody revolution.’

At this time, Mr. Gandhi was shrewd and politic

enough to seize on the opportunity of uniting Muslims and Hindus by also constituting himself a protagonist of Mussulman sentiment and disaffection.

He was acute enough, too, to try and enlist the British people on his side ; for, shortly after inaugurating ' Non-Co-operation,' he wrote an open letter, entitled *To every Englishman in India*. In this letter he appealed to Englishmen ' to make common cause with the Indian people ' in their demand for self-rule. Later, in July, 1921, he wrote a similar letter, asking for the co-operation of Englishmen at least in the boycotting of foreign cloth and in his anti-drink campaign.

' We are at war with nothing that is good in the world,' he said. ' It is derogatory to the dignity of India to entertain for one single moment hatred towards Englishmen. I condemn Western civilization. I feel that if India would discard it she would only gain by so doing.'

To spread his new political doctrine, he toured the country again, speaking upon it at Madras, Tanjore, Bangalore, and other places, and he published letters and articles in his paper, *Young India*. His scheme was taken up with avidity by ' the unlettered people, who saw his earnestness and asceticism and heard his simple eloquence.' They regarded him now, if they had not already done so, as a *saint*, and invested him with the title of *Mahatma*.

Needless perhaps to state, he set himself out also to win over the National Congress to his campaign, but its members were not so easily converted.

At all events that body did not accept the new creed unanimously, as has already been said, for there he found himself up against human nature in great measure. Members 'felt the inconvenience and suffering of sacrifice,' we are told.

The Congress sat at Christmas time, and after he had laid his scheme before it, the matter was referred to a Subject Committee, which debated it for eight hours on end without coming to any decision. Mr. Gandhi had now elaborated his original plan very much and extended it to seven sub-headings or tables in the resolution he put before the Congress.

The new or enlarged scheme was as follows :—

(1) All in sympathy were to surrender titles or honorary dignities and resign from nominated seats in the local Councils.

(2) All were to refuse to attend Government levees, durbars, and other official functions.

(3) Children and students were to be gradually withdrawn from all schools or colleges owned, supported, or controlled by the Government, and national schools and colleges were to be established.

(4) The British courts of law were to be gradually boycotted by Indian lawyers, and litigants advised not to take their cases to British courts but to private Arbitration Courts which would be established.

(5) The military, clerical, and labouring classes were to refrain from offering themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia.

(6) Candidates for election to the Reformed Councils were to withdraw from candidature, and

voters were to refuse to vote for any candidate who offered himself for election.

(7) *Swadeshi*—that is, the patronage of home merchants or manufacturers—was to be adopted in piece goods on a vast scale, and stimulation was to be given to hand-spinning in every home and hand-weaving on the part of millions of weavers who had abandoned that honourable and ancient calling for lack of encouragement.

Among other members of the Congress who opposed the scheme were Mrs. Besant, who vehemently ‘assailed the very principle of Non-Co-operation,’ we are informed, and Mr. Lala Lajpat Rai, who had actually started the campaign with Mr. Gandhi in the previous July. Mr. Rai, while approving of the boycotting of the Reformed Councils—non-participation in their proceedings—did not hold with students being withdrawn from scholastic institutions or with lawyers relinquishing their practice in British courts.

Other members did not agree with the boycotting of the Reformed Councils and the withdrawal of candidates thereto, &c., but advocated that Swarajists (Home Rulers) should offer themselves in force as candidates for election, and then obstruct the working of the new Bill in the Councils.

The matter was at length put to the vote, and 148 voted for the adoption of Mr. Gandhi’s scheme and 133 voted against it.

About 2,000 people had gathered outside the building, and when the result of the voting was

announced, this crowd hailed it with jubilant shouts of '*Gandhi Mahatma kee jai!*' (Guide Gandhi for ever !)

The matter was to be laid before the Congress, in full sitting, on the following day. When Mr. Gandhi rose to move his resolution, he was greeted with 'thunderous applause.' He moved that 'there was no course open for the people of India but to adopt the policy of progressive non-violent Non-Co-operation, until the said wrongs were righted and *Swarajya* (Home Rule) established.'

A Mr. Pal moved an amendment, to the effect that a Mission should be sent to England to present the demands of the Indian people for Home Rule to the British Parliament, and that, pending the result of that Mission, national schools should be established and arbitration courts formulated, but that the Councils should not be boycotted ; that, instead, Swarajists should be elected in as great force as possible upon them.

Mrs. Besant spoke against both the resolution and the amendment. When it was put to the vote, the amendment was lost and Mr. Gandhi's resolution carried by 1,855 delegates against 873.

With the decision of the Congress, Mr. Lala Rajpat Rai and others who had been opposed, more or less, to the new cult gave it and Mr. Gandhi their full allegiance ; and he made another big tour of the country, preaching 'Non-Co-operation' everywhere he went. He was received with acclamation on all sides, and, as Baron Meston, says, he

was in that year of 1921 at the zenith of his power.

The Ali Brothers accompanied him on this tour and appeared on every platform with him, entreating the Mussulman section of the community to take its stand also under his banner, to unite with their Hindu fellow-countrymen.

Students at once began to desert their schools wholesale, and at Calcutta the amazing scene was witnessed at the entrance to the University Hall of thousands of Indians, men, women and children, prostrating themselves at the steps, lying prone in front of these so that the few students who meant to attend the examination would have to walk over their bodies !

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was to open the new Legislature, and Mr. Gandhi wrote to him :—

‘ Our non-participation in a hearty welcome to your Royal Highness is no demonstration against your personage but against the system you come to uphold. We are opposed to all violence.’

In February, the Duke opened the new Indian Legislature and Chamber of Princes at Delhi, expressing the hope that a new spirit would be engendered amongst the Indian people by the reformed order of things. On April 2, the new Viceroy, Lord Reading, arrived at Bombay. He had been Sir Rufus Isaacs, Lord Chief Justice of England from 1913 to 1918, had been created Viscount in 1916 and Earl in 1917.

Great unrest still continued, riots occurring at

Nasik, in Bombay, where a constable was killed, and elsewhere. With a view to restoring peace, Lord Reading invited Mr. Gandhi to an interview, and they met on May 16 at Simla, the summer viceregal capital.

Their conversation lasted several hours, but nothing came of it. Gandhi would not call off his Non-Co-operation campaign. He wrote an account of what took place at the interview in *Young India*, entitling the account 'The Simla Visit.'

He now, indeed, went further, and encouraged the burning of foreign cloth, as well as its boycott, and his personal friend, Mr. Charles F. Andrews—the English lay missionary in India, already referred to more than once—was horrified and wrote to him, deploring such 'wanton waste' and begging him to put a stop to it. But Gandhi, who was in the habit of addressing letters to Mr. Andrews, beginning with 'My dear Charlie,' and concluding 'with love, Yours, Mohan,' would not listen even to this old friend.

The more violent elements of the Indian people could not long be kept in check in the circumstances. On July 5, the post-office at Aligarh, in the United Provinces, was attacked by a mob; and on July 29, the National Congress passed a resolution to boycott the visit to India of the Prince of Wales. Then in August occurred what was known as the 'Moplah Outbreak,' or Rebellion, but this rising partook more of a racial or religious character than a political one.

‘Moplah’ is a native name given to a Muslim sect or tribe of Arab origin settled in the Malabar district of Madras. This sect numbered about two million persons and formed more than two-thirds of the entire population of the district. They had always been fanatics and had given us trouble before. They belonged to the sect of Shiahs, one of the two great divisions of Mahometanism, Sunnites being the other. The Sunnites accept the *Sunna*, or body of tradition in regard to the Prophet, but the Shiites reject it, claiming that Mahomet before his death named his adopted son Ali to the Caliphate, and following Ali’s doctrine. Persia belongs to the Shiite sect, while Turkey is Sunnite, and most of the Indian Mussulmen are Sunnites.

Owing to this difference in religion, the Moplahs, who are for the most part a very illiterate peasantry, had small sympathy with the new friendly understanding come to between their Sunnite brethren and the Hindus over the Khilāfat or Caliph question, possibly even resented it. Anyhow, they rose in revolt *en masse*, and, tearing up the railway lines, cutting the telegraph wires, and blocking the roads by felling trees across them, started burning the Government offices. They brutally slaughtered some Europeans, and then, proclaiming a Moplah king, fell upon their Hindu neighbours. They burned the Hindu villages, looted and destroyed Hindu temples, and massacred the unfortunate Hindu people or tried to convert these forcibly to their form of Mahometanism.

It was, as many opponents of *Swaraj*, or Indian Home Rule, were not slow in pointing out, a fair sample of what might be expected to occur if the British *raj* or government terminated. A strong force of military had to be despatched to Malabar to put down the rebellion, but complete order was not restored in the district until October.

In the month after this outbreak the Ali Brothers were arrested and prosecuted for persisting in preaching 'Non-Co-operation' after being cautioned and forbidden to do so. Gandhi was still uninterfered with by the Government as he afforded it no direct provocation. At Bombay, on October 10, he solemnly set fire to a pile of foreign, or imported, cloth.

On November 17, 1921, the Prince of Wales landed at Bombay, and Mr. Gandhi ordered a *hartal*, or day of mourning, instead of one of rejoicing. Not all the shops closed, some of the shopkeepers disregarded his mandate, and this incensed some of the lowest rabble of Bombay, who started a riot. Gandhi, to show his displeasure at this violence by his followers, made personal penance by fasting for three days.

