



Day-to-Day with Gandhi

[SECRETARY'S DIARY]

Volume III

[From October 1920 to January 1924]

By

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- Narayan M. Desai

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- Publishers

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Publishers' Note

It is a matter of privilege for Sarva Sava Sangh to have the opportunity of publishing Mahadev Desai's Diary in Hindi as well as in English.

The relation between Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai is well known to all. Both names are immortal in the history of our national freedom movement. Mahadev Desai joined Gandhiji in 1917 and remained with him till 1942 when Mahadevbhai breathed his last in the lap of Gandhiji in Agakhan palace while in detention. It is amazing to note that Mahadevbhai regularly wrote his day-to-day diary despite his busiest routine with Gandhiji.

Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai had such an inseparable relation that they were like two bodies with one soul. Hence, Mahadev Desai's Diary means Diary of Gandhiji's activities.

While reading this Diary one feels like actually witnessing the various incidents with Gandhiji. As there are authentic records of important interviews of Gandhiji with national and international leaders, we come across even the utterings of Gandhiji in his delirious condition side by side with excerpts from Gandhiji's most important historical as well as epic speeches, we also find here Gandhiji's typical crackling of jokes with small children.

There is no other Diary in history of this kind except that of Bosswell, the learned English writer, who has noted the events of Dr. Johnson's life in his diary. But the difference between these two diaries lies in the difference of the life of Gandhiji and that of Dr. Johnson.

Mahadev Desai had a knack of snatching some time out of his overcrowded daily routine for some extra reading. He had enriched his diary by jotting down some references out of that study. Mahadevbhai was a voracious reader and a deep thinker. As we find in his diary glimpses of a critical study of his reading, there are sprinkling of a lucid description of some new places he had visited or a running life-sketch of some new personalities he had met. In all these writings Mahadevbhai's supreme literary genius is amply revealed.

The period between 1917 and 1942 was a glorious chapter of India's non-violent struggle for Independence. We get a peep into Gandhiji's innermost thoughts through Mahadevbhai's diary. This period was packed with Gandhiji's most important



interviews, correspondence, and whirlwind tours all over the country. A vivid picture of the social, political and spiritual atmosphere of our country in those days is graphically drawn by Mahadevbhai in this diary.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that such a publication is definitely an enriching addition to the world's literature. It is an irony of fate that Mahadevbhai could not live long to edit his diary himself. True to his devotion he died in harness. Late Shri Naraharibhai Parikh, Mahadevbhai's dearest and nearest friend, shouldered the responsibility of editing this diary as a labour of love for a departed friend. Naraharibhai himself was suffering from a serious disease. But he persevered relentlessly and completed the editing of about 3000 pages when he succumbed to the disease. It was a tremendous task to edit the voluminous matter which would run into about 20 volumes of about 400 pages each. The remaining volumes are being edited by Shri Chandulal Bhagubhai Dalal.

The original diaries are in Gujarati. First three volumes in Hindi, covering the period of 1932-33, were published by Navajivan Trust. The publication work of these diaries was interrupted due to some dispute over the right of publication. Finally Shri Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai, got the right of publication and he generously entrusted the publication of Hindi and English editions of the Gujarati Diary to Sarva Seva Sangh without claiming any royalty. Sarva Seva Sangh is deeply grateful to Shri Narayan Desai for this generous offer.

Sarva Seva Sangh has already brought out 5 volumes of Hindi edition chronologically right from 1917. Sixth and seventh volumes are expected to be out in October 1968.

The English translation of Mahadev Desai's Diary is being done by Shri Hemantkumar Nilkanth. We have published uptill now 2 volumes of English edition. We are happy to have been able to bring out this 3rd volume on the auspicious day of 2nd October 1968, as announced earlier.

We propose to bring out the 4th volume before the end of April 1969.

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Preface

A remarkable feature of this Diary is that it deals with two parts of two distinct periods in the history of India's struggle with a big gap between the parts, both in time and in the political and psychological situation of the country.

The first part begins on 27-10-1920 and ends in June 1921. the second covers a period of 10 days, viz., from d. 18-1-1924 to d. 27-1-1924. There is thus a time-gap of about 2 years and a half.

As regards the first part, the last Editor of M. D's Diaries, Naraharibhai Parikh, has given in his preface to the second volume of this series such a vivid and thoughtful picture of the non-co-operation struggle waged in 1921, that there is no need here to add anything to his observations. But the gap that follows needs clarification. This intervening period also may be divided into 2 parts, the period before Gandhiji was sent to jail, i. e., between July 1921 and March 1922, and the period during his confinement in jail, i e. from March 1922 to January 1924.

During the first period, the seeds of non-violent non-co-operation he had sown at the Congress session of Nagpur and earlier had yielded a rich crop. As this volume also shows, he made a hurricane tour all over India and visited various places and regions, such as Bombay, Poona, Aligarh, U. P, Bengal, Assam, Madras, South India, the Punjab etc. to explain, to spread, and to get implemented his message of non-violent non-co-operation. Monster meetings were held and bonfires of foreign cloth were lighted not only in leading cities but in towns and villages also.

The next session of the Congress was to be held at Ahmedabad in December 1921. The Government's earliest reaction was that of ridiculing the movement, as it had imagined that the bonfires etc. were only passing shows. But as time passed and there was not only no abatement but a more glowing flare-up, it grew alarmed. It saw that Gandhiji's entirely fearless speeches had begun to spread a sense of hatred and disgust towards it among the masses. But in view of the novel character of the agitation, viz., through non-violence, it was annoyed and perplexed at first, but finally it took up arms against the Congress.

Maulana Mohammad Ali was arrested at Voltair when he was travelling with Gandhiji from Madras to Calcutta. Maulana Shaukat Ali was the next victim of repression. Gandhiji was given an order not to visit Malabar. Lala Lajpatrai, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and many other distinguished leaders were clapped in jail.



Even Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, the President Elect, was not spared. The Congress session was held at Ahmedabad never the less and all this fury of repression failed to suppress the rising spirit of the nation.

The Congress decided to make the whole region of Bardoli Taluka the arena for offering mass civil disobedience. Gandhiji gave an ultimatum to the Viceroy and the movement, as admitted by Sir George Lloyd, the then Governor of Bombay, came to 'within an inch of success.' But as the fight was rushing on towards its climax, there was a sudden jolt—of a sad event which seemed to Gandhiji the forbidding finger of God. People at Chauri Chaura (a small town in U.P.) lost their sanity at Government persecution and they reacted by burning Police Stations and killing policemen. Though this happened in U. P., far away from Bardoli in Gujarat, it was the third outbreak of violence during that year in India. As Gandhiji believed that if mass civil disobedience were started in Bardoli, the steam created by its heat might burst into violence at other places also, though it might remain quite controlled and guided in Bardoli Taluka itself. When, therefore people were at the height of sanguine expectations he cried a sudden halt and decided not to start mass civil disobedience in Bardoli Taluka.

The flood-tide began to ebb and a sense of frustration and despair began to overtake the people.

The Government was but waiting for its chance.

On March 10, 1922 Gandhiji was arrested on the charge of sedition for his 3 articles, (1) Tempering with Loyalty, (2) The Puzzle and its Solution and (3) Shaking the Manes (or the British Lion). He was hauled up before the District Judge, Mr. Broomfield. The case has been regarded by some as the re-enactment of the scene of that famous trial before Pilatethough with some differences. Gandhiji said that he had to choose between submission to a system that had done irreparable harm to India or incur the risk of the outburst of mad fury by the people and that he would take that risk again if he was set free. " I am here, therefore, to invite and submit to the highest penalty for what, in law, is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, Mr. Judge, is either to resign your post or inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and law you are assisting are good for the people." The judge was very courteous and sentenced him to 6 years' imprisonment on the analogy of Gandhiji's distinguished compatriot, Lokamanya Tilak.



This period was to end on March 17, 1928, but within two years, an entirely unexpected event happened which revealed the Hidden Hand behind all events, for it changed, suddenly again, the course of history.

On Jan. 5, 1924 Gandhiji had an attack of pain in the abdomen, on the 10th the doctors suspected appendicitis and on the 12th Col. Maddock, the Civil Surgeon, grew so alarmed that, on his own responsibility, he carried Gandhiji in his car to the Sassoon Hospital, Poona, and performed, with Gandhiji's consent, an operation on him. Sri Shastri's account, given in App. III in this connection, has become a historic document as a political opponent's spontaneous tribute to Gandhiji's sublime character.

The news of Gandhiji's operation startled India and there was a universal clamour for his release on the ground of illness.

By that time the political climate of Britain had undergone a favourable and significant change. The Labour leader, Mr. Ramsay Mac Donald, had become the Prime Minister and the Labour Party was more sympathetic towards India than the Conservative.

A resolution to release Gandhiji was tabled in the Legislative Assembly, but before it could be discussed on the scheduled date, 5-2-1924, Gandhiji was released on the morning of the same day.

Gandhiji was, of course, all through the period between his operation and release, a patient, but a prisoner, in the State hospital. But in view of his critical health all restrictions against his visitors were suspended. Accordingly, Gandhiji's first interview with the public must have taken on Jan 18, 1924 and hence, Mahadevbhai's Diary rebegins on that date.

But why should there have been this silence right from July 1921 to January 17, 1924?

Here is the probable explanation.

A Nationalist Daily in English *The Independent* had begun to be published at Allahabad with Mr. Syed Hussein as the editor. The sponsor and patron of the paper was Pandit Motilal Nehru. In 1921 Mr. George Joseph (a non-co-operating lawyer) was its editor. Repression was in bloom and the conductors of the paper were living ever under the Sword of Damocles. At the request of Panditji, therefore, Gandhiji sent Mahadevbhai to Allahabad. The paper's hot stuff was too much for the Government stomach. It arrested both the Nehrus, father and son, as well as the editor, and



demanding a security of Rs 2,000/- for 'good behaviour.' On December 7, 1921 this security was given by Mahadevbhai, who got himself registered as the editor. The title of one of his first articles reveals at once Mahadevbhai's outlook on life and the nature of the climate prevailing. It was, 'Abide With Me' – the title of the famous English hymn. On the 20th of the same month the new security was confiscated and a fresh one, of Rs. 10,000, was demanded. Mahadevbhai refused to give it, and started the paper's hand-written edition bearing the motto : "I change, but I cannot die."

Would the Government put up with even this little sign of resistance? It arrested Mahadevbhai and sentenced him on the 24th December to one year's *rigorous* imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100/- or, in default, one month more. Mahadevbhai was released on January 23, 1923.

No information is available whether he wrote any diary between the period from July 1921 to the date of his arrest (24-12-1921). One has but to come to the conclusion, that if he did write it, it has been mislaid and lost. But during this period, he continued to correspond with Gandhiji. Besides these unpublished letters, the *Navajivan* has published his two articles, plus his written statement during his trial and two letters written by him during his Jail life. After his release, moreover, the whole burden—specially since Kakasaheb Kalelkar (the editor) was sentenced on February 20, 1923 – of conducting *Navajivan* fell upon Mahadevbhai's shoulders, till Gandhiji resumed its charge on April 6, 1924. It may, therefore, be said that his articles themselves in *Navajivan* were his diary notes. There is thus sufficient material—sufficient to make a whole volume—of Mahadevbhai's writings during the two periods from July 1921 to December 24, 1921 and from January 23, 1923 to January 17, 1924. All that can be said at present about these writings is that a separate volume covering them will be published in future.

So much for the time gap in the chronicle appearing in this volume. But there was another big gap. a big difference, in the Indian situations prevailing in January 1922 and in January 1924. This change too calls for a rapid review in order to explain Mahadevbhai 's and others' feelings and ejaculations given in this Diary under the dates of January 1924.

During the period of Gandhiji's jail life the Congress had no fighting programme. There was, of course, the constructive programme suggested by Gandhiji before his arrest. Work on these lines continued for a while after the arrest, but it slackened with the passage of time. The waters both of Congress work and the people's enthusiasm



receded further and further and Congressmen began to lose faith in the efficacy of the non-co-operation programme itself. Even big leaders thought that the programme was no longer feasible. The boycotts resolved upon by the Congress thus lost much of their virility. Students reverted to their Government or Government-recognised schools and colleges; lawyers resumed their practice; and the people in general took to the use of foreign cloth again. The idea that the boycott of Councils must be given up and the Government challenged on the Council-floors took shape and gathered strength. The sponsors declared, they wanted to beard the Lion in his own den.' But there were others who did not like the changes and thought them a vain attempt to put up a brave face. There was thus a distinct split between 'No-changers' and 'Pro-changers or Swarajists'.

Till Gandhiji was in jail, the schism between the two, though clear, had not come to a head. The state of the 'No-changers' was almost like that of a leaderless herd. On the Swarajists' side were ranged the most powerful—guns—Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and others while the No-changers, mostly composed of silent constructive workers, had the backing of C. Rajagopalachari and, later on (Sardar) Vallabhbhai Patel, only second-rank leaders at the time.

The Congress was thus torn by internal strife. The situation of the country, as a whole, was no better, if not worse. Communalism, in its increasingly dangerous form, had raised its ugly head and there were grumblings, bickerings, and even riots at different places, specially in 1923.

So the situation of the country was in a bog and the only man whom the people could look up to for salvaging it was behind prison bars.

Gandhiji's release was, therefore, like a welcome shower in suffocating summer. That explains the people's tremendous anxiety at the illness of their beloved leader and their delirious joy at his release.

The second part of the Diary thus deals with the period that had, all of a sudden, raised high hopes after a period of increasing darkness. The reader will find this attitude reflected in the last part of this Diary.

As the periods dealt with in the texts of the Gujarati volume and this one are not the same, I had to write this Preface myself, though I have heavily drawn from the Gujarati Preface of Sri. Chandulal Bhagubhai Dalal, for which thanks are due to him.

Hemantkumar Nilkanth



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Volume-III

"We cut ourselves free from nature by means of the power which we exert over natural forces; we even make her in turn our servant. But in so doing we lose our connection with her and enter into a universe of environmental conditions whose naturalness is fraught with manifold dangers. We force nature to work for us by means of mechanical devices. In the writings of Chuangtzu it is related that when one of Confucius' scholars saw a gardener who was making journey after journey to the well with a single bucket in order to fetch water for his flower borders, he asked him whether he would not like to have his labour lightened, 'How so?' replied the gardener. The scholar answered. 'Take a long wooden lever thick and heavy at one end and thin at the other. In this way it is possible to arrange matters. so that the water will be forced up without this constant stooping on your part. That's what they call a drawwell' But the gardener, who was a sage, replied, 'I have heard my teachers say that if anyone makes use of machines he gets into the way of doing all his business mechanically. and the man who does his business mechanically gets to have a machine-like heart; but if a man has a machine-like heart in his breast, he has lost his grasp of pure unity and becomes involved in complexity'.¹

* * *

"Ethics is nothing else than reverence for life. Reverence for life affords me my fundamental principle of morality, namely, that good consists in maintaining, assisting and enhancing life; and that to destroy, to harm or to hinder life is evil".²

* * *

"All attempts to use me for any programme involving violence are bound to fail. I know not secret methods. I know of no diplomacy other than of truth. I have no weapon save of non-violence".

Gandhi
(translated)

"It is the lack of moral perception—this want of faith in the elemental triumph of Truth and Non-violence".

Gandhi

1-2 (sources not indicated)



1. Gandhiji at Dakore

Speech at Dakore before forty thousand pilgrims on *manekthari punam* (the full moon night of Ashwin) of Samvat 1976¹:

27-10-1920

You all and myself have gathered at this place of pilgrimage, but India has fallen today into such a sorry plight that we cannot experience an atmosphere of purity even at her place of pilgrimage. And, I for one, have not come here for the *darshan* of Ranchhodraiji.² He has at present lost the power of releasing man from (karmic) debts. The reason is that we, the worshippers, are no longer real worshippers at all. We have lost our faith. I have been personally seeing that our places of pilgrimage have ceased to be holy and become dens of cant and irreligion.³ When, O when, will you save us, Lord, from this calamity and sin!

I have often been told that many people who come to Dakoreji do not conduct themselves in a becoming manner. They commit rape at times on their way to Dakore. I do not know whether or how far the allegation is true. But if our religion—Hindu as well as Muslim—does teach us anything, it teaches us first of all this: We must keep under control our passions and our senses. All religions without exception teach us to regard women older than ourselves as our mothers, equal in age as sisters and younger ones as daughters. I have been told—and I believe it—that some of those who come here infringe this very first commandment of religion and yet they believe that their sins will be washed off by a dip into the Gomtiji (a sacred big pond near the temple). Is there any sense in this belief? And I, for one, refuse to accept that they have even the intention of purifying themselves by a bath. *Brahmacharya* and truth are commonly insisted upon for all. Even for worldly men the observance of *brahmacharya* is a religious duty. *Brahmacharya* means control over all the senses—the ears, the eyes, the nose, the mouth and the skin. This *dharma* of self-restraint is not meant solely for monks. It is enjoined upon lay men also. He is really not a gentleman at all who does not observe these simple rules. If we want to behave properly in this world—in Hindu as well as in Muslim society, if we want to live as free men and not be slaves of anybody—the observance of self-restraint is our very first *dharma*.

1. A. D. 1920. Ashwin is the last Gujarati month, near about October. This full-moon day is the most important day of the pilgrimage which lasts several days.



2. Name of Lord Krishna meaning one who releases man from *debts* (of *karma*).
3. Gandhiji often uses the same protean word *pakhand* to mean cant, irreligion, trickery, villainy, brute force, etc.

A word to the Thakore-Brothers

Somebody told me that many Thakore-brothers (a backward community among the Kshatriyas) would attend this meeting and I should say something to them specially. I wonder what I should tell them. But one thing at least I may say. If you have any regard for your religion, let me tell you it never asks you to rob others. It is definitely better to commit suicide than to live upon robbery. It is better to starve than feed ourselves, better to move about naked than clothe ourselves, by looting others.

I have been pleading hard these days with one and all in the whole of India—and I address my appeal not to Brahmins and Banias merely but to all the communities of India—the Dheds, the Bhangis (both 'untouchables'), the Thakores, the Mussulmans, the Parsis, the Christians—that if you wish to make India a happy land, your first and foremost *dharma* is to live in hearty unison with all the religious communities in India. That is our duty as a neighbour. Had not brother Shaukat Ali been obliged to go to Bombay on some business, you would have seen him by my side today in this pilgrimage-town of Hindus. Wherever I go I take him—and now both the brothers—with me. I say to everybody my two full brothers are no more on earth, but my love for these two brothers is not a whit less than for a full brother. I claim to be a *sanatani* (rigid adherent of the ancient faith) Hindu and I can fully observe the tenets of my Hindu religion while living in comradeship with these two Mussulmans. In doing so I am serving my own interest. If, as a Hindu, I can die for Islam, I shall be able to die for Hinduism, if the need arises. Herein lies the test both of myself and my country.

An avalanche has descended upon the seven crores of Muslim brothers. A ferocious Empire is out to make mince-meat of their religion. Just as, in the sky above, the moon is eclipsed – is possessed by a demon,¹—so is Islam eclipsed today, possessed by a demon called the British Empire, and you must free it. The lunar eclipse is only a physical phenomenon and it is not in our power to free the moon. This lunar eclipse does not frighten me at all. It does not impel me to go on a fast. But I verily tremble at the eclipse that has shadowed our hearts our souls.

If fasting is the specific remedy for that eclipse, I pray to God to grant me the power to fast. If suicide is the remedy, may God enable me to commit it. The beautiful



moon of India is, at present, stained with the spot called England. I have already given one reason why that is so. The Empire's sword hangs over and is about to fall on Islam. If it is Islam that is in danger today, it may be Hinduism tomorrow. How wicked must be that Empire which has played Islam foul, which, through the Punjab, has made the whole of India crawl on its belly, has compelled all the little kids of India to salute the Union Jack – and taken the lives of two little ones of six or seven as a result – and under whose regime fifteen hundred or at least one thousand innocent persons have been murdered? I cannot even conceive how thick is the darkness with which this Imperial eclipse has enveloped our land.

The present rule is no *Ramarajya*; it is *Ravanarajya*.² We are groaning in slavery under that *Ravanarajya* and learning irreligion. How can we wrest our freedom from such *Ravanarajya*? By becoming irreligious ourselves to be a match for the irreligious? By entering into a contest of villainy with villains? How can we hope to beat them in crookedness? How shall we be able to defeat the Machiavellian intrigues of the Empire? What are our crafty schemers going to do to that Empire which, has by its wiles, outmatched even fraudulent Europe? Even if Hindus and Mussulmans wish to resort to wiles and might, they are too artless and weak. If we want to beat Ravana on his own ground, we must have, like him, ten heads and twenty arms. Whence to bring them? Only an astute opponent like Rama can perform the feat of killing him. And what kind of astuteness did Rama possess? He observed *brahmacharya*.

He walked in the fear of God. He had an army, but of monkeys. Have monkeys ever taken up the sword? Even today, our Divali Holiday³ is the celebration of the victory of Rama over Ravana. But we can rightly celebrate that victory now, only when we can smash into smithereens the present Ravana who possesses not ten, but a thousand heads. Till we can't do that, nothing but a life in the wilderness is our destined lot. You will be able to defeat this Empire only if, unlike Ravana, you do not cast a lustful eye on our women, our Sitajis. If anyone has been able to overcome Satan it is God. It is He Who created Satan and He Who can overcome him. Satan cannot be defeated by human power. It is God alone Who brings about his defeat through a person who follows God's dictates like a bounden slave.

With that Empire which possesses so much power, we have to contend. I don't wish to wail over the sorrows it inflicts on us. On the contrary, I pray for the indulgence of India to concede to me alone the privilege of finding its fault. I have seen you spitting fire on the Government during the period when I was offering co-operation. Even a



censuring tongue against the Government does not become you. You have never drunk to the dregs, as bitter draughts of insults etc. from the Government as I have. You have not got a hundredth part of the power which I have gained by assimilating those bitter draughts. I have been given many provocations which would have infuriated me against the Government. But I have sublimated my anger. Even on this occasion I do not speak a single word in a fit of anger. I am speaking only what the still small voice impels me to say. I do not want from you a single word of anger against the British Empire. Instead of picking holes in Englishmen, you must see the evil imbedded in you and drive it out. That will make you free and independent. I do point out the defects of Englishmen, but as a detached witness. After serving the British Empire with all my heart for full thirty years, I have arrived at the conviction that it is not *Ramarajya*, it is *Ravanarajya*. It does not mean that because this Empire appears to me so wicked now I have any hatred for the Englishman. All my hatred is exclusively against the Empire. So long as the British Empire does not repent, does not apologise to Indian women and men, does not say, "We are only your servants and wish to remain in India if you keep us in employment", so long I am prepared to fling myself against the might of the Empire. No number of its aeroplanes and machine-guns can frighten me.

And I do not see any fall from righteousness in opposing the Empire. Just as I may rightly non-co-operate with my son if the occasion demands the step, so may I non-co-operate with the Empire. This second non-co-operation is equally my *dharma* when it becomes necessary. No human being is free from error or sin. I admit I am not perfect, though I observe the *dharma* of self-restraint. There is no dearth of sin and imperfection in me. But with all that, I fear to commit sin. There are defects in me, and them I try to remove. I am not their slave. But this Empire regards sin itself as righteousness. It crushes other countries in order to make itself prosperous. That is downright tyranny. I do not wish to make India prosperous by the suppression or destruction of other countries. I do not wish to raise my country by submerging the religion of other people. But this Empire says, 'We will go to any length in atrocity to maintain our supremacy.' It does not say so in so many words, but its actions betray this attitude, as is evidenced in its handling of the Punjab affair. I, a worshipper of Sri Krishna, ask you to hurl into an abyss, the schools and courts of such an Empire. For the safety of my body I am afraid of none. It is only after entrusting the body to the Empire that I am speaking to you here. You also give the reins of your heart to God alone. Your chains will give way on the day you do so.



Non-co-operation is a weapon worth its weight in gold. It is a divine weapon. Sri Krishna has given it to Hindus and the Prophet Mohammed to Muslims. The Parsis got it in their Zand-Avesta. Wherever you see injustice, wherever you find a person the embodiment of injustice, have nothing to do with him. In his gentle language Tulsidasji asks us to run away from unholy men, since they harm us through their contact with us. Just as you would fly from a conflagration, so should you fly from a wicked man and injustice. This flight means nothing else than non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not hatred or revenge. On the contrary, it is the righteous action of a righteous person. In a difference between father and son, non-co-operation is just the thing to do, in that between husband and wife a bounden duty and in that between relatives, a social obligation. If my son comes home after an indulgence in meat and wine, and I, a Vaishnav father, give him shelter even for a moment in my house, I would be consigned on death to no other than the worst infernal region. If I am unable to impress upon you the beauty and necessity of non-co-operation Swaraj becomes an impossible achievement. If we want to win Swaraj, there is only one remedy for it and that is non-co-operation.

Yes, there is indeed another remedy—the sword. But have you undergone the necessary discipline? Have you learnt to bear the hardship that method involves? The Mussulmans are ahead even of you in the use of the sword. But they also realized that the sword was no good in this matter. Will this Empire be scared at the sporadic murders of a few and grant you Swaraj forthwith? Will that Empire, which has been built up on the corpses of thousands of Englishmen and which has shed like water the blood of thousands of others, Sikhs and Pathans, be frightened out of its wits by your few murders? Never. I condemn the British Empire but admire its courage and tenacity. The Englishman is a patriot through and through. The spirit that animates him is wicked and deserves to be shunned. But I am a man who sings praises of even Ravana for his bravery. Tulsidasji also has said that if a man is fated to have an enemy, it is best to have a Ravana for one. The man who dares to cross swords with Laxman can only be a warrior of Indra! It's⁴ prowess. If you want to fight such a powerful Empire, you must boldly enter the arena, draw the sword and fight it openly. But that fight is beyond our power. According to the Hindu *dharma* as I understand it, the Hindu must fight without a sword altogether and cut off his own head rather than cut somebody else's. I claim to be one of the greatest Kshatriyas of Hindustan. Do I not know how to fire even five rounds from a revolver? Or to poison somebody? Can I not throw a bomb from an aeroplane, if someone takes me on a flight? But I have



discarded that thing purposely—as a result of discernment. Since God has not given me the power to create life—even that of a little bug—it is not for me to take any life either. It is my business simply to offer my life—to die. I am a true Kshatriya when I give up my life in defence of myself, my wife or my country. The physically weakest man—and a woman also—can cultivate in himself the spirit of a Kshatriya, i.e. can say to the enemy; 'Here I stand as firm as a rock. Do your worst.' If that were not the right sense of the word, every murderer is a Kshatriya. Even that man who beats his wife is then a Kshatriya! That is why I am never tired of dinning into India's ears, 'In whatever you do, don't fail to keep up the true spirit of a Kshatriya'. To abuse the Mussulman or abhor him is to cast a slur on our religion. Supposing he behaves treacherously with you in future, use that power of non-co-operation with him, which you must have gained by that time through non-co-operation with this Government today. You have not till now even tried the method of co-operation with the Mussulman. Make the trial for once. With the Government you have co-operated for quite a long time and we have remained unhappy. That is why I ask you to non-co-operate with the Government and co operate with Muslim brothers. You are not to indulge in bloodshed in order to compel others to join you in non-co-operation. Physical force can never convert to your view the man who doesn't want to join. You must bow to him and plead with him. You will win him over to your side, if he kicks you and you suffer meekly. If there is truth in you, if there is humility as well as hearty unity among you and if you become brave, who can dare to leave you and side with the Government? Be brave and make sacrifices yourselves, in order to convince such people of the truth in your view.

How is it that a mere lakh of Whitemen are able to lord it over thirty-three crores of Indians? The reason is we have become slaves even mentally. If we tell them, 'Brothers, we are not going to remain your slaves any longer', they would either leave the country or stay on as its servants. But the first step to gain the power to give this notice to the Englishman is that we must fraternize among ourselves, among all our different communities—the Thakores, the Bhils, the Muslims and the Scheduled Castes. We must treat them as our brothers and never look down upon any of them. You are enraged with the Mussulman, because he kills a cow, but are there not Hindus also who do the same? To go on milking a cow till not only the last drop of milk remains but blood comes out, and to prod a bull – the ptogeny of the cow—with a pointed nail are also acts on a par with cow-slaughter. With what face can a Hindu, who always commits the sin of cow-slaughter in this form, approach a Mussulman and remonstrate with him, 'Why do you kill my holy cow?' If the cow is to be saved, the



Hindus must first show charity of heart towards the Mussulman. I, at least, would feel ashamed to beg of the Mussulman to desist from cow-slaughter. And what of the Englishman who daily eats your cow? The English soldier cannot do for a moment without beef. Why do you detest the Muslims? There is, at least, the fear of God in them. A short stay with the Ali Brothers will show you how God-fearing they are. If you harmonize with Muslims. Swaraj is just in the offing.

1. Reference to the hoary popular superstition that eclipses are due to the possession of the two Gods. Sun and Moon, by the two demons Rahu and Ketu. Fasting and alms-giving bring about their release. Characteristically, these are names in Hindu astronomy of the exact spots in the firmament where the sun and the moon are when they are eclipsed.
2. Rule of Ravana, Rama's enemy, i. e., Satanic rule. Ravana is described as having 10 heads and 20 arms to portray his might.
3. Deepavali, turned into 'Divali', means a row of lights. The holiday is celebrated with brilliant lights and fireworks
4. Indrajit knew the art of being invisible and rain missiles from different directions in the sky. He even killed Laxman (Rama's brother), but the latter was brought back to life by the roots of a plant that revived corpses.

Swadeshi

Withdraw your children from Government schools, don't send any representative from your constituency to the Councils, ply the spinning wheel and wear Khadi.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have to say one thing. We want to give education (national) to our children and we want to conduct new arbitration courts. All that requires money. Hence, I request you to give me your mite.¹ I am rather loath to take money from you, because I don't find many young men whom I can trust with your money and feel at my ease. If you really want to support non-co-operation you may give anything you like, from a pice onwards, to the volunteers who will now be moving among you. The least one can do for non-co-operation is to give a pice each and that is within everybody's means. If nothing else could be done, everyone can at least spin and weave. If you think you observe Swadeshi by wearing (Indian) mill-made cloth, you are mistaken. The mills cannot manufacture cloth sufficient for India's needs. It is in Khadi



and Khadi alone that real beauty lies. Fine muslin is an emblem of slavery, and, therefore, Khadi seems to me light as air and fine muslin a heavy wear. And please do withdraw your children from schools right now. They will come to no harm, if they do not read for a while. Let them sing Lord Vishnu's hymns during the period they remain at home.

If you approve of non-co-operation, if you want to shake off the yoke of this Satanic Government, do not leave the meeting without giving something to the volunteers who may approach you now. If somebody claims to come from me or Vallabhbhai or Swaraj Sabha and asks for donation, do not give him anything. without proper inquiry. Give him something only if you know him personally. Those who have no money with them just now can send their contribution to Ahmedabad. May God make you courageous and grant you the power of sacrifice, truth and humility henceforth and may you fear God alone and drive out any fear of any human being whatsoever from your heart!

1. Gandhiji began at Dakore his practice of collecting funds at his public meetings and continued it, though for varying purposes, till the last.



2. Address to Women

(Speech before a meeting of about three thousand women at Dakore during the same visit).

Sisters,

You will please, hear me quietly. I will finish in a few words. Some of you may be from Dakore itself, while the others may have come from outside as pilgrims. I am certain that hardly anyone out of these so many women may be knowing what the present situation of India really is, and what our duty, our *dharma*, is under that situation. Inspired by an uplifting feeling, you all have come here, at this place of pilgrimage. You may be feeling that all your sins are washed off the moment you have Dakoreji's (Ranchhodji's) *darshan*, that you can get everything you want, the moment you have a bath in Gomtiji. Some sisters may also be convinced that *darshan* of a Mahatma like Gandhi means the achievement of the goal of life. All this is an entirely wrong notion. If, without purifying your mind, you have a bath in Gomtiji you only make Gomtiji herself dirty. Going to Dakoreji for *darshan* and leaving there only the dirt of our feet when we return, will do us no good. Our *darshan* of Dakorenath (Lord of Dakore) will bear fruit only if thereby we purify our mind, create holy feelings in the heart and gain self-knowledge. You yourself will say that the *darshan* will leave a Christian or a man of no faith like myself as dry and unaffected as before. I want to show to you that, till our mind is not pure, till our heart is not clean, the bath in Gomtiji or the *darshan* of Ranchhodrai is of no avail.

'Please understand once for all wherein your true *dharma* lies'- that is my first and foremost appeal. I assure you, you are never going to be free from slavery, so long as you do not see what your true *dharma* is, do not know what the plight of India is, and so long as you look up to the Government as your parent and feel that under its rule you enjoy peace. I believe the Government has made us slaves. For thirty years I continued to believe that we were happy under the sheltering canopy of this Government. But I am now convinced that under this rule, far from being in a shade we are shrivelling in a sweltering heat. Religion is passing out of our life. I saw on my way boards hanging at different places with the words, 'To visit a hotel is to lose our religion' That is true, but partly. When did the hotels spring up? Under this rule. And why? Because this Government taught us to love an easy sedentary life. We have now learnt to give up home-made dishes and enjoy prepared articles of food bought from shops in the market. We have thus transgressed the *maryada-dharma* of the Vaishnava.¹ This is a sort of government that has no scruples for earning lakhs of



rupees from trading in liquors and opium. Our scriptures tell us that a king who enters into business is a second-grade king, while the one who takes requisite money to enable him to protect the people belongs to the first grade. But that king who coins money for himself by inducing the drug-habit among his subjects is the worst king. It is to teach you, sisters, that the present rule over us is of this worst kind that I have come here.

1. Maryada—limitation or restriction. Among the Vaishnavas (followers of Lord Vishnu) there are some, ladies specially, who do not take food or water not prepared or drawn out by themselves. Gandhiji himself belonged to a Vaishnava family.

The Country's Two Eyes

The Bhagvadgita teaches us that we must have the same regard for all creatures. Hindus and Muslims are verily the two eyes of the country. There cannot be, there must not be, any enmity between the two. But we detest these same Muslims, non-co-operate with them and create bad blood between them and us. This Government is out today to exterminate the religion of these Mussulmans. If it can destroy their religion today, it can as well destroy ours tomorrow.

Then there is the Punjab. You may not have even heard the name of that land. But it was through the Punjab that our *rishis* (sages) entered India. The Punjab is that hallowed land where the *rishis* when they wrote our scriptures, lived. In that same Punjab, the Government has dishonoured our brothers and even our sisters. In that same Punjab little children have been whipped. In that same Punjab human beings have been compelled to crawl as if they were snakes. It is irreligion to accept that Government's domination over us. That is why I say we must overthrow this *Ravanarajya* and establish *Ramarajya*.