He and his party, however, continued to boycott the public functions arranged everywhere in honour of the heir to the throne, but these did not suffer much, and the Prince was well received by the English residents wherever he went. He visited most of the principal Indian states, departing for home from Karachi in the following March.

While the Prince of Wales was still in India—in fact, almost immediately after his Royal Highness's arrival—Gandhi proposed extending the campaign to what he called a 'Civil Disobedience' Movement. This consisted in carrying into effect those portions of his original programme which had hitherto been left in abeyance—namely the non-payment of taxes and the organization of volunteers to take the place of the ordinary native police and military, if not also the calling upon these two services to disobey orders issued to them in the name of the Government.

This new move on his part made the situation very grave, but it also occasioned a partial split between him and the more moderate or Nationalist body. A deputation from this body waited on the Viceroy on December 21, and suggested a Round Table Conference 'to bring about a final settlement' of the matters at issue.

Lord Reading told the deputation that it was impossible for him to convene such a Conference while open and avowed defiance of law and order continued.

Mr. Gandhi declined, therefore, to call off the *harts* as regarded the tour of the Prince of Wales, and he still had the country so much with him that the Congress held its annual session at his headquarters in Ahmedabad. Not only that. The new Congress was with him practically to a man, and it invested him *with sole Executive authority!* He was installed as 'Dictator,' with full authority to institute his 'Civil Disobedience' Movement and such other

action as he considered necessary. The Congress deputed him to act as he deemed fit in its name, and even 'empowered him to appoint his own successor!'

He professed, however, to be opposed to absolute severance from Great Britain. He did not want separation from the Empire, he said, and so he to some extent estranged the extremist party of the Indian community, who would not be satisfied with Home Rule but only with complete independence.

With the dawn of the new year, 1922, he started to organize his projected 'Civil Disobedience' campaign, and the Government retorted by declaring 'volunteering' unlawful.

As was to be expected, a collision soon took place between the people, thus incited, and the forces of law and order. In the early part of February, at a village called Chauri-Chaura, in the United Provinces, a mob, including a band of some of Gandhi's newly raised 'volunteers,' set fire to the local *thana* and beat to death or burned alive twenty-two policemen.

Gandhi promptly suspended 'Civil Disobedience,' even calling off all picketing and processions, instructing the population to restrict itself to *Swadeshi* and the private manufacture of Khadder cloth. *Swadeshi*, as already explained, was, in a word, the support of one's own local shopkeeper, and Mr. Gandhi had defined it as 'the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love.'

The Government now, however, dropped on Mr.

Gandhi, arresting him at his monastery or *Ashram*, outside Ahmedabad, on March 10, on several charges of spreading disaffection and seeking to incite public disorder with a view to the overthrow of British rule.

His publisher was arraigned with him before the Assistant Magistrate at Sahibah, and the evidence brought against the pair was that they had jointly published four seditious and treasonable articles in their paper, *Young India*. These articles were respectively entitled 'Disaffection a Virtue', 'Tampering with Loyalty', 'The Puzzle and its Solution', and 'Shaking the Manes.'

Mr. Gandhi, who was described on the charge-sheet as 'a farmer and weaver'—evidently his own definition of his employments—declined to cross examine the witnesses, and said, in answer to the charges, 'I am the editor, and the articles were written by me. The proprietors and the publisher permitted me to control the whole policy of the paper.'

He was committed to the Sessions, and was lodged in Sabarmati Gaol.

CHAPTER VI

*Sentenced to Six Years' Imprisonment—Swarajist
Obstructive Tactics—Gandhi Released—Retires for
a Year.*

ON Saturday, March 18, 1922, Mr. Gandhi appeared before Mr. C. N. Broomfield, I.C.S. District and Sessions Judge, at Ahmedabad. The public part of the court was packed with *Khaddar*-clad sympathizers with the prisoner, and he entered, attired only in a loin-cloth, a style of garb he had now adopted in accordance with the native custom.

We are told that all rose at his entry, and he said, as he gazed about him, 'This looks like a family gathering.' After the evidence was taken, and the Advocate-General had stated the case against him, he was asked what he had to say in answer to the charges. He replied :—

'I wish to endorse all the blame that the Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders. I have come to the conclusion that it is impossible for me to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri-Chaura or the mad outrages of Bombay. To preach disaffection to the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me. I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenu-

ating act. I am here to invite and submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen.' (See *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*, with introduction by Mr. C. F. Andrews and a Biographical Sketch, published by Natesan & Co., Madras.)

He was suffered to occupy fifteen minutes of the court's time in reading a statement ; and the judge, it is said, was deeply moved in passing sentence upon him.

' It will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried, or am likely to try,' Mr. Broomfield is alleged to have said. ' It would be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in the eyes of millions of your countrymen a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and even saintly life. But I have to deal with you as a man subject to the law who has by his own admission broken the law.'

He then passed sentence of six years' simple imprisonment upon Mr. Gandhi, and added, ' If the Government shall see fit in the course of events to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.'

Before he passed out of sight, Gandhi bade farewell to the throng, many of whom pressed forward ' to touch his bare feet.'

But, as Sir John Rees is reported to have said in

England, 'Gandhi in gaol might prove to be more dangerous than Gandhi out of it,' and probably there would have been serious outbreaks in consequence of his imprisonment had not popular attention been diverted into another channel.

This was the publication by Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, of a despatch from Lord Reading or his Government, urging the Imperial Government to revise the Treaty of Sèvres in deference to the Mohammedan sentiment in India. Mr. Montagu, it appears, published this despatch without the approval of the Cabinet, and he had to resign office in consequence.

But the news was like the mythical throwing of the apple of discord. It produced dissension among the Indian leaders, the Hindus concluding that the Mohammedans were going behind their backs to obtain a concession on the Khilāfat problem from the Government, and many of the Mussulmen seceding from the political union with their Hindu brethren on account of the old religious feud and the belief that it would pay them better to be loyal than disaffected.

About the same time, too, Government brought in an Act which did much to assuage popular resentment and please the labouring class—the Factories Act, which raised the age of children who were employed part time in factories from nine to twelve, and that of those who were employed full time from fourteen to fifteen. Moreover, the new Act prohibited night work for women, and laid down that

the maximum day's work should be eleven hours, and the maximum week's work, sixty hours.

On April 4, however, the mail train from Calcutta to the Punjab was derailed by some strikers near Mahupur, five passengers being killed or fatally injured; and there were other troubles. In the Punjab also there was a race of Sikhs, known as Akalis, of a fatalistic creed and most turbulent character. They had taken advantage of the general disorder to turn out certain hereditary incumbents called *Mahants* from the temples, and by other riotous conduct they now caused a reign of terror in the neighbourhood. The police were unable to cope with them, and military had to be sent.

With the dropping by the Swarajists of their Civil Disobedience campaign, though, matters went more smoothly, on the whole, all over the country up to the end of 1922. The new Delhi Legislative Session opened on January 30, in the new year, and the more moderate section of the Home Rulers who had been elected numbered 45. These were well disciplined, and formed a coalition with the Liberals and Independents, thus outnumbering the Government party. Displaying no spirit of compromise, they on February 8 demanded the appointment of a Royal Commission for the revision of the Government of India Act.

The viceregal party opposed this demand but agreed to form a Committee 'to investigate justifiable complaints.' This Committee was under the

presidency of Sir Alexander Muddiman. A Royal Commission, however was appointed on the Civil Services, and the result of its sitting was that increased standard ratios were laid down in the following year, for the inclusion of Indians in those services. As regarded the Civil Service and the superior Engineering Service, the ratio was to be 60 per cent. instead of 39 ; in the Police, 50 ; and in the Forests Department, 75, while the recruitments for the 'transferred' departments were to be left to the Provincial Governments, which it was expected would largely Indianize them.

A Mines Act was passed, forbidding the employment of children and young women below ground, and limiting the time of the workers to 60 hours a week above ground and 54 below ground ; and a Workmen's Compensation Act was also passed. As manufacturers had been clamouring for Protection, an Indian Tariff Board was appointed to consider the applications, and particularly those relating to the steel industry. The Board decided to protect the Tata enterprise by a heavy tariff and with subsidies.

Salt, as already stated, was one of the Government monopolies and contributed a large share to the Indian revenue. It was derived from four sources ; firstly, importation by sea from Great Britain, the Red Sea, and Aden ; secondly, solar evaporation in shallow tanks, erected along the coast ; thirdly, salt lakes in Rajputana ; and, fourthly, quarrying in the salt hills of the Northern Punjab. The salt

lakes actually belonged to the rulers of the States but were leased by the Government, and there were immense salt deposits at the Salt Range Mines, which were worked under Government control. The principal brine-works were on the Runn of Cutch, which is a salt-marsh (*runn* or *ran* is the Mahratta for a waste). Tolerably dry in the hot season, it is flooded and impassable in the rainy season of the south-western monsoon, when the peninsula and State of Cutch becomes an island.

There was a duty or tax on salt, and this was formerly reserved for war purposes. This tax varied from time to time. In 1903 it was reduced from $2\frac{1}{2}$ rupees to 2 rupees a *maund* (82 lb.), in 1905 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ rupees, and in 1907 to one rupee. Then on March 1, 1916, it was increased to $1\frac{1}{4}$ rupees, which was equivalent to a little over a farthing per lb.

In the second or Simla session of 1923, however, begun on May 17, the Government proposed to raise the Salt Tax. It was defeated by the coalition opposition, but the Viceroy, by virtue of the new Act of 1919, took it on himself to certify it, and the tax was raised, creating great dissatisfaction. The Swarajists moved that Mr. Gandhi and the other 'Non-Co-operators' should be released from gaol. Sir Malcolm Hailey replied, on behalf of the Government, that it felt unable to agree to the motion, which was therefore lost.

Gandhi's following, in his absence, now decided to offer themselves in strong force for election to the new Assembly and Provincial bodies towards

the end of the year. The total electorate was 990,979 for the Legislative Assembly, and 5,810,315 for the eight Provincial Councils. In the new Assembly for 1923-4, the Swarajists secured 50 seats out of a total of 145, thus increasing their number only by five. In the Central Provinces, however, they obtained 50 of the 54 elective seats, and in nearly all the other Provincial Councils they increased their number but in none sufficiently to achieve their avowed end of 'mending or ending them.'

They had a majority only in the Council of the Central Provinces, where the seats were 69 in all. In Bengal, their strength was 49 out of an elected membership of 113 and a total Council of 139.

Adopting obstructive tactics straightway, they with the help of the other more moderate parties of the Opposition, rejected the Budget in the Assembly, and the Governor-General was obliged to certify it, in accordance with his powers. In the Central Provinces and in Bengal, they completely neutralized the dyarchical system, so that it had to be discarded by the Governors, who took over the transferred subjects, and with them the entire administration. The Governor of Bengal tried to meet the situation first by inviting Mr. C. R. Das, the Swarajist leader, to form a ministry. Mr. Das refused to do so, as the Mohammedans organized a *bloc* in support of the Government, thus creating greater friction between themselves and the Hindus. Conspiracies of a terrorist nature were discovered in Bengal, and its Governor had to be invested with

the special emergency powers, under the Rowlatt Act, to deal with the situation. The Government established another Provincial Legislative Council in Coorg, a province in Southern India adjacent to the Western Ghats.

Meanwhile, on January 6, 1924, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the British Premier, had sent a despatch to India, declaring 'that no party in Great Britain would be cowed by threats of force or by a policy tending to bring the Government to a standstill'; and on February 17, Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State, taking the same attitude, announced that the Imperial Government stood by the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1919.

Mr. Gandhi, however, was released from gaol on February 5, on account of his health, it was stated, as he had had to undergo an operation for appendicitis while he was incarcerated. The remainder of his sentence was unconditionally remitted. He was struck off the roll of barristers by the Benchers of the Inner Temple, in London; but the Indian National Congress offered him the Presidency of its body for the next year—'the highest honour in the giving of the nation.'

He declined to accept this offer owing to his ill health. Two days after his release, he expressed his views in a letter to Mahomet Ali—one of his friends, the Ali brothers—who was the President of the Indian National Congress.

'I am sorry,' he wrote, 'that the Government has prematurely released me on account of illness, for

the illness of a prisoner does not afford grounds for release.' He evinced his gratitude to the gaol and hospital authorities for the way they had behaved, and went on to say that his restoration to freedom had brought no relief, 'because I am overwhelmed by a sense of responsibility which I am ill-fitted at present to discharge . . .

' Without the unity of all communities, all talk of *Swaraj* is idle. When I heard of the Hindu-Mohammedan tension, my heart sank within me, and the rest I have been advised to have will be no rest with the burden of disunion preying upon me. I appeal to both sides to shed mutual fear and promote unity. . . . I ask you to help me through the period of my illness with a lighter heart. The only remedy for the growing pauperism of the land is the spinning-wheel, which will leave little leisure for fighting. Two years of solitude and hard thinking in gaol has made me a firm believer in the efficacy of a constructive programme, to carry out which we need never resort to civil disobedience, though my belief in the efficacy of that method is unweakened. '

Referring to the removal of the boycott of the Councils, he did not propose to express an opinion, he said, until he had had opportunities to discuss the question with illustrious countrymen.

' I urge that there be no quarrel with the Moderates who, too, are well-wishers of the country. Englishmen, too, are friends. Do not treat them as enemies. The struggle against the system for which the British

Government stands is not against Englishmen administering the system. Those who have failed to bear in mind the distinction have harmed the cause.'

On the same day as he wrote this letter, curiously enough, the 45 Swarajists and 27 Independents in the Legislative Assembly at Delhi agreed to unite and form a Nationalist Party. This union gave them a majority in the House, which had a membership of 143. The new party pledged itself to ask the Government to appoint a Round-Table Conference to frame a scheme of full responsible government for India, with the threat of otherwise opposing the Budget supplies for the next month. A Committee of four Swarajists and three Independents was formed to draft a Constitution, and rules to govern the Nationalist Party. The Committee consisted of Mr. Matilal, the Pandit (learned Doctor) Malaviya, and Messrs. Jinnah, Patel, Rangachariar, Kelkar, and Rangaswami Ayyangar.

Although the Ali brothers were still in alliance with Mr. Gandhi, the light sentences which had been passed upon them, compared with his, occasioned considerable annoyance to his followers and prevented a complete reunion between Hindus and Muslims generally. It was pointed out that, while Mr. Gandhi had pursued a non-violent policy, the Ali brothers 'and other Mussulman firebrands' had displayed an 'extra-territorial patriotism' which had led them to threaten to proclaim a republic and call on Muslim soldiers to desert.

‘ Mr. Gandhi had come back,’ says Baron Meston, ‘ to a party which had chosen new leaders and was soon to reverse his policy of boycotting the Administration. Esteemed and consulted though he continued to be by his old followers, he was no longer a power to sway the masses ’—at least for a time.

The defeat of the Finance Bill or Budget in the Assembly in the previous year had, as the same authority says, established the Swarajists in the rôle of a constitutional Opposition ; and Mr. Gandhi, when his health improved, left politics alone temporarily and ‘ led a vigorous, if not a wholly popular, mission for the uplift of the lowest strata of outcasts or “ untouchables ! ” ’ These, of course, owed their degradation to the distinctions of caste, and Mr. Gandhi now set to work to try and break down these old, time-honoured and time-rooted barriers—an excellent work, undeniably. He organized the ‘ untouchables ’ for their protection and betterment.

The Presidency of the National Congress, on his declining to accept it, had been conferred on a Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, an accomplished native poetess, and this constituted a great advance in Indian ideas. It led to numerous Indian ladies emerging from the seclusion in which they had hitherto passed their time, and taking their stand on the political and social platforms along with men. Further progress was shown in the adoption of a new law for the remarriage of Hindu widows. These had up to then been doomed to remain unmarried for the remainder of their lives.

Mr. Das, the Swarajist leader in the Legislature, declared that his party renounced Civil Disobedience, and asked that in return the Government should drop the emergency repressive measures; and the Committee, which had been appointed to investigate the difficulties of the working of the Constitution recommended several alterations in it, 'particularly that the control of the Secretary of State should be relaxed in purely Indian matters.'

On account of the Committee's suggestions, Lord Reading, the Viceroy, came home to England in the summer to confer with the Home Government, Lord Lytton, the Governor of Bombay, taking his place for the time being. But on his return to India he announced that 'the moment for an inquiry into a complete revision of the Constitution, as contemplated in the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme, had not arrived.'

Mr. Das, the Swarajist leader, died suddenly, and was succeeded by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, who with his party continued to obstruct the Government and agitate that the promised Statutory Commission should be appointed before 1929. Consequently, in the latter part of 1925, Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State, said he would be willing to consider any practical scheme of advance on which the Indian leaders could agree and invited them to draft a Constitution they would be prepared to work.

Apparently, they did not respond, but the popular discontent found expression in further strikes on the part of the cotton mill-hands in Bombay. A

notable change, however, took place in the Legislative Assembly, a Swarajist named Mr. Vallabhai G. Patel succeeding Sir F. Whyte as its President on August 29.

An excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was levied on all cotton goods woven in Indian mills and the duty on imported cotton goods was $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., cotton yarn and thread being exempt. The duty on native-made cotton goods caused intense discontent, and the Swarajists and Nationalists brought about its removal in this year, and the increase of the impost on imported cloth to 11 per cent., thus showing that the feeling in the country, as Baron Meston points out, had become 'undisguisedly Protective.'

Mr. Gandhi was still taking no active part in politics, and he now, at the end of 1925, announced his intention of retiring from the world's affairs for a year.

He withdrew, with Mrs. Gandhi, to his *Ashram*, or monastery, at Sabarmati, outside Ahmedabad, and there spent most of his time spinning yarn on an old wooden spinning-wheel. This instrument he typified and adopted as his 'emblem of economic independence.'

'Spinning is a sacrament,' he declared. 'Every Indian peasant should spin. It is through the spinning-wheel that I keep in touch with the poorest of the poor, and through them with God.'

Mystic as he is, he also imposed upon himself during his seclusion what he more specifically termed 'sacraments'—trance-like silences, each of

twenty-four hours' duration. These periodic 'sacraments,' he averred, gave him the opportunity to meditate, pray, examine his conscience, and commune with his Creator.