My second appeal to you is to begin to observe the *swadeshi dharma* forthwith. This Government has taught us irreligion and sham. We have learnt to believe that foreign clothes enhance the beauty of our body. A stench of foreign clothing is coming out even from those women who are present here. (Indian) Mill-cloth also is not Swadeshi. The cloth the Indian mills manufacture cannot meet the needs of the whole country. And, poor as you are, you are not miserable beggars. I have seen persons even poorer than you. I have seen men having nothing on them except a loin-cloth and women a torn and tattered skirt. If India adopts the Swadeshi *dharma*, today, if all our



women start plying the 'good old wheel' and wear only as much clothing as they can spin for, we would become free from slavery this very day. Our women of the past believed that good qualities made for beauty. Those who wear foreign clothes are nothing but ugly. To wish to appear beautiful through a charming dress is a public woman's attitude. What is our criterion for our adoration of Sitaji and Damayanti ? Do we worship Sitaji and Damayanti for their perfect taste in superfine saris? Not at all. We worship that Damayanti who roamed in forests with only half a piece of cloth on her and that Sitaji who spent fourteen years in exile. King Harishchandra's queen-consort actually drudged in slavery. Did she do so in a sari that was the last word in finery? That was a time when some people covered their shame with leaves. To look beautiful by outer embellishments betrays the psychology of a woman of ill-fame. If you want to observe your *dharma* the first step to it is to understand and assimilate completely the *swadeshi dharma*. That is the observance of the *swadeshi dharma* by which the family wears clothes made from yarn spun by its women and woven by its men, singing hymns the while. I am myself handsome in the right sense, since the clothes I wear are made of yarn lovingly spun and woven by women and men themselves. If you want to become free from *Ravanarajya* and bring about *Ramarajya* here, you must adopt the *swadeshi dharma* and introduce the spinning wheel in your home. At least at present it is easy to get women-teachers of spinning. Let every sister spin for at least an hour, with the accompaniment of hymns, and then get that yarn woven into clothes.

It is certain you will find it difficult at first to give up foreign muslin and wear a hand-spun and hand-woven sari. Some sisters in Bombay complained to me that the (foreign) saris they used formerly weighed less than 40 tolas (1 lb.) and now the Khaddar sari exceeds even 70 tolas (1¾ lbs.) in weight. In reply, I used a somewhat figurative language and said, "You have till now lessened your own weight (=dignity) by lessening the weight of your clothes." Joyfully, do women bear the weight of the unborn child for nine months as well as the terrible pain of the travail that follows. India is in a travail today. Will you not, on this occasion of the nation's new birth, be ready to bear even the weight of thick clothing? Only if you bear that weight, you can make India free. If you want India to give a new birth, every woman shall have to bear the weight of heavy Khadi for, not nine months merely but nine years.

And do you know where you send your children to learn? You are sending them in schools of *Ravanarajya*. Would a devout Vaishnav ever send her child to a school belonging to an irreligious ruler? Would I ever go to an irreligious man to learn from



him the Gita or the Bhagwat?¹ The present schools belong to an irreligious government. So long as we do not acquire their possession, you must not let your children learn in them. Teach them *Ramaraksha* (the verses that grant Rama's protection) and other hymns or approach the wise men of your town or village and tell them, "Please teach our children." Do anything you like, but don't send your children to these schools.

Today a sister left rupees five with me. I have never accepted any donation of this sort till now. I have been getting whatever I want from my friends. But now I want to have Swaraj, and conduct numerous schools. All that work cannot be maintained from friends' contributions only. If you want Rama's *rajya*, you have but to strive for it. You may give whatever amount you like. I will use it for *Swadeshi* and for maintaining schools for your children. Things have come to such a pass today, that there is a fight over Dakorenathji and the irreligious among us have resorted to law-courts! What a travesty, that we carry our disputes about our Gods to the foreigner's law-courts! That's what I call an eclipse of religion. To relieve lawyers of their occupation we shall have to give them something. If there is truth in the plea advanced by myself and colleagues, the donation of one pice will give you a return worth two. Swadeshi activity and law-courts for yourselves will be maintained from your money. The money we give to temples these days is squandered away at the hands of men of no religion.

If you aspire to be as chaste as Sitaji, if you want to give up various subtle forms of adultery exposed by me to your view and to free other sisters also from them, if you are in earnest about shedding irreligion and taking to real *dharma*, you must give your full share to the Swaraj movement. Everyone must inevitably know how to discriminate between *dharma* and its antithesis. There will be many who will approach you in the name of religion. I won't say you must give something to everyone of them. It is only after I was convinced of your faith in me, that I am stretching out my hand for a donation. I tremble at the idea of allowing filthy lucre to enter my field of work. I would never beg for money, if, I had in me sufficient austere self-discipline and knack to enable me to do my work without money. But I confess I do not possess that much self-discipline and knack. I too am a man belonging to no other than *kaliyuga* (iron age); I am full of drawbacks. But of this one thing I am certain: I have been incessantly striving to do away with my drawbacks. If, therefore, you are inclined to trust me, you may give me any amount from the lowest, a pice, to the highest you like. Swarajsabha will administer the donation.



1. The magnum *opus* of those who believe in *bhaktimarga* (the path of devotion) and hence a vety special favourite with the Vaishnavas.

Wash the Heart on the Eclipse Day

Finally, it is my appeal to you, sisters, to let not what I said go in at one ear and out at the other. The *swadeshi dharma* will save you some clothing expense. You may spend a part of the saving after milk and ghee for your children. At present, you simply waste away after ease and comfort the amount that could provide their milk and ghee. From the saving that then remains, I ask you to give me something. But you may do so only if you have a positive desire to give it. Even if you don't please do perform the *dharma* I have pointed out for you—that of plying the spinning wheel. This is the day when we purify ourselves from the contamination caused by the eclipse. The right form of this purification is to wash off the dirt of the heart. If all our women chant *Ramanam* sincerely and pray to God for the advent of *Ramarajya* to replace this *Ravanarajya*, then, I assure you, that Rama (God) is certain to be the help of the helpless. May God be the master of your heart and release you all from other kinds of slavery.

31-10-1920

Speech before a ladies' meeting held at Kadiani Vadi in Ahmedabad.

"I never fail to get spiritual satisfaction by having the holy sight of women at all the places I pass through in my all-India tour. Women in their thousands meet me everywhere. I am going to relate today a very chastening incident. That there is a city called Amritsar cannot, I am certain, be now unknown to you. It was there that a river of blood from thousands of our murdered brothers had flown and it was there that General Dyer had slaughtered or wounded a thousand or fifteen hundred of our innocent men. During my visit to that Amritsar a few days ago, four sisters came over to me early in the morning at 6.30. It is much colder in Amritsar than here. But the sisters felt, 'Since this brother is taking so much trouble to serve us, he must at least be warned, and told the facts as they really are.' One of them told me, 'Brother, you are doing good work indeed but you don't know that our men—and to some extent we women also—cheat you—'. I was shocked, 'Me?' I said, 'why should they cheat me? What can they gain?' She said. 'Men are rogues. They put up a show of purity in



your presence. But we, women, have fully realized that you want for your work men and women of really pure character. That is why we women flock after you wherever you go, so that your ideals may germinate in us." That sister then used a Sanskrit word, which we wouldn't expect from a Punjabi woman. You; too, perhaps do not understand its meaning. The men are not *jitendriya* and we women also are not *jitendriya* to the extent that you believe and want us to be." I saw perfectly what she meant through this little hint. *Jitendriya* means one whose senses are under control. That is to say that person is not a *jitendriya* who lends his ears to evil or uses his tongue to speak evil. But the special meaning the word carries now is this: That man or woman who is not faithful to his or her spouse is not a *jitendriya*. The sister continued, "You say we must control anger. But how can he control anger who cannot control his lust? And how can he sacrifice his personal interest and do *Qurbani*, who cannot control his anger?"

As from the women at Dakore, from the women at Ahmedabad also, Gandhiji begged for alms of four kinds. The first one was that of purity of character. Without purity, one cannot conquer the senses and for one who has not made this conquest, *Qurbani* is impossible.

The second kind of alms he begged for was from mothers for the withdrawal of their children from Government schools. "Both the Gitaji and Tulsidasji enjoin us to shun the company of the evil-minded. And this *raj*, is vile, i. e. of 'evil-minded'. Rather than go to schools of such a Government it is better, by far, to regard that education itself as *haram*. There is no reason to entertain the fear, 'If my son doesn't take any education, who will feed me?' How do those women, who have no sons, feed themselves? The one who gives us our bread is none other than God."

The third thing he wanted from all women was the observance of the *swadeshi dharma*. We became slaves for the very reason that we gave up the *swadeshi dharma*, he said, and then gave the same argument as he did at Dakore to refute the plea that Khadi was too heavy for wearing. He asked the women, "If you know only how to make thick rotis (unleaved disks of bread) and some other woman knows the art of preparing thin ones, will you eat your self-made thick *rotis* or beg of that other woman to give you her thin ones? You cannot perform your *swadeshi dharma* by wearing mill-cloth, even of Indian mills. If you wear Indian mill-cloth, you will make it dearer and the poor classes who are its consumers will suffer." Gandhiji then said, "Without first undergoing trouble there is no happiness for man. It was because Rama suffered exile



for fourteen years, that he was able to free Sitaji. King Nala became immortal only after he went through great sorrows. The truth that lay in Harishchandra, queen Taramati and prince Rohit became a resplendent sun and shed its light over the world only after the three passed through harrowing troubles. So instead of shying at hardship and feeling ashamed of wearing a thick Khadi sari. you ought to wear self-spun and hand-woven cloth only." He then added, "It is necessary to take God's name; but you cannot gain salvation by a parrot-like repetition of Ramnam. If Rama dwelt in the heart, pity and fellow-feeling would make a lodgement in it, and if they did, the person would abstain from a behaviour that causes pain to others. Take my word for it that if you don't wear handspun and handwoven cloth, thousands of our women will have to remain naked or wear only a tattered clothing. Even today I can show you thousands of pure women like Damayanti in our country. I asked a woman to have a bath. She answered back, 'Give me one sari to change for this and then I will gladly have a bath'. This is the tragic state of our country at present."

Gandhiji then showed the women their fourth *dharma* and begged for his last kind of alms. "For the establishment of Swaraj, for the opening of new schools, money is a necessity. It does not grow on a tree, so that I have only to pluck it from the tree. This form of begging I began at Dakore where an ordinary woman, a corn-grinder with a hand-mill, gave me the ring she was wearing. Then two or three sisters gave me rings and a necklace ." One brother took off his gold bracelet and said, "I hope, the man who gives one pice will get two in return." Gandhiji was not prepared to give that promise, but he said, "This is Kaliyuga. Religious pretence is the order of the day. I would be very glad, if I could do without money; then I would never ask for it. Your donation will not be misspent by me or my colleagues as far as possible. All the same you may give me your mite only if you believe in what I say." Gandhiji then appealed to the audience not to celebrate the Divali or such festivals. by preparing sweet dishes and firing crackers and spend the amount thus saved for the cause of the country. "The Divali festival celebrates the release of Sitaji by Rama. As long as we have not gained a victory like the one Rama had over Ravana, we have no right to enjoy ease and comfort, to adorn our bodies with ornaments, to indulge in tasteful dishes or in displays of fireworks."

Then the collection of the fund began. The scene it presented was glorious beyond description. Some girls and some Ashramite sisters began to move among the women and the meeting presented the appearance of a congregation in a holy temple. All the women, young and old, rained coins— pices, annas, quarter rupees and even



rupees. Some women including even the aged, felt grieved at having with them nothing or not more than what they gave. There were many who gave their addresses to the volunteers and earnestly requested them to visit their homes and take away the specified amount. In a twinkling, loose coins worth about one hundred and twentyfive rupees piled up. The collection contained not only ordinary brass coins like pice and two-pice bits but even quite small ones like pies (one-third of a pice) and half-pices (1 pice = 1/64th rupee). With eyes wet with tears of love, Gandhiji seemed almost choked with emotion. He exclaimed, "This amount is more sacred than donations worth lakhs of rupees from millionaires. There is an aroma of the very soul of the women of Ahmedabad in every brass pice given here. Every coin is steeped with their devotion for the country. From this hallowed gift I will educate the country's children. It is on the basis of such sacred small coins that I will erect the edifice of Swaraj." When this collection was still going on, a girl was suddenly impelled to take off an ornament from her ear. Another did the same. A third took off a bangle. And then ornaments streamed from all quarters, so that, before one could realize what happened, there was already a neat little pile of finger-rings, ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets, locketts and other ornaments, big and small. In the meanwhile, half in jest and half in earnest, Gandhiji would say, by way of clarification, "I am dead against donations from those sisters who, on going home, demand or desire new ornaments to replace the ones they give here." Immediately, a number of women and girls assured Gandhiji that they were not going to wear any ornaments henceforth. Gandhiji gave them one uniform answer, "That's but your *dharma* and that resolve alone becomes you in these times of dire distress." It was already evening when, after finishing the meeting, Gandhiji returned to the Ashram. At the end of the Ashram evening prayer also, this collection was continued and some women-inmates stripped off the gold bands fixed on their shell-bangles and gave them to Gandhiji.

Speech at Mehmdabad

1-11-1920

I had many things to talk about with you, but I don't wish to make a long speech. India is in the throes of troubles these days. The country is in a state so sad, that it is beyond me to give you a picture of it. Very recently, I said at a ladies' meeting that the Government which rules the land is diabolic, is Satanic, is a *Ravanarajya*. We have two big instances to prove the charge: the Khilafat and the Punjab. As regards the former,



solemn promises have been broken and there has been foul play. In the Punjab, quite unnecessarily, there has been a massacre. A man of Satanic nature alone is capable of committing such crimes. Tulsidasji has branded such a rule as '*rakshasi rajya*' (devilish rule). You must never co-operate with it. And even that is not enough. It is our duty, our *dharma*, to offer active non-co-operation against it. If we take any help, accept any favour, from such a government, we become abettors in the crime and injustice it has committed. So long as we remain accessories in its crime, the country can never be happy.

How to offer that non-co-operation successfully? One way to enable us to do so is the establishment of complete co-operation between ourselves. Among all the citizens of the country, Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians, one and all, there must be total and absolute co-operation. The Devil can continue his rule only by creating division among the ruled. Our Government has done exactly the same. It engineered dissensions between Hindus and Mussulmans. In the Madras Presidency it made Non-Brahmins fight Brahmins. It would not fail to create caste-quarrels here also. if it can do so. Why, I have been already receiving letters, in which Dheds and Bhangis are questioning me: "What is going to be our position in your Swaraj?" I see clearly what it all portends. And that is why I say that non-co-operation is an impossibility so long as there is not a unity of hearts among us. That unity cannot be established by an insincere show of it. Unity of hearts is possible only if we do justice to one another among ourselves.

Offer Qurbani , Purify Yourself

We ought, for that purpose, to have the strength to offer *Qurbani*, to undergo self-sacrifices, and know how to die bravely. We will never be able to gain Swaraj by killing others, burning buildings, tearing off rails etc. If we want to win Swaraj, we shall have to be men of pure character. That means we must be *jitendriya*.

We are not going to succeed, so long as untruth and treachery are not driven out of our hearts. A very recent incident—an attempt to stop the slaughter of a goat—testifies to this statement. An irreligious Maulvi began his game of misleading the people. He held meetings lasting late till 12 mid-night. He declared he had come as Gandhi's representative and had stayed on in Ahmedabad at his instance. By a jumble of facts and fictions in his speeches, he incited the people and a Hindu *sadhu* (recluse) joined hands with him. This *sadhu* believed that his passport to Heaven could be



secured, if he could save a goat from being sacrificed. So this *sadhu* brought the Maulvi to help him. The Maulvi browbeat the slaughterer and saved the goat. But the incident sowed the seed of discord between Hindus and Mussulmans. Some Hindus believe that a goat should be offered as a sacrifice at the altar of Mother Kali. A man like myself believes it must not be. If a sacrifice has to be given at all, it could be only of my own body. But, in any case, in a quarrel among Hindus themselves, I would make it a point not to call Maulana Shaukatali to help me. And yet these cowardly Hindus called for the Maulvi's interference. The Maulvi entered the scene and, with the help of his tom-tomers, released the goat. That *sadhu* came to see me. I told him, "Take off your ochre robe." To the Maulvi I said, "Go away from Ahmedabad. You cannot serve the country this way. Shall we, who do not want to gain self-rule by beating even Government men, be able to gain it by thrashing our own brothers? What would be the result? In this case also the result would have been a sight to see. Fortunately, the present Collector of Ahmedabad happened to be a sensible man and he stopped the slaughter. Otherwise, in such a case, the Government would send the police and, with its aid, get the goat sacrificed. And then our non-co-operation would go to sleep." I called the Maulvi and told him all this. If such impurity gets into our movement, we would fail miserably. I told the Maulvi, "Don't leave your province. Don't leave your work." He then said, "It was Hindus themselves who pressed me hard." But how can two hundred cowards compel a man? If two hundred cowards can force a man, what cannot one Whiteman do to him? And the same thing actually came to pass. When the Collector called the Maulvi, he got frightened and asked for the help of the mill-labourers, so that out of the fear of a riot, the Government might desist from taking any action against him.

On my arrest or that of Shaukatali, if you indulge in rioting, incendiarism or uprooting rails, you will lose the battle. I say so to you because you are not Arabs. You for one, do not know how to use even a *lathi*. Beating an ass or one's wife with a stick does not mean knowing how to use the lathi. The man who knows the art can brave a thousand opponents singlehanded. Since you do not know the art, I can give you the advice I have given.

We have forgotten our leonine nature and become meek lambs. If we try to follow Ireland's or Egypt's example we will simply go to hell. When the Government flourishes its sword—and there is nothing wrong in it; were I the Government, I would myself arrest trouble-makers; any Government that wants to carry on its administration would definitely arrest such opponents, it is even its duty;—when,



therefore, the Government takes off the glove and you create violent disturbances, it is you who will be the loser. You are cowards if you attempt to browbeat the Government by rioting. If we want to free India from slavery, we have to be lions.

You, six thousand men, are at present in danger. A Municipality for you, so few! What an absurdity! It is nothing but a white elephant that the Government has thrust upon you. An expense of twelve thousand rupees to be borne by six thousand persons! You just wind up that Municipality. It renders you no service. It gives you education, but with that education we want to non-co-operate. How can we accept any donation from soiled hands? I want money for the Gujarat Vidyapith. (National University of Gujarat), but shall I conduct the Vidyapith with the aid of donation from prostitutes? Or by gaining a profit from a public house?

For, I assert that the money you get from the Government for education comes from liquor-booths. When we suggest that the Excise Department be closed, the Government say that schools will have to be closed if the excise-income is given up. How can our lawyers, barristers and learned men, educated from that polluted money—profits in liquor—do any good to the country?

I congratulate the boys of this town on their giving up Government schools. Now *you* teach these boys and girls at your expense. Get the teachers to resign from their posts and, with their aid, make the auspicious start of national education right from today. You begin it in a privately owned building and let the Government school building remain empty. This is the solution of the question of education given by the Municipality. The other thing the Municipality deals with is street-lighting and latrines. As it is, both these matters are in a miserable state even under the Municipality. And it does nothing about the protection of the people, because the Police Department is not in its charge. And clouds of dust rise from its streets. Thus the Municipality does no look to real business except conducting schools. It has one dispensary, but against it, there are three private dispensaries in the town. So that dispensary also may remain unused, left to the Government's management. In short, we have no use whatsoever of a municipality. It is, like an idol, set up for worship from a distance. So, you, nine hundred tax-payers, do one thing. Hold a meeting and pass a resolution that the Municipality must be closed for good. Tell them, 'We don't want either your Sanitary Board or your Gram Panchayat (village commune)'. And give the members a notice that they must resign from the Municipality.



Don't Pay the Tax

Tell the Government also that you are not going to pay any municipal tax. There is no breach of law there. There is no discourtesy either. Since you do not take any service from the Municipality, the Government has no reason to say anything against the step. You are Justified in resisting the Government. It will threaten you for some time. When you do not mind the threats, it will issue a warrant of attachment of your house. Allow the Government to sell it. A population of a mere six thousand can desert the whole little town even. Whose work will the Municipality then do? But the Government is not foolish enough to go that far. I have been speaking ill of the Government, but I know it is sane and shrewd. If it went to that length, it would have to leave the country right now. But the British Government does not want the liquidation of the Empire.

Beseech Your Opponents

In order to succeed in this work, you must be of one heart. Opposition is bound to arise from some people. But, with becoming respect and civility, you may say to the opponents, "You are the crown of land. Simply, we respectfully appeal to you to honour the will of the people." Even if they don't go so far with us as to be our colleagues, we may pray to them, "Please refrain, at least, from blocking our path." And, after all, what treasures these few hundreds can amass from co-operation, that they would like to resist even the united will of six thousands? But the advice I have given you can work, only if you, Hindus and Muslims, live in amity among yourselves.

I have shown you two conditions for successfully doing this work. One, self-suffering or non-violence. Even if we accept the view that non-violence is only a weakling's business, it is impossible to show you any other method, so long as you have not acquired the strength of fighting with arms. The second condition is single-hearted concord between Hindus and Muslims, between all the communities of the country. You cannot offer non-co-operation against the Government, unless and until you fulfil these two conditions. The first step to it is abstaining from sending any representatives to the Councils and withdrawing children from Government schools. This done, you have as good as won Swaraj.



Be Fearless and Self-sufficient

Never allow yourselves to feel afraid of any Government servants, be they even policemen. We have no quarrel or enmity with them. We have to win their hearts by love. Then you need not be afraid of them.

There are now two points left. You send for your cloth from Ahmedabad. Ahmedabad was once a centre of excellent hand-woven cloth, but now there is not a single weaver left. If only you have the will, is there anything that you, six thousand persons, cannot do? Why do you require mill-cloth at all? Let your homes be your mills. You don't order your daily meals from hotels. Why then do you order your cloth from outside?

It will not bring about the closure of the Mills of Seth Mangaldas or Tata if you stop buying mill-cloth, which is really for the use of the poor. You must not snatch from the poor a bit of their scanty bread by using mill-cloth yourselves. Now remains the question of foreign cloth. But that you must regard as nothing but *haram*. We must stop being clad in other people's clothes. Like a covetous glance on a married woman, a craze for foreign cloth is a form of adultery. We will never be free from the British Empire, so long as we remain its slaves for our clothing needs. Use of Japanese cloth is as bad, because it is the Empire's steamers which bring that cloth here. The Empire has thus blockaded us completely all around. That is why I suggest, you begin a new chapter in history. It may be a difficult thing for crores of men, but you few can certainly be self-sufficient within the limits of your town. As for your food-materials you have not to bring them from outside at all. Any dearth of farm-produce in the Kaira District is an impossibility. But you must produce cloth not only enough for your local needs, but also for sending it to other places.

You will not then find it difficult to procure twelve thousand rupees to meet your civil needs.

Appeal for Funds

And now I come to the question of money. So many things have to be done and for them money is an indispensable necessity. But I find the collection of funds my most difficult task. I come across dishonest persons among those who collect funds, and the fact gives me the creeps. But you can't do without money. Very reluctantly, therefore, I have stretched my hand to the public for help. I do not wish to carry on



this work through the help of millionaires alone. I will accept a donation even from a Bhangi the poorest and the lowliest. I prize one pice given to me with faith in the heart as worth a lakh of rupees. Virgins give me rings and other ornaments and I adore their gifts because the while they give them, they invoke God's presence. This gift is a thousand times better than a donation for which I have myself to go to somebody and flatter him. I ask you, too, not to give me anything for my sake but for God's.

Public Money: A Sacred Trust

Our work will advance only if the volunteers, who collect the fund, consider it *haram* to use it for personal benefit. The people are really so guileless that they are easily duped. They accept the word of anyone who comes to them in my name. The other day one woman-swindler posed herself as my daughter and collected money in Dwarka. She has now gone to Hyderabad. There also she was given a warm welcome. It is unbearable to me that in my name the public is thus swindled. Then there is the instance of the Maulvi at Ahmedabad. It was my name he exploited to have a field-day for himself. Moral cleanliness is, therefore, what I beg of you. If you become honest, I shall eagerly kiss the ground you tread upon. The world is never going to be entirely free from fraud. But let not the poor, simple-minded public be made its victim. If that is not done, I, to whom the scaffold of the Government holds no terrors, am terribly afraid of this scaffold – this painful experience.

Please, therefore, call Heaven to witness your collection of the public fund.

Beware of Crooks

I warn the public through you, 'Do not give a pice to anyone, however imposing his pretensions, if, unauthorized, he approaches you in the name of anybody. I am thinking of issuing two certificates bearing the stamp of the Khilafat Committee and the Swaraj Sabha each. Don't listen to that man who does not possess either of them and don't give him anything. Drive the man out. We want to take the Government in our hands and we shall have to be stern, where necessary, in order to carry it on.

That is no freedom, if you cease to be slaves of the Government and fall into slavery under me. What I wish to do is to steal your hearts, but never to make you my slaves, since I never wish to be a slave myself.



At Nadiad

Went to Nadiad from Mehmabad by the train which leaves the latter at 11 a. m. We put up this time at the Santaram Mandir in Nadiad at the special invitation of the monk, Maharaj Janakidasji. After the mid-day rest upto 2 p. m., Gandhiji met the Municipal Councillors. The Municipal Board of Nadiad has resolved not to accept the Government grant of twentyone thousand rupees for education and has asked the Government to relinquish its control over the municipal schools of Nadiad. The Collector of the Kaira District has written in reply that the Board should reconsider its resolution, since its financial position is not strong enough to do without Government grant and since, even by the rejection of the Government grant, the schools cannot be free from Government control. Gandhiji was adamant in his advice to the Councillors. "Then you can be independent not only in education but in all matters. Take the Municipality in your charge and you collect the taxes. The Government is certain to exercise pressure for a time and go on collecting taxes itself, but the tax-payers must oppose the Government and undergo the consequent suffering". The Councillors argued that it would be difficult to organise all that work simultaneously.

Gandhiji answered, "We demand Swaraj today. We must then be prepared to organise all that work this very day. You can explain the situation to the tax-payers and if they are not prepared to refuse to pay taxes to the Government, you can non-cooperate with them also. You can then plainly tell them, they will not be able to take any work from you, in that case. Leaders must lead, not be led. You must, moreover, impress upon them that, by refusing to pay (municipal) taxes to the Government, they would not be able to save the money for themselves. Money is needed for conducting our independent Municipality. Only, while from the money they give at present to the Government, they get a poor return – worth one rupee for every ten – the money they give you will fetch them a much better return – worth two rupees for a single one. But money they shall have to pay." The Councillors, thereupon, agreed to call a meeting of the tax-payers the next day and persuade them to follow this advice of Gandhiji. From that meeting he went to a mosque to meet the Mussulmans. He thanked them for inviting him at that holy place and impressed upon them how bad it was that tension grew up at times between the two communities from the words or acts of individuals, whether Hindus or Muslims. "If," he said, "we want to bring about solid unity between the two communities, it is absolutely necessary that there must be a real unity of hearts between Hindus and Muslims. So long as our hearts are suspicious, are quick to feel offended, we shall not be able to achieve anything. Even men, who have no malice,



sometimes stumble into wrong actions. Our duty then lies in showing them their error, but without getting excited ourselves."

After this meeting was over Gandhiji went to a ladies' meeting. The attendance here was nearly one and a half times as large as at Ahmedabad. Stating first of all that the present rule was *Ravanarajya* and that purity and *swadeshi* were the two means necessary to destroy the rule, he asked for four kinds of alms from the women of Nadiad, viz., purity of character, observance of *swadeshi-dharma*, withdrawal of children from Government schools and contribution in money. Religion, he emphasised, did not mean simply telling the beads of a rosary and going to temples. It meant striving for the establishment of Swarajya, i.e., *Ramarajya*. This true religion could be observed today only by non-co-operation with the Government. Women must therefore take an active part in non-co-operation, he declared.

The public meeting of the citizens of Nadiad was held at 8 p.m. in a large *maidan* at one of the outskirts of the town. Even from villages people had come there and, though more than ten thousand people must have been present, remarkable silence was maintained: Vallabhbhai was given the chair.

Gandhiji said:

"When, in this grim fight, it is necessary to have hearty unity between all communities, it is all the more necessary that nothing should happen which could raise an internal quarrel among Hindus or Mussulmans themselves from an indiscreet speech of any irresponsible or irreligious man. I hope, therefore, the Swaraj Sabha and the Khilafat Committee issue a notice to the effect that nobody should deliver a speech unless he is permitted by either of them. You are free and you have the right to hear a speech delivered by any unauthorised person, but you will then at least know that the speaker does not represent any of the two institutions. The Empire we are going to fight is very well organised and disciplined. None of its officials can speak or do anything without his superior's order. We shall have to acquire that power of discipline.

"If we wish to be independent, unity between Hindus and Muslims with crystal purity in the heart of both, is quite essential. If some Mussulman inadvertently says something unpleasant, Hindus must tolerate him and *vice versa*.



No Hartal On My Arrest

"You have to go on doing your work silently, without any demonstration, on my arrest or that of M. Shaukatali or M. Abdul Bari. You must not go even on a *hartal*. If you do, it would be tantamount to losing our battle. Why should you wish to get us released? To Zafarali, who has been sent to jail, I simply said, "We are not going to address a petition for your release, but we will release you by gaining Swaraj." If you want to get a man like myself released, you must resolve to take the four steps of non-co-operation I have shown you. Were I the Government and knew that Gandhi was all in all in the people's resistance, I would not fail to arrest Gandhi.

No Courage, No Respect

"If, therefore, courage is not inherent in you, you are of no value in the world's estimation. You must, therefore, carry out non-co-operation all the more vigorously, when we are not in your midst."

Touching then the different topics, such as, the boycott of legislative Councils, the evacuation of schools, the renunciation of legal practice and titles, purity of character, *swadeshi*, and the right form of celebrating the Divali, Gandhiji came to the question of contribution in money.

The Poor Man's Fight

"Give your money only after assuring yourself about the honesty of the volunteer who approaches you. This is not a fight of the millionaire. It is the fight of the million. If the thirty crores of us give only a pice each, we can collect fifty lakhs of rupees and education could be given free. My appeal for money is not an appeal for charity. It is for a matter wherein your own interest is involved. If you give me one pice, you will get a return in value worth two."

Referring then to the glorious scene which the ladies' meeting at Ahmedabad had presented, he said, "Little girls from eight to sixteen took off their rings and necklaces to give them to me. And they had promised me that they would not ask for new ones from their parents. For what's the use of wearing ornaments when India has been widowed? There are no men in India worth the name today, that she would love to bedeck herself with ornaments. She will look smiling and gay, when men in the real



sense of the word are born and then Indian women will be able to wear their ornaments proudly."

The meeting ended after the collection and at night Gandhiji left for Broach by the mail train.

On The Sands of Narmada

2-11-1920

At this meeting held at Broach on the sands of the Narmada Gandhiji said:

A battle is raging today between *Ravanarajya* and *Ramarajya*, between God and Satan, between a divine and an anti-divine people. I conjure up the soul of this present rule as of the form of a devil. Ever since the day that my eyes were opened to the fact, I have been spreading among the people this my view about the Government. I am convinced that the British Empire is replete with Satanism, nay, is the very form of the arch-fiend. All the world's religions—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, all—tell us that irreligion has to be ousted by religion, i.e., that we must cease to lend a helping hand to irreligion. You can find instances of this fight in Islam. Zoroastrianism speaks of an eternal warfare between Ahurmazd and Ahriman. The same thing is given in the Gita. Non-co-operation is the only choice left to us, if we want to perform our *dharma*. But if you feel that one can still gain something from the British Raj, and that it is not steeped in sin, you may certainly continue to cling to it. I do not mean to say that the Englishman, as an individual, is bad. But the deep sin he has sown, the organisation he has created, is harmful to India. There are definitely some good officials among them, good Viceroys like Lord Hardinge and Lord Ripon and real gentlemen like the Collector of Ahmedabad, Mr. Chatfield, but they are parts of a nefarious organisation and hence promoters of nothing but a devilish activity. My own father was a servant in an Indian state. The King was a man of loose character. I asked my father, "Why don't you give up serving such a ruler?" He said, "We have eaten his salt." So my father remained faithful to his salt, but our whole family remained proteges of a king who spent his life in orgies of wine, women and meat. I have been dinning into the ears of the whole country that, to follow our *dharma*, there is no alternative to non-co-operation left to us. However virtuous a man may be, he does not remain so after his association with the Government machinery. And that is why there has arisen a difference between me and men whom I revere and even adore, — Sri Shastriar and Pandit Malaviyaji, close



contact with whom I heartily cherish and for whom even today I have the highest regard and love. While they think there is purity in this Empire. I think there is sin in it. I place Malaviyaji in the position of my elder brother and I have great respect for Shastriar Saheb and yet I have but to fight with them. How this non-co-operation is to be implemented has been shown by the Congress, by the Muslim League and by the Sikh League.

There are two basic conditions necessary for its implementation. One of them is Hindu-Muslim unity, i. e., unity between all our communities. I have named only the two communities, simply because they are known the world over. There has been distrust between the two for a long time past. There is no victory for us, therefore, so long as either is in a quarrelsome mood. We must conquer the Parsis also with the same intensity of love that we want between Hindus and Muslims. We can certainly subjugate them by Satanic means, i.e., by their murders, but we must that way massacre all the eighty thousand of them. So we must win them only by love. If Hindus or Muslims suppress the Sikhs, even then we are not going to win independence. Even some Jains have begun to say now-a-days that they are not Hindus. Shall we then exterminate them? The strength of the strong lies in winning over the opponent with love, not in crushing him in the pride of power. The first thing we must do therefore is the preservation of unity between all religions.

Our second means is the power of organisation. Non-cooperation is impossible, so long as we do not acquire the power of organisation.

Stick to Your 'No'

The next essential is sympathy. Not even a thought of murder should strike us. Even if you indulge in cruelty and give up charity of heart, you will not gain your object. If you take up the sword, it will be your own sword that will be broken into pieces. Were you able to save the country with the use of the sword, the question of its use would have been your concern. But you can't save the country that way. Don't use a single bad word for the Government. Give up abusing altogether. Listen respectfully to what the co-operators may wish to say, but stick to your 'NO.' One firm 'no' saves you from a thousand temptations. This 'no' is a synonym for non-co-operation.



Two Great Sacrifices

In order to make non-co-operation successful, you have to offer two great sacrifices. The first, in the matter of education. The question of education has, these days, assumed the greatest importance in India. The second sacrifice is the refusal to accept the Councils. Non-co-operation has been offered till now by the public, by the masses only. The classes have done nothing in the matter. If we want to make them offer non-co-operation, we can do so through our own spirited action. We can give them a monster notice signed by us all requiring them not to go to the Councils as our representatives and then they cannot go there. But how shall we tackle the question of non-co-operation in education, if parents, students and teachers feel perplexed whether to take the plunge or not? The answer is, our future generation has, at all hazards, to get out of slavery. It is therefore the duty of the elders to free the future generation, i. e., the students from the shackles of Government schools. Provision for that freedom has got to be made by the teachers and the parents at any cost. They must not delay the march of national education, even for a moment, for want of funds. "What will you do if the Government passes a law that impedes national education?", a doubter may ask. I am not going to say a word in reply, because the question has no meaning. If you find that there is someone bent on stopping the march of national education with his might, you must gather the courage of a hero and fearlessly come out of Government schools. Then you may teach as many students, boys and girls and youths, as you can and rest content. Give up the greed to teach one and all.