He usually went about now garbed only in a loin-cloth, or with the addition of a self-made shawl. Even when interviewing the Viceroy or appearing at the High Court, he wore only a short home-spun garment. Always very abstemious, we are told that he 'eats with the appetite of a canary.' Small and painfully thin, as well as partly toothless, he is frail-looking to a degree, and weighs only ninety-three pounds—five pounds short of seven stone.

'No leader to-day has so many followers of widely varying beliefs all over the world,' writes Sheik Mir Mahommud, 'and since the time of Christ there has not been another who will leave such an imprint on history. Thousands who dislike him and his policy readily admit his greatness and altruism . . . Other leaders court advertisement, publicity, and praise, but Gandhi shuns the limelight. Despite his utmost endeavours to live in solitude, he is constantly besieged by journalists, who hang on every word he utters and his lightest sayings are carried to the corners of the globe in a few seconds. Whether he is successful as a leader or not, only the future will tell, but as a MAN there is little doubt that he towers above his contemporaries to-day . . . Nominally Gandhi is a Hindu, but he respects Christianity, and his tenets coincide largely with the Christian belief.'

On one occasion, one of his followers wrote to him that his eldest son, Mr. Harilal Gandhi, had started the 'All-India Store, Ltd.' at Calcutta. He replied that he was not answerable for what his son did, as his son was thirty-six years of age and the father of four children. 'I disclaim all responsibility,' he said.

A French author, M. Romain Rolland, in his work, *Mahatma Gandhi* (Paris, 1924) also, with other 'Western enthusiasts,' to quote Baron Meston, has compared Gandhi with the Founder of Christianity.

CHAPTER VII

*The Simon Commission Appointed—Gandhi Fined—
The Commission Boycotted—Civil Resistance once
more.*

WITH the new year, 1926, the Government decided to reconstruct the Royal Indian Marine as a combatant force, so that India could undertake her own naval defence. The Royal Indian Marine consisted of ten sea-going vessels and a great number of smaller steamers and launches used for harbour and river navigation, surveying, and submarine mining; and a big part of it had been lent to the Admiralty during the World War. A rear-admiral was in chief authority, and known as its Director. Thus in February, 1926, a Royal Indian Navy was formed.

At the end of March, Lord Reading laid down his office as Viceroy, and was made a Marquis. He was succeeded by Lord Irwin, of Kirby Moordale, who had previously been Mr. Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, and was a son of Viscount Halifax. In Mr. Baldwin's Conservative Government he had been Under Secretary for the Colonies, and member of the Board of Education and of the Board of Agriculture. He reached India in April and made an earnest appeal for national unity; and in the

United Provinces a Bill was passed to ameliorate the condition of tenants in Agra 'by facilitating occupancy tenure' and preventing 'unauthorized imposts by landlords.'

But in the same month as the new Viceroy landed there were grave Hindu-Mohammedan riots at Calcutta, and this was a prelude to the outbreak everywhere of communal and religious collisions between Muslims and Hindus. Great loss of life occurred in the clashes at Calcutta, Kohat, and Delhi, and the Government of Bengal had to proclaim a state of emergency. A greatly-respected Hindu leader named *Swami* Shradhavanda, leading a movement for the reconversion of his low-caste brethren who had turned Mohammedans, was assassinated by a Muslim.

Towards the close of the year the elections for the new Assembly and Provincial Councils were hotly contested by the various political parties. The Swarajists obtained a majority of seats over any other group in the Assembly and in the Councils of Madras, Bengal, Behar and Orissa, as well as the Central Provinces.

On January 18, 1927, the new Legislative Palace or Parliament House was formally opened at Delhi. There were three parties as well as the Government—the Swarajists, the Nationalists or Moderates, and the Mohammedans. The two former worked together in opposition to the Government, which the Mohammedans on the whole supported. Owing to the Swarajists still pursuing their obstructive

policy, administration generally was 'comparatively slow.' The dyarchic system was revived on all the Provincial Councils ; it had fallen into abeyance on some.

An Act was passed for the registration of Trade Unions, to encourage these on sound lines ; and the Sandhurst or Skeen Committee was appointed to report on the desirability of further measures for the Indianization of the Army. The Government decided to accept some of the Committee's recommendations, and announced that 'in future direct vacancies open to Indian candidates at Sandhurst would be doubled ; that a certain number of vacancies would be reserved to Indian officers holding the Viceroy's commission, and that Woolwich and Cranwell would be open to Indian aspirants for the King's commissions.' Thus it was expected that in the course of time the cadre, or staff, of officers would be 50 per cent. Indian.

A Royal Commission was also appointed to deal with Indian agriculture ; and a settlement was reached regarding the grievances of Indians in South Africa. When this happy result was announced in February, the following year, Mr. Gandhi was highly gratified and declared it 'an honourable compromise.' A Mr. Srinwasa Sastri was created the first Agent-General for India in South Africa.

Towards the end of 1927, the Home Government yielded sufficiently to appoint the promised Statutory Commission at once ; and it started for India in January, 1928, under the presidency of the Right

Hon. Sir John Simon, the famous Liberal statesman. It consisted of eight members, but included no Indian and no person with experience of Indian administration, so as to assure its having an 'open mind.' But on December 27, the Indian National Congress decided to boycott the Commission, and render it impotent, denouncing its formation as 'racial arrogance.'

The year's legislature saw the defeat, 'with other important Government measures, of a Bill for the creation of a Reserve Bank, which was to be the coping-stone of the new currency edifice,' the Swarajists and their allies, the Nationalists, still bitterly maintaining 'a uniform, continuous, and consistent obstruction.'

On January 25, 1928, the Madras Legislative Council also passed a resolution to boycott the Simon Commission; and when the Commission arrived at Bombay, on February 3, a *hartal* was observed and all business suspended in protest, while rioting took place at Madras. Sir John Simon suggested that his Commission should hold joint sittings with representatives of the Indian Legislature. The Nationalists rejected the idea and on February 18, the Legislative Assembly at Delhi passed a motion of 'no confidence' in the Commission, which, thereupon wisely decided to make a preliminary tour of the country.

Mr. Gandhi now once more stepped into the forefront of Indian politics. He made great efforts to bring about a reconciliation between his co-re-

ligionists and the Mohammedans, and was so far successful as to induce the leaders of both sects to hold an 'All-Parties Conference' at Delhi. It sat during the latter part of February and the early part of March; and he spoke long and earnestly on behalf of a better understanding. But the two sects split on the reservation of seats for minorities. This, with a communal electorate, the Muslims declared they must have, and the Nationalists would not give way on those two points. Rioting ensued between Hindus and Muslims everywhere.

The Simon Commission had gone back to England, but was to return in the autumn in the hope of a better reception; and in its absence all the Legislative Councils, with one solitary exception, adopted motions to co-operate with it, and appointed Committees for that purpose.

This more amiable attitude was owing to Mr. Gandhi, who strongly advised it as the only ostensible means to obtain *Swaraj*. His native province of Bombay passed the motion as early as August 2.

In September, the Council of State at Delhi elected three of its members to sit with the Simon Commission. But the Legislative Assembly was still divided on the matter, so the Viceroy took it on himself to nominate a committee of its members to represent it.

There was still great disorder throughout the land, and this was now put at the door of Communism and other anarchistic elements, and towards the latter part of September an Act was introduced into the

Assembly for the deportation of Communists and the like. The voting tied, and the President thereupon gave his casting vote for the 'noes' and the motion was defeated. A fortnight later, a bomb exploded on a train travelling from Allahabad to Bombay, and four persons were killed and seven or eight injured. When Sir John Simon and his colleagues of the Statutory Commission returned to India, at the end of October, they were received at Lahore by a hostile mob, which the police had to use force to disperse.

Meanwhile, on July 25, in London, an Indian States Committee, presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler, had conferred with a group of India's ruling princes, with a view to better financial and economic relations, the princes requiring that their position should be taken into consideration before any further step towards self-government be made in British India.

Mr. Gandhi was keeping very much in the background again, and the extremists of his own party were greatly indignant with him because he had not intervened on behalf of one of their number, named Baghat Singh, who was executed for assassinating the chief of police at Lahore. His great friend, and fellow-Nationalist leader, Mr. Lala Rajpat Rai, who was the editor of the Lahore *People* and known as 'the Lion of the Punjab,' died at the end of 1928 from injuries received in the riot at Lahore, while trying to persuade the infuriated mob to disperse. With the close of the year, the National

Congress threatened to revive Mr. Gandhi's policy of 'Non-Co-operation,' if the British Government had not accepted its draft of a Constitution, giving India Dominion status, by the end of 1929.

Mr. Gandhi agreed wholeheartedly with this resolution. Although he was disposed to give the Simon Commission a trial, he continued to encourage the boycotting and even the destruction of imported cloth, and to try to heal the breach with the Moham-medans. But on February 6, 1929, a dreadful riot occurred between his co-religionists and the Muslims at Bombay. There was considerable bloodshed; the troops had to be called out and were obliged to fire on the mobs. Nevertheless, the rioting was resumed on the following day, and more troops had to be sent for, as well as armoured motor-cars. The mob was again fired on, but the situation continued to be so bad that the tram service was discontinued and shops closed. Before things quietened down, the casualties were 112 rioters killed and 400 wounded.