Swadeshi

Now about Swadeshi. Swaraj is comprised in Swadeshi – that is one of my fundamentals. Sri Chintamani¹ once wrote that Swadeshi was dearer to Gandhi even than Swaraj and the Khilafat. Swadeshi is really my heart's love. Is it possible that after our victory the Khilafat question does not end? But Swadeshi is an eternal principle. That is the *dharma* indissolubly bound with the body itself. It is also unfailing. Swaraj is in our hands this very day, if we observe Swadeshi in its intense form. Some wise men advised me that boycott of British cloth could put down Lancashire. But, I think it is not so easy as all that. We possess neither the capacity nor the necessary attitude for carrying out the boycott. If we have the capacity, I am not the man to be afraid of the boycott, just as I am not afraid of British arms. But, if India is squeezed dry owing to its non-acceptance of that temporary boycott, I consider even that contingency as



desirable. To me at least, boycott is boycott. Once I launch it, I will never give it up. There can be no co-operation with a drunkard or a sinner—unless he totally gives up his habit. If India accepts this eternal principle (of Khadi) freedom would be ours, and justice would be given us on the Khilafat question, in no time. But I have not succeeded as yet in making the Mussulmans converts to the Khadi cult. I have not been able to make them *fakeers*. Nor have I won over the Hindus in favour of Khadi. That is why the Khilafat question is still hanging and that is why, despite our loud lamentations, nothing is done, even still, in the Punjab matter. A conviction that foreign cloth is *haram* for us must arise from the depth of the heart. This is my supplication to the women specially, "Swadeshi is a matter where you are at home. Spinning is a veritable *dharma* for you. In the adoption of Khadi you women must set an example to men. Of all persons, no mother at least can legitimately complain that Khadi is too heavy for wear. How can the woman who cheerfully bears for nine months the burden of the child in her womb say that she cannot bear one pound of weight? She can rightfully say so only if she is prepared to remain barren. I am not going to listen to any words of complaint from her, so long as she does not wish to be childless, but wants to be a mother of heroes and heroines. It passes my comprehension how, when your country goes naked, you can non-chalantly go on wearing *saries* made in the mills of Japan, China, England or France."

1. C. Y. Chintamani, a leading Moderate and editor of 'The Leader', Allahabad

Cultivate the Spirit of Self-sacrifice

Money is a necessity for the work we have undertaken. This is the land of such deep faith that even Pharisees can collect large amounts here. If you can raise money from the public for your temples, mosques and *dharmashalas*,¹ why can you not get money for your holier temples—temples of learning—from the people? What is wanted is sufficient austere self-restraint (*tapashcharya*) and renunciation (*tyaga*). Hindus will at once understand the word *tyaga*. The scripture says that jewels simply dance attendance upon one who practises the non-possession vow.² My own experience attests this. The (Satyagraha) fight in such a poor country as South Africa had never to be stopped for want of funds. On the contrary, I had to write to Gokhaleji (G. K. Gokhale) that he need not send me money. During the Champaranya³ and Kaira struggles also, money poured from the public and I had to stop people from sending



any. The mill-labourers of Ahmedabad offered non-co-operation on a tremendous scale for full twenty-three days and yet I did not ask for a single rupee from outside. If there is the spirit of renunciation in us, we would be simply flooded with money.

Crores of rupees are rusting for want of use in the Vaishnava, Jaina and Swaminarayan temples. If you get only a small portion from them, you can maintain your whole education department. But unlike the Government, which spends money like water to cavalierly open new departments in a trice, our activities will be in conformity with India's poverty. You can make a magic mango-tree grow big before your eyes, but you cannot have a taste of mango-juice from it. A real mango-tree takes twenty years to grow fully. On the same ground, I ask you to reject the offer outright, if somebody comes to you to give a crore of rupees for national education. The professors of the Khalsa College were told that they might non-co-operate with the Government, provided Gandhi gave them a grant of a crore of rupees. They answered, "We don't want a change of masters and become Gandhi's slaves instead of the Government's. We will visit the Sikhs in their hutments and beg from door to door." These Professors, moreover, have given a notice to the Khalsa College that if it does not free itself from Government control, they would become fakirs, resign from their posts, and give national education to the country's children.

If you have faith in this programme, please give as much as you can without any constraint. The amount will not be used solely for your city. It will be used also for the Gujarat Vidyapith which has been established in Ahmedabad.

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1. Buildings that provide free temporary lodgement to wayfarers.
 2. Owing to the similarity of the two aphorisms there has been a confusion here. The original aphorisms of Patanjali say. 'By the establishment of non-stealing all wealth (jewels) comes to the Yogi'; and 'When he is fixed in non-receiving (non-possession), he gets the memory of past life' —II-37-39. Translation from Raja Yoga by Swami Vivekanand.
 3. In 1916 and 1918 respectively. The first in the Champaranya district in Bihar for saving the peasants from compulsory cultivation of indigo on a fixed fraction of their farms and the second for suspension of land revenue in the Kaira district in Gujarat, owing to the failure of rains.

Speech at Ankleshwar

Opening the Lokamanya Rashtriya Shala (national school named after Lokamanya Tilak), Gandhiji said:



"Let your conduct befit and adorn the name of the revered person in whose memory you have named your school. There must be hardly anybody whom Lokamanya did not surpass in his love for Swaraj. For no other purpose, therefore, than bringing Swaraj nearer, should his name be associated with this national school. It is not on account of the poor quality of the education given in Government schools, that I ask parents, students and teachers to leave them. The question of the type of education has not much to do with the consciousness that I wish to awaken in your heart. There is definitely need for reform in the education given in Government schools, but this other work, that has to be done, cannot be allowed to wait till that reform is brought about.

For the last fifty years we have been making use of Government schools and not without some benefit. But at present all these schools are *haram* for us. The reason is not the type of education given in them. The flag that flutters over these schools is the flag of the Satanic Empire. That flag is the symbol of that Empire which has wounded the hearts of seven crores of Muslims and spread a Reign of Terror over the whole of India through the Punjab atrocities. With one voice the scriptures of all religions proclaim it a sin to be a protege of an irreligious king, since it is as bad as embracing irreligion ourselves or participating in devilish acts. I appeal to you to fly from the schools of that Empire, even if, by going there, you get money and are taught the Quran, the Zand Avesta and the Gita. Even if they teach you your own scriptures, the motive underlying it is wicked. We do not, therefore, wish to make slaves of our children by letting them be taught in that school over which the Devil has hoisted his flag. Those who realize the import of this fact will not allow their children to continue in Government schools for a single day. They will first take out the children and then make a provision for giving them another kind of education. If we find that our house has caught fire we will not delay our evacuation till we get a new house to go to. We will even jump headlong out of the window, even though there be a trench below. Unless this consciousness of emergency stirs our heart, we are going to fail in our agitation regarding education, because the Government men—the secret agents—will always continue to offer us the bait and point out, "See! How excellent the education of our Government schools is! How magnificent our buildings are! And they give education free in our schools, to boot!" Our movement will make no headway till the public is animated with the spirit that, despite all that, Government schools are taboo for us—are *haram*.



This is my prayer to parents: "Don't let your children rot in slavery. The very first thing you must do is to withdraw your children from Government schools. They are not to be allowed to roam in the streets after they are taken out. So the second thing you must do is to make arrangements for giving them national education through your dedication of all that you possess. If we have not acquired that much capacity, we shall not be able to win Swaraj. Such capacity is an inevitable necessity in order to conduct Swaraj which means self-government.

The second essential for the success of national education is to have with us teachers of high moral character and efficiency. I congratulate the Head Master and those other teachers of the local High School who have sacrificed their jobs for the cause of their religion and country. I beg of them to maintain the same attitude towards the work now awaiting them, as the one which impelled them to undergo the sacrifice. If they become absorbed in their work, money for the school will be no problem. Your Managing Committee will find it easy to get the necessary amount, and, though merely squatting on clean ground, the boys of the national school will then be quite a match for other boys. If the national school teachers are men of character, their boys will be more manly than those who attend Government schools which have an imposing paraphernalia. At present our men have lost their manliness and women their womanliness. Our women do not possess the strength to produce a manly race. And I ask them not to bring forth slaves any more. If a virile race is born, it will refuse to learn in these schools which turn out slaves. Those parents, who do not send their children to schools which impart slavish education, will find that the national school definitely outshines other schools.

This is my advice to the Managing Committee: "You must not be impatient at all. You may certainly request the parents to send their children here, but let no harsh word escape your lips. It is no easy matter to persuade parents to send their children to this school. Do not assume that the eyes of everyone will open and see things from our angle. This new wind has been blowing since a very short time and we will fail if we are not able to keep patience."

I have been told that the rich Parsis of this town, Ankleshwar, are opposed to non-co-operation. India is the country as much of Hindus and Mussulmans as of the Parsis. Did not Dadabhoy Naoroji¹ (a Parsi) belong to India? Was Sir Pheroz Shah Mehta² (also a Parsi) a non-Indian? Parsis ought to feel for the country as keenly as the other communities. We will beseech the Parsis, fall at their feet, and beg money of



them. If they send their children to our schools, we will bow down to them; and even if they don't, we will do the same. That way we will show them that they, too, must contribute their due share in the tremendous movement going on all over India. You will subdue the Parsi brothers by the strength of your love. Tell them it is our *dharma* to explain to them wherein lies their duty.

The best way to make the national school a success is to avoid altogether any pretentious show and advertisement. That will save us from any set-back. One can pull down a structure in all haste, but for the construction of a strong brick-building, haste is waste. You can take a sickle in hand and reap a whole field in a single day, but the sowing cannot be finished so summarily. A single day is all that is needed to get the Government schools evacuated, but exceeding patience is necessary where something new has to be created. If you don't get good teachers, don't lose your patience and do not employ even a single teacher of no character. If we do not give up truth and patience, you will have 1200 students in this school instead of the 120 who have joined at present. If all the children attending the Government schools flock to this school, even that is not sufficient, since not all the children of the town go there. There must not remain a single child in the town, boy or girl, who does not receive our education, which turns out students of the strongest character.

Your work here must adorn both the great name you have associated with your school and the sacred purposes—securing justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab and winning Swaraj—for which you have started it. May God enlighten the minds of the parents, the students and the teachers!"

1. This "Grand Old Man of India" first unfurled the banner of Swaraj. His book 'Poverty and the Un-British Rule in India' was avidly read by the people.

2. He was called "The Uncrowned King of Bombay" for his intrepid fight for freedom. Both were Presidents of the Congress for some time.

4-11-1920 to 8-11-1920

World-Teacher's Invitation

The programme of Gandhiji's campaign through Maharashtra was fixed on the 4th. It did not include Nasik, even though Gandhiji had received invitations from there. But just then a deputation carrying a specially weighty invitation—from the World-



Teacher, Shrimat Shankaracharyaji of Karvirpith,¹—arrived from there. The deputation said that the *Jagadguru* was continuing his halt at Nasik simply for the sake of Gandhiji, and was cherishing the desire of establishing a National University at Nasik, for which he wanted Gandhiji's counsel. "The people", the deputation continued, "have been all agog, waiting for your visit. Please do manage somehow to spare a day for Nasik, otherwise, the whole population will be sorely disappointed." The Nasikites' importunity thus snatched away from Gandhiji the one little day,—the 5th—, which he had left out of his crowded programme for his rest.

We left Bombay by the night train. According to the schedule we were to reach Nasik Road Station at 6.00 a. m. (and Nasik City at 6.30), finish the whole Nasik programme by noon and catch the Punjab Mail for Bombay at 1 p.m., since it had been decided to leave Bombay the same night for the Maharastra tour. We started from Bombay in right time. Pandit Motilal Nehru and, on behalf of the Khilafat Committee, Mr. Moazam Ali, a barrister, who has only recently given up his practice, accompanied Gandhiji. Unfortunately the train arrived as many as three hours late at Nasik Road and instead of the 6 a.m. we got down on the platform at 9!

1. Shrimat Shankaracharya, the well-known exponent of monism, established, about a thousand years ago, four centres of learning or 'piths' in the North, South, East and West of India for the propagation of his theology and stationed his four chief disciples in them. They too began to be called Jagadguru (World-Teacher) Shankaracharyas. Sub-centres also sprang up. The *piths* have continued to the present day from disciple to disciple. Everyone of them has of course to be an erudite Sanskrit scholar. Karvir is one such centre. Shrimat is an honorific.

The Good Old Disorder

On the platform itself, we had to be the unhappy witnesses of the old suffocating congestion, indiscipline and rush and bustle of the volunteers. Nobody heeded the volunteers' instructions and an order given by one volunteer was countermanded by another, to the confusion of all. We huddled ourselves into whatever motor-cars that came in handy, flung our packages pell-mell as best we could into them and started. The city is five miles from the station. For about three and a half miles our cars sped on smoothly. When, however, we reached a distance of a mile and a half from the city, crowds and crowds of men surrounded our cars and though, it was already so late, the procession started with a snail's speed. Gandhiji earnestly pleaded with the leaders, impressed upon them, left no doubt in their minds, that even



if the programme was not finished he would start for the station at 12 noon and pointed out that it was already nearly 10 a. m. But it was found that both the leaders and the volunteers were entirely helpless in the matter. It was impossible for them to make this mass of humanity give room for a passage for us.

At last, wading somehow through the narrow and crowded market-lanes of the city, we reached Shrimat Shankaracharyaji's *math* (monastery) and in a few minutes went to the dry bed of River Godavari, where we saw a sea of human heads, undulating like the waves of an ocean on account of the hard rocks, high and low, with which the bed is studded. The speakers were seated on a stone-platform in the centre. It was 11 a.m., when Gandhiji, Pandit Motilalji and others, in company with the *Jagadguru*, reached the place. And the sun was burning fairly hot. There was no end to jostling among the crowds. There was a canopy over the heads of the speakers, who, none the less, remained completely exposed to the sun, since the shade of the canopy fell aslant. After the welcome formally given by Shrimat Shankaracharyaji and the Khilafat Committee Gandhiji began his speech in Hindi.

"Brothers, this time, I am not going to have a long talk with you, at this holy place, I am sorry that M. Shaukat Ali, for whom I have a brother's love, is not with me here. He and his brother Mohammad Ali are on a very responsible mission at Aligarh and hence their brother-in-law, Mr. Moazam Ali of Moradabad, a barrister, who has only recently given up his practice, is now with me.

"You must all be knowing, by name at least, Pandit Motilalji Nehru, the President of the Congress this year. Everybody knows how splendid have been his services in the Punjab affair and what a tremendous sacrifice he has undergone. It was through the Herculean efforts made by Pandit Malaviyaji and him that the lives of countless innocent Hindus and Muslims were saved there. And now, renouncing a most flourishing legal practice, which brought him a monthly income of a lakh of rupees, he has dedicated himself entirely to the service of the country.

"The events of the last ten months have convinced me beyond doubt that the Empire that is ruling over us is Satanic. I call it *Ravanarajya*. There are two glaring attestations, well-known to the public, to prove this charge. The Punjab was subjected to a terror, perhaps unheard of. Secondly, no king would stoop to the treachery which this Empire played in the Khilafat question and would thus wound the hearts of even crores of Muslims. How should the subjects behave towards such a demonic Empire? Tulsidasji has said that those who are vile and wicked must be ostracized, be non-co-



operated with, left severely alone, and deprived of the contact and help of society. This movement is a great sacrifice itself. We cannot be pure till we offer ourselves for that sacrifice, and only then shall we be able to establish *Ramarajya* and demolish this *Ravanarajya*. By *Ramarajya* I mean Swaraj. It is impossible to free ourselves from the clutches of this Satanic rule without establishing Swaraj.

"How can we bring about that Swaraj? By increasing *prem* and *mohabbat* (Sanskrit and Persian words for 'love') and co-operation between Hindus and Muslims. Till the Empire does not publicly express regret and does not do any penance for the crimes it has committed, any dealing with it must be *haram* for us. We will not end or bend the Empire by murdering Englishmen and burning down their buildings. But we can gain our object by snapping all ties of love and co-operation with them. The only reason, why a mere lakh of men are making 30 crores of their subjects, helpless and dependent, is that we ourselves have an infatuation for the rulers. We ourselves believe that if the Englishman left the land, we would fight among ourselves to our own destruction. The sooner we free ourselves from this delusion the better for us. We, thirty crores of humans, must refuse to be the dumb cattle of a lakh of Englishmen. Hindus and Muslims must unite and, instead of committing murders, win freedom by shedding their own blood only. I want to impress upon you that that is the one and only road to freedom and that there is no other. The Devil can be conquered and subdued only by the help of God and not by Satanic means. And only he can be the recipient of God's help, whose heart is filled with love.

"We want thus to construct our edifice of Swaraj on the foundations of self-sacrifice, of *Qurbani*. And for that, we have to renounce all relationship with the Empire including all its grants and all its favours. Its titles and its honours, its schools and its jobs must all be *haram* for us and just as we would at once run out of a house on fire, we must, first of all, and unquestioningly, come out of all these things. We must not be even recruits in the Empire's army. We must not be caught in the snare it has spread for us in the form of its legislative councils. I find that there are some persons who argue, "Whose is the money with which the Government conducts its schools? Ours, not theirs. Why should we then abandon schools maintained from our money?" To them I say, "How can you persist in calling that money as yours, which a robber has already taken away from you? And from the money, which you have been robbed of, how can you accept a portion thrown at you by way of charity? How can we degrade ourselves so much as to accept charity from one who disgraced and dishonoured us and committed the most depraved dacoity possible by putting our



religion in danger? Under these circumstances, only one course of duty is open to us—to fly from any contact with such persons. We must never resort to their law-courts for settlement of quarrels among ourselves. We must see that not a single voter in our constituency cast his vote for candidates for the new legislative councils, given by them."

Then, after a few words on *Swadeshi*, Gandhiji made the following prayer:

"I pray to God that, at this holy place, by the side of the purifying Gunga,¹ He may grant all of you the strength to take a solemn oath to sacrifice your all in order to make India independent, to heal the wounds inflicted on the hearts of the Muslim brothers and secure redress for the Punjab wrong."

1. River Godavari is regarded as the Gunga (Ganges) of the South. Nasik is a holy city of pilgrimage, replete with the memories of Sri Rama.

Pandit Motilal Nehru

Pandit Motilalji rose next. He said, "To everyone of us, there are two things dearer than all others—religion and honour. When these two are attacked and when the community affected offers no resistance but submits on bended knees to the aggressors, that community is at the nadir of degradation among all the wretched communities of the world. A frontal attack has been made today on the religion of the Mussulmans and, even after the misdeed, we do not see a tinge of repentance on the part of the assailants. Will those same people have any scruples about attacking your religion tomorrow, if it advances their interest anyway? Analyse any step taken by the Imperial Government, and you will find the interests of the bureaucracy as the motive behind it. They will look after the subjects' interests only to the extent that the step does them no harm at all. The Punjab affair is now well-known everywhere. Let alone the innocents who died at Jallianwala, but others also were made to rub their noses against the earth, to crawl on their bellies, to salute the Union Jack subjected to disgrace in a thousand other ways. And why on earth? To burn it into our heart that we are their slaves and they our masters, to brand the conviction in us that we are not fit for the name of human beings, that we are in no way better than beasts. What then shall we do to make this sun dried bureaucracy recant its misdeeds? It has snatched away from us all possible weapons of resistance. It has made us totally helpless –



incapable of stirring a little finger in self-defence. All the same, God, in His wisdom, has kept one weapon in store for us. And that is soul-force. It is a divine weapon, capable of bending the enemy without shedding his blood, without even our getting infuriated with him. What that soul-force is, the Mahatmaji has explained to you and I will not repeat it. I will only add that till now whenever a calamity visited our country, or there was need for any *sadhana* (spiritual practice), we contented ourselves with prayers and appeals to the God above. Today you must adore Hindus and Mussulmans. You cannot save the country any other way. I assure you, the very moment our rulers see the whole nation fired with the same spirit that is evident here, their self-assertion will give way and they will grant you what you want. So long as that spirit does not permeate the nation, so long as we do not consider it a sin to go to their schools and colleges, their courts and their councils, and abhor these things as *haram*, so long, I will take it for certain, we have not yet freed ourselves from our slave-mentality. And till then, I can tell you, there will be no end to the insults daily heaped upon us and no chance for us to walk with our head erect in self-respect."

Janab Moazam Ali

After this soul-stirring speech by Panditji, Janab Moazam Ali got up. He began his speech with a pointed reference to the local Muslims. He said, "I was at once amazed and deeply pained, when I heard that the local Muslims were afraid of even forming a Khilafat Committee here. Everyday the Mussulman says in his Quranic *ayat* (verse), "There is no power on earth except Allah and no one should fear anybody except Him." Do you say that *ayat* for nothing? Life on earth is a moonlit show of a few days. Everyone has but to stand one day before the Master and render an account of his deeds on earth. If, in a matter where your religion and your honour are at stake, you are afraid of the Collector or Inspector and you prefer the trifles of ease and comfort to your duty, you will stain your religion, your country and yourself.

"These Government schools, colleges, courts, councils—everyone of their fascinating carnivals in fact—are nothing but snares. Save yourself from them. Shake off the dust of your feet from all of them. Brothers, daily pray to God, 'No one is powerful except Khuda and we fear nobody', and, from that prayer, go on receiving inexhaustible soul-force."



Closing Speech

Shrimat Shankaracharya, the President, then got up to close the proceedings. He thanked the speakers and then said, "Through his visit to Nasik, Gandhiji has satisfied our cherished desire. The man, who has, by his austerities, practice of truth and non-violence etc., succeeded in making even his opponents free from anger, is now in our midst.

"It is he, I tell you, who is the real Guru of the people today, and he, the true founder of religion. It is he who has taught the public anew the real significance of our ancient *yagna* (sacrifice). It is to save *our* religion, to prove the mettle of *our* character and to maintain *our* self-respect, that he has been preaching non-co-operation with the irreligious, immoral and tyrannical rulers. I ask you, what else do you get from attendance in their councils and schools and colleges except insults at every step? Is it not far better to remain at home than go there and be lost to shame? How can you ever think of doing all that, if you have an iota of self-respect, if you want to call yourselves humans? I say, don't fail to treasure in your heart the sacred sermon of this *Mahatma* and to give up Government titles, schools and colleges, courts and councils. 'May our people get the light to follow this path shown by the *Mahatma*—this path that is in full accord with our ancient culture! And may this movement meet with a glorious success!'—that is my benediction."

Closing the meeting, then, Shrimat Shankaracharya took the guests to his monastery. A ladies' meeting had been arranged in *Panchavati* on the other side of the river, but there was hardly any time left to go there and information was brought to us that the meeting had dispersed; as it was too late already. The guests, therefore, finished their meals within a few minutes and left for the station. Shrimat Shankaracharya also came to the station to see Gandhiji off. On the platform he discussed with him in detail the question of national education as well as of the establishment of the Nasik National University.

Poona and Vai

‘साधु सन्त येती घरा |

तोचि दिवाळी दसरा ||’

When a saint visits a home,
The home is filled with light;



Of Dussera and Diwali
In one, it forms the sight.
- Tukaram

‘जिकडे जग तिकडे जगन्नायक |’

Where the world is,
There the Lord of the world is.
- Shree Samarth Ramdas¹

Only now, Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali could find time to accept the invitation of Maharashtra, the sacred land of saints and heroes. During the Divali days specially, a tour through Maharashtra, resounding with the immortal hymns of Tukaram, Ramdas, Gnandev² and other saints, is, for the visitor, a treat at once bracing and sanctifying. And the masses of Maharashtra also, who chant the *mantra* of freedom bequeathed to them by Samarth Ramdas, Shivaji and Tilak Maharaj, felt the contact of Gandhiji and Shaukatali, as a soul-uplifting experience.

1. Dussera is a festival to celebrate Rama's start for conquest over Ravana. Tukaram and Samarth Ramdas are well-known saints of Maharashtra. Shree Samarth was King Shivaji's Guru also.

2. His commentary, a big volume in verse, of Bhagawadgita has found a permanent home in Maharashtra.

Advent of Saints

The whole of Poona was bursting with joy on the 5th November. As our route was blocked by mammoth crowds, there was not much to say in favour of order and discipline, but it was clear that the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds. Reminding itself of the well-known *abhang* (a form of verse) of Tukaram, Maharashtra, the inherent worshipper of saints and their sayings, was convinced that its Divali, this year, proved itself worth the name. For, Tukaram Maharaj has left the word that that day is the real Divali and that the real Dussera, when a saint visits the home. Throughout our trip this one and the same verse could be heard from the lips of many a devout Maharashtrian lady. We saw that no other region was more conscious than Maharashtra of the fact that this was truly religious fight.



Hectic Programme

We have spent only four days in Maharashtra, but the work put in within those four days has been marvellous. On the first day in Poona there was, to begin with, a public meeting at the Deccan Gymkhana; then, after visits to six or seven homes in the afternoon, a private conference of the workers; then, in the evening, a big public meeting at Bhawani Peth and finally, a talk at night with the Moderates at the Servants of India Society. Two meetings, the next morning, of students and businessmen; in the afternoon, a magnificent congregation of women; and then fifty-six miles of motor-drive from Poona to Vai, followed by a meeting there at night. Twenty miles again by motor from there. Halt for the night at Satara. Women's meeting the next day and then a public meeting there—both in the morning. Start at noon for a thirtytwo-mile journey to Karad. After a speech at Karad, a seventy-mile dash to reach Nipani at night. The next day, on the 8th morning, a public meeting at Nipani. Then a women's meeting at Chikodi, 13 miles from Nipani. Then two meetings at Hukeri and Sankeshwar *en route* to Belgaum. At night there, a women's meeting followed by a monstrous public meeting. I quote this itinerary from my diary, by way of introduction to a detailed report. We have thus been able to cover the important centres of Poona, Satara and Belgaum within 4 days, holding four meetings at the least, reaching even to seven, in a day.

From Gandhiji's speech at the Deccan Gymkhana (Poona) I give below the most noteworthy portion. It referred to the function, recently held there, of distribution of prizes for physical culture and wrestling. He said:

"H. E. the Governor was invited here the day before yesterday and prizes were given away at his hands. I felt ashamed when I heard of the fact. I know His Excellency quite well. He is fit for his post. While the Governor of the Punjab had gone mad during the atrocity-days there, this Governor kept his head cool and maintained admirable peace. If we wanted the Empire's rule to continue over us, we would like to have this selfsame Governor for us. But, at present, I deny him also, because he has not resigned his Government service. How is it possible for a gentleman like him to continue serving an Empire which emits, not the aroma of Godliness but, the stench of Satanism? If my revered Guru, Gokhaleji, was present in our midst today and he were made the Governor, even then I would have declared that I had nothing to do with that Governor who meekly bore with the atrocities of the Empire. The best gentleman can do no good as an official within the steel frame of this Empire. Tilak Maharaj, who wore out his



whole life in pursuit of Swaraj, was definitely fit to be our Viceroy; but even to him I would not have gone to pay my respects, if he had become the Viceroy under this present regime, which has not yet recanted its crimes. My quarrel is not with the race of Englishmen but with the Empire. It talks big, but does nothing. It has forgotten its Cobden¹ and Bright² and has become the Devil's tool. So long as this situation lasts, any contact with the Empire must be *haram* for us."

1. Richard Cobden; a great English economist, who advocated 'free trade' at the time when there was an import duty on corn, which, by the high price of bread, caused great hardship to the poor. As a result of his strenuous exertion, he got the Corn Laws annulled in 1846. The repeal made him one of the most popular figures in England.

2. John Bright; a famous political leader, who took a prominent part in making the British Constitution more democratic. He was Cobden's colleague in the fight against the Corn Laws and was, for some time, a member of the Cabinet under Gladstone. He made his name also as a champion of a liberal policy towards India and other countries.

Bhavani Peth's Record Attendance

The meeting that was held at Bhavani Peth at night made perhaps a record in the history of Poona. The attendance must have come to thirty thousand. Among the speakers were Gandhiji, Pandit Motilal Nehru, M. Shaukat Ali, Haji Siddik, Khatri Saheb, Messrs. Kelkar, Khadilkar, and Paranjpye. In the beginning Gandhiji exposed the Satanic nature of this Government and suggested that, in order to cut off all association with the Devil, we should use not devilish, but divine means. By that he meant fear of God and absence of excitement.

There has been a tension between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins in Maharashtra. The quarrel is of very recent growth—hardly more than three or four years. It is the half-educated class which is responsible for creating it. The majority of the people are Maratha Non-Brahmins. A large number of them realize that their interests are best served by living in co-operation with the Brahmins. But only from the Maratha section of the Non-Brahmins, an association called 'Satyashodhak (Truth-seeker) Mandal (association) has sprung up, which has raised the standard of violent opposition to the Brahmins. Its incitement has caused many rows between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. There have been incidents of the lifting of the Brahmins' cattle, of the burning of their stacks of hay and grain-in-chief and even of indecent attacks on Brahmin women. This association dubs Brahmins as their tyrannical government, charges them with



offences, both real and imaginary, and looks up to the Government for help. And yet, as I have said above, the quarrels are not such as cannot be made up and Brahmin leaders have been consistently trying to remove this bitterness of feeling among Non-Brahmins. The Maharashtrians had earnestly requested Gandhiji that he should somehow solve the problem, specially because the *Satyashodaks* clique had extracted several expressions from Gandhiji's own speech before Madras students to support their claim that even Gandhiji castigated Brahmins. Gandhiji, therefore, discussed this point in all his speeches here. In his speech at Poona Gandhiji said:

"Till today there has been enmity between Hindus and Muslims. We have loudly proclaimed our unity of hearts, but in fact, only for political work there has been some co-operation between the two communities. There has not been any sincere unity. I now wish we cleansed ourselves and solidified this unity by a meeting of hearts. But I see that matters here are worse. Even between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins here, such shocking things are happening, as make my flesh creep. I was speaking at Madras before Brahmins one day. It was a private meeting. The Non-Brahmin problem there is different from here and extremely acute. Giving one example, I told the Madras Brahmins that, in their dealing with the *panchamas* (untouchables) specially, Brahmins were behaving as Satanically as the bureaucracy. It was the Brahmins I was speaking to and so I found the Brahmins' fault. It is undoubtedly Satanism to treat the *panchamas* as untouchables. I also said that so long as we did not do away with our own Satanic practices, we could not acquire the power to end the Satanism of others. But my accusation then was not against the Brahmins, but against the whole Hindu community. I did not lash out at the Brahmins of today. The late Gokhaleji was a Brahmin. The late Lokamanyaaji was also a Brahmin and he, too, said that the so-called 'untouchables' were really 'touchables' and always asserted that if we regarded them as 'untouchables', we would not be able to carry on our Swaraj government.

'There, I did not even refer to Maharashtra. From my speech at Madras meant for Madras only, the Non-Brahmins here have extracted a word and are exploiting it for their own ends. Some Non-Brahmins even say that they are not Hindus. They at least have no right to take any side in a quarrel between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. But I say to Non-Brahmins, 'Just as we are not going to resort to a court of law if Muslim brothers abuse us, so you, Non-Brahmins, also shall have to give up all ideas of a recourse to law.' If, in order to put down the Brahmins, Non-Brahmins run to this wicked Empire for help, let them bear in mind that they will have to be slaves of these very helpers. 'Please do not spread any lie in my name!' – that is my earnest appeal to



the Non-Brahmin. I do not know what kind of institution this 'Satyashodhak Mandal' is, but it has been declaring that I am out to destroy the *varnashrama* dharma.¹ I say this is a canard. The most fantastic frauds have been spread under cover of my name. But I am a strict Hindu—a Vaishnava. I have imperishable faith in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Upanishads. I do understand what is defective in my religious books, but I am a firm believer in *Varnashrama*. Let anybody, who wants to, take advantage of my name, but only after clearly understanding my attitude. If Hindus create a division of Brahmins and Non-Brahmins among themselves and resort to this Satanic Government for help, sad disillusionment is in store for them and they will have but to revert to the old ways of unity among themselves. Muslims have drunk this bitter draught. Unity among us all in order to get the injustice against the whole nation redressed is an unavoidable must for all of us."

Dealing with the same topic at Vai Gandhiji said:

"Non-Brahmins misinterpret an expression used at Madras and exploit it for their propaganda. I say in all humility that my speech there had no bearing whatever on the Non-Brahmin question here. Non-Brahmins go to the length of saying that they will drive out the Brahmins. They harass them in many ways, and even terrorise them. But our Hindu culture is not of a kind that sanctions such behaviour towards anybody. It passes my imagination how any man, bred up in Hindu culture, may wish to say he is not a Hindu. I cannot understand why a Non-Brahmin should cherish hatred for a Brahmin. I am a Non-Brahmin myself, but I have no hatred for any Brahmin. I am a student of the Bhagwadgita and it is my claim that it is easy for a true student of the Bhagwadgita to shed hatred and aversion. The Gita also says that if you want to subdue anybody, do it with love. I must say to Non-Brahmins: "Give up this quarreling, if you really appreciate Hindu Culture. If Brahmins have done you an injustice, you can demand reparation. Your first duty is to find out all that Brahmins have done to you and then ask for redress from some Brahmin leaders. It is the Brahmins who are trying to remove the excrescences and repair the defects that have crept into the Hindu *dharma* of today, since they are really grieved at them. I am not referring to those Brahmins, who are groping in darkness themselves and who only repeat by rote what the Shastras say; but about those other Brahmins who are the victims of Non-Brahmin attack, I say, 'If you hate the Brahmins, you dig a pit for yourselves.' Gandhiji then dwelt upon the services of the late Gokhaleji, Tilak Maharaj, Paranjpye and other Brahmin leaders and declared, "Enmity towards that community which has produced such patriots is an act of suicide."



At Satara also Gandhiji continued the same plea:

"Even if you are reluctant to hold Brahmins in reverence, you will have to do so for their austerities, their knowledge, their self-sacrifice and purity. I would indeed hesitate to pick holes in Brahmins, who have composed immortal works like the Upanishads, and yet I did say, and I repeat it, that by sanctioning untouchability, Brahmins committed Satanism to some degree. But you will not be able to protest your own religion by abusing Brahmins and burning their buildings. If you claim to be Hindus, let me tell you, you are acting against Hindu *dharma* that way. If you are not Hindus, I will point out that there is another *dharma* for you. You may as well gloat over your Non-Hinduism, but I say to you, as to the Jains, "It's all right if you are not Hindus, but if you believe that India is your country, another *dharma* besides your own faces you—and that is *Swarajdharma*. That *Swarajdharma* teaches you to make friends with Hindus. Tilak, Gokhale, Ranade, Agarkar—who were all these? Though Brahmins themselves, they underwent great austerities to help Non-Brahmins. Tilak Maharaj had great affection for even a Non-Brahmin like myself. Your uplift is an impossibility if you detest the community which has produced Samarth Ramdas, Tulsidas (author of Hindi Ramayana), Ranade, Tilak and such others. You will only sink into deeper slavery by asking for the Englishman's help. Just ask Shaukat Ali what treasure the Muslims amassed through their co-operation with the Government.

1. Hindu society was divided into four classes (varnas) and every individual was required to go through four stages (ashramas) in life. Hence, the word *varnashram*. The classes were formed on the basis of differing aptitudes and so of functions; the society thus rested upon a division of labour. So there were: (1) Brahmins—devoted to the pursuit and teaching of knowledge, secular and spiritual; (2) Kshatriyas—defenders of the state and holders of political power; (3) Vaishyas—businessmen, farmers and such others and so belonging to the Money-earning class; (4) Shudras—the servant class. The Aryan conquerors here solved the problem of the most uncultured among the conquered by absorbing them into their society as servants. The four *ashramas* were: (1) the student; (2) the worldly gentleman; (3) the retired adviser; (4) the ascetic exclusively intent on Self-realization. Inter-class marriages, though not the rule, were not infrequent down to the time of Manu the well-known codifier, who flourished centuries after the Upanishadic age, as is evident from the different names he gives for the progeny of different admixtures of classes. Intended literally at first as mere expressions of different aptitudes, the varnas came, in course of time, to have inheritance as the basis of distinction and thus the system slipped into a hierarchy based on birth. The saving grace was that learning and character received the highest respect in society, not money or political power.

Caste owes its origin to this later transformation. Probably the inroads of the Muslims accelerated the process of rigid caste-formation, as Brahmins thought it best to save their culture from being swept off by intercourse with a different culture having the support of political power for its infiltration. Other Hindu communities followed the example set by the most respected among them, as is but natural.



Gandhiji considered untouchability as an 'excrescence' on Hinduism and in later days believed in the total abolition of castes. His later attitude towards *varna* is not clearly known, but he *always* asserted, "Brahmanism is the culmination of other *varnas*, just as the head is the culmination of the body. It means capacity for superior service, not superior status. The moment superior status is arrogated, it becomes worthy to be trampled under foot."—*Young India*, 24-11-1927.