At the beginning of March, Mr. Gandhi went to Calcutta to advocate his boycotting of foreign cloth, and a demonstration in his honour was arranged for the evening of March 4, at Mirzapur Park. A bonfire was to be made of objectionable goods. On the night in question a large crowd assembled in the square and enthusiastically cheered Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Karin Sankar Roy, the secretary of the provisional Congress Committee, when they arrived.

Dr. Roy announced from the platform that a police notice had been served upon them that a bonfire in a

public place would be illegal. Mr. Gandhi then stepped forward and said that the notice was unjustified, and that he would take full personal responsibility for what was to happen.

Bundles of cloth had been heaped on the ground, and the fire was kindled. The police then rushed forward and proceeded to beat out the flames with *lathis*, amid wild excitement. The crowd showed a hostile attitude, and from the shadows of the square many missiles were thrown at the police, several of whom were struck, including Inspector Twichen, who was felled to the ground. Reinforced by a mounted contingent, the police finally cleared the square; and later Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Roy were arrested.

After his arrest, Mr. Gandhi gave a bail bond to appear in court, to answer the charge brought against him, on March 26, and was suffered to depart for Burma. He issued a statement that he had given Mr. Tegart, the Commissioner of Police, an undertaking that there would be no further public burning of foreign cloth in Calcutta until after the settlement of his case.

‘That does not mean the end of the boycott, or of the demonstrations, or the collection of foreign cloth for burning in private,’ he said, ‘and I challenge the legality of the action by the police.’

The Indian newspapers devoted many columns to accounts of the riot and the arrest of Mr. Gandhi, and also to further incitements to boycott all foreign goods.

On the 26th of March, the Presidency Magistrate reserved judgement in the charge against Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Roy. Gandhi, addressing the court, said that there had been no intention of defying the police notice for the sake of mere defiance and inviting imprisonment on his part.

‘It is the duty of the police,’ said he, ‘to refrain from interference with an orderly demonstration, and in putting out the fire they usurped the functions of the Court. It is clear in my mind that Mirzapur Park is not a thoroughfare in the meaning of the section prohibiting bonfires. I claim discharge for myself and my colleagues, and ask the Magistrate to take such notice of the action of the police as is open to him.’

Mr. Gandhi and four other defendants were ultimately fined one rupee (1s. 6d.) each, the Magistrate saying that he felt it unnecessary to inflict more than nominal punishment, as Mr. Gandhi had stated that he did not desire to break the law. Mr. Gandhi was not present in court at this ruling. He had left earlier. During the hearing of the case against him, the court was crowded, and a large assembly, waiting outside, cheered him as he left. He was in high popular favour once more.

His counsel, Mr. Sen Gupta, informed the court that Mr. Gandhi had instructed him that it would be impossible to pay the fine. Subsequently, all the fines were paid by a pleader, or another lawyer, whose name was not given.

It was proposed to extend the term of the sessions

of the Central and Provincial Legislatures, and to postpone the elections, until after the publication of the Simon Report. This proposal was accepted by the *Swaraj* Party, who, however, would have preferred to wait until April twelve months. The Indian Budget was passed at the end of March with a clear majority. It incorporated the Salt Tax at the original rate. Furthermore, it was announced that the number of working days lost through the strikes amounted to 31,647,404, and was larger than for the whole of the previous five years! The greatest stoppage was that of the Bombay cotton-mills, there being 22,300,000 lost days of work in them. There had been 203 strikes compared with 129 in 1927, and the number of men involved was more than half a million. Lord Burnham, one of the members of the Simon Commission, had fallen ill and was advised to take rest and return home to England.

On April 8, in this same year, 1929, two bombs were thrown from the public gallery of the Legislative Assembly, during a sitting, and Sir George Schuster, who was the Finance Minister, and four others were more or less injured. A Public Safety Bill was therefore introduced to deport non-Indian Communists from the country. The President of the Assembly spoke against the measure, and was ruled out of order; and on the following day, April 12, the Viceroy, addressing both the Assembly and the Council of State, said that he would issue an Ordinance, assuming the necessary safety powers

and amending the rules in order to prevent interruption of business by the Presidents of either Chamber.

At the beginning of May, there was another huge mill strike in Bombay, 150,000 workers being concerned. Fierce riots took place and troops had to be sent to quell them. The two Indian anarchists who had thrown the bombs in the Legislative Assembly were sentenced to transportation for life on June 12. In October it was announced by the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, that the terms of reference of the Simon Statutory Commission had been enlarged, and that a Conference on all Indian problems would be shortly held. 'The gaol of British policy,' he declared, 'is the establishment of Dominion status for India.'

Under the new Ordinance, strikes and lock-outs in the utility services were made illegal if they arose from any other cause than a trade dispute. The Butler Indian States Committee in London recommended in its Report that the Viceroy, but not the Governor-General in Council, should henceforward be the Crown Agent and that all important contentious matters between the Indian States themselves or between those States and British India or the Paramount Powers, should be referred to independent committees. An Appellation Jurisdiction Act also allowed for the appointment of Indian judges, and other functionaries, as additional members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for the hearing of appeals from India.

As had been proposed, the elections were postponed

beyond the close of the year to permit of the Legislative bodies receiving the shortly expected Report of the Simon Statutory Commission. On December 23, 1929, the train in which the Viceroy and Lady Irwin were travelling, was bombed near Delhi. The dining-car was shattered, but, happily, there was no loss of life, one person only being injured. Later, Lord Irwin met some of the Nationalist or Swaraj leaders to discuss the Draft Constitution they had drawn up, with a view to its submission to the Commission. But as their most insistent demand was for Dominion status straightway, the conference resulted in nothing.

Following upon this break down, the Congress met at Lahore on December 29, and Mr. Gandhi moved in committee that it now demand complete independence and refuse to send delegates to the Round-Table Conference which was expected to be held in London after the Simon Report, and also that Civil Disobedience be revived and prosecuted vigorously. His motion was carried by 134,677 votes. Two days later, the Congress adopted the resolution by another huge majority, and Civil Disobedience was once more formally inaugurated in the land.

CHAPTER VIII

Shops Picketed—The Salt Rebellion—Gandhi Arrested and Detained in Prison without Trial—The Simon Report.

THE renewed campaign of Civil Disobedience opened on New Year's Day, 1930, with the Congress calling upon all members of the different Legislatures to resign forthwith. For the most part the order was obeyed; and the Congress next announced January 16 to be celebrated as 'Independence Day.'

Mr. Gandhi, recognized again everywhere as head of the movement, insisted on all his followers taking five vows, namely: purity, mental and physical; poverty; cleanliness, or honesty in all things; obedience to the Congress; and non-violence. 'If we possess more property than is actually necessary for our subsistence or station in life,' he said, 'we are thieves, for we deprive others of their fair share.'

He also, in furtherance of the observation of the vow of purity and cleanliness, laid a ban on all liquor shops and urged the discontinuance of opium-smoking. The women at once rallied to his cause, and many ladies of the highest caste discarded the

conventional veil, picketed the drink-saloons and were most successful in dissuading men from entering these. So much so that ultimately, we are told, 'the proprietors of liquor shops raised a protest, saying that since they were compelled to buy licences, the authorities were bound to protect their interests.' 'Hundreds of women were incarcerated,' asserts Sheik Mir Mahommud, who although a Muslim, was an ardent admirer and had been a guest of Gandhi, 'but as many took their places till the gaols were overflowing.'

Immediately too, according to the same authority, 'the opium consumption dropped by 25 per cent., and continued to decrease till the authorities grew alarmed at the fall in revenue,' for the gross value of opium (which was a Government monopoly, like salt, except in certain provinces and States) sold by the Excise Department in India alone ran to something like two million pounds sterling.

A band of North-West Frontier Pathans was organized by Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan into an anti-British political force, and they called themselves 'Red Shirts.' A collision occurred between them and other Mohammedans on 'Independence Day' at Bombay. Then on February 22, a bomb was thrown at a meeting at Khalsa College, in Amritsar, and a dozen people were injured.

On the last day of the same month, the Indian Budget was moved in the Assembly. It proposed increasing the duty on cotton piece goods and protecting British cotton goods; and at the end of

March it was passed, with, however, an amendment which struck out the preference intended to be shown for Lancashire cheaper products.

Meanwhile, on March 2, Mr. Gandhi delivered a sort of ultimatum to the Viceroy, formally announcing Civil Disobedience. The Government acted promptly and forbade speeches in support of such a campaign, and on March 7, Mr. Vallabhai J. Patel, lately President of the Legislative Assembly and now Mr. Gandhi's 'chief lieutenant,' was arrested and sentenced at Ahmedabad to three months' imprisonment for disregarding the order.

Salt being wholly a Government monopoly, Mr. Gandhi called on the people to make their own salt, and began his Civil Disobedience by leading a pilgrimage to the coast in order to do so. On April 6 he and those with him made salt at Dandi, but the Government ignored him. For speaking in favour of the new movement, however, his son and others were arrested at various places. Mr. Gandhi's son was given six months' imprisonment.

Then, in the middle of April, action was taken against those who were breaking the Salt Laws by making contraband salt, and for this offence both the President of the National Congress and the Mayor of Calcutta received six months' imprisonment. A *hartal*, or 'mourning strike,' was declared in Calcutta in consequence of these sentences; and during it there was a fierce outbreak of violence, in which a large number of English people suffered

maltreatment. To aid the police in restoring order, armoured cars were called out.