Non-Co-operation: A Sacred Word

"You are talking of non-co-operation with Brahmins, but the very utterance of that sacred word requires purity of character. I call the British Empire Satanic, but I can do so since I have no hatred for any Englishman. With Lord Chelmsford I would refuse to co-operate in any way, would even refuse to break my bread with him; but if that same Lord Chelmsford fell ill, I would attend on him as ardently as I would on you. If you want Justice from Brahmins, you should, like them, undergo austerities. If you take up the sword against them, you yourselves will meet with death. I have been telling this same thing to the Mussulmans. They will not be able to emancipate Islam by means of the sword. I think that the sword will only put Islam in greater danger. So I say to Non-Brahmins, 'Make India free first and then, if you will, you may cut the throats of Brahmins'. To the Hindus also my advice is the same, viz., to win Swaraj first and then to fight with the Muslims, if they liked. And to the Muslims also my advice is exactly similar. For the present, at least, there is no remedy for our ills except co-operation among ourselves and non-co-operation with this Empire which has been insulting the honour of all the thirty crores of us and even oppressing us".

Gandhiji gave a still more detailed exposition on this question at Nipani, where a Maratha gentleman plied him with questions. In that reply Gandhiji was lavish in his praises of Brahmins. As what he said there shows his deep appreciation of them, a literal reproduction of that part is not out of place here.

A gentleman, Mr. Marutirao Ravan by name, thus indicted the Brahmins: "Brahmins want to keep Non-Brahmins under their thumb through the Shastras which are full of lies. They reduced us to a state worse than that of beasts and kept us out of their pale."

Gandhiji replied, "I heard carefully all that Mr. Marutirao said. I want to tell all Non-Brahmins that there is a half-truth in what he said and half-truths are always dangerous. I do not mean to say that he deliberately tells a half-truth, but, out of imperfect understanding of facts, we speak half-truths and follow them in life. There is no doubt that there are Brahmins in this world high-headed enough to make others



take their *charanamrit*.¹ There are books, passing muster as religious books of Hinduism, which contain even *dhurtavidya* (the art of cheating).

But we must use our discrimination and see what is pseudo-religious and what reveals the truth in these writings. It is an act of suicide to hate the whole Brahmin community and non-co-operate with it, because a few Brahmins told lies, because a few of them wrote pseudo-religious books. I am speaking God's truth when I protest: "I have studied the Quran, The Zand Avasta and the Bible as best I could. I respect all these religions at heart and I am certain that there is much truth in everyone of them. But I believe, no religion exalts self-restraint and self-denial to the status of a veritable holy sacrifice as much as Hinduism does. And I want to impress upon all Hindus that we are indebted wholly to Brahmins for exalting self-denial so much, for instituting the very immolation of the self as a *dharma*. No other community in the world has sacrificed itself as much as the Brahmins have. And even today, in these very sinful times, in this Black Age, it is that same community which surpasses all others in its spirit of sacrifice and purity. That is why to Mr. Marutirao and other Non-Brahmins of his type, I want to say, "Well, you may be right in showing these faults of Brahmins, but that reminds me of a simile. If there are dirty particles in milk they can be seen at once, but in things already dirty they are not visible immediately. Non-Brahmins have set such a high standard of good conduct for Brahmins, that the faults of the latter immediately catch their eye. But I say, the test of Brahmins lies in the very fact that small offenses committed by them are made to look large. I have yet to see any community in any part of the world, which has performed austerities as severe as the Brahmins. That is why I ask Non-Brahmin brothers to form an unbiased judgment on the faults of Brahmins and not to commit suicide by non-co-operating with them.

"I know that, as contrasted with the very big majority of Non-Brahmins, the Brahmins form a microscopic minority. And that is why some Satanic Indian has said that the present Government is also a Brahmin, since one lakh of Englishmen rule over thirty crores of Indians having brave and warlike Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs among them. But while the British Government keeps the thirty crores under subjection by the might of its sword, the Brahmins of India have never wished to lord it over the crores of Non-Brahmins by physical might. But those handful of Brahmins will be able to keep their hold over the thirty crores of India by the power of their *samyama-dharma* (the dharma of self-restraint). Just as it is with the weapon of *samyama-dharma* that we want to fight this tyrannical Government, so also the Brahmins have till now preserved their freedom, their sanctity, by keeping up a high standard of purity



in conduct. I am aware of the fact that Brahmins have now lapsed from their *dharma*. That is why I earnestly plead with the Maharashtrian Brahmins to regain their pristine faith and devotion, and when they do so, there will remain nothing for me to say to them. To the Non-Brahmins, the only thing I wish to say is that they should not lose their patience and peace of mind and must stop hating the Brahmins. I do not mean to say thereby that they must meekly bear with Brahmins. I never advise spineless submission to any injustice. By the same power of steadfast dutifulness with which we want to beat this unjust Empire, we can secure justice from any caste however traditionally powerful. But even a child can say that, in the Brahmin-dharma, there is no such Satanism as there is in the British Empire. On the contrary, the Brahmin-dharma declares that even a little child can become the King of Kings by keeping his mind pure and observing the *samyama-dharma*. It is that same Brahmin-dharma again which actually worships saints belonging even to untouchable classes. And yet Brahmins have indeed many faults. Well, see them if you like; but the judgment over them must be given by an impartial tribunal. Our *dharma* really lies in appreciating the services they have rendered to the world and in continuing our co-operation with them."

After this exposition Mr. Marutirao declared that readers of his community would meet Gandhiji at Belgaum and were prepared to come to a compromise with Brahmins. The merchant-class among the Non-Brahmins in Belgaum live on very cordial terms with the Brahmins there. It is only the salaried Maratha class from which this venom against Brahmins emanates. The Brahmins have agreed to accept Gandhiji's judgment on all their defects which this class of Non-Brahmins point out to him and correct themselves accordingly.

A special meeting of Marathas is to be held today and there is a chance of some satisfactory solution of the question being arrived at right here.

But I finished nearly the whole letter in giving an extensive reproduction of those portions of Gandhiji's speeches which related to the Non-Brahmin question alone. His more noteworthy remarks at the public meeting at Bhavani Peth in Poona are all yet to be recorded.

1. After worshipping the feet of a holy man with water, the adorer sips a little of it. The water is called *charanamrit*. *Charana*—feet. *Amrit*—nectar (here water). Any saint, not necessarily a Brahmin only, is sometimes thus adored when he visits a home.



Your Violence: My Funeral Pyre

At the end of his speech there, Gandhiji said, "There are rumours of our impending arrests. If the Government wants to arrest us, we can't blame it. We are out to destroy the Empire root and branch and the Empire has the right to clap us in prison, but you have no right to go on a *hartal* therefore; your hartal can carry only one meaning, viz., you do not wish to go to jail yourselves. You will get a knock-out blow if any of you go mad, burn down buildings or murder a stray English man or two. We are not Egypt, not Russia, not Ireland. Ours is not a fight with arms. Our one single weapon is non-co-operation. The government believes that, by arresting us, it will frighten you into meek surrender. But after our arrests, you can show it that its cold unimaginative calculation was wrong and things turn out contrary to its expectation. You will be able to release all the three of us from jail by taking up my programme of non-co-operation in right earnest and thus securing the hand seal of Swaraj. Our release must be in your hands. I wish to be released not by the government but by you, provided your hands are not blood-stained. Take my word for it, that the moment a murder is committed as a result of my arrest, the news will be the death of me. From the depth of my heart will arise the prayer to God to endow me with some such uncanny power that by it, I would be literally burnt up in the fire which your deeds would kindle in any heart. I trust, my community will not betray me. But if it does, I will beseech God to grant me relief through death." Many leaders spoke after Gandhiji, but I will give only the following memorable words of Mr. Khadilkar:

"Gandhiji has purified his body, mind and intellect by his austerities. That body is never going to remain for long in the jail of a Satanic Government. It will always be in the custody of God. And we give our solemn word hereby that if perchance it happens to fall into the confinement of a jail, then our weak limbs will be so charged with the power—with the divine power emanating from the dynamo of those same austerities of his that we will be able to secure his release at our own hands and bring him back to us."

Purses of Rs. 1001 from Sadar Bazaar, Rs. 1001 from Gujarati businessmen and Rs. 101 from Mr. Dhanji Ratanji were then presented in support of the non-co-operation movement. The next day, Rs. 700 from the Jain Mandal, Rs. 101 from the *Kesari* office (Tilak Maharaj's paper) and several other small donations were given.



Place of Pilgrimage

On the 5th noon Gandhiji was taken to Gaekwadwada, the residence of the late Lokamanya Tilak. Gaekwadwada has thus become no less than a hallowed place of pilgrimage. Mr. Kelkar led Gandhiji to the living room of Tilak Maharaj. Everything there was exactly the same as when we saw it four months ago, but this time we could not help feeling an eerie void hanging about the room. The sons of Tilak Maharaj welcomed all the visitors and gave them Tilak Maharaj's favourite chew—betel-nut. Gandhiji was then decorated with a silver medallion with the image of Tilak Maharaj embossed on it and he was also given the present of the small silver box in which Tilak Maharaj used to put his parings of betel-nuts. Gandhiji was charmed with all this presentation and he always carries the medallion and the box with him.

Leaders' Want of Faith

A private meeting of the leaders and workers of Poona was then held in the very next room of the same building. Most of the local leaders of the Nationalist Party were present. There was more talk on doubts and difficulties in the acceptance of the programme than on how to translate it into action. Some doubted the very necessity of the boycott of schools, some others were in favour of postponing it till new national schools came into existence and to all the difficulty of collecting the necessary amount loomed the largest. I will not give here all the counter-arguments which Gandhiji advanced, but content myself with only their substance. He first pointed out that the question was not whether the present education was good or bad; the question was not whether there were defects in it or not. The central point lay in the fact that it was a sin to get ourselves educated under the aegis of that Government which had wounded us so sorely. He went on to say that it would be all right to wait for the establishment of national educational institutions, so long as this Government continued to be not unbearable. But it had passed the stage of our endurance and every situation was better than the one which tied us down to this intolerable Government. The question of ways and means, he added, was nothing but want of faith. If there was any defect in the land of Maharashtra, the land *per excellence* of sacrifice and keen intelligence, it was this single one—want of faith. He then exhorted the workers to make that pursuit i.e. Swaraj, their *dharma*, which Tilak Maharaj himself regarded as his very *dharma* and which he ardently remembered till his last breath. Speaking on faith, he went so far as to say, "I want you to be reckless in faith."



Answering the questions, 'If all the students vacated the present schools in a body, how was it possible to make arrangements for them all?' and 'Can we get all that amount by begging?' Gandhiji said, "If all the students come out, will it be possible for the professors to stay away from the exodus? And when all professors also come out, the whole country will be stirred to its depth." In reply to the further question, "If there is that stir all over the country, has India got the money to tackle all the activities it must handle without Government aid?" Gandhiji said, "When the country is roused to that pitch, do you think it possible for Ramnath Kali Kamliwala¹ to sit tight on this hoard?" But it seemed that these arguments did not carry much weight with Mr. Kelkar (editor of Tilak Maharaj's paper *Maratha*) and he said, "It all seems a child's play to you, but we don't think it so easy to secure donations from religious endowments." This want of faith was evident in nearly all the other leaders. But Poona itself was providing the instance which showed that its leaders' want of faith was groundless. Let us now turn to it.

1. Nearly a century ago, a sannyasi, Ramnath, who always wore a black (kali) blanket (kamli) began to collect money to facilitate the pilgrimage to Badrinath and Kedarnath and conduct free lodging houses on the routes. Gifts to him and his succession have streamed in since then and now there is a huge amount in that institution's possession.

'Sacred Sisters!'

A ladies' meeting was held at the Kirlosker Theatre on the 6th afternoon. All the space on the ground floor as well as on the two galleries above was filled with women. Hardly an inch of space was left vacant. Like a sea at the sight of the full moon, women had flooded the theatre to overflowing. Women of all ages and all communities—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and others—were present. The function began with a beautiful song. I give below some of the verses to show how apposite the song was:

दिन आले दुर्धर भारत भूला
संकटी या तारक तुम्हीं जनतेला
प्रभु देवो यश या सत्कार्याला ॥ चाल ॥
जाऊं दे नशिबाचे हे पारतंत्र्य विलयाला ॥

मान्य असो स्वागत०



जरी आमुचा बाल तिलक आजि गेला
अवचित हा घात जनांचा झाला
तरि आतां भार तुम्हांवर आला ॥ चाल ॥
ठेउनियां विसरूं आम्हीं या तिलक-निधनदुःखाला ॥

मान्य असो स्वागत०

When the darkest were the days on which
This land of Bharat landed,
God sent you, as a beacon-light,
To save us all, the stranded.
'Grant us success', we pray to God.
In this our holy fight;
To end our serfdom this we give
A welcome royal right.
When Tilak, from our midst, was whisked,
The shaft did strike us sore;
The burden now you bear so well,
Our pain is softened sure.

Gandhiji addressed the women as *pratahsmaraniya* (=worth remembering in the morning i.e., sacred) and gave an exhortation for nearly three quarters of an hour, but only the most remarkable portions are given below:

"Preservation of any religion—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi or any other—is all in the hands of women alone, I know. Religion is doomed on the day when women discard it. Our Shashtra says, 'That country perishes where the king and the women give up religion.' In our land women have not entirely renounced religion, but the king has. The Government that rules our land is like the government of Ravana, i.e., of the Devil." Referring to the injustices of the Punjab and the Khilafat he said: This is an Empire which reduces brave men to cowards. If we were not spineless, if our women were giving birth to heroes, these atrocities would have been impossible. But alas! our men have become poltroons these days. I wish, our women felt sore and shed tears at this sorry plight. There is no hope for the country so long as our women do not produce a race of heroes ... And what makes the birth of a race of heroes possible? When women rise to such a height that courage inspires, devotion purifies and faith sustains them, when God becomes the Lord of their heart and they fear Him alone and cease to be



afraid of men, only then can India be blessed with a generation of men of undaunted spirit ... If we want to end *Ravanarajya*, we must create *Ramarajya*. And so long as our sisters have not undergone austerities like those of Parvati¹ and Kaushalya,² so long as they have not performed their *dharma* to the extent of Draupadi³ and Damayanti⁴, any hope of their acquiring the power to be the mothers of heroes is a mirage.” Gandhiji then narrated the incident of that lady from Amritsar who had asked him to make his compatriots *jitendriya* and then began to ask for his alms: the first, of purifying their character; the second, of washing their heart of all hatred for Mussulmans; the third, of withdrawing their children from the schools of this *Ravanarajya*; the fourth, of observing the *swadeshi-dharma* and the fifth, of giving some sacrifice by contributing in money and ornaments to the national fund.

It takes a poet to depict the scene which followed this appeal, I have seen women at Dakore, Ahmedabad etc., giving away their ornaments in warm response, but it is no exaggeration to say that the Poona women beat them hollow. The auspicious start was made by a Parsi lady who gave away her gold bangle; and then bangles came out in quick bewildering succession as if from a conjurer's hat. To bangles were added necklaces, ear-rings, flower-shaped hair-pins and rupees. Women were collecting gifts from among themselves and then handing the collection over to the volunteers. Those sitting in the gallery took a gentleman's upper garment (a long draped strip hanging from the shoulder), used it as a receptacle for gifts and let it dangle from their hands so that the volunteer below could take it. For nearly half an hour this flood of coins and ornaments continued. The scene impelled Gandhiji to remark to Mr. Haribhao Phatak, "If Maharashtra does not imbibe faith even after this, I wonder when it will. But our fate balked us from watching this scene for long, since we had to catch the bus for Vai and Satara. Leaving it, therefore, to Mr. Haribhao Phatak to wait and collect all the valuables the flood brought in, we took leave of these *pratah-smaraniya* sisters. Mr. Kelkar met Gandhiji on the way. Gandhiji gave him a graphic report of the scene he had witnessed just then. Mr. Kelkar could hardly believe his ears. To him also Gandhiji said half in jest, "Let at least the sight of women's faith infect you."

1. According to the poet, Kalidasa, Parvati was given the name of Uma (-O, don't) because her mother asked her to desist from performing severe austerities. But she persisted and Lord Shiva married her as she prayed for.



2. Owing to the machinations of the second queen Kaikeyi, Kaushalya became at one stroke a widow and bereft of her son and daughter-in-law (Rama and Sita), who were banished. But she forgave Kaikeyi and keeping her own grief to herself, performed all the duties of the head of the family and Queen dowager.
3. & 4. Both of them, being loving and dutiful wives, accompanied their husbands—the Pandavas and Nala respectively—to their exiles in forests and shared with them all their troubles.

Vai

Leaving the heart-stirring scenes which had taken place at the Kirloskar Theatre, we got into the bus to go to Vai. There was not any very particular reason to visit the place. But because the Brahmin population there is large—and there are some Mussulmans also—and because it is famous as a holy place lying quite near Satara which we were to visit as per schedule, Gandhiji had decided to halt there. Vai has the reputation of being a centre of learning since ancient times and even today revered Narayanshastri Marathe, an erudite scholar of Sanskrit and a *brahmachari* all his life, is conducting a *prajna-pathshala* (a Sanskrit college to teach theology) along the traditional lines. Spinning-wheels have found their way into the homes of Vai also. Immediately on his return from the Congress session, one young man manufactured a spinning-wheel as best he could, learnt spinning on it and is now teaching it to some others. He had brought his wheel at the meeting to get instructions for its improvement.

The meeting was held on the spacious dry bed of river Krishna. As an air of sanctity permeated the place, Gandhiji's speech took a more than usually religious turn. Gandhiji began with remarks on the small attendance of Muslims and then went on to the need for non-co-operation with the Government and simultaneously for co-operation among ourselves. This led him on to dwell, for a while, on the Brahmin and Non-Brahmin question. But I have already given a report of this portion in my first letter on our tour in Maharashtra and I will not repeat it here. In answer to the question, "Why do I non-co-operate?" which he put to himself, Gandhiji then said:

"I was a co-operator for thirty years but now I am out for non-co-operation. And why? For the simple fact that our scriptures declare that so long as there is an iota of goodness in a man one must continue to co-operate with him ; but when a man becomes doggedly insistent on throwing away to the winds his very humanness, it becomes the duty of everyone to shun him. Tulsidas, Tukaram, Ramdas—one and all—have taught us the one same thing, viz., there can be no co-operation between God and the Devil, between Rama and Ravana. They were but Children—Rama and



Laxman—and yet they pitted themselves against the ten-headed Ravana. Our British Government has thrust a sharp dagger into the Muslim heart and insulted Islam. In the Punjab men, women and students have been treated with execrable cruelty. There is only one way to prevent a repetition of such crimes and that is non-co-operation.

"What is the meaning of the Gita's teaching of *abhedbuddhi* (a feeling of no distinction between one's self and all others)? So long as you are not moved by a poignant feeling that it was you yourselves who suffered the tortures inflicted on the men in the Punjab, you who underwent the humiliation involved in the orders of rubbing the nose against the earth and of crawling, and you who were subjected to the atrocities inflicted on the students there, you have not acquired that *abhedbuddhi*. Shree Samarth Ramdas Swami is said to have felt so deeply pained at the sight of a man being whipped, that on his own back the same stigmata of the lashes of the whip could be visible. It is because of his cultivation of this *abhedbuddhi* that Ramdas Swami has become a figure venerated by us all. How are we going to defend Islam and so avert any possible danger to Hinduism, unless we feel that the injustices inflicted on the Punjab and on Islam have been inflicted on our ourselves?

Sitaji's Non-Co-Operation

To err is human, but, on realization of his error, everyone begs for forgiveness, repents for the lapse. But, in its arrogance, this Empire not only refused to apologise and make amends for the crimes it had committed, but even asked us to forget all its atrocities. And that was the unkindest cut of all. Tulsidasji has asked us to avoid the wicked. It is on the basis of that precept that I am advising the people to keep away from the Empire. I do not mean an exodus. It is enough if, remaining in the Empire, we stop accepting any favour or help from it. During her confinement within Ravana's Empire, it went against the grain of Sitaji to accept the richest dishes sent by Ravana or the services of the female demons of the place. She, therefore, went through hard ascetic practices and preserved her spotless character and loyalty to her husband. If we, too, want to preserve the purity of our character, there is no go for us except to non-co-operate with the Government. Students desist from leaving their schools under the fear that their education would suffer if they left their schools. I give my word to the students that if they first renounce the education given by this Satanic Empire with the same faith as the one which inspired Sitaji to refuse to eat the food provided by Ravana—and she got sufficient spiritual food from Rama so as to sustain



her—then Lord Ramchandraj and Lord Sri Krishna are certain to provide for their education.

Our Cultural Heritage

“But where is your Ramachandraj?” the students will question me. Such doubts arise because we are trained according to the English system and have learnt our history as taught by them. Our students are degenerating day by day. We have adopted Western habits in consequence of our Western education and begun to raise cries of 'shame!' 'shame!' for an unwelcome speech. If you do not love Mrs. (Annie) Besant, you may not join her schools or attend her meetings. But it is neither Hindu culture nor Islamic manners to go to her meetings and make a row there. We must neither express out appreciation by cheers, nor our aversion by cries of 'shame'. We can rightly do so only through our action. If you want to non-co-operate, you must know what your scriptures tell you in such matters. This is a holy fight. We can defeat irreligion by religion and stop an irreligious conduct of the opponent by behaving in the way of righteousness ourselves.”

Addressing the lawyers, Gandhiji said, "When you become exclusively the servants of India, you will be able to render a service four times as great as you do now. Our *sannyasis* used to be content with nothing more than the food they got from householders. In like manner you must be *sannyasis* for one year and win Swaraj."

Gandhiji then narrated the incident of the sister from Amritsar and her precept to all to be *jitendriya* and said "Our *yagna* (sacrifice) has no value so long as it is not really sacred."

Winding up his speech he declared, "Hinduism is the high-water mark of all the cultures of the world and it says that he is the true Kshatriya who knows how to die, not kill. The Bhagwadgita provided me with a word of the highest import, the word *apalayanam* (refusal to escape from a battle-field). For the man who uses the sword, there is a chance of his deserting the field under the most formidable circumstances. As he renounces his faith in God and puts it on his physical might, he does not practise the *apalayana dharma*. I, for one, will assert that Prahlad¹ and such others proved themselves hundred percent Kshatriyas by practising the *apalayana dharma*."



Be you a soldier brave
For freedom's battle grave;
Take up the 'weapon' great:
Refusal to co-operate.

In hand the 'shield' you hold
Of a stand tenacious, bold;
Your 'armour': the country's love;
Hold it as all above.

Your 'right' must always be
Behaviour orderly;
Your 'left' must be likewise
Stupendous sacrifice.

And let your 'halt' erase
Alien culture's craze;
Your 'trench' be self-dependence
And 'canon' be forbearance.

Make foreign goods the 'shot'
Of volleys quick and hot;
So strive with all your might
And win this glorious fight.

1. King Hiranyakasipu, a demon king, forbade Lord Vishnu's worship. His son, Prahlad, a mere child, non-violently disobeyed the order and suffered tortures. In the end the king was killed by the Man-lion form of Lord Vishnu.

Satara and Karad

On behalf of Satara, Dadasaheb Karandikar had come to Vai to request Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali to visit his town. In response to his solicitation, Gandhiji left Vai for Satara that very night by a car. Separate meetings for men and women of Satara were



held the next morning. The interval between the end of the meetings and the scheduled time for leaving Satara for the next halt was so short that no other work could be done beyond those speeches at the meetings. What Gandhiji was most keen on was a talk with the local workers, but it was discovered that no such conference was arranged by Dadasaheb. So, at last, Gandhiji saw Dadasaheb. A talk with him revealed that Dadasaheb was not very enthusiastic about implementing the non-co-operation programme in *toto*. So Gandhiji remarked, "Then there was no sense in your inviting me here." "But I may not be ready for the programme," rejoined Dadasaheb, "while the people may be; and it was in order that the public might hear your precept that I had called you here." And on their part, the people were really enthusiastic. Women flocked to their meeting in large numbers and Gandhiji's appeal for money and ornaments met with a very enthusiastic answer. At the meeting for men the citizens gave a purse of Rs. 1000/- for the Swaraj Fund. From there we went to Karad, where also the meeting was a remarkable success. People from villages around had thronged the meeting. A purse of Rs. 400/- was given at the meeting, where, another Rs. 200/- was collected. What is really striking, however, was the fact that the students of Karad and places round about collected small sums and gave Rs. 25/- for the Swaraj Fund.

Nepani and Chikodi

The slight disappointment we felt in Satara evaporated on stepping into the Belgaum District. The impress of the excellent organising capacity of Sri Gangadharrao Deshpande, who has been spending every moment of his life after the non-co-operation movement, could be seen wherever we went in that district. There is a large majority of Non-Brahmins and a fair sprinkling of Gujarati businessmen at Nepani, which is a big centre of the hand-weaving industry. At the meeting held in the morning Gandhiji said something with reference to Non-Brahmins and a Non-Brahmin gentleman, Marutirao Ravan, stood up to reply on behalf of Non-Brahmins. What happened subsequently has been dealt with by me already in my first letter, and I have also given there Gandhiji's statements on the differences between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. What effect these statements created could be seen from an incident which happened only a few days back. Mr. Latthe, the originator and leader of the Non-Brahmin agitation, visited Nepani some days ago. He had planned to speak on "Mahatma Gandhi and the Non-Brahmins" to a Non-Brahmin audience there. The



meeting was attended exclusively by Non-Brahmins. They requested Mr. Latthe to desist from delivering his speech, since what he was going to say was evident to everybody. They also declared that Gandhiji, being a Non-Brahmin himself, knew wherein the interests of Non-Brahmins lay and that, in pursuance of his advice, Non-Brahmins must not accept the Councils. They, therefore, appealed to Mr. Latthe to drop his idea of going to the Council. I do not know whether Mr. Latthe bowed to this request, but it is certain that not only did he drop his speech at Nepani but also gave up his programme of going to Chikodi for a speech on the same subject.

Nepani gave Rs. 700/- in a purse plus Rs. 300/- collected at the meeting.

Chikodi is fourteen miles from Nepani and is also a hand-weaving centre. Owing to Sri Gangadharrao's exertions, plentiful yarn is being spun these days both at Nepani and Chikodi and there is a good output of Khadi also from the yarn. There was even an exhibition of yarn and Khaddar organised at Chikodi by the women there. Among the exhibits, the sample of yarn spun at Saokeshwar was really wonderful. Many women have taken to spinning. From the high standard of culture, to which women in even such small villages had attained, it seemed that the women of Maharashtra could easily take the first place among all the women of India. At the meeting at Chikodi also, a purse of Rs. 500/- was presented to Gandhiji and in addition a respectable amount was collected at the meeting.

Belgaum's Excellent Organisation

The well-organised functions at Nepani and Chikodi had led us to hope for excellent arrangements at Belgaum and the hope was fulfilled. We reached Belgaum in the evening of the 8th. Under the leadership of volunteers clad in 'pure' (hand-spun and hand-woven) Khadi, multitudes of men were standing in a disciplined manner all along the route on both its sides after leaving a vacant space for two carriages to run abreast. There was no uneasy stir, no noise and bustle, among the people even when Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali passed by. With perfect quiet the people gave a welcome to their leaders and, with equally perfect quiet, they allowed the working of the meeting to continue to its end. But, before I come to the meeting, I had better say a few words about the women of Belgaum.



Women's Hearty Response

The women's meeting was held at 7 p. m. in the courtyard of the Maruti Temple. Not only the expansive courtyard, but even the interior parts of the temple were overflowing with women. It was because the women themselves had insisted on inviting Maulana Shaukat Ali to come into the holy precincts of the temple, that he was sitting close by the side of Gandhiji. After a melodious song by a sister, Gandhiji was requested to deliver his speech. His heart was bubbling with joy. I have given at the end of this letter his speech before them almost word for word. His call for funds was enthusiastically heeded. There was a repetition here of the moving scenes at Poona, but while we had to break away from there, our eyes were feasted to the fill here. Before even Gandhiji ended his speech, a woman in dirty rags came forth and putting Rs. 10 at Gandhiji's feet, said, "Please accept this present from an indigent widow." And after it ended, there was the same rain of ornaments here as at Poona. In pursuance of the fixed programme, we went straight from this meeting to the public meeting for men. On the next day also, so long as Gandhiji was at Belgaum, there was a regular stream of women coming to him to give him their presents. Let me give just here an unforgettable incident to show how discriminating this devotion was. Gandhiji never fails to tell the donor that he wants any ornament only on condition that the donor entirely gives up the use of that particular kind of ornament, so as to make the donor perform an act of real renunciation. When a sister came in the evening and took off three ornaments, Gandhiji repeated his condition. The sister was not prepared to give up wearing forever one of the three ornaments she was offering. So she at once took back that particular ornament. What an example of transparent self-honesty that!

But my letter would fill pages and pages, if I wrote down all that I have to say about the women. Even after two days, when we had to pass through Belgaum station on our way to Bombay, women did not fail to present themselves at the platform with their presents in hand. It is impossible for time to wipe off the remembrance of that occasion, when these valuable gifts, dripping with the incessant flow of tears of love, were given by the women.

Public Meeting at Belgaum

The public meeting had the dignified look of a conference and even outstripped it owing to the complete silence that prevailed there. The volunteers, of Belgaum at



least, proved that they were fit to become soldiers for Swaraj as envisaged in the poem at the head of this letter. The function began with welcome addresses to Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali given in two different caskets. As the first address was written in English, the fact was mildly and lovingly criticised by Gandhiji. He expressed his displeasure at the unequal sizes of the two caskets also. When Sri Gangadharrao explained that two boxes of the same size were not available in the market, Gandhiji retorted that the bigger one could then have been given to M. Shaukat Ali.

The tribute Gandhiji paid to the women during this speech is worth quoting:

"It is beyond me to put down in language the tremendous surge, which the scene I just now witnessed at the Maruti Temple, produced in my heart. And I saw the same fervor at Poona also. They (the women) have showered on us not only their ornaments but their heart's love—and with the clear consciousness that the object behind the appeal for ornaments was to win Swaraj, i. e., *Ramarajya*. Our millionaires have never given us donations, so valuable as these. In order to make them loosen their purse-strings you have to kiss their feet and earnestly entreat them, and then their hearts melt a little. The women needed no such pleading from me. They gave, whatever they wanted to, solely out of sincere love and enthusiasm. And these gifts of the heart are essentially more precious than even a windfall of crores of rupees."

I do not reproduce his remarks at this meeting on the present situation and on the Non-Brahmin question, since it would mean only a repetition of what he has said elsewhere. A purse of Rs. 3200 for the Swaraj Fund was presented at the end of the meeting and the usual collection during the meeting itself came to a very respectable figure. On the next day the two caskets were sold by auction and they fetched Rs. 1100 and Rs. 800.

All this gives some idea of the achievement of the workers of Belgaum. It is very necessary to introduce some of these workers to the reader, but that I will do in my next letter.

And now Gandhiji 's speech before the women gathered in the Maruti Temple, Belgaum:

"Revered (pratahasmaraniya) sisters,

"I feel myself sanctified at the *darshan* of you all gathered here, at this holy temple. What delights me still more is the fact that you have shown your eagerness to meet my brother Shaukat Ali also. We were all tired and were taking a little rest, but



when I learnt that you wanted Shaukat Ali also to come with me here, I called him. In this brotherly regard I see one of the achievements of India, because I know that so long as our Hindu women do not look upon Mussulmans as their brothers, these evil days of India are never going to end. Sitting in this yard, I do not wish to give any shock to your religious sentiments. I am myself a follower of *sanatani* (ancient and sacrosanct) Hindu *dharma*. But it is from that same Hinduism that I have learnt the lesson of never looking down upon or hating any other religion. I have also realized that it is impossible to achieve the welfare of our country so long as we, Hindus, do not love the followers of all other religions and our neighbours. I have not come here to tell you that you must begin to arrange inter-religious dinners and marriages, whether with Mussulmans or followers of other creeds. But I have definitely come here to say that we must have love for every human being. I earnestly pray to you to teach your children to cultivate love for followers of other religions.

"I also want you to thoroughly realize the present state of our nation. In order to do so, it is not at all necessary to be highly educated or ponder over big volumes. I wish to tell you that our Government is a fiendish government. It resembles closely the *Ravanarajya* of old, because it has deeply wounded the feelings of our Muslim brothers, because it has committed deeds of unspeakable cruelty on man, woman and child in the Punjab and because, even after doing all these things, the Government does not admit that it has erred and does not repent for its crimes. On the contrary, it asks *us* to forget all those atrocities. That is why I call this Government 'demonic'. And now our men and women have to offer non-co-operation against this Government, just as Sitaji offered it, just as Ramachandraji offered it, against Ravana in ancient - times. Ravana offered temptations to Sitaji, sent her sweet dishes of various kinds, but Sitaji ignored them and performed severe penances to get herself released from the clutches of Ravana. So long as she was under the heavy hand of Ravana, she never bedecked herself with rich clothes or ornaments. Ramachandraji and Laxmanji also put a severe curb on sense-pleasures. Contenting themselves with taking only fruits and edible roots to sustain their body, they observed *brahmacharya* very rigorously. What I mean to say therefore, is that so long as this tyrannical Government is riding on us, neither you, the women, nor we, the men, have any right to decorate ourselves. Strict self-denial is a necessity for us all, till India becomes free and the wounds of Mussulmans are healed. We must light such a fire of grief at this our plight, that it would burn into ashes all our easy ways of life. In all humility and earnestness, I pray



to you to renounce worldly comforts, perform austerities and keep your mind and heart pure.

"Fifty years ago, the sacred spinning wheel used to hum in the homes of all our women—Hindu, Muslim and others—and every woman used to wear clothing made from hand-spun yarn. Let me point out to you, my sisters, that ever since we gave up our *swadeshi-dharma* our degradation began and with it the imposition of slavery on us. And now, there are places all over our country, where the people are dying of starvation and moving about naked for having nothing to wear. Under this situation, do please, each one of you sisters, spin for at least one hour for the sake of the country and dedicate the yarn to the nation. It is at present difficult for you to get fine hand-spun clothing, but even that you will get as you begin to spin fine yarn yourselves. But clothing made from fine yarn ought to be *haram* for us as long as the country remains under subjection. Spinning fine yarn takes up much time and, in India of today, every minute counts for much."

Gandhiji then requested the women to withdraw their sons and daughters from Government schools and then made the following appeal for donations for starting national schools and colleges for them.

"I have already begged for money at Dakore and Ahmedabad. Only the day before yesterday, I did the same at Poona. Some sisters, even quite little girls, took off their rings, bangles, nose-buttons and necklaces. If I have succeeded in creating in you an urge for renunciation—and that was the object of my coming here—you should have no hesitation about giving away all your ornaments for the country's cause. The money obtained from them will be utilized by Sri Gangadharrao for national education and *swadeshi*. If any of you, sisters, intend to donate something in cash or ornament, please give it to the country with the same religious fervour with which you offer something at this temple. India is at present like a helpless cow in the clutches of a butcher and it is your business as well as mine to save it. Any amount given by you for securing its release earns for you as much virtue as the same amount given to a temple.

"And the last form of alms I beg of you is to give your blessings for the success of the work Shaukat Ali, myself and Gangadharrao are doing. Let me also say that I want your gift only if it is free of mental reservations. If a conviction wells forth within you that it is at once an act of virtue, a matter of duty, to give me anything, you may



do so. May God endow you with purity of character, courage and an urge for sacrifice for the country's cause."

15-11-1920

Speech as Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith on the occasion of founding the *Gujarat Mahavidyalaya* (national college) at Ahmedabad:

A Self-revelation

Sisters and Brothers,

I have done many things in life, for many of which I am proud, while for some I feel repentant. Many of those were deeds of high moment and responsibility. But when I say that not a single one of them can stand comparison with the monumental work I am about to do, I think I am not at all exaggerating. I feel overwhelmed with a sense of tremendous responsibility in taking up this work, not because the work is harmful to the country, but because, I feel myself unequal to the task. That consciousness pains me. I am not saying so out of modesty, but I am revealing before you what my conscience says. I would not have been compelled to say all this as a preface to my speech, had I been certain that the work I am going to do is in conformity with the essential trait of 'education.' The object of the establishment of this college is not to give a merely academic education. The college also wants to give practical training to the students so as to enable them to earn their livelihood. And I simply shudder at the thought when, for that object, I compare this college with others like the Gujarat College (local Government college). There is no exaggeration in this statement also.

No Comparison in Brick-and-Mortar

What a difference, again, between Gujarat College and the like and this our small *Mahavidyalaya* (maha=big; vidyalaya=seat of learning. Hence a college)! In my eye it is definitely what it means— a 'big' institution. But I fear that when you compare this *Mahavidyalaya* with the magnificent colleges extant in India, you may be thinking of this as not a *maha* but an *anu* (anu =atom or atomic, i.e., small) *vidyalaya*. Your mind must be comparing this institution with others from the brick-and-mortar angle. As for that brick-and-mortar, I also see a far larger quantity of it used in the Gujarat College.



As I was coming here by the train, the one thought that exercised me was, "What more attractive thought must I put before you which could succeed in driving away from your minds this comparison? It grieves me that that impressive thought has not yet struck me. I have never before created for myself a situation, so difficult as this. And even at present the occasion has not come of my choosing. I fear I shall not be able to infect you with the same certainty that I have of the truth I see. 'How can I convince you that what you think to be 'defects' are really not so?' I ask myself. Kishorelalbhai¹ has made my task easier by frankly pointing out what these 'defects' are. But, believe me, despite all those defects this is a really great thing we are doing. May God instil in you the same faith for this undertaking as I possess! I myself have not the power to implant that faith in you. I do not possess the power of penance sufficient for the purpose and I must admit my want of capacity. I have not done any such service in the field of education by means of which I can show that this work (national education) is of the greatest importance. But the type of work we are doing here is the only one that becomes us in these difficult times for India. Any comparison on the score of buildings has no sense. Things have come to such a pass at present that we cannot call an inch of earth our own. Everything is Government property. This ground, this tree—everything—is under Government ownership. Even our bodies belong to the Government and I doubt if we are still masters of even our souls. Under this pitiable condition, how can we afford to be in the look-out for good buildings for our *Mahavidyalaya*? How can we afford to seek for scholars of repute as our professors? If a most illiterate boor came here and could convince you that our soul has become dry as a bone, that this country has lost its lustre and sunk into ignorance, I would readily instal him on the Principalship of this college. But I am not sure you would be prepared to let that position be given to an ignorant shepherd of that type. Hence, we had to hunt out Sri Gidvani for the position. I am not enamoured of the (foreign) degrees he holds. Perhaps you do not know him except as a man possessing these degrees. But I wish you to find out a different touchstone, a new standard of judgment, to test the worth of this college. If you use the common touchstone, the college will give you an outward appearance of being made, not of gold, but of brass. But if you put the college on the touchstone of character-training, you will realise that it is made of gold, not brass.

The confluence that has taken place here makes it a place of pilgrimage.² Men of sterling character, the pick of Sindhis, Maharashtrians and Gujaratis have come together in this college. Is not such a confluence itself a rare event?



I will first pray to the elders—both brothers and sisters—who have come here: 'You are witnesses to the installation ceremony of this *Mahavidyalaya*. If any of you regard all this as an empty show. it is my appeal to their hearts that they should desist from attending the function any longer. You may continue to sit here for the one purpose of giving your blessings to the occasion. When this *Mahavidyalaya* gets your blessings, it will be acknowledged as really *mahan* (great). But your blessings must come from the heart, not from your lips merely, and blessings from the heart can only be given by sending your sons and daughters to this college. India does not lack in the capacity for bountiful donations. No activity has ever been brought to a standstill for want of funds. Its progress stops for want of right men—for want of a good teacher or leader, or, if he is there, for want of good disciples, i. e., soldiers for the cause. I believe, where the leaders are really worthy, soldiers are always forthcoming. No carpenter quarrels with his tools, however blunt they be. The use of the bluntest of them will be for him a child's play. In the same way if the leader is an expert artisan, he will be able to bring out the best products from whatever he gets in hand. He will create men out of mud.

1. K. G. Mashruwala, an earliest and staunchest colleague of Gandhiji and one of the best exponents of Gandhian philosophy in all its aspects. He succeeded him to the editorship of Gandhiji's weeklies. He was also the first Registrar of the Gujarat Vidyapith.

2. A confluence of rivers is regarded in Hinduism as a holy place.

Miracle of Moral Worth

"Please do *that*" is my prayer to the Principal. One and the same lofty motive has brought you all, the Principal and the professors, here. It will be your character, not your learning, that will perform the miracle of bringing Swaraj for us. It will be by confronting our divine peaceful force—imperfect though it be—against the feverish and fiendish forces of the Government, and not by matching our sword against their lustrous sword, that miracle will be achieved. Our object here is to sow the seed of freedom, bring it up and make it grow into the beautiful tree of Swaraj. The tree can be cultured only by our high character and the purely divine force it generates. As long as you, the Principal and the professors, hitch your wagon to this star, our work here is certain to go on unsullied by even a trace of stain. May you, the Principal and professors, prove true by results the faith that I personally have in students. Had there



not been that unshakable faith in me, I, an ulettered fellow, would never have agreed to accept the sacred position of Chancellorship of this Vidyapith (University). I am prepared to live for this work and die for it. It is because I know that, like myself, you, too, regard losing life for this cause as really winning it, that I continue to live in your midst and have accepted this very responsible position.

If you, the Principal and the professors, do your duty, what will remain for me to say to the students? I am not going to commit the sin of hurling accusations against the students. They are simply mirrors which reflect the prevailing situation. They are free from lie, hatred and pretence. They disclose themselves as what they really are. It is not their fault if they have no truth, no *brahmacharya*, no *asteya* (non-stealing), no *aparigraha* (non-possession) and no *ahimsa* (non-violence). The fault lies with the parents, with the teachers, with Principals and with the King. But why blame even the King? Only yesterday I said to the students in Bombay, 'Just as यथा राजा तथा प्रजा (As the King, so the subjects) is true, so is यथा प्रजा तथा राजा (As the subjects, so the King) also true. Perhaps the latter alone is true. The fault lies, first of all, with the people. Their weaknesses have found a concentrated expression in the student-world and are, therefore, clearly visible in it. It is we therefore, the parents and the teachers, who have to do whatever should be done to lift up the students.

Every home in India is a University— a college. The parents are the Principals. The parents discarded their *dharma* when they ceased to perform the duties of the Principal. We have not yet been able to appraise the foreign civilisation at its true value, have not found out what its merits and defects really are. We have, as it were, hired this foreign culture and, as we do not pay any rent, we may say we have simply stolen it. How can India ever rise through this stolen civilisation?

It is the national, and not the educational, point of view which has urged us to found this college. In order to make our students men of strong character, I have been giving out all over the country my conviction that we will be fit for Swaraj to the extent of our success in building up the character of our students. The edifice of Swaraj cannot be raised on any other foundation. No expenditure in money and in energy of men of character is too great for the purpose of making such institutions successful.

This is not the time for talk, but for action. I have simply transmitted to you my thoughts just as they came to me. And so I have begged of you everything that was worth begging. Now I am begging something from the students also. That they possess



the spirit of adventure is beyond doubt. That entitles me to refuse to regard those who have already joined the college as nothing more than students and I am not going to consider that they are free from every other responsibility than of a student. These daring enthusiasts, who were the first to enroll themselves in a college that was yet to be formed, are semi-teachers. It is they who have founded the college. It is to them that all the other adjuncts of the college have been appended. Had they not enrolled themselves, the college could not have come into being. Their responsibility, therefore, is very great indeed. You (the students) have full partnership in this firm. If you do not contribute your full share to this work, the teachers will not succeed—certainly they will not fully succeed—however much they strive. Those students who have left their college must know clearly the implications of their step and what they will get from here. May God instil into them the power to tenaciously continue their work here, all the while this grim struggle lasts, however long it continues. If they get that power, I am certain that a handful of students though it may have, this college will shed a lustre all its own and become an ideal college for the whole country.

The reason lies neither in Gujarat's wealth nor in Gujarat's scholarship. It lies in the fact that Gujarat is the birth-place of non-co-operation. It is in Gujarat that the seed of non-co-operation has been sown. It is in Gujarat, that that seed has been watered. And it is in Gujarat again that the necessary compost, in the form of austerities performed, has been made. Do not, from these words, imagine that all this is nothing but the vapour of a conceited fellow. And do not believe for a moment that I alone have undergone these ascetic practices or that none but myself has planted this root. All I have done is to give Gujarat the *mantra* (a potent charm). If it is possible for a Vaishya to do the work of a *rishi* (a Brahmin sage), I have done that work.

Colleagues' Contribution: Faith

I have done nothing more. The roots have been really sown by my colleagues. It was because their faith exceeded even mine that this work could be done. It is my claim that I possess wisdom born of experience. Even if the Gods descend on earth and try to dissuade me, my faith in this matter will remain unshaken. As clearly as the trees before me, I see that India's uplift will come through non-co-operation and that alone. But my colleagues have convinced themselves of this same truth by means of reflection, logic and faith.



Neither in India nor anywhere else in the world does everybody do anything solely on the basis of self-experience. While experiential knowledge impels some persons to begin some work, others do it out of faith in the former.

Thus the foundation has been laid by my colleagues. Many of them are Gujaratis. There are some Maharashtrians also, but they are those who have become, by their stay in Gujarat, fifty, seventy-five or even one hundred and twenty-five per cent Gujaratis. It is through them that this weapon (of non-co-operation) shines bright. We have not yet witnessed its full miraculous powers. It will take six months still to let this work, for which little girls have given me their bangles, reveal its wonder-working glory more clearly. But the source of that power—its visible image—is this *Mahavidyalaya*. Hindus are idol-worshippers and we are proud that we are. This idol has different limbs. One limb, the Chancellor, is myself. The Principal, the professors and the students are the other parts of the body. But I am like a sere leaf. I am engaged in other activities, besides. If this yellow leaf falls off, the tree will not suffer at all. The Principal and the professors, too, are simply leaves, but at present they are young and green. In a few years' time they, too, will grow old and fall off. But the students are the branches of this beautiful tree. It is from these branches that Principals and professors will shoot forth as leaves.

Light a Fire Like Prahlad's

It is my request to the students that they should put as much faith in their professors as they have in me. But if you find your Principal or your professors to be weak and timid, you must then light a fire like the one Prahlad lighted in the days of yore and consume in it that Principal or those professors and press on with your work. That the students be so bold is at once my prayer to God and my blessings to them.

Finally, this is my prayer to God and I wish you all approved of it and joined in it with all your heart : "O, God! Make this *Mahavidyalaya* so virile that through it we may attain that freedom which incessantly, day and night, we long for. And may that freedom be the harbinger of happiness not only of India but of the whole world, wherein India is like a mere drop in the ocean!"



15-11-1920

Speech before the students at Ahmedabad

Mr. President, students, sisters and brothers,

Our worthy Principal has asked us to bear in mind the fact that the people must not fail to implement the resolve they made at the Calcutta Congress. I want to remind you of another and, to my mind, a more important resolve. Last year when I went to the Punjab, we unanimously decided on the boycott of the Hunter Committee (The Disorders Inquiry Committee appointed by the Government). We had discussed the matter for many days before coming to that decision. Pandit Malaviyaji had given many arguments against it. He had reminded us of our many weaknesses, of our lassitude after showing feverish enthusiasm in starting a thing and of the possibility of the leaders being clapped in prison. And yet, after mature thinking, all those who had come there including the four of us, Pandit Malaviyaji, Pandit Motilalji, Mr. C F. Andrews and myself, resolved with one voice to non-co-operate with the Hunter Committee. Let me first remind you of that resolve. As early as even at that time, I had warned those present that if we kept aloof from the Hunter Committee, it would be incumbent upon us all to issue our own independent report, and that if, on our inquiry, the atrocities were proved true, we might have even to die in order to secure justice. If the whole country was to be sacrificed, I had added, to gain that objective, even that sacrifice had got to be made. Despite this grave warning from me, all those present hailed the resolve of the boycott. That resolve is graver in import than even Congress resolution. It has been alleged about the latter that the people did not get sufficient time to reflect over it, that they were hustled into passing it owing to the spell cast over them by my speech and that it secured a majority simply because of the substantial support of the Muslims who were present in the Congress in large numbers for the first time. This last charge is certainly not true. The fact was that votes were taken province-wise and, with the exception of two provinces, all others had passed this very same resolution by a majority. All the same, it is true that all the voters may not have given sufficient thought to that (Congress) resolution and, on that ground, you may, not, if you like, give any weight to it. But even there those at least, who have a regard for the Congress and who have no conscientious objection against the Congress resolution, must unhesitatingly implement it. But the resolve of the Committee held in the Punjab was taken with full deliberation in an atmosphere completely cool and uncharged by any excitement and with the full consciousness of



the dangers it involved. It is your own highly respected leaders who have made that grim resolve to save the honour of the Punjab for which we are all fighting. It was that oath I wanted to remind you of and I do so hereby.

The Golden Chain

And now I ask those students who have not joined the National College what they really want. Are you earnest about having independence, i. e. Swaraj, for India? What is your choice—preservation of your own culture or subjection to a foreign rule? I have not a single word to say to you, if you are prepared to bear with subjection. In the Gujarat College you are provided with an extensive ground for your recreation, many games both indoor and outdoor, erudite scholars as professors and a laboratory the like of which it will take a long time for the National College to be equipped with. You won't get all such amenities in this (National) College. But unless a chain is not a chain because it is made of gold and studded with jewellery, you are veritable prisoners in the Gujarat College. But if you believe that you cannot maintain your honour except in a climate of freedom, you must quit the Gujarat College, no matter how many its other advantages be, and enter this *Mahavidyalaya*, despite all its inconveniences. I do not want to excite your passion but to awaken the dormant spirit of discrimination in you and to make you conscious of your duty. I wish to build a bridge of understanding between my intelligence and yours. And yet if you feel that you cannot entertain any thought of freedom so long as you attend Government schools and that the very thought is an act of treachery, you may not leave your Government school. We may indeed speak well of a government, so long as we get our education through its schools; but this Government has forfeited that claim to loyalty, since it has become insolent, rained atrocities on us, bled the subjects white and attacked our religion. After all this how can we honestly wish well of it? How can we proudly say that this Empire is so just that the sun never sets on it? And since we cannot sincerely wish well of it, we must fly from it. Every religion, without exception, teaches us that there is no sin more heinous than treachery to one's religion. That is why I have stated that studying in these Government schools is like cutting the very branch of a tree on which we stand. I, therefore, ask those students who have not yet left their school or college to search their hearts again and again. If you are then convinced that there is no course open to us except to end this Government, then your strength of character, your courage lies in no other act but that of leaving your institution.



Our respected Principal has shown you how co-operation in some matters with the Government is unavoidable, while in others we can withdraw it at once. In order to do without some things provided by the Government, a wholesale renunciation is necessary. A time may come I don't say that it can never come—when even that step may have to be taken. But that time has not yet arrived and we won't discuss the question now. At present our austerity (of renunciation) must be confined within the limits of our individual activities. If a man wants to gain purification of the mind or a cure of his disease upto a particular degree, and if he can achieve his aim by one day's fast, it would be foolish on his part to go on a fast for two days. We need not, therefore, undergo more severe austerity than what is capable of gaining our object. That same answer stands good for the question why we co-operate with the Government in such matters as the use of railways, telegrams etc. But we must undoubtedly non-co-operate in those matters where co-operation fades our lustre and we deliberately stretch the beggar's hand for charity from the Government. Attending Government schools is this form of co-operation. Fortunately, the National College has now been opened. You won't find such a Principal and such professors everywhere. I do not wish to make their comparison with the staff in the Gujarat College here. Which of the two is the better staff will be evident automatically in a short time. But now those students, who were afraid to leave their college for want of an alternative institution, have no reason for that fear. They cannot now complain of the uncertainty of their fate, if they left their college without having another college to go to. Such students must now immediately join the *Mahavidyalaya*.

Students Under Agreement

A medical college student asked me what medicals should do if they wanted to non-co-operate. There are two types of these students. Those among them who pay their college fees may immediately leave their college. But I don't advise those students to leave their college right today, who are getting a Government scholarship and, in return, have either bound themselves to serve the Government for a certain number of years after graduation or to return the loan within a fixed period. I cannot give such students any amount from the public fund we collect in order to enable them to pay off their loan and leave the college. It is their duty to gain their freedom from the college, if they can find the means from somewhere else to return the loaned amount. But more pressing question facing me pertains to those medical students who



pay their fees. Whether we get the necessary facility of a national medical college or not, we must give up the present college, if we feel that, by continuing in it, we only delay the day of our deliverance. We must give up our fascination for learning medicine and engage ourselves in some other avocation, so long as we do not get that facility in a national college. What will our people gain by any learning, if once they become spineless cowards? Not that I condemn this fascination itself for learning. I accept the plea that it is, on the contrary, the duty of a young man to cherish the aspiration to become a learned man. But our country and our religion must not be sacrificed at the altar of that ambition.

Definition of Learning

That is learning worth the name which gives us the power to preserve *dharma*, and that is the motto the Vidyapith has accepted. I am charmed with that epigram: सा विद्या या विमुक्तये" (That is learning which leads to Freedom or Redemption.) Freedom is of two kinds. One freedom releases the country from foreign subjection. This freedom is not the one that abides. The other kind means freedom that is eternal. But even for gaining this second freedom -*moksha* (release from the chain of births and deaths, pleasures and pains etc.) which we call as our *dharma par excellence*—the former worldly freedom is an essential first step. A man, hemmed in by many fears, cannot at a bound attain that higher and eternal freedom called *moksha*. If anybody wants to gain that everlasting *moksha*, wants to make that *purushartha* (striving for a particular object) which is of the highest kind, there is no other go for him except to reach first the nearer stage of worldly freedom. And that learning which makes our eternal freedom recede from us is, therefore, devilish, irreligious and worth discarding. However good the learning provided in the Government college be, it deserves to be given up by us owing to its tainted source, i. e., the Satanic Government.

Discrimination in Obedience

I shall now tell you how you, students, should behave towards your parents and whether you should ever disobey their injunctions or not. It is your paramount duty to obey your parents in the best possible manner. But more compelling even than this is the duty of following the voice of your conscience. If it says that it is fear that impels



your parents in their prohibition and that your spiritual effort lies in leaving your college, you must give it up despite your parents' 'no'. But to whom does this call of the still small voice come? I repeat what I have often said in answer to this question. That man alone can transgress the parents' injunction, who is extremely modest and courteous, who has always obeyed his parents and who understands and puts into practice the standards of morality. He alone can say, 'This is the voice of my conscience', who has given a high place in life to charity of heart, has attained control over his senses by observing *brahmacharya*, has not soiled by sin either his body or his mind and has kept the non-stealing and the non-possession vows by refusing to saddle himself with a stock of various possessions. Don't approach your parents with the plea of the voice of Gandhi in your support. Go to them on the strength of your own voice and, after making a deep obeisance, tell them, 'I cannot obey your injunction in this matter.'

A student told me that though his parents forbade him, he gave up the government college and now they asked him not to join the national college. I advised him to definitely obey his parents in that matter. If the parents feel that it is harmful for their son to learn what is taught in a particular new school, they have every right to wish him to desist from learning in that school and it is the duty of the son to obey them in that case. Parents are entitled to stop their children from learning something new, if they think it harmful for the children. But they cannot compel their son to fill his mind with sin. Every student must first see clearly what his duty is in this matter and then perform it even at the cost of the opposition from his parents or the Government. The country cannot rise without that behavior on his part.

Now let me tell you of a recent incident in Bombay. Some students there raised shouts of 'shame', 'shame' at a meeting. Bhai Nimkar was one of them. At the Bombay meeting I laid stress on the insulting treatment given to Mrs. (Annie) Besant. I detest any disturbance in peace made by a single non-cooperating student. He must heartily accept the three facets of non-co-operation. And the first among them is the one of peace. Let it be indelibly imprinted in the mind that the non-cooperator must neither cause a row, nor abuse anybody, nor lose his temper, nor slap anyone, nor raise shouts of 'shame'. No one should join this fight, so long as he cannot help doing any of these things. I said to Bhai Nimkar, "You have committed a breach of the peace. It was not your *dharma* to cry out 'shame', 'shame', no matter how gravely Mrs. Besant or Sri Purshottamdas or Sri Setalwad wounded your feelings. Your *dharma* simply lay in keeping quiet at the meeting or stealing away from it quietly." Bhai Nimkar saw the



wisdom of my plea and openly expressed regret for his act in a well-attended public meeting and thus proved what courage he possessed. He is one of the truly brave who admits his errors and repents for them. Bhai Nimkar has thus raised his moral stature by his admission of error.

Three Facets of Non-co-operation

In the same way, I wish you all—those who have joined the *Mahavidyalaya* as well as those who go to the Gujarat College—not to lapse from your *dharma*. The non-co-operation resolve has three facets. The first is peacefulness. Non-co-operation must be peaceful, must have no room for the sword—and the tongue is a sword, the hand is a sword and a sharpened piece of steel is also a sword. The second is discipline or self-restraint and the third is *yagna*, sacrifice. Only when we are pure we can perform a *yagna*, i. e., undergo a sacrifice. Without making a sacrifice, none can be pure or holy; and till you do not become pure, do not leave your school. There are nearly sixty students today here (in this *Mahavidyalaya*). But with even five students the Vidyapith will carry on. The essential thing for the Vidyapith is purity for its basis. If it is there, the structure of Swaraj will be constructed on it. He, therefore, who has not purified himself will not only be able to enhance the purity of this sacred basis, but will cast a slur on it. Hence I say to those students who intend to Join this *Mahavidyalaya* that they should give up their idea, if they do not wish to live according to all the three facets of non-co-operation.

To The Parents

To the parents who have come to this meeting I say, "You were present at the National Conference. You have passed its resolutions by raising your hands. The Congress also has your moral support. Please understand fully your grave responsibility. Don't stab your own progeny, don't stab your motherland. If your sons and daughters want to join in this sacrifice, do not debar them, but send them to this *Mahavidyalaya* with your hearty blessings. If you don't do so, you will disgrace yourselves, disgrace Gujarat and prove that Gujarat, and so India as a whole, is morally bankrupt.



Conclusion

Gujarat never counted in Indian politics till today. It has resolved to enter the field new. May it remain steadfast in its resolve and may Gujarat and Gujaratis make a name in the whole of India. If you have imbibed even a little the qualities of truth and heroism you must never fail to nourish them. 'May God endow you with the power to do so'! That is my closing prayer.

26-11-1920

At the Sacred Varanasi

All eyes were rivetted on Gandhiji's visit to Benares (now Varanasi). "How will the Hindu University fare?" "Will not Gandhiji's visit give a shock to Panditji (Malaviyaji, the Father of the University)?" "Will it not make his weak health even worse?"—These and such other questions were agitating many minds. Some friends had even suggested to Gandhiji that he should drop for the present his idea of going there, in view of the condition of Panditji's health. But Gandhiji had inquired of Panditji's health from three or four sources by telegrams and when he received a wire from Panditji himself, saying that Gandhiji was always welcome whenever he chose to visit the place, he decided to go there. And now Gandhiji has even returned from Benares. All that happened there was like a meeting between two brothers, who embrace each other, drop a few tears over their difference in views and then separate as lovingly. The reason for this perfectly cheerful and peaceful finale was only one: the indissoluble bond of love which subsisted between revered Panditji, revered Anandshankarbhai¹ and Gandhiji. One cannot say today what the students there will do and how many of them will leave their studies, but there is nothing wrong in saying that the very open-hearted discussion that took place there between the students, the professors and the Panditji has resulted in making the atmosphere clearer and purer.

But let us now turn from general observations to the speeches of Gandhiji before the students there.

1. A profound Gujarati philosopher, *who* was then the Registrar of the Benares Hindu University. He was also the arbitrator in the dispute between Gandhiji and the mill-owners during the strike in Ahmedabad in 1919.



A Harmonious Duet

Those who heard Gandhiji's two speeches during the two days there as well as that of Malaviyaji have only one word to say of them—'superb'. The beauty of their speeches lay in the fact that both the speakers were striking, not discordant, but harmonious notes, as in a duet. Their speeches were complementary, not contradictory.

On the first day early in the morning, Gandhiji spoke before the students for nearly an hour and a quarter at the 'Non-cooperation Grounds' situated near the College. It is difficult to give a full report of the speech and I have not had time enough to show my report to Gandhiji. I must say, however, I took down the notes of the speech there and then and from them I reproduce it here as best I can:

No Incitement to Insolence

A few months ago I had talked to you on self-restraint and today also, in my view, I have come to speak on the same theme. It has been alleged against me these days that I am making the students self-willed and insolent. With the full sense of responsibility I say, I never wish to incite anybody to indiscipline. I am incapable of such an act. I was myself a student once and I always behaved respectfully in my student days. I am, besides, the father of four sons and hundreds of boys have passed through my guidance, whose father I claim to be even today. As I am a man of that type, it is impossible for a language encouraging insolence among boys to escape my lips.

My Language: Not Discourteous

But times have come when parents believe I am doing injustice to them in whatever I do. They feel that both my claims of insistence on truth and politeness in language have lost their validity more or less. All these things have made me sit up and think. But my conscience attests that I am not using discourteous language. What I say, I say after grave deliberation and with mental equipoise. The fact is, the delusion which I was nursing till December last has been smashed up and a language, different from the old, comes out of my lips. But I am doing nothing beyond presenting facts as they actually stand. It would be a travesty of truth as well as of decorum, if I see a thing dirty and don't call it so. In showing up a thing in its true colours, one commits no breach of good manners but only speaks the truth. Absolute truth, indeed, lies in



silence alone. But since one has but to use language in life, complete truth can come out only in that language in which I give you a faithful picture of the situation as I see it.

My Elder Brother

The Leader has published a speech made by Panditji (Malaviyaji). I see that it is an authentic report, since Panditji's previous sanction was taken. I want to draw your attention to one sentence appearing therein. He tells students "After fully weighing *the Pros and cons*, you may act according to the dictates of your conscience." I also want to say the same thing. And if you have the slightest doubt as to what the voice of your conscience says, if you are unable to decide for yourself your course of action, I ask you not to listen to me or anybody else but only to your revered Bhaisaheb Panditji. I have not seen a greater *dharmatma* (a religious soul) than Malaviyaji. I do not see any living person who has rendered more yeoman services to our land than he has. Panditji and myself! How close we are! I have been his adorer ever since I returned from South Africa. Many a time I have felt myself relieved of my heart's burden by pouring out my troubles to his sympathetic ears. He is to me verily like an elder brother.

In Case of Doubt Follow Panditji

That is the affinity between us. So all I can say to you is "Only then you may follow my advice when your conscience tells you that truth lies only on the side of Gandhi. But if you feel that both are great leaders and that you have to choose between one of the two for guidance, let me tell you, you must follow Panditji and not myself. If you have the slightest doubt about my view, you better leave me out. Following me in that case is quite likely to be harmful to you." Panditji is the arch-*guru* of the University. Panditji has founded it and Panditji is the soul of it. It is our duty to pay him our respects. I see Panditji's error in this matter, but if you have the least little doubt about the correctness of my view, you must reject my plea. The other day a gentleman approached me. He said, "Panditji's health at present is so delicate that your visit to Kashi (Benares) will give him a serious shock and it is possible that we may have to lose our Panditji. Is not your visit likely to mean the end of Panditji?" "But who am I," I replied, "to bring Panditji's life to an end? And if you mean the extinction of his



soul, that is utterly impossible." But the gentleman felt that my visit to Kashi would mean the death of Panditji's body. He said. "The boys will listen to your advice, vacate the University and Panditji will feel that the creation of his life-time has been brought to nought; and that will kill him." The fear moved me to a smile. I thought the gentleman did not know Panditji's mettle. He is no coward. He is not the man to die of a shock over such a matter.

India is Dearer

It is true the Hindu University is dear to him as life itself. But I, for one, think that he loves India even more than his University. Panditji is an optimist of optimists. He rightly believes that India is beyond the reach of harm from any power human, that the reins of India are in God's hands—not in anybody else's—and that God is there to advance India's welfare. All the same, I did wire to Panditji and, in his reply by wire, he sent me an invitation couched in sweet language to come over here.

Panditji did feel worried because of his conviction that some of you were taking a plunge without previous careful thinking and that if you took a precipitate step you would be nowhere. But if you consider it a sin to continue your studies here, you may leave the institution at once and Panditji will bless you. But if your conscience is not burning with that sense of sin, you must listen to none else than Panditji.

What is the Voice of Conscience?

That act alone is inspired by the voice of conscience, wherein the process of performance is clean, the object behind the act is pure and the outcome healthy. But our Shastras have imposed a still stiffer restriction to define clearly what such acts are. He alone who is self-controlled and observes non-violence, truth and non-possession can say he has received the call of conscience. If you do not observe *brahmacharya*, if your heart is hard and unsympathetic, if it is untruthful and unrestrained, you cannot say of any of your acts as impelled by the voice of conscience. But if you possess a heart with qualities I have already enumerated, if you have discarded the modes of the West, if your heart is as pure as a temple and so made by God His abode, you can respectfully disobey even your parents. You are entitled to take this step, since you are a free soul in that state of your being. I know there has been an inundation of undisciplined and self-willed behaviour in the West. But I do not wish to make the



students of India self-willed and insolent. I am quite unfit for my work, if, in this holy city of Varanasi and at this holy place, I wish to make you irresponsible.

Reason for Boycott of Schools

Why then am I appealing to the students to realize that their *dharma* lies in leaving their schools? Do I want that your student life must go to rack and ruin? No. I have myself been spending a student's life right till today. But I mean to say that he who has not learnt the lessons of liberty—and definitely you cannot learn them by the study of Mill's book, 'Liberty'—can never be called a free man. Your education is worse than even what the boys in Arabia get. A gentleman who came from those parts told me that our students do not have even a quarter of the training which the Arab boy has. There is not a single Arab student who accepts the rule of this Empire. The Arabs were tempted in various ways; postal and telegram and tram services were offered; aeroplanes also were promised; they were even told that their desert sands, which grow so hot that *khichri* (rice and lentil boiled together) can be cooked with the heat, would be cooled down and magnificent schools would be opened for them. But the students of Arabia said they did not want that education. They receive a strict religious education. What is needed for you is such religious education. The environment under which you get your education is such as cannot but make you afraid of human beings. But I would call that student an M. A. (Master of Arts) who has mastered the art of giving up all fear of man and walking in the fear of God. Your education is worth the name, when you become so strong that you need not stretch the beggar's hand for employment before any man. You are an educated man only when the truth dawns in your heart that, to gain your livelihood, you need not approach anybody with a crestfallen mien, so long as your hands and feet are alive and vigorous.

Sattu in Janak's¹ Holy Land

It is English historians themselves who say that there are three crores of men in India who do not get a square meal. A large part of the people in Bihar manages to exist on nothing else but *sattu*, a food that has little nourishing value. I have myself seen people pushing that draught—a mixture of water, maize-flour and red chillies—down their throat and my eyes have fired up at the sight. Pray, tell me, how long can you pull on with life, if you get that food to eat? In that land of Ramachandraji, in that



holy land of King Janak, not to talk of *ghee* (melted butter), people can't get even milk. How can you sit at ease, when such is the plight of our land? That education has no meaning which does not teach everyone to be a Macswiney.² May you get the strength to be *azad* (free) by dying of hunger, if freedom is the price you have to pay to keep your body alive.

I am told that the boys in Arabia and Mesopotamia have got that kind of education. They are braving the might of the Empire. But they have arms with them, while we have none. But in India's truthfulness lies a great power—that of the soul—and thereby we have the capacity to beat down the brute force of the Empire. Tulsidasji has left us the word to dissociate ourselves from the wicked. I say this Empire is demonic and hence dissociation from it becomes our *dharma*. This definitely means exodus but I do not ask you to go that far. Where can we go, if we emigrate? I, for one, see no where to lay our heads on except the bottom of the Indian Ocean or the Bay of Bengal. But Tulsidasji has also said, "If you cannot shun the wicked completely, avoid them as far as you can." I have not the least doubt that India would be doomed to destruction, would go on rotting in slavery, if you cannot imbibe the power of peaceful non-co-operation—like the one Sitaji resorted to, when she subsisted on the fruits and roots growing in her place of confinement *Ashoka-vatika* and refused the sweet dishes as well as the ministrations by female demons sent by Ravana.

1. King of Mithila and father-in-law of Rama. He was called *Rajarshi* (sage-king) because he was an ideal example of an ascetic who, however, performed all the duties of a worldly gentleman and a king.

2. Terrance Macswiney, a freedom fighter of Ireland and Mayor of Cork, who, when he was imprisoned, declared he would be free in a month alive or dead. But death came after a tortuous delay of about 70 days' fasting. In India there was one hero like him, Jatin Das, who fasted unto death in jail for about the same period.

India Systematically Ruined

I do not wish to enter into the reasons which prove that the Empire has become Satanic. But to me it is the climax of *adharma* (irreligion) to learn at the schools and colleges dominated by that Empire which has committed awfully wicked deeds in the Punjab, has compelled little children of six or seven to walk under a blazing sun and thus killed them, has insulted the honour of women, and, to crown it all, has declared the perpetrators of these horrors to be innocent and has even hailed them as 'saviours of the Empire'. My respected elder brother Panditji (Malaviyaji) considers it a *dharma*.



But my scriptures do not teach me so. I may never be a disciple of Ravana to learn from him either the *Bhagwadgita* or the Quran or the Bible. I would learn the Gita from one who has studied it with religious reverence. How can I learn it from a reeling drunkard? It is beyond the power of my language to give you an idea of the blazing fire that consumes my heart. I served this Empire for thirty years. I do not mean to say I did anything wrong in it. Only, it is impossible for me to continue the service, any longer, since I have seen the horrors of the Punjab. And that is not all. I see clearly that ever since its inception, this Empire has been systematically grinding India into dust, a fact, in comparison with which the Punjab horrors pale into insignificance. When I was of your age, I read Dadabhai Naoroji's, 'Poverty and the Un-British Rule in India.' Has what he proves therein, 'the progressive drain of India', abated in the slightest degree? Is it or is it not true that the Army Expenditure has been consistently increasing? Is the outflow of India's wealth through 'pensions' to Covenanted Servants greater now than before or not? If the answer is yes, then, I say, let Lord Sinha, or, for that matter, let the Panditji himself become the Viceroy, but I should be the last to go to him to pay my respects. The fact is, our slavery is ever increasing under the British regime. And when the slave is fascinated with the shining polish of his chains that slavery has bloomed to perfection. I assert that we are more abject slaves than we were even thirty-five years ago. We are sinking ever deeper in despair and cowardice. So, if I take a perspective view, I would definitely say that slavery has been consistently tightening its coil round us.