In Karachi, on the following day, April 16, while the magistrate was trying six Indian prisoners, a great mob attempted to raid the court and rescue them. The police fired on the assailants and repulsed them. Terrorists pretty well everywhere now rose in open revolt, and at Chittagong, in Bengal, attacked and destroyed a police station, killing nine of its occupants, including two Englishmen. A strong force was at once sent against them, and they fled to the jungly hills northward. While the search was going on for them, they killed the four defenders of Fenny village police-station. Some of them later were cornered by detachments of Light Horse and the Eastern Frontier Rifles, and twelve of their number were slain and two severely wounded.

To meet these raids, Government revived its emergency powers, but on April 23, terrorists in Peshawar captured two armoured cars, poured petrol over them, and set them on fire. Two of the crew of one of the cars were burned to death in it, and an English sergeant was hacked to death with hatchets. Troops were rushed into position and opened fire on the frenzied mob with rifles and machine-guns, and some twenty of the rioters were shot dead. The raiders used hatchets and iron-tipped staves, and had already beaten off the police with volleys of stones, and Mr. Metcalfe, the Deputy Commissioner, was seriously injured.

The trouble continued so bad at Peshawar that

next day all European women and children had to be evacuated, and there were subsequent rumours that some of the native Rifles had to be withdrawn owing to their 'unsatisfactory conduct.'

On May 2, three breakers of the Salt Law, being sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine each of fifty rupees (£3 15s.), expressed regret and asked to be put on probation. They were released on giving sureties. It was stated that analysis of the natural salt taken from areas where *Satyagrahis*, or Civil Registers, were busy showed that the percentage of calcium sulphate and magnesium chlorate rendered the salt unfit for human consumption.

Mr. Gandhi was touring the Surat district, and the 'War Council' which the Bombay Provincial Congress had formed, invited him to return to Bombay. He wrote that he could not do so unless the Volunteer Corps which the Council was organizing was brought under the same rigid discipline as that to which his own immediate followers were subjected.

A signed message from him appeared in the *Bombay Congress Bulletin*—an unregistered, cyclostyle-printed sheet published daily by the local Provincial Congress Committee. In this message, Mr. Gandhi stated that he would lead the Civil Resistance movement in Bombay only on condition there were observances of complete discipline, absolute abstention from drink, a permanent pledge to wear only *Khadder* (home-spun), and the actual spinning with a *takli*, or miniature spinning-wheel, for one hour

daily by all who followed him. He added: 'If Bombay produces 100,000 such men, I should lead them without the slightest hesitation.'

Owing to the publication of such seditious newspapers as this *Bombay Congress Bulletin*, the Government had revived the Indian Press Act to put them down.

Mr. Gandhi was arrested in the early hours of May 5, in his camp at Surat. When his health permitted, he preferred to sleep upon the earth. He was taken by train to Borivli on the Bombay-Baroda railway, and then by motor-car to Poona, where it was announced that he would be detained without trial under authority given by Ordinance 25 of 1927. A committee of the Bombay branch of the European Association was reported to have written to the Governor, requesting great firmness in the maintenance of law and order, and the arrest of those inciting to breaches of the law, as well as that processions should be prohibited as tending to disorder and producing traffic congestion.

Questions were asked in the British House of Commons relating to Gandhi's arrest, and the reply was given that he was not to be charged but detained under the Regulations—a reply which evoked cheers from the Opposition.

Terrorist riots and Civil Disobedient salt raids continued, and the 'War Council' of Congress now proclaimed 'No British goods' as its watchword. The cry was taken up on all sides, and even women and children picketed stores, and Indian Nationalist

schoolboys paraded the streets singing boycott songs and bearing flags inscribed 'Boycott British goods.' The gaols became full of salt-law breakers, thousands being rounded up by the police ; and so grave at length was the boycott of British goods that the Government was constrained to take action. Lord Irwin issued a decree over his signature—without referring the matter to the Legislative bodies—making it criminal offences to boycott goods of any description or picket stores to prevent sale or purchase.

But fast as one batch of picketers was arrested, another took its place. During that month of May alone, the imports of piece-goods dropped by millions of yards, and of twist and yarn likewise. The sales of Delhi market were completely stopped when the season should have been at its height, and trade was so dislocated that the Hindustani Mercantile Association cancelled all its indents. A complete deadlock supervened and liquid capital became scarce, dealers being unable to recover their outstandings from buyers or to clear their heavy stocks, these being quite unsaleable. American and other foreign goods, not being boycotted, invaded India wholesale.

The civil police, too, in places became terrorized and refused to perform their duties, as at Sholapur. On May 19, *Dewan* Bahadur Rachandra Iyer, a member of the Council of State or Upper Chamber, wrote to the Viceroy, tendering his resignation as a protest 'against the imprisonment of Mr.

Gandhi without a trial, the revival of the Press Act, and the illegal, unwarranted use of violence against the Passive Resisters (*Satyagrahis*).'

The amazing scene was witnessed, on May 23, of a procession of 20,000 Indians—some say 200,000—on being stopped by the police squatting on their hams in the streets and blocking all traffic. They refused to move, and the police were powerless to make them and had to withdraw. The crowd remained thus for four hours on end. Two days later the police had to fire on a huge mob which raided the Wadala salt works, in Bombay. Raids had been made there repeatedly for nearly a week, and at first the police had only used *lathis* in rounding up the offenders.

While he was in prison, we are told, Gandhi 'subsisted largely on cracked, uncooked corn, raisins, and milk curds.' His place at the head of the Passive Resistance movement was again taken by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the poetess, who had travelled in the United States. She in her turn was arrested in June, and sent to prison; and in the same month the Afridis, the turbulent mountain race on the Afghan frontier, advanced in force against Peshawar, but were repulsed by troops, supported by airplanes.

The Simon Commission. now issued the two volumes of its Report, one in the early part of June, and the other on the 23rd. Put briefly, the first volume reaffirmed self-government as the goal of British policy in India, as the Viceroy had declared,

and the second suggested 'not independence, nor yet Dominion status but an elastic All-India Federation, with as much local autonomy as possible, a widened franchise, and the separation of Burma from India,' in a word, a Federation of States under the Crown.

There was to be a Reformed Constitution, which was to include the States of the Indian princes and British-India. Burma was to become a self-governing dependency. The Central Government, it was proposed, should comprise a Federal Assembly, elected by the Provincial Councils by proportional representation to take the place of the Legislative Assembly, and the Council of State, which consisting of elected and nominated members, was to stand. Federation would begin with such States and Provinces as agreed on 'common interests,' and others were to join when they decided to do so, after the manner of Canadian Federation. The powers, both legislative and financial, of both Chambers were to remain the same as formerly, except that the Federal Assembly might vote certain indirect taxes, and collect and distribute these among the member States and Provinces. The Governor-General was to have added authority to appoint Executive Councillors.

State and Provincial units of the Federation were to have the maximum of 'progressive' local autonomy consistent with the common interest of India as a whole. The dyarchy system was to cease, as it excluded Indian ministers from certain depart-

ments. As to the franchise, it was to be treble the former electorate and include more women, and there was to be reservation of seats for representatives of minority and depressed classes. Provision was to be made for larger financial resources. The provincial administrations were to be under a Provincial Cabinet, appointed by the Governor, who was to have full powers of intervention in the event of a breakdown, subject to the direction of the Governor-General. Special provisions were to be made for the international defence of the North-west Frontier Provinces.

The Army was to be put under the Governor-General, as representing the Imperial authority, since 'India and Great Britain were so related that Indian defence could not now or in any future which was within sight be regarded as a matter of purely Indian concern.'

The customs tariff, the salt tax, railway policy, trunk roads, post and telegraphs, wireless, currency and coinage, commerce, banking, and insurance, opium policy, and matters arising in connexion with India's membership of, and participation in, the League of Nations, Indians overseas, &c. should, it was recommended, be placed at first in the hands of a Council for Greater India created by the Crown, and consisting of representatives of the States and Provinces, so as to help pave the way for the Federation.

The first volume of the Report consisted of 409 pages and was mainly devoted to the racial, religious,

and economic complexities of the land, and the second volume ran to 300 pages and contained the Commission's recommendations.

None of the native political bodies had a good word to say for the Report. Everywhere their press denounced it, mainly because the Indian Civil Service and police would remain under the complete control of the Secretary of State, and while the country was given provincial autonomy, the Governors' powers were increased so that autonomy, it was argued, was neutralized.

The Madras *Indian Review*, a Moderate organ, said :—

'The provincial autonomy . . . is nothing but a camouflage . . . The failure to provide for Indianization of the Army at any reasonable pace, the retention of the India Council, maintenance of the Secretary of State's control, and the retention of communal electorates, are some of the unsatisfactory features of the Report.'

Pandit Motilal Nehru, the acting president of the Nationalists or Mr. Gandhi's party, declared :—

'The Report remains boycotted as far as the National Congress is concerned, and we simply shall not pay the slightest attention to it.'

The ultra-Swarajist *Bombay Chronicle* had four lines of headings :—Simon Commission insults India—Dominion Status in the Dim and Distant Future—India not a Nation—British Domination to Continue.'