India Made Irreligious

A portion of Babu Bhagwandas's learned speech¹ continues to haunt my memory. He said, when our rulers become *Banias* (businessmen), and not merely ordinary *Banias*, but those who deal in liqueurs like *bhang* and *ganja* (Indian intoxicants), they become the meanest of rulers. Such rulers must be non-co-operated with. This Empire has made India *napak* (unholy). The Excise Department is thriving ever more. Men like Gokhaleji had advocated the increase of schools. But as matters stand, while in 1857 there were 30,000 schools in the Punjab, at present there are only 5000. The Government thus suppressed those many schools. The Government possesses the power of organisation and discipline. Do we have it? But the rulers have adroitly kept us in delusion. What kind of lessons of Swaraj can people of that sort teach us? Shall we learn these lessons by going into the Council-chambers? If you want



to learn how to get Swaraj, you must go straight to the Arabs or to the Boers. But even at present we do possess, I affirm against doubters, the innate power to win Swaraj, but have deluded ourselves into the belief that we are but lambs, though in reality we are lions. 'Who, on earth, can browbeat me, when the soul within is all-powerful?' Only when that conviction is awakened in you, can you be said to have got true education. After learning these fundamental lessons of freedom, and not before, can you rightfully have learning of any other kind. But today you are getting an education that only strengthens your chains. It is because we have a craze for degrees that we say we cannot do without a 'Charter' from the Government. Why do we not sit under these trees to get our education? Why do we require such magnificent buildings? When so many of your countrymen cannot have sufficient food to eat, when your sisters cannot bathe for days on end, since they have no spare clothing for a change, do you want palatial buildings for your studies? If you do, forget non-co-operation. But if you have any feeling for your land, if a fire is glowing in your heart as it is in mine, you must brush aside all talk of buildings and the like and plunge at once into non-co-operation of the kind I have suggested. If you do that, I repeat at this holy place the sacred promise I have given elsewhere—and that is, we will get Swaraj in one year.

1. *Supra*. Vol. II, Pages—269-272.

Fly From This Raging Fire

But let me warn you again and again that Swaraj can be gained only if you realize wherein lies your *dharma*. Loud cheers will not bring us Swaraj. And what is it that impels me to speak in this strain? It is not honours and titles, not land and money, not power and kingship I want. The one thing I hanker after is India's freedom. Many good people tell me I must align myself with other leaders. But I can't. I cannot set aside the compelling urge of my heart, the clear call of my conscience in order to be one with others. I don't want an agreement with others at the cost of my principle. And that fundamental principle is, you cannot gain the freedom or Swaraj for all before first breaking your own chains. If your inner eye perceives, as clearly as you see the trees opposite, that this Empire is Satanic, is treacherous, that it is a sin to study in this institution and that the Lieutenant Governor, despite all his protestations, does exert a subtle but effective influence over this institution's working, then, I tell you, don't tarry for a minute, keep miles away from it.



"Out from this raging fire, dare all possible risks to fly—that is my appeal to you. Don't ask me any question. Not even what you should do after coming out. Don't ask me how you will study, with no professors to teach, no buildings to shelter. If you have the nerves, go back to your homes. The home is your University then. If you can become more respectful and more truthful there, your home is definitely the University for you. But if you wish to have something that can match these temples (pointing his finger at the University buildings), you will fall from virtue. Your soul is fallen, if you have an infatuation for these temples. Is there any common ground between our houses and these imposing temples? In England there is to some extent—but not even that here. In India such edifices are made simply from looted money. The slave cannot even pray to God undisturbed. But it is possible for you to win your physical, mental and spiritual freedom right today. That student has already won all these three freedoms in whom the faith arises that, if he only chanted the *mantra* of Narayan, remembered Rama after leaving this institution, that itself would be a great education. If I can instil this indomitable faith in India's students, I can raise a Swaraj army from them. I say that there is no other course open to you except to give up these colleges, so long as the Empire breathes its influence on this institution directly or indirectly. But if you have not gained that self-confidence, you better continue where you are.

Unconditional Exodus

Two hundred students have resolved to leave this institution and I feel worried. I am not unhappy over their vow, but I am concerned lest they have little faith in themselves. It is a delusion you are cherishing, if you think that Gandhi is a conjurer and, on his coming, he will create a national college for you. In that I would say, not to start a venture (owing to the recognition of one's limitations) is the first sign of intelligence,¹ for you. If you leave this college without thinking that much, it is I who will fall into sin. All that I tell you is this: After leaving the college sit quietly at home. Save yourself from this raging fire. If you have faith in yourselves, you will be able to create a college right today. But, as Pandit Jawaharlal has declared,—and so has Mohammed Ali at Aligarh—you must leave this University without any mental reservations and pre-conditions. Leave it only if at any cost you must, and in your own personal interest. Otherwise, it is best you returned. And if you are ever going to return, please don't leave it at all. Our country is not ours, if we do not follow the



behests of our (national) *dharma*. Don't forget that in speaking to you, I am addressing your higher self, your ancient cultural heritage. Let me repeat again that, if there lingers in your mind even a trace of doubt, you must follow only Malaviyaji. He has cut down the span of his life in his Herculean effort to build up this University. But if it is as clear as daylight to your soul that it is a sin to remain here, you may bid it a good-bye. 'When the son attains the age of sixteen, he must be treated like a friend'—so says our Shashtra: And as you are above sixteen, I have the right to tell you what I have done. I have given this selfsame kind of education to my sons and I have not done them any harm. And now at the end, this is my prayer for you: "May Kashivishvanath (The Lord of the World at Kashi) instil in you purity, courage, the power of performing austerities and all the other necessary ingredients for your step!"

1. Reference to a Sanskrit verse which adds in the second line that the second sign of intelligence is to bring every hazard to its proper end. if once it is begun.

‘अनारम्भो मनुष्याणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् |
आरम्भस्याऽन्तगमनं द्वितीयं बुद्धिलक्षणम् ||’

Speech at the College Hall

This speech was delivered on the University campus, but Panditji insisted on Gandhiji discoursing to the students from the same platform from where Panditji himself had done. So the next day Gandhiji agreed to speak to the students at the spacious hall of the College itself. Panditji as well as all the professors and others were present. I will drop here those portions which were a repetition of his preceding speech. Gandhiji began his speech with the comparison of the work that faced him at Aligarh and Benares:

"As I am sitting here, I remember the scene I witnessed at Aligarh. When I went there and talked to the students, I said what I wanted to say at the Hall there. I was quite aware of the great responsibility that lay on my shoulders then. I was aware that that was an old institution, older than this. I was aware that the students of that institution loved it dearly and that a great Muslim was its creator. And yet I summoned up courage to have my full say. None the less, my heart was shedding silent tears and feeling amazed at what I was doing. At the sight of these magnificent buildings around me my heart is weeping today also. It is crying even more bitterly, since the soul of this



institution is revered Panditji, whom I have looked up to as my respected elder brother. It was a habit with me not to take any step without taking his advice. I used to cherish the aspiration that in India I would spend my life in his company.

That is the relationship between us. The situation at Aligarh was different. I do not even know who is all in all there. And I tremble at the fear lest, while I am sitting in this University hall, something comes out of my lips that causes pain to my respected elder brother. But my *dharma* teaches me that I must part from the object of my deepest love, when the occasion demands that I should speak out what appears to my conscience as my *dharma*. This very thing I am doing today. But let me assure you that despite our serious difference of views, my reverence for Panditji will not be a whit less than before. In the same way even if you accept my advice, you will, I hope, retain the same reverence you have for him now.

N.C.O.: Not for Lapse into Indolence

"My heart testifies that Panditji has been doing what he does as a matter of religious duty. It is, therefore, impossible for our friendship to cool down the slightest. Similarly, I wish, your reverence for Panditji and the professors continues to be as great as now. And don't imagine that your patriotism or your intelligence is greater than theirs. What happens to be is nothing more than a difference of views. India can become free this very day, if all the men and women of India become of one mind. But every country that has fought for freedom has had the experience of such differences of views. It could become independent only after crossing all these difficulties. Our country also cannot be free without undergoing those same trials and tribulations, which these countries had to pass through. I ask you not to lapse from your modesty, your politeness and your humility; don't look down upon those who remain in the college and don't harass them. Behave in such a way as would drive out the fears and doubts which our honoured elders have for you. You will get only their blessings, and nothing less, if, after coming out of the College, you are more religious in thought and act than before. It will pain their souls as well as mine, if, leaving the College thoughtlessly, you advance only your own interest, become hypocrites or addicts to bad habits and give up your *dharma* of service to others. If you are open to anybody's advice, take only that of Panditji. But if there remains for you no need to consult anybody and you are resolved in the matter, if your heart insistently cries out that it is your duty to non-co-operate, then do get out of the institution without any hesitation



And when you come out. don't fail to take Panditji's blessings. He will not try to detain you for a minute."

Why Not My Own Emigration?

After declaring further that he was appealing for non-co-operation, not because the present system of education is very defective but because to accept any charity, be it of gold or education, from the hands of a wicked man in morally bad, Gandhiji said:

"I would definitely leave this Empire, but if I did so, I feel I cannot give to India the message I want to deliver. That is the only reason why, even under this intolerable situation, I manage to live on in India. As Tulsidasji has spoken in no uncertain terms about the wickedness of *Ravanaraj*, so am I saying with equal emphasis that this is for us nothing but *Ravanaraj*. The one question I am asking myself,—the one object for which I chant my *mantra* every hour and every minute of my life—is how to mend or end this Empire. That is the one and only object that keeps me tied to this land."

Sacrifice Even Higher Education

Asking the students to give up their present education, whether they can learn anywhere else or not, Gandhiji again said, "Leave your College only if a strong aversion against the ruling conditions—the like of mine—has arisen in your mind, only if you are convinced that it is your duty to sacrifice, without any hesitation, even your body for the cause of freedom. Even if this College provides you with education and personal facilities of the highest type, a sacrifice of even these amenities is now necessary for the good of India.

Self-restraint and Politeness

"Non-co-operation means the *dharma* of self-restraint at its highest. You can't be a non-co-operator if you are intolerant. As for your duty towards parents, I may only say that if you have resolved on non-co-operation, approach them with deep respect, plead with them with great politeness and if the talk shakes your resolve, you must definitely obey your parents. In every one of your acts I expect you to be courteous and to follow your *dharma*. You will be committing a breach of that very



oath, after taking which you leave the College, if you discard your *dharma*. The first lesson you must, therefore, learn is that of being respectful. And you will have to undergo heavy sacrifices. I call them 'heavy', because our miserable condition has made us cowards and renunciation of the means of livelihood is also a 'heavy' sacrifice."

"In conclusion let me repeat again and again that only after discussing the matter with those professors in whom you have faith and with Malaviyaji and after getting their blessings you may leave the College."

Pandit Malaviyaji

Panditji then got up. He said,

"I hope, you will ponder with faith and devotion upon every word of the solemn and soul-stirring exhortation you have heard just now and then come to a decision. The question that faces you is this: If, from the acts of the British Government, you feel that it is painful to live in that land or that institution which has any connection with that Government, then give up the contact by all means. There is no *dharma* for man higher than obedience to the voice of one's conscience. But do not do anything in excitement, in haste or without due deliberation. If your conscience is uneasy about your stay here, you must definitely obey its mandate and leave. But do what you think best only after carefully reflecting over the sacred sermon you have just now heard and the hard tests it has posed. This Empire is tainted with countless ills. The other day, during the lecture I gave you for hours together, I had harped upon the same thing, viz., there are no two opinions about these ills. Let me tell you, you have learned nothing here, if, after completing this education or leaving it just now, the urge to sacrifice your very life for the country does not arise in you. I wish our students continued their education here for the one object of establishing Swaraj in the country, of dedicating their wealth, their body and their mind to national service. But if you are convinced at heart, that your *dharma* to get education here no longer obtains, you may go to your parents and tell them what you feel. If their dissuasion fails to change your conviction, bow down to them and take your leave. If the father is like Hiranyakashipu, you must do exactly as Prahlad did. If you have the light that had illumined Prahlad's heart, you, too, may certainly disregard your parents' advice respectfully and disobey them. If that disobedience entails any sin, I will willingly share it. The one thing I want to impress upon you is this. Only then you may leave the



institution, when you can sufficiently steel your heart to make the grim resolve to get out at any cost. And be determined never to return, if once you leave it. Don't leave this college with the impetuosity of a raw *sannyasi*. I will definitely give you my blessings, if you leave this college with the single purpose of serving the country. May God grant you intelligence, spirit of adventure and firmness in order to enable you to be true servants of the country."

I will close this letter with the expression of my desire that every Indian student should treasure in his heart this sublime sermon. The students of Benares are now thinking what they should do. Professor (J. B.) Kripalani has resigned from the College and has become their adviser. Babu Shivaprasad and Babu Bhagwandasji also are helping them. There is no doubt about the happy outcome of these efforts.

Dialogue with Professors

The professors of the Hindu University had arranged a dialogue with Gandhiji at the Central Hindu College. He prefaced his speech with these remarks: "I wish we had a heart-to-heart talk here. I know there is a sharp division of opinion in the matter of advising students to leave their colleges. It has been charged against me that after my failure to appeal to the intellect of the country, I have entered upon this wild cat scheme. The second charge against me is that my temperament is so frail, that, after arriving at a certain decision, I am not open to correction. I will say only one thing in reply. I have not embarked upon this scheme in haste or anger or even righteous indignation. In my letter to the Viceroy I had given a warning of serious consequences for the breach of promises given to Islam. There was another warning also that declaration of grief alone was not sufficient. I have also told in my letter to the Viceroy that a case had been made out for the use of the sword. But India is incapable of wielding the sword. I found non-co-operation to be the only alternative and which in the detail I have placed before the country.

The student problem has come into prominence. The poor response of professors and teachers has been an eye-opener. I have not been able to find any cogent reasons for it except the atmosphere in which we were born and the very system of education which has made us incapable of the sacrifice required for the country and for revolutionising India's opinion.



There is nothing that I can see in our mental constitution which should debar us from having Swaraj today. No nation has had to go through a period of tutelage for winning freedom. In many instances the sword has decided the issue, for example, in the Boer War. In India either the sword will revolutionise opinion or non-co-operation, not any other method. I have come here to take notes with you, to be mercilessly challenged by you. I am not going to advance any argument for non-co-operation in education.

(The following dialogue then took place—)

Q: Does your programme mean non-co-operation irrespective of the fact whether we are prepared to give them any other education?

Bapuji: It is certainly not a *sine qua non* and I think that this self-denying ordinance is a *sine qua non* and to be infinitely preferred to the literary education that the students receive today. We would be able to finance the education suited to the needs of the country in an easier manner than the top-heavy education system obtaining today. But we have to be confronted with a mad career of repression. When the country responds to the repression fittingly, we would have Swaraj in a month.

Anandshankar Dhruva: Will this sacrifice help in maintaining Swaraj?

Bapuji : It will certainly help in winning Swaraj. We are engaged in a battle with a brave nation. My idea of the future is that the English are an ultimately sane nation and they will seek our co-operation. I don't for a moment believe that there will be complete sundering.

Q: But what about the intellectual hiatus?

Bapuji: This is a programme capable of being worked out in a year or two. If you open my heart, I read Swaraj in one year.

Anandshankar: There is a genuine difference in this forecast. The war will have to last much longer.

Bapuji: Then you will have to be prepared for sacrifices all the greater. But I see a ray of hope if the educated class is converted to my view. It is only the educated class which is hindering the work.

Anandshankar: We will serve better by doing what we are doing (educational work in the Hindu University) here.



Chhabalani: The habit of not working together is an age-old one and that has made us a prey to the foreigner. All the good this British despotism has done by way of national consciousness will be gone. Education, elementary education, is even necessary for understanding of the orders of the Field Marshall.

Bapuji: I am not striving for a monarchy of the type of Akbar. India may present a larger problem than any other country. The question is whether the country has got that political consciousness. And it is asserting itself in an astounding manner. The demonstration all over the country is not a matter of personal equation. Supposing I lead an anti-vaccination campaign. Do you think I could command an audience? But the reason why the people flock to me is that they are filled with hope and a consciousness of the wrong. We would be grievously erring if we place before the country a programme of the three R's before we can conceive Swaraj. Primary education is not indispensable for the awakening of national consciousness. A few more Jallianwala Baghs and you will see the nation free. To say that non-co-operation is a process of destruction is to caricature it. Literacy is not necessary either for political consciousness or parliamentary government.

Chhabalani: We are known for the unparliamentary attitude of the mind.

Bapuji: My reading of the masses tells me that they are trained parliamentarians. Sir Henry Maine bears me out. There is my personal experience also. Where they are deeply interested, you will find them taking part as much as the English in the boxing matches.

Sheshadri : Conscience test is dangerous. 'No man should act according to his conscience, if it be that of an ass', says Ruskin. The Spanish tyrants and Aurangzeb claimed to follow the voice of conscience. The boys cannot be expected to have that divine conscience capable of judging between right and wrong.

Bapuji: I certainly share the feeling in connection with the appeal to individual conscience and I am most grateful for your caution. I fully realize the tremendous responsibility that lies on my shoulders. But I have to steer clear of the greater danger today; that is, being brought up in a certain atmosphere, we find it difficult to wriggle out of it. In spite of the bad examples quoted, we have equally good examples of good lads having used their conscience for the good of mankind. I would say that I would tolerate examples of one thousand errors, if I can get one clear example of a boy having used his conscience aright. Without that it would be impossible to do anything in this priest-ridden and authority-ridden land.



Am I not to teach the youth of this country that it is a sin to regard anybody as an untouchable? Am I not to teach the youth that if the parents are drunkards, they are to resist the authority of the parents, if they placed a cup of wine before them? I appeal, however, to the conscience not of an ass, but to a disciplined conscience. I try to place the truth unadulterated before the students and I have discharged my duty. With some of them the wish may be father to the thought and if such vagrant students hail this talk of boycott of schools, the fault does not lie with me. I would risk the students' youth running riot, rather than crush its budding enthusiasm.

Anandshankar: That means judgment instead of conscience. Self-restraint and politeness and a spiritual attitude in life.

Bapuji: Yes.

Sheshadri: Ram Ram Ram! You didn't mean it literally? The sooner we try to be more material, the greater will be the hope of our salvation.

Bapuji: I was speaking to a number of young men full of zeal and enthusiasm. They had laid aside the religious culture of the country and become athiests and scoffers. Speaking to them and knowing that their religious sense had been fully starved, I told them if they had nothing to do they should utter these words from the heart: 'Seek ye the kingdom of God and everything shall be added unto you.'

Sheshadri: Any kind of association is bad. Why don't you preach leaving the country for good? Why do you use stamps, telegrams, coins and such other things? On what principle do you draw the line somewhere? Why don't you proceed logically?

Bapuji: Whilst my logical nature recognises the inexorable nature of the logic just cited before me, I realize the limitations of human nature and feel that my country is not able to go the whole hog. Nor is it even necessary. Through the non-co-operation programme the country denies itself the use of only those things which are the most visible signs of degradation. Stamps etc. don't come in among them. The coil of Satan has so wound itself round us, that it is impossible for us to extricate ourselves completely.

Adhikari: Do you seek to get any work by means of undisciplined men? You are beginning at the wrong end. I have been teaching them for the last twentyfour years. They will raise a guillotine to kill you one day, Sir.

Bapuji: If they were an undisciplined rabble, it is a sad commentary on the present system of education. I know I am running big risks. But surely, you are not



going to win a big battle by running away from big risks. I say that even that state is infinitely better than the present. I am getting impatient, I confess. But to save myself I have adopted the least risky of the methods. The students are good at heart and they would take time before they are disciplined.

Anandshankar: What makes you think that this education has been a failure?

Bapuji: I am not quarreling with the system of education. My fight is against the domination of the mind. This education has produced vacant minds and manufactured servants for the Government. It has produced Malaviyaji and Nehru (Motilal Nehru), but these are not because of this education, but in spite of it. If our education were healthy, we would have had better results. I do not know of any educated class in any part of the world which is so enervated and unmanly as our educated class. It is like the coil of the snake which has taken the lifeblood itself.

Anandshankar: Is it intellectual domination you talk of or administrative domination? The helplessness of the educated is not on account of the system, but of the intellectual poverty of our people.

Bapuji: The products of our universities have become nincompoops. The poverty of the mind has been produced by an erroneous education imparted through a foreign medium. Our educated men are the blotting sheets of European civilization.

Anandshankar: Then change the medium.

Bapuji: I will. But I have given only the chief cause. Not only have we suffered from intellectual poverty, there is no correspondence between the needs of the country and the education given. 80% of the people need be agriculturists. But that subject does not occur in any curriculum of our universities. We have no religious education worth the name. You cannot have true education in any country where the soul is starved. That is why I only say, 'Get out of this domination. Get out of this mark of the beast.'

Anandshankar: Then you come forward as an educational reformer, rather than as a non-co-operationist.

Bapuji: But today my purpose is higher. I want the nation to be free from this enslaving atmosphere.

Telang: When you speak of 'slave-mentality', you are laying too much stress on what is the portrait of the moment and not looking at it historically. When you speak



of parliamentary institutions in India, you overlook that they were not on the national scale at all. The idea of 'national democratic government' has come from the West. If we cut off the contact with the West just now, when we are beginning to imbibe the idea, we shall reel back to the period of benevolent despotism. What is necessary is to improve the education. I, for one, think that the Hindu University and the Aligarh University—with all their sins on their heads—are exactly the institutions that we want.

Bapuji: These institutions are retarding national progress today. I wish, both these institutions become purer. I have no quarrel with the West. I detest Western civilization, but condemnation of all that is West is totally different. I have given ample recognition to the scientific spirit of the West, its accuracy, its relentless search after truth. But my quarrel centres round the present system of Government and I should destroy the system. I have no quarrel with learning many a lesson of the West. I want a meeting ground. I am quarreling with Kipling's¹ teaching. But today there is really no meeting ground. A perpetual quarrel between East and West is out of the question. If anything can bring them together it is non-co-operation, which is essentially a cleansing process. I want you to understand the distinction between what I am aiming at and what is imputed to me. I am certainly not instilling hatred into the minds of the people. I am certainly bringing to the surface all the bad feelings lying unexpressed in the public mind, but that also for purification. I may tell you that many an Englishman testifies that I am doing that process of purification and now the country is rivetting its attention more and more on the purity of means and on reform from within. This scheme of non-co-operation contains so many automatic checks and so many safety-valves, that it will not lead to an explosion. I am sorry I have opposed one whom I revere. If I could have saved Panditji his pangs, and my pangs I should have done so. Say what you will, claim for yourself all the liberties, but the fact is, the hand that holds you is hidden. It is the velvet glove which hides it. I cannot possibly tolerate the crushing weight of this domination.²

1. Reference to the well-known lines of Rudyard Kipling:

"East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet."

2. Mahadevbhai took down long-hand notes of this dialogue, which were, therefore, hastily written and rather scrappy. It is possible that in the reproduction of the arguments there may be some misrepresentation. I must,



therefore, offer my apology. But as the dialogue is at once instructive and Interesting, I have ventured to reproduce it (in Gujarati) as best I could.

The translator has tried to be as faithful as possible to the original notes, taken down in English. in the Dtaay itself.

Editor.

28-11-1920

Met the Gujaratis in Benares.

My invaluable meeting with a great soul—Babu Satish Mukherjee. Left for Allahabad by the night train.

Talked about Mukherjee in the train. Bapu wrote letters to Devdas, Deepak, Saraladevi, Harkisanlal and Maganlal. He prepared a translation of his favourite hymn with its analysis.

Vaishnavajana

वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिये, जे पीड़ पराई जाणे रे,
परदुःखे उपकार करे तोये, उर अभिमान न आणे रे| वैष्णव०
सकल लोकमां सहुने वन्दे, निन्दा न करे केनी रे,
वाच काछ मन निश्चल राखे, धन-धन जननी तेनी रे|वैष्णव०
समदृष्टि ने तृष्णा त्यागी, परस्त्री जेने मात रे,
जिह्वा थकी असत्य न बोले परधन नव झाले हाथ रे| वैष्णव०
मोह माया व्यापे नहीं जेने, दृढ़ वैराग्य जेना मनमाँ रे,
रामनाम शुं ताली लागी, सकल तीरथ तेना तनमाँ रे|वैष्णव०
वणलोभी ने कपट-रहित छे, काम-क्रोध निवार्या रे,
भणे 'नरसैयो' तेनु दर्शन करतां, कुल एकोतेर तार्या रे| वैष्णव०

(A new translation has been given below, as Gandhiji's translation could not be traced—Translator.)

He is a Vaishnava, and none else,
Who in virtue ever excels;
Who feels, as his, another's grief
And wipes the tear and brings relief.



He, yet, with pride doth never swell;
Humility true in him doth dwell.
In praises free, in scandal untrained,
In body, mind and speech restrained.
Not his the eye that lusts, desire-free,
With equal love the world doth see.
Others' wealth he does not crave,
Speaks truth in temptations grave.
No craze, no spell, disturb his peace;
Renunciation firm is his.
In tune with God, himself the sage
Becomes a place of pilgrimage.
Is crooked wiles and greed without;
Anger and lust are all thrown out.
Hail, mother! thou who gave him birth
And brought up a son of glorious worth.
The holy sight of such a sage,
Says Narsinh, saves our whole lineage.

From the qualities of a Vaishnava which Narsinh Mehta¹ has enumerated here, we find that:

1. He is a good Samaritan;
2. Is free from pride never the less;
3. Respects and praises all;
4. Slanders none;
5. Is restrained in speech;
6. Is restrained in mind;
7. Is restrained in body;
8. Loves all equally;
9. Is, hence, free from desire;
10. Is a loyal husband;
11. Is truthful;



12. Does not covet others' wealth;
13. Is beyond infatuation;
14. Is filled with the spirit of renunciation;
15. Is in tune with God;
16. Is, therefore, saintly;
17. Is free from greed;
18. Is free from wiles;
19. Is free from lust;
20. Is free from anger.

Letter to Lala Harkishenlal (a Moderate leader):

"Your letter has followed me in my travels. If you prove a true prophet the blame will be partly yours also. You may not sit still and let the roots of violence sprout and say: "Behold! what I said has proved true.' But whether you prove a true prophet or false, non-co-operation has to go on till it stops by the weight of its own violence. Therefore, you are expected to strain every nerve to falsify your prophecy.

"The demand regarding Khilafat is: Restore to Turkey what was hers at the time of the War with completest safeguards for the self-determination of Arabs and the Armenians. Regarding the Punjab, full reparation in accordance with the demands of the Punjab. This should be followed by complete Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of only chosen leaders of the people. You will see this suggestion in my letter to every Englishman."

A portion of a letter to Saraladevi:

"Deepak asks for being relieved from English studies for the time being. I honour the boy for it. If you do not even mentally resist I would like to let Deepak have his way. I will see to it that some day he learns English. But I assure you he will lose nothing by omitting English for the time being. Do you know that when a boy has acquired linguistic talent and has mastered the science of language, it is an easy thing for him to learn a new language? Thus did Max Muller learn sixteen languages. When you have mastered the science, you have only to memorize a few hundred root words and you know your language. Do, therefore, please give me your willing consent. Deepak is a



great and noble boy. I would not force him in the matter of learning or anything else, so long as he remains busy and trains himself to think. Please tax yourself and give me your true decision. Remember it is ever safe to trust one's children's teacher. Take all the precautions you like about your choice; but having made it leave the training to the teacher. "I had a nice time in Benares. What the outcome will be I do not know. The atmosphere is certainly clear and "Malaviyaji is calmer if not entirely calm."

Letter to Deepak:

"I will write to you henceforth in Gujarati only. I had your letter. I have asked for Mother's opinion whether you should give up studying English at present. There will be no harm in leaving the study of English now, if you become a real student. Take care of all the three—your body, your mind and your soul. For the body, physical exercise, healthy jokes, good food and cheerful temperament. For the mind, reading and reflection. For the soul, a pure heart; and for this, early rising, deliberate effort to get absorbed in prayers and the study of the Gita. Everyday you must say to yourself : "Only the truth I will speak, meditate on and act. I will love all. I will gain control over all my senses. I will not cast a covetous glance at anything belonging to another. I will regard nothing as my own, but will dedicate my all to God." Such contemplation will purify the heart."

An extract from the letter to Devadas:

"Spent two full days at Kashi. Had fairly good experiences. I had no fear of a bitterness arising with Panditji (Malaviyaji). Others might have some doubt, but even that must have been dissolved. Had long talks with students. Now we have to wait and watch. The country is ridden with inordinate weakness. This non-co-operation, and nothing else, will make it strong."

1. Father of modern Gujarati poetry who flourished in the 16th century and was a devout "Vaishnava" himself. Vaishnava = follower of Lord Vishnu, who does not mean merely one of the Trinity—the Preserver. Apte's Dictionary gives the 'popular' derivation of the word as meaning the One Supreme.



29/30-11-1920

1-12-1920

Reached Allahabad at 11 a. m. Pandit Motilalji and Jawaharlalji saw Bapu. Welcome with blowing conches and ringing bells. Panditji put rice-grains and vermilion on Bapu's forehead. The following letter gives greater details about Allahabad:

Leaving Benares Gandhiji came to Allahabad. As news was coming thick from everywhere that students were giving up their schools, Gandhiji, as we have seen, had stressed the need for caution and firmness. Immediately on stepping into Allahabad, Pandit Motilal Nehru handed Gandhiji a letter to him from Jhansi. It said that after Gandhiji's departure many students returned to their schools within only 2 or 3 days, even though they had taken a solemn oath not to do so in the name of Gitaji or the Quran. His lecture on the 30th, therefore, given to the students of Allahabad may be said to be very largely devoted to the value of an oath. The thoughts expressed therein were not new. Gandhiji had often given vent to those same thoughts during the great strike of mill-labourers at Ahmedabad in 1917. All the same, put as they are in a new form, they are likely to be both helpful and charming, not only to students but to everyone. And they deserve a permanent place as the first lesson in moral behaviour that should be taught in any school.

The Sacredness of a Vow

Relating the incident at Jhansi, Gandhiji said : "The news pained me exceedingly. There also many students had first met Jawaharlal and he had told them quite plainly that they might leave their school only under the conviction that it was their *dharma* to do so and not in the hope of an alternative provision. They agreed to get on with anything that could be done for them. And Bhai Jawaharlal even got a building for them, but, for the last week, it remains empty. I am unable to express in words, the pain all this news has given me. These events are, to me, a clear sign of our slavery. That man becomes a beast, a coward, who dishonours a solemn pledge. After coming from England and staying in Bombay for a short while, Lord Willingdon, giving an account of his Indian experience, declared that in India he did not meet with a single Hindu or Muslim who had the courage to say 'No'. That charge holds good still. We look at the man opposite, sense from his face what he expects from us, whether 'yes' or 'no', and say what pleases him. But here, I cannot get Panditji's daughter, a kid of



three or four, do anything against her will. I tell her, "Sit on my lap", and pat. She says, "No". I ask her, "Will you wear Khadi?" and out comes "No." We do not possess the strength of even this little baby. A great man has stated that we shall have to be like children, if we want to ascend to heaven. To be like children is to have the courage and innocence of the child. Edwin Arnold¹ has given an excellent exposition on the innocence of a child. It catches a scorpion, even a snake, and thrusts its hand in fire, but without the least consciousness of fear. You must cultivate that freedom from fear. It is because you have lost your faith in God that you are a prey to fear.

"Often I cry to myself, 'O, for a flight from India or freedom for her!' Freedom means nothing else than the capacity to speak out or act according to our conviction without fear or favour. That is the boy with true courage who says his say in face of a million men. So the first lesson for you is to learn to say, 'No'. It is far better you did not take a vow at all. But I call it a serious crime, if you took a vow and then violated it. If you have got the highest education, acquired imposing degrees, but are easily prone to break your vow, I will say, "Better drown yourself in the Jamuna nearby." You may perhaps defend yourself on the ground that your heart said one thing and you acted accordingly and it then said something else which, too, you followed. But the answer is, 'You should not then take a vow at all'. Our scriptures say, "If you take a vow, die for it." And these injunctions were proved true by Raidas², and Harishchandra³ who had served a Bhangi's home (the lowest caste among even the 'untouchables'). How can you forget that you are children of these spiritual heroes? True, one can definitely break a vow taken to tell a lie or commit debauchery, because the man only raises himself by the breach. But a vow for renouncing something can never be retracted. If a Hindu takes a vow to abjure cow's flesh or a Muslim wine or pork, he should refuse to take those things even in illness, despite the danger of impending death or the strong pressure of a doctor. Only to that man who has, at the cost of life itself, refused to take the forbidden food and remained loyal to his vow, will the Lord say, when he is carried to Heaven, 'You are verily a lion's cub.'

"In all religions of the world, there is this strictness of injunctions about a vow. You cannot tell a lie to save a man or even a whole town, if you have taken a vow to speak the truth. I must—I have to—show in some way or other how deeply pained I am at the scant respect shown to the vow. I may manage to understand a decrepit old man going back on his word. I am an old man and it is possible I may err; but you? You are in the bloom of youth, new blood courses through your veins; how can I forgive you? In this context I cannot help giving you a bit of my experience, even at the risk of



irrelevancy. Under the shade of a tree on the bank of the river Sabarmati, thousands of mill-workers, invoking the presence of God, took a solemn pledge at Ahmedabad two years ago not to resume work till their demands were granted. They held on for twenty days, but then I sensed that they were on the point of lapsing from the vow. I told them, "If you fall, I too will end my life by fasting. Had you not taken the vow, it would not have mattered much. But I can't bear your taking a vow and then breaking it." The workers began to weep, fell at my feet and appealed to me to give up the fast, saying, "We will make our bread by physical labour, but will not return to work." I had thus to take a vow of fasting to save them from a moral fall. Don't be more indisciplined than even those mill-workers. Don't have less faith in God than even they had. Give up the slavery of man and accept that of God. If you want to destroy this Empire, you will have to free yourselves first from your personal slavery. Not that Swaraj can never be gained if you do not take a vow, but it is certain to recede from us, if you break a vow once taken. Muslims are not going to be able to help their brother-muslims with the aid of students who will not keep their oath. It is, therefore, my earnest entreaty to you not to take a vow and, if you once take it, not to give it up even if the heavens fall. If only a handful among you bind themselves with a pledge, Swaraj will be ours with the help of those few. There are the examples of Imam Hasan and Hussein to inspire Muslim students. It is not the sword but such great fakirs with indomitable resolve who have sustained Islam. You will not be able to make the country free as much by taking the M. A. degree or becoming a volunteer of *sevasamiti* (society for service) or gaining the power to deliver a harangue on a Congress platform, as by honouring a pledge."

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1. A great English poet and Sanskrit scholar celebrated for his "Song Celestial" and "Light of Asia", translations in verse form of Bhagwadgita and Buddha-charita.
 2. A mediaeval 'untouchable' saint, who nevertheless received homage from the high and mighty. His hymns have earned immortality.
 3. To keep his promise of charity, he sold himself to a low-caste man.

This Government and Ravana

After thus speaking at length on the duty of keeping a vow, Gandhiji came to his usual subject. In his comparison of British rule with that of Ravana, he made some improvement: "There is no difference between this rule and *Ravanaraj*. If there is any, it is simply this. In Ravana's heart there may be a grain of pity, a little less of bad faith.



He had even said to Mandodari (queen consort) "Can I be a match for Rama, just because I have ten heads? You have gone crazy. I know he is an *avatar* (God's incarnation to destroy evil). And I am quite conscious that I have grown so wicked, that it would be nothing wrong if I die at His hands." But our Empire has lost all fear of God. It has not even the consciousness that God is there to destroy it. It behaves as if it has God in its pocket. Superior airs, abundant wealth and bad faith—these are its Trinity. European culture is steeped in Satanism, but the British Empire is the worst even in that culture. Till yesterday, I thought the British Empire to be less wicked than all other countries in Europe. But now I am convinced that there is no Empire that has forgotten God as completely as the British. I am not going to serve it any more. Not for a moment can I stay under the aegis of that Empire.

Don't Be Greater Slaves

"If you have any doubts about the truth of my statements, if you don't think the Empire as wicked as I do, you may unhesitatingly continue to study in your school. But if you agree with me, even the study of the Gita in this Empire's school is no good for you. The Government that enslaves us will build palaces for us and teach the Gita in them, teach us medicine, science, engineering and what not, but can we study in them? I say 'no', because all these forms of learning are drugged with poison, because all that education is only to bind us down all the more in slavery. We are fighting for *dharma*, the Government for *adharma* (irreligion). How can we take any help from, or have anything to do with that Government which knows quite well the crimes of its officers like Sir Michael O'dwyer (the Lieut. Governor of the Punjab) and still defends him, knows the beastliness of (General) Dyer (of Jallianwala Bagh fame) and calls it merely "a grave error of judgment?" To continue our contact with it is to be more beastly, is to sink into deeper slavery.

"What is the Provision for Us?"

"For God's sake don't ask this question. I don't ask you to give up Government slavery in order to be slaves under me. If you intend to be my slaves, I don't know you. If you have not sufficient strength to earn your livelihood and support your parents by exerting yourself in every possible way, you must definitely refrain from leaving your school or college. It is our business to make a provision for you and we are certainly



going to make it as best we can. The Indian climate is so vitiated that I should not wonder if professors and teachers consider me a lunatic and their help you may not get. I do not want help from such people either. But if you don't get teachers or professors, you may become your own professor and stand on your own legs. If you think of coming to us in the hope of getting support and strength from either myself or Motilalji or Shaukat Ali, you best remain where you are."

Putting to himself the question, "Whence to bring Satyagrahis like Prahlad in these days?" he answered it by narrating incidents from the life of Swami Dayananda¹. Somebody suggested that if Gandhiji wanted to take real work from the people by showing to them that a state of war existed, he should provide some excitement to them. Gandhiji replied, "I do not want to provide any excitement to anybody. The way you are educated is sufficient excitement for you. What I want to instil in you is cool courage. What I wish is that your heart is pure enough to enable you to undergo austerities, sacrifices." In reply to the complaint that parents did not give permission, (to leave the school or college), he said, "The fact is, parents are not stopping their children, but the boys themselves do not wish to leave, even if the parents ask them to. At the Hindu University I had asked a hundred or a hundred and fifty boys. They had told me that the parents not only permitted them, but were even ready to pay for the expenses. Be that as it may. Whatever some one else may say, you may leave your institution only if your conscience told you that it was a sin to continue in it. In case of the slightest doubt, follow Malaviyaji's advice. I came to India only five years ago, while he has spent his whole life in the country's service. Hence I say, if my voice does not tally with the voice of your conscience, obey Malaviyaji. If it does, you must definitely reject even Malaviyaji's advice."

In his short but charming speech Maulana Azad Saheb said two things: The first that he was crazy about education. Even during his confinement at Ranchi, he had tried to spread education and had raised a fund for starting an independent school. Nobody could, therefore, accuse him of being against education as such. The second thing, he said, was the fact that the country's good depended on none others as much as on students. If, at this invaluable opportunity, the students did not play their part creditably, the country was never going to extricate itself from its present state.

After his speech ended, those students who had decided to leave their institution were asked to form a separate group. 75 collegians, 35 high school students and some girls of the Krosthwait Girls' High School declared their decision to do so.



The next day Gandhiji had a long talk with all these boys and girls. A list of those among them, who had no means of livelihood, was then made in order to provide for them. On the following day Gandhiji opened a school "Tilak Vidyalyaya", for the non-co-operating schoolboys. The education of non-co-operating collegians lay, he declared, in keeping patience at present, in regularly attending the Ashram and in becoming adepts in the art of spinning. Jawaharlal was in the look out for a building for these students. He must have got it by now. He has also undertaken to advise them and make other arrangements for them.

Left for Patna on the 1st December. I halted at Allahabad for a while. I could not help breaking down when I had to separate from Bapu. Meeting with Mrs. Joseph. Bapu reached Patna on the night of the 1st, while I on the morning of the 2nd.

1. Founder of Arya Samaj (1824—1863). A fearless fighter for reformed Hinduism. He was the target of vicious attacks from the orthodox.

2-12-1920 to 13-12-1920

(Mahadevbhai's letter published in the *Navajivan* is first given here -Editor)

It is nine p. m. now. I am writing this letter in the train going to Calcutta from Bhagalpur. This is the only time when I can have some quiet. The stream of visitors and public meetings take up my daytime fully. At every station, even at night, hundreds, nay, thousands, eager for Bapu's *darshan*, would always be seen waiting on platforms. One is, therefore, compelled to keep awake at least during the first half of the night. Not that people don't come at 2, 3 and 4 a.m. but by that time we would be so exhausted that we would begin to doze and be half-asleep despite their invasion. But the early hours of our nights in a train are always a vigil for us. The interval during which the train is in motion is one of quiet and hence of work.

Our Bihar tour ends today. Bihar—Gandhiji's beloved Bihar—was yearning to have his *darshan* for so many months past. Mazharul Haq Saheb had been bombarding Gandhiji with wires for the last two months. At last his patience was exhausted and, at the end of the last month, he finally telegraphed: "You have failed to keep your word for the second time. If you don't come even now, we shall have to give up public life and fly away somewhere." Even while Gandhiji was at Benares, Haq Saheb had come there with an eleven days' tour programme completely drawn out. The tour had



proceeded according to schedule and is now over. Covering first Arrah, Patna and Chhapra, Gandhiji went south to Gaya and then north to Muzaffarpur, and further northward to that Champaran which made Gandhiji's worth recognised all over India, i. e., to Betia and Motihari. From there he proceeded eastward to Darbhanga and Samastipur and again down south on the bank of the Ganges to Monghyr, Jamalpur and Bhagalpur. Bihar was thus completed in 11 days.

No province can be covered in that short period, but that shows how speedily the whole work was done. The people, too, have become politically conscious and they used to come to Gandhiji's halting town from long distances of forty and even fifty miles.

Boundless Love

It is impossible to put in language the exuberance of love which Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali experienced in Bihar. Our train on the B. N. W. Railway line stopped at all stations and there was not a single station which was not crowded with hundreds of people at that time. Even women, who never stir out of their homes, did not fail to present themselves so that they could see and hear him. A huge concourse of students would everywhere smother Gandhiji with their enthusiasm. If at some place a sister would take off her coral necklace and tell him, "I give this specially for your wear", at some other, *sannyasis* would come and leave their rosaries on his lap. If beautiful sheets handspun and hand-woven cloth, many yards long, would be presented at one place, at some other places would turn up a loving villager from the woods, boastful of his trophy, saying, "Maharaj, (an address of reverence) this is my feat of strength. The tiger was a terror to our people; I am giving the skin to you." At some places, guns normally used as fog-signals were fired in his honour. At some others, we came across railway officers who would not give the green flag, when our train came within their Jurisdiction, in order to have and let others have Gandhiji's *darshan*. Not minding the fact that our 'Special' was certain to pass by them in terrific speed, people were seen at some places, standing along the railway lines in the distant hope of having just a glimpse of Gandhiji or at least of making their loud shouts of "Gandhi-Shaukat Ali-ki-jai", reach his ear. We have met with even policemen who had the courage to approach Gandhiji to salute him or touch his hand, and C.I.Ds. also who would plaintively say, "We have taken to this dirty work for the sake of the sinning flesh, but please do accept these five rupees."



Political Colleagues or Sannyasis?

The second remarkable experience of the Bihar tour was our meeting with Gandhiji's and M. (Maulana) Shaukat Ali's colleagues as great in renunciation as *fakirs*. As soon as one steps on the threshold of Bihar, one has the *darshan* of Mazharul Haq Saheb who has become a *fakir* for the cause of Swaraj and Islam. What a world of difference between his royal style of living two or three years ago and his present simplicity befitting only a God-mad mystic! The man who was ranked among the best lawyers of Bihar has auctioned away his law books and resolved 'never to drink that poison any more in this life.' The man who used to possess the most luxurious motor-car in Patna, now borrows a friend's car or walks out the distance he wants to cover. He, who was most particular that there should be not a single wrinkle in his luxurious suit, now wears hand-spun and hand-woven Khadi from top to toe and moves about for days together without caring to change his *achkan* (a long coat) and *pyjama*. The gentleman who could not have a wink of sleep without first shaving his face clean, now says, "A Muslim and no beard! What a fall!" and is now growing a silvery-white beard. That Haq Saheb, who, when he went to bed, rolled on a quilt stuffed with the softest silk till the late hours of the morning, is now sleeping on a bare mattress spread on the floor and gets up quite early in the morning to say his prayers. His palatial building "Sikandar Manzil (palace)" will lose its life-spirit from the first of the next month. He will teach thenceforth students of his own selection in the "Sadakat Ashram" which he has established on the bank of the Ganges and his wife, who belongs to the illustrious Tyabji family, will content herself with 70 rupees per month and, with her two sons, stay in her own house situated in a village.

Non-co-operation cannot be condemned as a failure, even if it had produced only this single ascetic. But in this India, the land of ascetics, there may be many others of his ilk who maintain her purity to the end of time. When we proceed further on to Muzaffarpur, we find there Maulvi Mohammad Shafi who has given up his roaring practice and turned into a *fakir* from a barrister. His Moti-Manzil is now used for public activities and he himself lives in a small house. Further on at Monghyr there is Mr. Zuber, a bar-at-law, who has shut up his shop and burnt his beads since the first of August. Among Hindu brothers there are besides others the already well-known names of Babu Rajendraprasad of Patna, Babu Brijkishoreprasad of Darbhanga and Babu Dharnidharprasad of Samastipur.



Women's Courage

The third striking feature was the fact of women's meetings all over Bihar. Haq Saheb remarked that a meeting of women in Bihar was an unheard of event for many long years past. It was in his house that the women had gathered; even in the house there were (purdahs) curtains, but through them the women saw Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali as these two were beyond the purdah code. And what was their response to the appeal for funds? Mrs. Haq Saheb gave away her most valuable four bangles studded with pearls and rubies. When Haq Saheb came to know of it, his joy knew no bounds. He remarked, "She does not possess any bangles more costly than the ones she gave." Somebody queried, "Did she not wince at all, when she gave away those bangles worth a thousand or fifteen hundred rupees each?" Immediately Shaukat Ali Saheb returned, "But she has given away her heart's beloved lord to the cause! What is a bangle before that?" There were hardly a hundred women at the meeting, but more than a hundred and fifty rupees were collected on the spot. And afterwards throughout the three days of our stay a regular stream of ornaments flowed into Gandhiji's hands, as at Belgaum. This was Gandhiji's first visit to Patna since Babu Parmeshwarlal's death last year and he visited the widow. He had gone there simply to condole the bereaved family. But even there there was a rain of necklaces belonging to the daughters and wives of the family! The response of the women has been quite creditable everywhere, but today the women at Bhagalpur made a record. There was not the slightest flaw in the arrangements made at Darbhanga by Babu Deepnarayansingh—that enthusiastic patriot born with a silver spoon in his mouth—and his highly educated wife. But the women's meeting organized by them beggars description. Ornaments did not rain; they simply poured. Diamond rings, pearl and ruby bracelets, gold necklaces and quite a heap of silver ornaments! Thousands of women presented themselves, a fact, by itself, remarkable. The cash collection at the meeting came to rupees six hundred and fifty. Delhi, Allahabad, Patna and Bhagalpur! Will not the women of all these places instil faith in the hearts of sceptics?

Students' Spirit

At nearly every place there has been a students' meeting. At the sight of students, who love him to madness, Gandhiji, who never fails to keep to the schedule, forgets the time factor, forgets his meal also and becomes wholly one with them. The students, too, are more absorbed in listening to this great teacher than probably they



ever were before in their lives. And he speaks with naked frankness now, "I have had enough of lecturing. If ever you believe that a slave-owner can teach lessons of freedom to his bondsmen, if you think you can learn freedom in schools conducted by him, you must not vacate your school." "If you notice a snake coiled on your quilt, you have but to fly from it, no matter whether you are supplied with another quilt or not." "You may certainly become engineers, doctors, scientists, whatever you like to be, but only after making India free." "If you can't continue your studies for 2 years, your mind, like a field allowed to remain fallow, will yield a harvest, all the richer in future and, in the interval, there are these hand-spinning and hand-weaving arts which you have got to learn." "If you have nothing else to learn, there is your Ramayana—that masterpiece in the exposition of non-co-operation—for you to study. Read it, chew the cud and digest it." "Give up your craze for football and play with clods of earth in your own field." With numerous charming talks like these, he has captured the hearts of students, and the results are now coming out. 130 students of the Engineering College at Patna—the remaining six or seven are only waiting for their parents' permission – have left their college. They filled about 10 trucks with their baggages, started on foot in a procession from their hostel with posters bearing the words, "Farewell to the Government college" and passed by another college. Haq Saheb is already there to advise and guide them. Even Muzaffarpur College, that castle of 'interned' students is being breached. After Gandhiji's departure from there 85 students left the college on the 9th inst. Those 10 or 15 students who had left it even before Gandhiji's visit are rendering very useful service to the public. The songs of one of them, Manoranjanprasad, composed after he left the college, bring tears to the eyes of many a hearer. The situation at that place is being looked after by Shafi Saheb and Babus Brijkishore and Dharnidharprasad. If the students carry on their work with patience and perseverance, other students in Bihar are sure to catch their infection.

The bright side of the picture is now over. Let us turn to that unhappy land in Bihar, Champaran, where sorrow and oppression have made their home for years past. After a fight for one year and a half, Gandhiji released the agriculturists from the clutches of the planters there and ended an age-long oppression. It had appeared that the people imbibed some strength as a result of the fight. But the fact that the blackest oppression can still flourish in at least some parts of Champaran was seen with our own eyes, when we visited a village fourteen miles from Betia. And all this atrocity has arisen from a petty, street-brawl. A goldsmith was given an order for an ornament. The man did not give the customer the ordered article for many months. The customer



went to the goldsmith's shop and refused to leave the premises till he got the ornament. They come to blows and some blood was shed. One of the two Lodged a complaint. The police added the other's name in the charge-sheet. When they came to arrest this man some of them were hounded out and some others were surrounded by the crowd. The police lost their temper and riding on horses and elephants, invaded the villages as a measure of reprisal. The poor villagers ran helter-skelter for their very lives, leaving even their children at home. The policemen and their hired henchmen broke open barns, rifled the contents of boxes and trunks, carried away whatever they could and, smashing the villagers' belongings to pieces, scattering the contents and making a hash of everything in the village, even pursued the women fleeing in deadly peril. One of them was unclothed, robbed of her wear and covered with dust. Another who had gone out to ease herself was beaten there and even harassed. I give this brief report of the misdeeds of the *Ravanasena* (Ravana's army) from the attestations—which were thoroughly checked by cross-examination—given to us, when Gandhiji, Shaukat Ali and I visited those three villages, Phulvania, Sisvania and Sedha. Haq Saheb is preparing a report from his separate inquiry into the outrage. The Government also, is preparing a report to prove that all these facts are cooked-up. How can any man, if he is a human being and has seen the streaming, red eyes of these villagers who have lost their all, say that the still visible signs of the ravage are all faked? But did not even (General) Dyer come from the human species?

The speech that Gandhiji delivered on his return to Betia after giving consolation to those villagers is worth verbatim reproduction. (I have condensed some portion, but have shown this whole report to Gandhiji):

Speech at Betia

Champaran is not a strange place for me. Whenever I come to Champaran, it strikes me that, in the whole of India, Champaran is my birth-place and I feel the sorrows of the people here as my own. Though I come here after two years, I tell you I have never forgotten your troubles. I have always remembered your sorrows, i. e. my sorrows, and have never failed to do something for your relief. But it is bound to be less than what you can do for yourselves. Hence, today I wish to tell you how you can save yourselves.

"I am coming here from a visit of the affected villages. I was already grieved at what I had heard, but after what I saw with my own eyes my grief knows no limit. I cannot find fault either with the Government or with the planters for the atrocities



that have been committed this time. I find that the fault lies with our police officials, their underlings and the villagers. But we will not secure justice against these people from the law courts. We want the offenders themselves to do us justice. The policemen are our brothers. Their duty is to protect, not devour, the public. When I heard that the local *daroga* (Sub-Inspector of Police) and other policemen went there and perpetrated all these horrors, I felt exceedingly grieved. Perhaps they will not admit that they have done all this, but I think that what the villagers told me cannot all be false. It is the duty of the respectable persons here to make the police see wisdom. I want to tell all the policemen present here: 'You are our brothers. You are also the brothers of the villagers. That is why I tell you, you must draw the line and never do any dirty work the Government may ask you to do. If you regard us also as your brothers, you would help us and never persecute us. If you are the servants of the Government the Government, in turn, is our servant and hence, it is by no means your duty to do any dirty work which the Government orders you to do'. But in the present instance, the Government, at least, never ordered the police to rob people's houses, to make other villagers their helpmates in robbery and inflict atrocities on a woman. The Government is, therefore, not to blame for what has been done in this case. It is the police themselves, who have, of their own will, ridden roughshod over the people. The remedy lies in our respected people making policemen realise that their red turban is meant for the protection of the people, not for their destruction. I say to the police, 'Return the property you have looted; and, knowing that villagers are your own men, you must make them really your own.'

"But, to prevent the repetition of such atrocities there is another method besides the one of making the policeman see his duty. I have always been proclaiming that the remedy for all these afflictions is *satyagraha*. I have been showing a way to bring about the end of this Empire and a way that is peaceful never the less. But while advocating the peaceful method, I never wish that the Indian ryots become unmanly, dependent on others and incapable of defending their women.

What did the villagers show me? What did they tell me? (Gandhiji here narrated what he saw and heard; I have already given its substance). What spirit did they show when the robbers invaded their villages? They ran away in all directions. The fact provoked me to ask myself, "Have Indians sunk to such sickening cowardice that they cannot protect their property and their women? Have we not the strength to defend ourselves even from thieves? Can it ever be called *satyagraha*, if a robber is left free to work his will and we run away in mortal fear?" If you voluntarily give away your



goods to dacoit that is a different matter. But if you don't want him to carry them away, you may reason with him and if he does not see reason, you can even thrash him. If the policeman is about to commit atrocities and you prepare yourself to die at his hands, I will call you a brave man, a *satyagrahi*. But it is better to beat him and drive him out, than simply to look on and cover yourself with disgrace. *Satyagraha* never means fleeing away and leaving the women of the family to their fate or seeing them made naked before one's very eyes. Do you consider that as *satyagraha*? I ask you, you have brought imposing long *lathis* (thick wooden sticks) here. Our religion does not teach us to be cowards and to go on meekly bearing with atrocities. Religion teaches us that it is better to give our own blood than to take the blood of the oppressor. If we thus prepare ourselves to shed our own blood, we become angels. But, if, at the sight of injustice perpetrated before our eyes, we show a clean pair of heels, we prove ourselves worse than beasts. We have evolved from beasts into human beings. The behaviour of the beast man adopts from his very birth. As he goes on imbibing wisdom, humanness enters his spirit. As we go on becoming more and more human, we increasingly discard brute-force and learn to rely on soul-force. But if somebody employs brute force against us and, far from pitting our soul-force against him, we simply run away, we cease to be either humans and animals. We are simply cowards, impotents, then. See what a dog does. He does not offer *satyagraha*, but he does not run away also. He barks at the oppressor and even fights with him. If India cannot show that it possesses humanness, it has certainly the right to prove that it is capable of using brute-force. Let me never hear henceforth that a hundred young stalwarts were present at the scene, but at the very sight of the police, they all fled away. On hearing that you stood against them and died non-violently, I will hail you as heroes. Even if I hear that you fought bravely with them, I will congratulate you. But if somebody tells, me "What could we do ? We were afraid that the police might whisk us away," I will retort, "It is better to die than to live by saving your skin that way." The Government also gives you the right to use physical force for the defence of your life or property. The right of self-defence is clearly recognised in law. So now every Champarani +(resident in Champaran) will fight on such an occasion and kill or die. It gives me the creeps, if I have to hear a complaint like the one I heard today.

"But you must understand me clearly. I do not ask you to get ready to thrash your opponent. at each and every occasion. If a policeman, with an arrest warrant in hand, approaches you and you people start fighting with him, it only means you are cowards. Suppose, there are fifty of you and one policeman gives one of you a



Government order. You can thrash him, but that is no feat. It is in obeying the order that manliness lies. It is the duty of the policeman to arrest the man. Even if the warrant is improper, we must not release that man from police custody. If the policeman while arresting you abuses you and beats you, even then you must bear with all that. But if, illegally, the police rush into your house to rob you of your cattle, your property, you may certainly oppose them and use your *lathi*, if, of course, you are not prepared to die by offering non-violent resistance. And let me impose another condition. In asking you to beat the culprit on such an occasion, I do not mean to say that if you see a thief, you may beat him to death. Has not even warfare its laws of conduct? Use of the sword against a *lathi* is not *dharma*, but of fisticuffs against a *lathi* is. It is not *dharma*, but cowardice, to collect with us an army of men to charge one opponent. By drawing the sword against *lathi*, by pitting fifty men against one mao, we have become cowards.

"I cannot help feeling afraid lest you may even misuse this my advice. But I wish that those men of understanding who are sitting here will repeatedly explain my view to you. It would be dereliction of duty on my part, if I did not give vent to my reaction at what I saw today. I felt I would then be going away without doing my duty. Don't be cowards; never be unmanly; and yet don't murder anybody—that is what I want from you.

"The Government did commit one mistake. It tried to browbeat the volunteers who went there to inquire into the outrage; tried even to hoodwink them. But you must not be cowed down by threats. A great responsibility has fallen on the shoulders of the volunteers. They will have to go on doing their work quietly and without fear".

I will not reproduce what Gandhiji said by way of connecting these remarks with his exposition on non-co-operation. I will only say that Gandhiji added a third condition for the use of physical force during the time non-co-operation was offered. The people were required not to use it at all then.

(The following is now reproduced from Mahadevbhai's original diary)

Letter to one Mr. Goodfellow on the 4th inst.:

"I was thankful for your letter. Has it struck you that this Government of ours is deliberately increasing the drink evil and that all effort at amelioration must be fruitless until this Government is either destroyed or radically mended? I should be glad to meet you when I am in Calcutta for any length of time."



In a letter to Mr. Hyderi, written on the way to Arrah at the same night, Gandhiji referred to Mrs. Haq's gift of the bangles:

*"We have just left Bankipore. Mazharul Haq is with us. I write this to say that Mrs. Haq gave me last night at a ladies' meeting to my call for donations her choicest four bangles made of pearls and rubies. Will you please tender my congratulations to Mrs. Hyderi on possessing a sister who gives away her choicest things for the country and her faith? I was simply overwhelmed with joy when she produced the bangles and thanked God that He had brought me in touch with the Tyabji family."

An extract from a letter to Saraladevi:

*" I shall not deliberately omit to write to you but you must cultivate patience and trust. You may not accuse me of sainthood and dignify yourself by adopting the role of a sinner. Each one of us must recognize (his/her) own limitations. Among lovers and friends there is neither sinner nor saint. We are all equal, but there are wise and unwise men and women among equals. And who knows who is wiser? You must let me delude myself into the belief that I am wiser than you and, therefore, fit to teach you and train you. But it has not unoften happened that the learner becomes the teacher. Gorakh¹ became the teacher of Machhander. And in trying to teach you, may God give me the wisdom to learn from you. Bdieve me, I will not grudge you the post. Indeed I shall count my teaching the most perfect if I can make you superior to me. Anyway that is the belief that keeps me attached to you. And, therefore. it is that I ever pray for a humble and contrite heart for you."

Wrote a letter to Swami Anand (Manager, *Navajivan*) rich in appreciation of his action in making Gandhiji completely free from any anxiety about *Navajivan*.

Went to have the *darshan* of Bodhigaya², after the meeting at Gayaji³ ended. There were four of us in the car—Bapu, Ba, Abul Kalam Azad and myself. During the drive we learnt some facts about Azad's life. He is of Arab descent. His grandfather and father were in India during the 1857 national rebellion. Laterly, they went away to Mecca where his father married an Arab lady whose son he is. He spent 10 years in Mecca, but, as he could not keep up his health, his father brought him to Calcutta for medical advice. He has now numerous disciples there. He studied Persian under an adept and then went to Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo where he picked up the highest education in Arabic. He can deliver fluent speeches in both Arabic and Persian. In 1910, at the age of 21, he started a paper *Al Hilal* (=The Crescent Moon) which published



articles espousing the cause of Hindu-Muslim Unity. People even like Mohammed Ali were then opposed to it. As he used to write fiery articles on the War, even when it was going on, a security of rupees 2000 was demanded from *Al Hilal*. That was confiscated and a fresh one for Rs. 5000 asked for. That also was seized and with it the press. After six months he started the same paper under another name *Al Balal*. That paper could continue for 6 months. The Maulana was conducting a school along with the paper. Under the excuse that the school was nothing but a secret organization of conspirators, he was kept in detention at Ranchi for five years. Though he had five or six assistants for *Al Hilal*, the Maulana used to shoulder the largest part of the burden and responsibility. He wrote an article *turke mavalat*, in July 1914, in which he declared that the Muslims' quarrel could only be with the Englishmen, never with the Hindus. He had also expressed the view in *Al Hilal* that the Muslim University ought to sever all connection with the British. Mohammed Ali wrote an article against it in his paper *Comrade*. During the internment period at Ranchi, he collected about 8000 rupees and opened a school there. He was at present engaged in preparing an Urdu translation of the Quran. He had written many other books during the enforced retirement at Ranchi.

At 4 p. m. on the 8th Bapu went to visit the *goshala* (a shed for decrepit and disabled cows) which he had himself established at Betia. The thoughtful statements he made there are worth noting down:

"Protection of the cow is an outer form of Hinduism and I would not regard him a Hindu, who is not prepared to give his life to save a cow. Cow-protection is dearer to me than life itself. Were it the duty of a Muslim to kill a cow, as it is his to do his *namaz*, I would have told him, " I should have to fight with you also." But that (cow-killing) is not his religious duty. It is our (enemical) behaviour towards the Muslim that has driven him to cow-slaughter.

"The right thing for Hindus to do is for themselves to begin protecting the cow, because Hindus also are killing the cow. To draw out the last drop of milk from a cow by blowing air and expanding the udders, to persecute the cow's progeny, the bullock, by goading it with a nailed stick, to make it carry a load too heavy for it—all these acts are as bad as cow-killing. If we want to protect the cow, we must first put our own house in order.

"The Muslim kills the cow only sometimes for food, but the Englishman cannot do without beef for a day. And yet we are their obedient servants. We like the schools



and courts of that Government which does not protect our religion. It is not that I came to know of this fact only today, but I was putting up with the cow-slaughter perpetrated by the Empire till now, because I had hoped I could succeed in getting some good work done by it. That hope has vanished. I have, therefore, declared non-co-operation against it. If, at this juncture, we want to protect the cow, we must give unconditional help to the Muslims. I have been moving about day and night in the company of Shaukat Ali, but have not spoken a word about cow-protection to him, because my immediate *dharma* is only to serve the Muslim. I am today prepared to dedicate my all—myself, my son, wife, friend—for that cause. You cannot protect the cow by remaining enamoured of the Government. But you can drench the Muslim heart with love by boycotting the Government.

"The cow is not really protected, moreover, by *goshalas* like this one. A '*goshala*', rightly so called, ought to supply excellent milk to a city. That could happen when there are thousands of good milch-cows in it and it possesses thousands of acres of land. Only then will a *kamadhenu* (the legendary wish-fulfilling cow) be produced, when we shall be able to give the fullest protection to the cow. And only then will all this misery of India, this hunger, this nakedness, this mental helplessness be rooted out. These are expressions that have come out spontaneously from my lips. I have never before given vent to these grave thoughts anywhere else. May you protect the Cow, the Mother, and She will protect you!"

Getting up in the morning at 5 a. m. on the 9th, Gandhiji wrote out at a stretch an article entitled, 'Dyerism in Champaran.' It contained the following thoughts on the essence of *satyagraha* :

*"Whenever such cases of loot happen, the people should be prepared to defend themselves. It is better if they can manfully stand persecution and allow themselves to be robbed, instead of hitting in defence of their persons or property. That would indeed be their crowning triumph. But such forbearance can only be exercised out of strength and not out of weakness. Till that power is acquired, they must be prepared to resist the wrongdoer by force. But in no case would they be justified in doing more bodily injury than was needed on the occasion. It is invariably a sign of cowardice and madness to use excessive force. A brave man does not kill a thief, but arrests him and hands him to the police. A braver man uses just enough force to drive him out and thinks no more about it. The bravest realises that the thief knows



no better, reasons with him, risks being thrashed and even killed, but does not retaliate. We must, at any cost, cease to be cowardly and unmanly."

During the one hour he got for himself in the train going to Bhagalpur on the night of the 11th, Bapu wrote two letters, to Barodada and Saraladevi. In his latest letter, the former had strongly supported Bapu in his campaign of non-co-operation in education, by propounding the principle that some destructive work was a *sine qua non* in order to start a constructive activity. Bapu wrote in reply:

"Your letter was a consolation to me. Your approval I count as a blessing. I am in Calcutta on the 13th and in Dacca on the 14th. May you live to see Swaraj established in India."

To Saraladevi:

"I had two letters from you, one a scrap, the other a longish letter which shows that you do not understand my language, i. e., my thoughts. I have certainly not betrayed any annoyance over your complex nature, but I have remarked upon it. If a person is born with a deformation, one may not quarrel with nature for it, but one may pardonably take note of it and try to remove it. And that is what I have done. I refuse to call an indefinable complexity a piece of art. All art yields to patient analysis and shows a unity of design behind the diversity on the canvass. You are hugging your defects, even when they are pointed out by a friend in a friendly manner. I do not feel vexed, but it makes my task of helping difficult. What art can there be in moods, in fits and starts? The simplest natures are certainly complex in a sense. But they are easily analysed. But they are called simple, because they are easily understandable and readily yield to treatment. But I do not want to quarrel with you. In you I have an enigma to solve. I shall not be impatient. Only bear with me whenever I try to point (out) what to me appear to be your obvious limitations. We will have them. It is the privilege of friendship to lay the gentle finger on the weak spots. Friendship becomes a divine institution only when it educates friends. Let us try to elevate each other.

I await with interest your letter on *Shuddhi*.⁴

1. The disciple, in this popular story, saves his *guru* from falling a prey to lust.

2. The place where Lord Buddha attained Buddhahood.

3. The town is a place of pilgrimage both for Hindus and Buddhists. Hence, the 'ji'—suffix of respect—after *Gaya*.

4. A movement to convert non-Hindus into Hinduism.



Calcutta
13-12-1920

Reached Calcutta in the morning.

Another article on the *antyajas* (= the lowest born, i.e., the 'untouchable' classes) O Important extract:

"I would sacrifice even the country at the altar of religion. My patriotism is limited within the four corners of my love for religion. Where the interest of the country clashes with that of religion, I would let the country's interest suffer. I consider it irreligion to regard the *antyajas* as untouchables and I have no desire at all to serve the country by doing some irreligious act. It is my firm belief that we can have Swaraj only after our religious consciousness, in the right sense of the term, is awakened. The time for that awakening has definitely arrived. That is why I consider the attainment of Swaraj in a year a possibility Does the statement, 'To throw dust at the sky is to make our own eyes filled with dust' need the prop of any argument? He who likes to raise dust that way will learn the wisdom of discriminating between good and evil only by raising it. To strive for Swaraj and refuse at the same time to throw out the dirt of untouchability is like kicking up a dust-storm".

1. A movement to convert non-Hindus into Hinduism.

Speech at Calcutta

*The very fact that so many of you cannot understand Hindi, which is bound to be the national medium of expression through-out Hindustan in gatherings of Indians belonging to different parts of the land, shows the depth of the degradation to which we have sunk, and points to the supreme necessity of the non-co-operation movement which is intended to lift us out of that condition. This Government has been instrumental in degrading this great nation in various ways, and it is impossible to be free from it without co-operation amongst ourselves, which is in turn impossible without a national medium of expression.

But I am not here today to plead for that medium. I am to plead for the acceptance by the country of the programme of non-violent, progressive non-co-operation. Now all the words that I have used here are absolutely necessary and the two adjectives, 'progressive and non-violent', are integral parts of a whole. With me



non-violence is a part of my religion, a matter of creed. But with the great number of Mussulmans non-violence is a policy, with thousands, if not millions of Hindus, it is equally a matter of policy. But whether it is a creed or a policy, it is utterly impossible for you to finish the programme for the enfranchisement of the millions of India without recognizing the necessity and the value of non-violence. Violence may for a moment avail to secure a certain measure of success, but it cannot in the long run achieve any appreciable result. On the other hand, all violence would prove destructive to the honour and self-respect of the nation. The blue-books issued by the Government of India show that, in as much as we have used violence, military expenditure has gone up, not proportionately but in geometrical progression. The bonds of our slavery have been forged all the stronger for our having offered violence. And the whole history of British rule in India is a demonstration of the fact that we have never been able to offer successful violence. Whilst, therefore, I say that, rather than have the yoke of a Government that has so emasculated us, I would welcome violence, I would urge with all the emphasis that I can command that India will never be able to regain her own by methods of violence.

My Ideal Swaraj

Lord Ronaldshay, who has done me the honour of reading my booklet on Home Rule, has warned my countrymen against engaging themselves in a struggle for a Swaraj such as is described in that booklet. Now, though I do not want to withdraw a single word of it, I would say to you on this occasion that I do not ask India to follow out today the methods prescribed in my booklet. If they could do that, they would have Home Rule not in a year but in a day and India, by realizing that ideal, wants to acquire an ascendancy over the rest of the world. But it must remain a day-dream more or less for the time being. What I am doing today is that I am giving the country a practicable programme not for the abolition of law-courts, posts, telegraphs and railways, but for the attainment of parliamentary Swaraj. I am telling you that so long as we do not isolate ourselves from this Government, we are co-operating with it through schools, law-courts and councils, through service, civil and military, and payment of taxes and foreign trade.



Why 'Progressive' Non-co-operation

The moment this fact is realized and non-co-operation is effected, this Government must totter and fall to pieces. If I knew that the masses were prepared for the whole programme at once, I would not delay in putting it at once to work. It is not possible, at the present moment, to prevent the masses from bursting out into wrath against those who come to execute the law; it is not possible that the military would lay down their arms without the slightest violence. If that were possible today, I would propose all the stages of non-co-operation to be worked simultaneously. But we have not secured that control over the masses; we have uselessly frittered away precious years of the nation's life in mastering a language which we need least for winning our liberty; we have frittered away all those years in learning liberty from Milton and Shakespeare, in deriving inspiration from the pages of Mill, whilst liberty could be learnt at our doors. We have thus succeeded in isolating ourselves from the masses; we have been Westernized. We have failed these 35 years to utilize our education in order to permeate the masses.

We have sat upon the pedestal and from there delivered harangues to them in a language they do not understand and we see today that we are unable to conduct large gatherings in a disciplined manner. And discipline is the essence of success. Here is, therefore, one reason why I have introduced the word 'progressive' in the non-co-operation resolution. Without any impertinence I may say that I understand the mass-mind better than anyone amongst the educated Indians. I contend that the masses are not ready for suspension of payment of taxes. They have not yet learnt sufficient self-control. If I was sure of non-violence on their part, I would ask them to suspend payment today and not waste a single moment of the nation's time. With me the liberty of India has become a passion. Liberty of Islam is as dear to me. I would not therefore, delay a moment if I found that the whole of the programme could be enforced at once.