The feeling of the mass of the people was shown

by a recrudescence of combined terrorism and Civil Resistance in their most acute forms; and on June 30, Government declared the Working Committee or 'War Council' of the Congress to be an unlawful Association and arrested its President and Secretary. On July 8, however, in an address broadcast from London's new India House, his Majesty King George pleaded for peace in India; and on the following day the Viceroy at Simla stated that his declaration as to Dominion status still held and that it would be 'the natural completion of India's constitutional growth.' He stated that a Round-Table Conference would be held in London and defined its functions. The party leaders, thereupon, in the Legislature promised participation in the Conference, and subsequently authorized Mr. Jayakar, the leader of the Opposition, to take such steps as might be necessary to bring about an amicable settlement of the political impasse. Mr. Jayakar proposed to see both the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi on the matter.

The Indian Princes, while favouring co-operation with Government in carrying out the design of ultimate Federation and agreeing to join the Council of Greater India, totally rejected as unsatisfactory the financial and other recommendations made by the Simon Commission.

CHAPTER IX

*First Round-Table Conference—The Delhi Pact—
Gandhi to come to London—A Hitch and Fresh
Negotiations—Gandhi in London.*

ON July 17, 1930, Lord Irwin permitted two Moderate members of the Legislative Assembly to interview Mr. Gandhi in Poona Gaol. The pair's conference with him and other prisoners lasted five hours, but Mr. Gandhi would not consent to drop his Passive Resistance.

Trouble again ensued with the Afridis in the first part of August, and martial law had to be proclaimed in the Peshawar district. On the 25th, bombs were thrown at Sir Charles Tegart, the Police Commissioner at Calcutta, and four days later the Inspector-General of Bengal was fatally wounded by an assassin at Dacca.

Still a prisoner in Yeroda Gaol, at Poona, Mr. Gandhi demanded assurance from the Viceroy of Indian independence as the condition to his entering into negotiations and attending the Round-Table Conference in London in the autumn, and on September 4, he and the Nationalist leaders who were at liberty insisted on the right for India to secede from the Empire at any time.

Mr. Gandhi's full terms, as the price of peace, were listed in the press as follows :—

Full national government, responsible only to the people of India ; control of all defence forces, as well as economic control ; all special restraining ordinances to be repealed ; political prisoners, not guilty of violence, to be released, their confiscated property restored, and their fines refunded ; village officers who had resigned or been dismissed because of participation in civil resistance to be reinstated, if they desired ; an independent tribunal to which might be referred such British claims and concessions, including the Indian public debt, as might be deemed unjust ; and the right to secede at any time from the British Empire.

The Viceroy denounced such demands as 'impossible.' He would concede only assurance of withdrawal of restrictive ordinances if Passive Resistance were dropped.

Terrorism went on by the Extremists : a mail-train from Calcutta to Dacca was derailed, four people being killed and over 40 injured. Congress women 'volunteers' endeavoured to prevent people polling for the Bombay Legislative Council, and a magistrate was killed, with seven other persons, in a fracas that followed. Once more Government arrested hundreds of persons. The Viceroy published a list of sixty-six delegates who were to attend the London Round-Table Conference. It named two to represent the so-called 'untouchables,' or outcasts.

His Majesty the King-Emperor formally opened the Conference on Wednesday, November 12, 1930, in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords, London. 'It was a scene of solemn grandeur,' and the speeches were broadcast throughout the world, being, however, imperfectly heard in India.

'No words of mine,' said his Majesty, 'are needed to bring home to you the momentous character of the task to which you have set your hands . . . I shall follow the course of your proceedings with the closest and most sympathetic interest, not indeed without anxiety, but with a greater confidence . . . I cannot doubt that the true foundation of self-government is in the fusion of such divergent claims into the mutual obligations and in their recognition and fulfilment. It is my hope that the future Government of India, based on this foundation, will give expression to her honourable aspirations.'

But in India there were riots at Bombay as a protest against the Conference, and the Calcutta City Corporation condemned it because of its alleged unrepresentative character.

The Conference lasted some ten weeks, and resulted in the establishment of full responsible self-government in India, with the Imperial Government reserving control of finance, foreign affairs, and defence; extension of the franchise, and the removal of restrictions based on religion or caste. There was to be a Legislature of two Houses modelled along the lines of the Congress of the United States, and Indians were to be encouraged to settle their own

communal problems. All political prisoners were to be released, if civil order were restored, and an invitation was to be extended to the Indian extremists to participate in the negotiations still to come before the new Indian Government was established.

Mr. Gandhi and his followers, however, were far from being satisfied. From his prison he sent out, somehow, each week a letter, which appeared in most Indian newspapers, and the picketing and boycotting went on unabatedly, the Indian people practically obeying two Governments—Congress, which ruled in Gandhi's name, and the British *Raj* at Delhi or Simla. Red Shirt volunteers marched about Bombay, displaying the Indian tricolour flag of rebellion. A crowd of over 10,000 squatted on the seashore to hear an address by the Mayor of Calcutta, Mr. Sen Gupta, who had just come out of gaol.

The Government of Bombay closed Congress House, and proclaimed its dealings illegal. Still the great mass of the people kept up their passive resistance, and terrorists caused disturbances, all through the early part of 1931, until at last at the beginning of Spring, Lord Irwin had Mr. Gandhi brought before him in the Viceregal Palace at Delhi. It was raining in torrents, and a fierce gale was blowing.

As a result of the conversations between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, although the latter 'abated nothing in his demands for complete independence and the elimination of British rule in India,' a truce was arranged. This truce is known as the 'Delhi

Pact.' It provided that the civil disobedience campaign was to be abandoned and the Congress party were to co-operate with the British Government, which agreed on its part to hold another Round-Table Conference in the autumn, with a view to reconsidering the decisions of the first Conference.

All political prisoners, including Mr. Gandhi, who had undergone nine months' imprisonment, were to be promptly set at liberty. Peaceful picketing was to continue but be kept within the normal laws of the country, which allow any citizen to discourage by peaceful means the sale of liquor, narcotics, foreign cloth or any other commodity. The boycott was to be directed against *all* foreign goods, not necessarily British products, with the object of promoting native industries. All repressive measures and extraordinary laws and ordinances especially promulgated to deal with civil disobedience were to be withdrawn.

The truce was only to be of a temporary character, Gandhi stating that, 'if the Nationalist demands for Indian autonomy in finances and military matters were not granted, he would renew the agitation for separation from the British Empire.'

The Associated Press correspondent thus described Gandhi's departure from the presence of the Viceroy, after signing the Delhi Pact. It was two o'clock in the morning, and cold and wet.

'Suddenly the puny, white-clad figure of Gandhi emerged from the huge stone gate of the Viceregal

Palace, resembling a spectre in a dream rather than a human being . . . The crooked-legged little man, who had brought the British Empire to terms, started on a six-mile walk over darkened, water-soaked roads to old Delhi. In the pelting rain he held a huge black umbrella over his bare head, resembling a Lilliputian under a canopy. Arriving an hour later at his house, Gandhi plunged into a long conversation with his Cabinet from the Congress Working Committee, which, despite the fact that it was already 3 a.m. had waited patiently throughout the night for the tidings from their leader. The weary Mahatma was happy over his achievement. He threw himself upon his coarse straw mattress, and snatched a few winks of sleep, but he was up again an hour later for his regular morning prayer. It was noticed that he remained upon his knees longer than usual . . . Far from being exhausted by two successive midnight conferences, the frail ninety-three pound leader arose from his prayer and plunged immediately into piles of accumulated correspondence and telegrams.'

An 'All-India National Congress' assembled at Karachi and named Mr. Gandhi to head the delegation to the next Round-Table Conference, to work for 'complete independence.' But the young Red Shirts were angry that he did not press for the release of prisoners under trial, and of those charged or convicted of violent political crimes.

'I am a beggar . . . If you say that I am doing harm to India, you have a right to do so,' he replied to

some of them, 'but it is my duty to turn you to the path of affection and truth. I have no weapon against you but love.'

Later, he said, 'Some of my associates believe British statesmen will never reconcile themselves to absolute equality for India. I may be a visionary, but I hold differently. . . . When we achieve independence, it will not be under the British flag but under a common flag. As a visionary I see the day when there will be no armies, but it will not come during my lifetime.'

The Communists and Terrorists rejected the Delhi Pact, and all through the spring there were Hindu-Mussulman riots. Gandhi again attempted to placate the warring sects. In April, Lord Irwin was replaced as Viceroy by Lord Willingdon, former Governor-General of Canada, and it is stated that Mr. Gandhi was deeply affected in bidding farewell to his late antagonist.

'I shall see you in London at the second Round-Table Conference,' said Lord Irwin.

'It is in God's hands,' responded Mr. Gandhi, with a smile. Then he raised his clasped hands as if in benediction and bowed his head reverently, after which Lord Irwin clasped his hand.

The boycott and peaceful picketing languished a little during the early summer, which passed uneventfully. A passage was provisionally booked for Mr. Gandhi to England for August 15, and it was expected he would arrive in London in the first days of September. True to his ideals of the simple life,

he was to travel as a third-class passenger, and accommodation was arranged for two goats to provide him with the milk which formed his principal diet. His luggage was to consist of one spare loin-cloth, two blankets, and a vast quantity of documents; and elaborate plans were made for him to make an extended tour of the English industrial centres, a large number of trade union organizations having invited him to address meetings to explain his policy.

At the closing session of the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay on August 8, Mr. Gandhi referred to an outbreak of communal hatred which had occurred at a meeting in the city during the week. 'The incident,' said he, 'has rent my heart, and I fear for India's peace if I attend the Round-Table Conference in London. Congress needs to send a man with faith and hope as their representative. I am losing faith. When Hindus and Moham-medans fight over political matters, I hold myself responsible; for it was I who brought about the present political awakening.'

He was so overcome by emotion that he could not speak for two minutes.

'Until I am assured,' he went on, 'that the Government will fulfil peace terms and give fair play to the peasant, I cannot possibly go to London. I have telegraphed the Governor of Bombay in regard to certain breaches of the peace which concerned peasants, and until I receive a reply I cannot make any decision.'

On August 11, a Hindu named Vasuedo Balwani Cogate, who was charged at Bombay with attempting the life of Sir John Hotson, the Acting Governor, when visiting Fergusson College recently, by firing two shots at him, dramatically admitted, 'Yes, I fired.'

Three representative Mohammedan meetings were held at Allahabad over the previous week-end, and resolutions were adopted to refrain from participating in the Conference plenary session if the principle of Federation laid down by their co-religionists were not accepted by the Federal Structure Committee. The Indian Chamber of Commerce, too, which represented Indian commercial circles, decided to boycott the Conference unless *their* demands were granted.

Mr. Gandhi received a letter containing the views of the Bombay Government, and thereupon he telegraphed to the Viceroy to the effect that it would be 'very difficult' for him to sail to London as arranged. The issues between him and the Acting Governor of Bombay were complaints he had made that coercion had been used in the collection of land revenue in the Gujarat district and that there had been alleged breaches of the Delhi Pact. Sir John Hotson, the Governor, had replied that the grievances were not genuine and that the ordinary law of the land was all that was enforced in the collection of the revenue—that no coercion was used. He denied also that the Government had committed any breaches of the Delhi Pact.

The Congress Working Committee met at Mr. Gandhi's residence in Bombay, on August 13, and after four hours' discussion decided not to participate in the Round-Table Conference. A huge crowd had gathered outside, and when the decision was made known shouted '*Inquilab zindabad*' (Long live revolution) and '*Mahatma Gandhi kee jai*' (Teacher Gandhi for ever).

The following is a London newspaper's account of the scene, and what ensued :—

'Gandhi appeared on the balcony and raised the popular enthusiasm to a climax. Waving his hand to the crowd, he told them to go home, and they dispersed amid scenes of tremendous excitement.

'Squatting on the mattress-covered floor, leaning back against a pillow, and surrounded by his colleagues on the Working Committee, Gandhi had his frugal meal of dates and goat's milk in the middle of the four hours' momentous deliberations. When he emerged from the meeting, his face bore signs of the incessant strain of the last three days. On the terrace of his home he paced up and down by himself for over an hour, deep in thought.'

With the Committee's decision, two of his fellow-delegates to the Conference, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and the Pandit Malaviya, at once cancelled their passages to London.

'As far as I am aware, there is no intention of resuming the Civil Disobedience movement at once,' Gandhi stated, 'and as far as I know, and as far as the Working Committee is concerned, there is no

question of reopening the negotiations. That is if you mean the negotiations regarding Congress representation at the Round-Table Conference.' He added that the Delhi Pact was not necessarily off; that Congress was in no hurry to take any drastic measure.

'There will be every endeavour made by Congress,' said he, 'to work the settlement honourably, but, of course, the Government may make the position utterly intolerable, when undoubtedly Congress will have to act in self-defence. I need hardly say that it has been a great disappointment to me that I am not to go to London. I had hoped against hope that justice would be done, even at the eleventh hour. My request was, in my opinion, incredibly simple. If there was a contract between the Government and Congress, and if there was a dispute as to the interpretation of the contract, or if there was a breach on either side of the terms, surely the rules governing all contracts must be applicable to this contract.'

He added that the fact the contract was not legally enforceable imposed a double obligation on the Government to submit to an impartial tribunal the questions which were in dispute, and that the Government rejected the suggestion of Congress that such matters should be referred to a tribunal of an impartial nature. Lord Willingdon had been appealed to, and his reply did not satisfy Congress.

Mr. Gandhi left Bombay for Ahmedabad on the night of August 14, writing before his departure a

personal letter to the Viceroy, explaining the implications of the resolution adopted by the Congress Working Committee respecting the withdrawal of Congress from the Round-Table Conference, and stating that Congress would honour the Delhi Pact and asking whether the Government meant to do the same.

He retired to his *Ashram* at Ahmedabad, where the Working Committee had decided to meet again on September 8. It was understood that the object of that meeting would be to invest Mr. Vallabhai Patel with emergency powers in order to permit of Mr. Gandhi proceeding at once to London in case negotiations with the Viceroy were re-opened and proved satisfactory, without waiting for the Working Committee's sanction.

Other delegates to the Conference sailed from Bombay on August 15, and included ruling princes, Mohammedans, and representatives of labour and of the 'Untouchables.' The presence of the outcasts, who were Rao Bahadur Srinivasan and Dr. B. R. Ambodkar, at the Conference was expected to change the whole history of India by being the first move towards the abolition of the caste system which had dominated the land for two thousand years. There are forty-three millions of 'Untouchables' in India, and hitherto they had been regarded as lepers, so to speak. High-class Brahmins the highest caste of all, were now to sit with them at the Conference. Many of the ruling Princes, oddly enough, were of a comparatively low caste.

Mr. Gandhi issued a 'charge sheet' to the press, setting forth the accusations he brought against the Government. He asserted that men and women had been tortured by landlords' agents while collecting rent, and that this had been done with the connivance of Government officials in breach of the Delhi Pact. One distinct charge was that a landlord, assisted by Frontier Constabulary, shut up six Red Shirt volunteers, who had not paid land revenue, in a room full of hornets. The men, terribly bitten by the insects, were told to sell their wives to pay the dues. Another charge was that some Red Shirts were roasted in the sun and beaten, and that one of them, an old man, collapsed. In yet another place a Red Shirt who refused to give up Congress work was tied, it was alleged, to the ground under the hot sun. Again, it was asserted that peaceful picketers of liquor shops had been assaulted.

Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy, hurried back to Simla from Calcutta on August 20 to decide what reply should be made to Mr. Gandhi, as the Executive Council was unable to do so. The Council, it was said, had reached a decision, but a communication from the Secretary of State in London had been received, and so Lord Willingdon was requested to return.

On August 21, Lord Willingdon's reply to Mr. Gandhi's charges was published. The Viceroy denied all the allegations and made the counter charge that the Nationalist Congress had broken the Delhi Pact to such an extent that it involved a

menace to the maintenance of peace in India. His reply was in the form of a letter to Mr. Gandhi and in return the Indian leader sent a telegram to him, asking for an early interview.

The Viceroy arranged to meet Mr. Gandhi on August 25, but the interview was postponed until the following day. Assassinations or attempted assassinations of officials still continued in India. On August 21, Mr. Cassels, the Commissioner at Dacca, was shot by an Indian youth at Mymensingh. The bullet struck Mr. Cassels in the thigh, inflicting a flesh wound. His assailant immediately fled, and, although chased, escaped in the uproar. Mr. Cassels was carried in a launch back to Dacca, where he was taken to hospital.

On August 25, Mr. Gandhi arrived at Simla, and in the evening conferred with Mr. Emerson, the Home Secretary. His interview on the following day with Lord Willingdon occupied three hours and had the happy result of his agreeing to come to London. It was arranged he should sail in the liner *Rajputana* which was to leave Bombay on the 29th and was due to reach London on September 18. He had decided to discard his loin-cloth as it would be unsuitable for the English climate in the autumn, and to wear a new suit of *khadder* (Indian-woven coarse cloth).

Mr. Gandhi had as his fellow-passengers the Nawab of Bhopal, the Pandit Malaviya, Mrs. Naidu, and his English secretary, Miss Madeleine Slade, or Mira Bei, to give her her Indian name. Miss Slade was the daughter of the late Admiral Sir Edmond Slade,

and she had renounced English society life to become one of the Mahatma's disciples. At Suez and Port Said, Indian residents waited on Mr. Gandhi with gifts, and at Marseilles he was received by Hindu students, gathered from all the great European centres.

He reached London on Saturday, September 12, and slept that night on a straw mattress in a tiny 'cell' at Kingsley Hall, Bow, which he thought of making his home during his stay in England. On the Sunday he had a long conversation with the Premier, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, at the Dorchester Hotel. He attended the meeting of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round-Table Conference in St. James's Palace on September 14, sitting at the left hand of Lord Sankey, who presided. But he did not speak a word as that day, Monday, was his weekly day of silence. Bareheaded, he wore a loin cloth and sandals and a great loose white shawl. On the following two days he spoke at the meeting. He asked the Government 'to place their cards on the table.'

As Kingsley Hall was inconvenient for his keeping in touch with his fellow Indian delegates, it was expected that he would move to the 'Aryabhavan' Hindu hostel, in Belsize Park, Hampstead.

What will be the upshot of his visit and of the Round-Table Conference remains to be seen. It would be idle for any one to speculate on the matter.