Why Non-violent

It grieves me to miss the faces of dear and revered leaders in this assembly. We miss here the trumpet voice of Surendranath Banerji¹, who has rendered inestimable service to the country. And though we stand as poles asunder today, though we may have sharp differences with him, we must express them with becoming restraint. I do not ask you to give up a single iota of principle. I urge non-violence in language and in



deed. If non-violence is essential in our dealings with the Government, it is more essential in our dealings with our leaders. And it grieves me deeply to hear of recent instances of violence reported to have been used in East Bengal against our own people. I was pained to hear that the ears of a man who had voted at the recent elections had been cut off and night-soil had been thrown into the bed of a man who had stood as a candidate. Non-co-operation is never going to succeed in this way. It will not succeed unless we create an atmosphere of perfect freedom, unless we prize out opponents' liberty as much as our own. The liberty of faith, conscience, thought and action which we claim for ourselves must be conceded equally to others. Non-co-operation is a process of purification and we must continually try to touch the hearts of those who differ from us, touch their minds and their emotions, but never their bodies. Discipline and restraint are the cardinal principles of our conduct and I warn you against any sort of tyrannical social ostracism. I was deeply grieved, therefore, to hear of the insult offered to a dead body in Delhi and feel that, if it was the action of non-co-operators, they have disgraced themselves and their creed. I repeat we cannot deliver our land through violence.

1. Sir Surendranath Banerji (1848-1925), eminent orator and politician and president of the Congress in 1895 and 1902, who later joined the Liberal Party and was opposed to Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme.

Swaraj In One Year

It was not a joke when I said on the Congress platform that Swaraj could be established in one year, if there was sufficient response from the nation. Three months of this year are gone. If we are true to our salt, true to our nation, true to the songs we sing, if we are true to the Bhagavad Gita and the Quran, we would finish the programme in the remaining nine months and deliver Islam, the Punjab and India.

I have proposed a limited programme workable within one year, having special regard to the educated classes. We seem to be labouring under the illusion that we cannot possibly live without Councils, law-courts and schools provided by the Government. The moment we are disillusioned we have Swaraj. It is demoralizing both for the Government and the governed that a hundred thousand pilgrims should dictate terms to a nation composed of three hundred millions. And how is it they can thus dictate terms? It is because we have been divided that they have ruled. I have never



forgotten Hume's¹ frank confession that the British Government was sustained by the policy of "Divide and Rule."

Therefore, it is that I have laid stress upon Hindu-Muslim unity as one of the most important essentials for the success of non-co-operation. But it should be no lip-unity nor *bania*-unity (=diplomatic); it should be a unity broad-based on a recognition of the heart. If we want to save Hinduism, I say, for God's sake do not seek to bargain with the Mussulmans. I have been going about with Maulana Shaukat Ali all these months, but I have not so much as whispered anything about the protection of the cow. My alliance with the Ali brothers is one of honour. I feel that I am on my honour, the whole of Hinduism is on its honour, and if it will not be found wanting, it will do its duty towards the Mussulmans of India. Any bargaining would be degrading to us. Light brings light, not darkness, and nobility done with a noble purpose will be twice rewarded. It will be God alone who can protect the cow. Ask me not today, 'What about the cow? Ask me after Islam is vindicated through India. Ask the Rajas what they do to entertain their English guests. Do they not provide beef and champagne for their guests?' Persuade them first to stop cow-killing and then think of bargaining with Mussulmans. And how are we Hindus behaving ourselves towards the cow and her progeny? Do we treat her as our religion requires us? Not till we have set our own house in order and saved the cow from the Englishmen, have we the right to plead on her behalf with the Mussulmans. And the best way of saving the cow from them is to give them unconditional help in their hour of trouble.

Similarly what do we owe to the Punjab? The whole of India was made to crawl on her belly, inasmuch as a single Punjabi was made to crawl in that dirty lane in Amritsar; the whole womanhood was unveiled, inasmuch as the innocent women of Manianwalla were unveiled by an insolent officer; and Indian childhood was dishonoured in that school children of tender age were made to walk four times a day to stated places within the Martial (Law) area in the Punjab and to salute the Union Jack, through the effect of which order two children, seven years old, died of sunstroke, having been made to wait in the noon-day sun. In my opinion it is a sin to attend the schools and colleges conducted under the aegis of this Government, so long as it has not purged itself of these crimes by proper repentance. We may not with any sense of self-respect plead before the courts of the Government, when we remember that it was through the Punjab courts that innocent men were sentenced to be imprisoned and hanged. We become participators in the crime of the Government by voluntarily helping it or being helped by it.



The women of India have intuitively understood the spiritual nature of the struggle. Thousands have attended to listen to the message of non-violent non-co-operation and have given me their precious ornaments for the purpose of advancing the cause of Swaraj. Is it any wonder if I believe in the possibility of gaining Swaraj within a year after all these wonderful demonstrations? I would be guilty of want of faith in God, if I under-rated the significance of the response from the women of India. I hope that the students will do their duty. The country certainly expects the lawyers, who have hitherto led public agitation, to recognize the new awakening.

1. A. O. Hume, a justice-loving Englishman who was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

Conclusion

I have used strong language but I have done so with the greatest deliberation. I am not actuated by any feeling of revenge. I do not consider Englishmen as my enemy. I recognize the worth of many. I enjoy the privilege of having many English friends, but I am a determined enemy of the English rule as conducted at present and, if the power—*tapasya* (austere spiritual effort)—of one man could destroy it, I would certainly destroy it, if it could not be mended. An Empire that stands for injustice and breach of faith does not deserve to stand if its custodians will not repent and non-co-operation has been devised in order to enable the nation to compel justice.

I hope that Bengal will take her proper place in this movement of self-purification. Bengal began *swadeshi* and national education when the rest of India was sleeping.¹ I hope that Bengal will come to the front in this movement for gaining Swaraj and gaining justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab through purification and self-sacrifice.

1. This was in 1905 and 1906 when the popular agitation against the Government resolution for partition of Bengal was in full swing.

14-12-1920

Bengali non-co-operators saw Gandhiji in the morning. One of them was a Mr. Shyamsundar Chakravarti. Talk about his paper *The Servant*. A reporter of the paper



made a queer suggestion to the effect that if there were a few articles in *Young India*, that did not smack of sedition, they could be reproduced in *The Servant*; would not the paper's security be confiscated otherwise? That explains why Bapu's statements on the destruction of the British Empire were not reproduced in the report of his speech appearing in *The Servant*.

A part of a letter to Saraladevi:

*"My love for you is not a task. It is one of the keenest pleasures of my life. It is based on faith in you, i. e., in your ultimate goodness. It will go only if I find you to be bad. My love is nothing, if it does not draw out the best out of you and make you better and purer than you are. And you must bear with me if, in the process of helping you, sometimes I seem to be rubbing you up the wrong way. Any way I am studying you and shall endeavour not to do so."

15-12-1920

From Calcutta to Dacca

Boat-travel from Golando to Narayanaganj on the river *Padma*. Exceedingly charming scenes. Began to send excerpts from Goswami (Tulsidasji's Hindi Ramayana) to Durga (Mrs. Mahadevbhai).

Bapu wrote an article entitled 'Curse of Secrecy',

There was total lack of organisation either in the reception procession or in the public meeting at Dacca. Bapu, therefore, commented upon it in his speech:

"We have assumed that our work ends with the organization of demonstrations, discussion of questions and the raising of our hands for voting. But practical work is not done that way. Practical work has no need for perorations. If you want to give me some relief and help me in keeping up my voice, you must gain the power of organisation and save me as much as possible from having to inhale dust. So many times I have said that we must give up organising processions. They spoil our work. I save myself from dust and preserve my voice because I observe some laws of nature. But I cannot maintain my health, if you do not let me keep to those laws. We raise loud shouts of victory, but there is no melody, no art in them. Bengal is known for proficiency in fine arts and musical talent. In the past it was here that I heard very charming music.



"We must employ our musical talent in making our meetings and processions orderly. Music that is heard in our audience-halls or in the homes of our English-educated families is not real Indian music. It is necessary to spread music among the masses."

* * * * *

Proceeding further Bapu said:

"I am not an enemy of the Englishman, but I believe that the Empire is filled with the stench of Satanism. I solemnly declare that if God gives me the strength, I will either end or mend the Empire. That is my supreme duty. Neither will I rest myself, nor let you have any rest, till we bring about the fall of this Empire. I am bent upon tearing the Seditious Act to pieces and throw the scraps into the waste paper basket, because I am straightforward. I speak out what I really feel. I am not a subject of the Englishman but his loyal and honest friend. That is why I don't mince matters in telling them what I feel."

There were some remarkable expressions in his speech before the Lawyers' meeting of Dacca:

"We must cease to attend meetings out of idle curiosity. I hope those who are not lawyers will leave the meeting."

"I had hoped for a small group here, so that we could talk freely and frankly. If we express our views without any constraint, we can understand each other better. I wish to speak before you as a lawyer of twenty years' experience. My practice also was by no means negligible. It did not compare unfavourably with that of the leading lawyers and barristers of India, though I had to live in the midst of very hostile surroundings. I have, besides, attended the Bombay High Court as a briefless barrister. I have practised in Kathiawar (Saurashtra) also, where I was quite a success. So I am speaking before you as a very experienced lawyer. I am speaking as a barrister who had had a lion's share of the prey. I gave up my practice, when I was making a mint of money out of it. I had never pocketed a dishonest penny from my work and yet I felt disgusted with the legal career, since it began to come in the way of my national service. I realised that I could not find time to do two things side by side, viz., adequate justice to my clients and service of the public. I called my clients together and told them that they should not expect me any longer to give them as much time as I used to. That telling expression of Gokhaleji, 'armchair politicians', was ringing in my ears."



But I am not asking you today to give up your practice for these reasons. My reason today is the fact that we are supporting this unjust Government as long as we practise in its courts. This Government has forfeited all its claim over our loyalty and affection. We are called 'officers of the law court'. I have had my full share in the release of many innocent clients from the clutches of the law. I also know that it is possible that a client may have to suffer owing to the want of a good lawyer. And yet, if we all lawyers give up our practice and some innocent person has to be hanged, would not that be an ideal outcome? If that happens, these law-courts will stink like caresses. That well-known lawyer of this same place, Shri Manmohan Ghosh, has stated that courts often become instruments of injustice. Even where justice is done, what a tremendous expense and delay it costs! Justice has become a dear commodity because lawyers like Manmohan Ghose are rare among us. He used to accept without fee so many cases both civil and criminal! But the real point is that this programme (of boycott of courts) is literally for one year only. Hence, I wish you all to give up your practice. I have faith in you because I am bred up in your tradition and know that you cannot live without the inebriation of national service. I wish the situation came to such a pass that it became impossible for a practising lawyer to stand on any public platform with dignity and respect. I wish to bring you to a more exalted platform. Instead of becoming the champions of the million, you have, till now, become helpmates of the millionaires. I wish you gave up that practice now and took your share in national service. But you cannot do it so long as you continue to earn your thousands. I am told that East Bengal is the real Bengal. I appeal to you to prove that you represent what is best in Bengal. I wish to come in contact with the masses and the farmets of Bengal. I wish a time came, when the people refused to listen to anything said by title-holders, lawyers who have not renounced their practice, students who have not given up their school and those who have been willing tools of the Government.

I am myself so caught up in the coils of this Satan, that I have not been able to free myself completely from his slavery. I cannot do without travelling in the Government's railway trains and using its post and telegraph. But I am a practical man. What I cannot act upon my view to its logical end, I admit my inability to that extent. I have such an aversion for these railways etc., that, if it were possible, I would walk out the distance or swim the whole river to reach Dacca. But if I do so, your Governor H. E. Lord Ronaldshay will declare, "Gandhi is a lunatic". The programme, therefore, which I am putting is still very Western in character. The Swaraj which I am fighting for today is the Swaraj which Deshbandhu Das¹ and other politicians aspire after. The



Swaraj, the Congress is striving for, is completely of the *swadeshi* parliamentary type which is entirely independent of any foreign control. My own ideal of 'Swaraj' I have given in my book *Hind Swaraj*. I do not wish to change a word from it. But today the Swaraj we want is of the type the public wants. That is practical Swaraj. When we win it, we shall be able to refuse to incur heavy military expenditure, to help the mills of Lancashire² and to maintain from our treasury Chelmsfords (Viceroy) and Dyers.

When we shall get ready to bend our back to do physical work and to refuse to stand as helpless suppliants before anybody, we shall gain the capacity to maintain respectably a family of even twenty persons, if we have that number, after we discard our practice. I assure you that you will be able to earn enough to supply your simple needs, though not according to Western standards. Thousands of men prepared to do their work intelligently, honestly and sincerely are needed today for *swadeshi* work. I see in *swadeshi* the vision of Swaraj, of *swadharma* (one's religion) and of the purity of women, all in one. I am clinging to *swadeshi*, as does a child to its mother's breast".
(Then followed questions and answers in which there was nothing unusual.)

1. Popular title given to C. R. Das in appreciation of his national service. It means 'brother of the country'.

2. The British Government had imposed an excise duty on Indian mill cloth, to help the British cloth industry.

16-12-1920

Visit of Gendaria Ashram. Remarkable peace and simplicity. Started from Narayanganj at 11 a. m. Bapu had a nice siesta on the way. Nine hours' travel in a steamer on the river Padma! Could its raptures be translated into language? Revised the article on 'Sin of Secrecy'. Wrote notes for *Young India*. Corrected my report of his speech at Calcutta. Talk with two barristers of Calcutta, Mr. Mitra and Mr. Mayor, in the evening. (The talk has been reproduced below).

The subject of the common teacher in India came up in our talk at night. "I have seen teachers who have never looked beyond the pages of their books", remarked Bapu. He gave them a striking epithet, 'They are *bhogalbhatias* (street-palmists, content with their very limited knowledge).'

Wrote a letter to Saraladevi. Also a short letter in reply to Brook's letter and discussed it in *Young India*. Wrote a small article of a very high calibre on 'Moral Values'.



Talk on the Steamer, 'Gurkha'

It is not always that I have to narrate the woes of our travels. Our journeys, from Golando to Narayanganj on our way to Dacca and from Narayanganj to Golando on return, have made us completely forget the strain of the whole tour. In the nine hours' journey, the steamer halted at only 2 or 3 places. Trains which halt seven or eight times, or at least once in an hour, can never stand comparison with this steamer in the deep and unbounded silence that pervaded it. No bustle of the railway train here, no grating noise of its rattling wheels and no annoyance. Not even the heaving waves of an ocean that toss a steamer. Our steamer glided on the *Padma*, vast like a sea but lucid like a lake, as noiselessly as passes a silken thread through the holes of pearls. And the entrancing and ever-changing beauty of the scenery around, with the rising sun tinting it with a charm all its own! Can one ever dream of these delights in a train journey?

But it is not my purpose here to describe the joys of this travel. I write this letter to give a gist of a charming tete-a-tete on board the steamer *Gurkha*. We were returning at about 7 p. m. in the evening from Narayanganj. Two unknown gentlemen disturbed Gandhiji's quietude, but the disturbance was both polite and pleasing. Both the gentlemen were barristers and one of them was an Englishman. It was evident from their talks that both were commanding a roaring practice. They were perfectly courteous in their talk and it was only their desire to know things at first hand that had drawn them to Gandhiji. They discussed non-co-operation.

Indian: So the immediate object of non-co-operation is resistance to injustice?

Gandhiji: Not resistance, purification. Purification of the opponent through our own.

Englishman: And dissociation with sin?

Gandhiji: Exactly.

Englishman: Do you think you have succeeded in bringing about any such purification?

Gandhiji: I have been touring all over the country and I am amazed at the progress people are making in imbibing self-control and self-reliance. The peasant class also is assimilating these qualities and I don't feel that even British officials remain untouched by the wind. Their minds also are getting purer.

Englishman: What do you want the Englishman to do through this purification? What change do you want in the Englishman's behaviour?



Gandhiji : I want to create a climate in which every Englishman regards every Indian as his equal. The Englishman speaks at present from the Olympian height of egotism. I want to bring him down and make him think himself as on the same level with the most common labourer in India. I want to bring about a condition under which he would no longer look down upon the Indian in any of his dealings with him but regard him as his equal partner. There is no place for the Englishman in India on any other terms. The moment both the Englishman and the Indian feel a sense of equality with each other and behave accordingly, it may be taken for granted that my country has achieved its freedom. And to bring about this result, it is enough if the present false idolatry of British prestige and honour is destroyed. What is our common experience everywhere? Indians afraid of the Englishman; Indians hiding their thoughts from others. What can be more degrading than this?

Englishman: Don't you think it is stretching the point a little too far, when you say that every Englishman must regard the Indian labourer as his equal? Does an Indian gentleman look on an Indian labourer that way? I can understand your demand if you say that an Englishman should behave with an Indian as he does with another Englishman. An Englishman may treat an Indian labourer as may an English squire his tenants.

Gandhiji: Excellent! You put it in a language better than mine. I mean exactly what you say.

Treatment Towards Culprits

Indian: So you say that the immediate object of non-co-operation with the oppressive Government is nothing but purification? And it doesn't matter whether by that purification other material benefits accrue or not?

Gandhiji: If our *tapasya* (penance) is pure and perfect, material benefits are certain to accrue automatically. For instance, there will remain nothing to do about the Punjab outrages. No culprit of the Punjab affair will have any asylum in India. Not even his pay or pension will be paid from our treasury.

Englishman: So you have reserved all punishment for Englishmen only? Indians—Indian masses also—did commit crimes. What about them?

Gandhiji: This is an astounding question. We have already received punishment a thousand times more severe than our crimes deserved. I assure you, not only have the



actual offenders been punished, but hundreds of innocent men have been killed. Unoffending men have been sent to jail. Even children have not been spared. Harmless women have been insulted. The massacre at Jallianwala was all of innocent persons. What punishment can be heavier than this? But I have never even talked of punishing English officers. All I have demanded is that they should no longer draw any money from the Indian exchequer, should not hold any titles or offices any more. As for their punishment, some of them deserve nothing less than the capital sentence. But that has no place in my religion. I don't know what India would like.

[This reminds me (Mahadevbhai), when Mr. Andrews compared the Jallianwala Bagh event with the notorious Massacre of Glencoe.¹ I immediately published in *Young India* Mr. Andrews' comment as well as a short account of that gruesome episode. Though I published it simply to show how deeply disgusted Mr. Andrews was with the Jallianwala affair, I felt on re-reading it that Mr. Andrews' comparison was a little overdrawn and unjust and I felt very unhappy at having given currency to it. I saw Principal Rudra and he, too, agreed with me. But now I see the perfect propriety of Andrews' comparison. If anything, the Jallianwala Massacre was even more heinous and more worthy of condemnation than the Massacre of Glencoe, since there is a world of difference between the stages of civilization then and now.]

Indian: How do you say that the Government has attacked religion? The British Government is only one partner among the big group of the victorious Allies.

Gandhiji: I am surprised at such question coming from a man like you at this late hour. England is the arch-culprit in conspiring the destruction of Turkey. The Prime Minister is now reaping what he has sown. He has had to go back upon his word and has wounded the Muslim heart.

Indian: Well, let's turn to another matter. You are getting the schools emptied, but are you offering them any alternative arrangement?

(Gandhiji in reply gave a detailed account of the national educational activities going on in Gujarat).

Indian: Is the present system of education bad then?

Gandhiji: The question doesn't arise. I have no objection, however, to answering it. I say, 'Yes, it is bad'. Owing to the fact that the medium of instruction is English, a too heavy burden is laid on the brain of the students. But why give my personal views ?



Even a man like Prof. Jadunath Sarkar (a leading historian and educationist) says that this foreign medium, has made the brains of the educated classes dull and listless and they have lost completely their creative and imaginative powers. All our time is spent up in trying to remember pronunciations and idioms of a foreign tongue. That work itself is tiresome and the result is that we have become mere blotting-sheets of European civilization. Instead of assimilating what is good in it, we have become its worthless copies. It has, moreover, created a yawning gulf between the educated classes and the masses. Let alone political knowledge, we cannot teach them even hygiene and sanitation, in the language they understand. In this modern age, we have grown as bad as the Brahmins of old; perhaps worse than they, for, at heart they were not impure. They were like trustees of the national culture. But we have ceased to be even that. We are only taking an undue advantage of our education and, towards the masses, we simply behave like superior beings. I wish you cross-examined me on this point, but let me tell you that I have not adopted these views recently; they are the quintessence of my long-standing experience.

Englishman: We have thought nothing about this matter. All we can say is that we will think over it.

Gandhiji: That's right. And I forgot one thing. I didn't say that this system (of education) has smothered our soul. You have been adoring only secular education and hence, Hindus have never been given any religious education. England has partly escaped from this evil result, since the clergy make some provision for religious education there.

Indian: But the real thing is that you do not wish to provide education to our children from looted money. Isn't it so?

Gandhiji: Yes. Not merely from looted money; not even under the robber's flag. I have declared that we must have nothing to do with schools conducted under the patronage of that Government which has lost all our faith and love. Let me tell you something. A time was when not only was I lustily singing 'God Save The King' myself, but had even made my sons, who did not know English, recite that song. After I came back from Africa to Rajkot, I taught that song to students of the Training College there, because I thought that every truly loyal subject must know by heart at least that song. But what is my feeling today? I can never, with my hand on my conscience, sing it myself or ask anybody to do so. I may, of course, say that I wish king George to live



long as an individual, but I cannot sing the prayer that the Empire which has so debased itself before God and man may live on for a moment longer.

Indian: You have said that you don't care what the system of teaching is?

Gandhiji: Yes, I have.

Indian: It is Indians who conduct our universities. Its policymakers are also Indians.

Gandhiji : Quite true. If the university authorities listen to me, I would tell them only one thing: "Tear your charters to pieces and then I will call the universities my own." If they say that the Government grant would be stopped, I am prepared to give a guarantee of providing for the amount. All I tell them is, 'Make your universities national'. What did I say to Panditji (Malaviyaji) also? "Return the charter to the Viceroy and, if the Princes want their money back, let them have it. We will get the deficit amount, if any, by begging. As you possess the inimitable power of begging from the Princes, so I have some power of begging from the masses"

Indian: But what harm has the 'charter' done?

Gandhiji: O, with the charter pass all the strings into the Government's hands. It is because of the 'charter' that the Hindu University is going to give an address of welcome to the Duke of Cannaught. How can I put up with that? Never. Let me frankly tell you that Mrs. Besant was right when she once remarked to me, 'You are out for a revolution, a rebellion'. I am. Only, it must be evolutionary revolution, but a revolution I do want and I think it absolutely necessary. There is no other go. See this one thing. The Government has changed its colour altogether. Look at the shameless latest public statement it has issued. In a maze of verbiage it declares that for the present it has given the Press the freedom of expression and that it is not going to seal anybody's lips. But what are they doing in fact? Why did they gag that silent worker in the Punjab, Aga Safdar? There is not a trace of religious fanaticism in him. I have not seen a more peaceful worker than he in the Punjab. Only the other day, moreover, Babu Shyamsundar Chakravarti (Editor of *The Servant*) told me that he had been given a 'warning'. And why? Because he reprinted from *Young India*, Sri Rajagopalachariar's article on 'Suggestion to the Voters'! This thing is simply intolerable.

Indian: Let us now turn to the law courts. What do you propose to do by boycotting them and making the lawyers renounce their practice?



Gandhiji : I want to undermine the prestige of the Government. These courts and schools are the fundamental bases on which Government prestige stands. It is through them that the Government has succeeded in ensnaring the people.

Indian: How will disputes be settled then?

Gandhiji: May I give you a bit of my experience? During my career as a lawyer, I had settled 75% of cases outside the court by mutual agreement, and I was considered an expert in bringing about a compromise. I had made a name for impartiality. So, when anybody got a notice from me, he would come immediately to me and ask for a private settlement. Many clients, therefore, had to engage two solicitors. If they did not succeed with me, they would at once run to other solicitors. I used to accept only clean cases.

Englishman: Do you think there will be many litigants prepared to trust arbitrators?

Gandhiji : 50% of litigants will leave the courts and hence, cases will be reduced by 50%. I am told that as many as 50% of cases are engineered by touts. Mr. Das did say that that was not the case in Calcutta, but others told me that he had little experience in the matter.

A lawyer from Calcutta who was listening to the talk here intervened to say, "The *mofussil* is all full of touts. I testify that 50% of cases there are got up by touts."

Indian: May be, but I am talking of cities. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce has instituted an 'Arbitration Tribunal.' The Chamber is a reputed body and business cases have not decreased in law courts.

Gandhiji: Possibly, because the lawyers have not decreased.

Indian: What is going to be the effect of a stray lawyer giving up his practice?

Gandhiji: It is certain to have a proportionate effect. I will definitely claim that one more push has been given to the already crumbling edifice of Government prestige by Pandit Motilal Nehru's giving up his practice. Ask Sir Hurcourt Butler (Governor of U. P.).

Englishman: You are also dissuading litigants from resorting to courts?

Gandhiji: Yes.

Englishman: How is that feasible here? The parties had faith in you. You accepted the cases of only those who came to you with clean hands and a clear conscience. You



would not cast a glance at the clients who came with unclean hands. What will you do here with dubious clients? Such cases are certain to be rare, where both the parties are honest and above board.

Gandhiji: I will not hesitate to give a present of all unclean clients to the Government.

Indian:(On behalf of them both): We have not come here to quarrel with you, but only to understand. I hope you know that. We will put only one more question. Is it true or not that the non-co-operation of your followers is based on hate and vengeance?

Gandhiji: Yes, an English gentleman from Madras has also written the same thing to me.

Englishman: I quite understand your principle. But your followers vomit only virulent abuse.

Gandhiji:Yes, yes. But what I mean to say is that you may do a noble deed out of love or hatred, still it will not fail to bring its own result. Truth may be spoken out of fear or wisdom, but, in either case, will it not bear its fruit?

Indian: Your principle is 'Hate the sin, but not the sinner', but that of your followers seems to be quite the reverse : 'Hate the sinner and you need not hate the sin'.

Gandhiji: Are you not doing some injustice there? There are people who hate both the sin and the sinner. It is because they hate sin that they are renouncing so much, are prepared to offer great sacrifices. Can a man who hates only the sinner give such heavy sacrifices? Never.

Englishman: Your fundamental principle is not to associate with sinners. How can you then align yourself with unholy colleagues? How can a man like you, who stands on such a lofty height, use dirty implements?

Gandhiji: Will you please compare the unholiness of the Government and the imperfection of my colleagues? You will understand me on a little deeper thought. Every reformer—and I am a reformer—is bound to use the implements available to him. Not 'dirty', say 'imperfect' implements.

Indian (rising): We have put you to a great trouble today. You will please excuse us. I have been fighting with 'non-cooperation' till now. But the 'non-co-operation' I was fighting with, is not the same as the 'non-co-operation' I have learnt from you. We are both thankful to you.



1. Through the persuasion of some of his Scotch supporters living in the plains who were enemies of some Scottish Highland chiefs (suspected to be in sympathy with the ousted king James II) William III issued an order, on pain of death penalty, requiring every Scottish chief to take an oath of loyalty to him before January 1st 1692. Owing to snow-storms on the way Mac Ian, the chief of the brave and proud Macdonald clan, took the oath a little later. Suppressing the fact of his having taken the oath, his enemies procured the Kingly order to kill him and his 'robber' clan. In order to destroy the clan root and branch, they took the help of the Campbells who were hereditary enemies of the Macdonalds. A Captain Campbell, with some of his men, became the guest of the Macdonalds, since he was personally on friendly terms with them. His men, in the meanwhile, closed all the outlets of the Glencoe Valley. When all arrangements were complete, the Campbells fell upon their hosts, the sleeping Macdonalds, early at 5 a.m. on the 13th February, 1692 and mercilessly massacred them. The miscreants did not spare even women and children. Those who could flee into the adjoining mountains died of cold and hunger. Green, the well-known historian, writes that, on hearing of this slaughter, one of the leaders of the conspiracy said that his only regret was that perhaps someone might have escaped safely.

17-12-1920

Left Calcutta. A lot of pending mail was disposed of on the way. Revised my report of his Calcutta speech. Saraladevi had written: Non-co-operation was based on hatred and she loved Bapu the less therefore. She would love Bapu more if he was free of hatred; an activity, moreover, like non-co-operation could be taken up by others also. Reply:

"I love you more (for) loving me less for any hatred you may see in me. And you would be right in your regret over my being in non-co-operation, if it was a matter of politics with me. As it is with me, it is my religion. I am gathering together all the forces of hatred and directing them in a proper channel. Hatred is a sign of weakness, as contempt of insolent power. If I could but show our countrymen that we need not fear the English, we will cease to hate them. A brave man or woman never hates. Hatred is essentially the vice of cowards. Non-co-operation is self-purification. Even as dirt comes to the surface when you are purifying sugar, so does our weakness come to the surface, whilst we are purifying ourselves. But what I like about your letter is your clear position. Your love for me is based on your belief in my purity and gentleness. I am worth nothing, if I have not these and I should hold myself unfit for all the renunciation of yours described in your previous letter."



18-12-1920

to

4-1-1921

Reached Nagpur at 12 noon. Excellent arrangements by Jamnalalji¹. Very great love. Public meeting on the 18th evening.

Bapu's speech:

We two brothers are moving about in India for the several months past. Our president has not introduced Maulana Saheb to you, because the Maulana was your guest at Chhindwara for a long time and you know why he was the Government's guest at Chhindwara (was interned) as well as the work we two are doing these days. I congratulate those lawyers who have renounced their practice but say that that is not enough. How will the invitation to the Congress to hold its annual session here become Nagpur, if it rests content with so much? Excellent work is being done in the Central Provinces and I have heard that the Nagpur Congress is going to be a grand success. It is very good that the boycott of liquor movement is making a great headway here. I say even that boycott contributes to the success of our non-co-operation movement. We are out for non-co-operation and if, with our brains heated with intoxicants, we do things we must not, it would mean anything but non-violence or peace. If we don't remain non-violent, we are not going to end this Empire within foreseeable future. If we want to end or mend the Empire, there is one and only one way to it and that is non-violent non-co-operation. I have been repeatedly declaring that this Empire is saturated with Satanism. If we want to subdue Satan or to drive him out, we cannot do so by opposing it with counter-Satanism. We have to take only God's help. Ours is the fight of *dharma* against *adharma* (a=not). Despite the wrongs of the Punjab and the Khilafat, the Empire is in no mood to repent. It asks us to forget the Khilafat, forget the Punjab and only then to do anything that we may. As long as there is not sincere unity between Hindus and Muslims—I speak here to both of them—it is impossible to uproot this Empire. That achievement is possible only when we are united. Non-violent non-co-operation is our supreme *dharma*. There can be no amity and co-operation between *adharma* and *dharma*. It is a question of courage to give up the help one gets from Satan. It is for that reason that Jamnalal has taken the chair today. We never waste our time in debating whether to leave our house or not, when it is on fire. Acceptance of the Councils cannot repair either the Punjab or the Khilafat wrong. Justice can be rendered to the Punjab only when we are able to win Swaraj.



It is impossible for seven crores of Muslims and twenty three crores of Hindus to live together except on terms of amity.

Till now we simply passed resolutions. It is now the time for action. If you want to show some solid achievement before the Congress meets here, all the schools and colleges of Nagpur must be emptied.

There are differences of views between Khaparde² and myself, but I can never approve of his harassment, I want as much freedom for him as for myself. If we can show good results, we will find that Khaparde and all others will come over to our camp.

We must have the strength to organise everything in such a way as to enable us to secure Swaraj in a year. We must have indubitable faith that the Punjab wrong is going to be rectified. It is only because we are cowards that a handful of Englishmen carry on their rule here. We want Swaraj in order to make any repetition of such treachery towards us impossible. We can achieve nothing, so long as we do not brace ourselves up for practical work. It passes my understanding what sacrifice is involved in adopting *swadeshi*. The present is a golden chance for us, which neither Egypt nor Korea ever had. We are three hundred millions in India. In Egypt there are only a handful. We two brothers are an object-lesson for the whole country. We are living together like loving sons of the same mother. And the hearts of both of us ring true."

Shaukatali : Let us speak out in no uncertain terms that if we don't get justice, there will remain on the Indian soil only Englishmen or only Indians. When will another Shivaji rise up from these mountains? Will not the Maratha women now produce sons whose seats would be on saddles and homes thousands of miles away? I wish your feet never fumed back but always marched on.

Speech at the meeting of the Subjects Committee on the Creed³ of the Congress:

*"There are only two kinds of objections, so far as I understand, that will be advanced from this platform. One is that we may not today think of dissolving the British connection. What I say is that it is derogatory to national dignity to think of permanence of British connection at any cost. We are laboring under a grievous wrong, which is the personal duty of every Indian to get redressed. This British Government not only refuses to redress the wrong, but it refuses to acknowledge its mistakes and so long as it retains its attitude, it is not possible for us to say all that we



want to be or all that we want to get is only by retaining British connection. No matter what difficulties lie in our path, we must make the clearest possible declaration to the world and to the whole of India, that we may not possibly have British connection, if the British people will not do this elementary justice. I do not, for one moment, suggest that we want to end the British connection at all costs, unconditionally. If the British connection is for the advancement of India, we do not want to destroy it. But if it is inconsistent with our national self-respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it (Hear, hear) . There is room in this resolution for both—those who believe that, by retaining British connection, we can purify ourselves and purify British people and those who have no such belief. As for instance, take the extreme case of Mr. Andrews. He says all hope for India is gone for keeping the British connection. He says there must be complete severance—complete independence (Hear, hear). There is room enough in this new creed for a man like Mr. Andrews also. Take another illustration, a man like myself or my brother Shaukat Ali. There is certainly no room for us, if we have eternally to subscribe to the doctrine that, whether these wrongs are redressed or not, we shall have to evolve ourselves within the British Empire. There is no room for me in that creed. Therefore, this revised creed is elastic enough to take in both shades of opinion, and the British people will have to beware that, if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy the Empire.

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1. Sri. Jamnalal Bajaj, who later on became one of the chief financial supporters of Gandhiji's activities and, of course, courted jail with his family. He was a member of the Congress Working Committee also. Gandhiji loved him to the extent of calling him his 'fifth son'.
 2. G. K. Khaparde, a staunch follower of Tilak Maharaj and a believer in 'responsive co-operation'.
 3. The resolution Gandhiji moved at the meeting was: "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means".

Squabble in Bengali Camp

Now remains the plea against the means. I do not want to enter into that question since I have the right of final reply. I want just now to wind up my remarks with a personal appeal, drawing your attention to an object-lesson that was presented in the Bengal Camp yesterday. If you want Swaraj, you have got a demonstration of how to get Swaraj. There was a little bit of skirmish, a little bit of squabble, and a little bit of difference in the Bengal Camp, as there will always be differences so long as the



world lasts. I have known differences between husband and wife, because I am still a husband; I have noticed differences between parents and children, because I am still a father of four boys and they are all strong enough to destroy their father so far as bodily struggle is concerned; so I possess the varied experience of husband and parent; I know that we shall always have squabbles, we shall always have differences, but the lesson that I want to draw your attention to is that I had the honour and privilege of addressing both the parties. They gave me their undivided attention and what is more, they showed me their attachment, their affection and their fellowship for me by accepting the humble advice that I had the honour of tendering to them and I told them, "I am not here to distribute justice; that justice can be awarded only through our worthy President. But I ask you not to go to the President. You need not worry him. If you are strong, if you are brave, if you really want to revise the creed, then you will bottle up your rage, you will bottle up all the feelings of injustice that may rankle in your hearts and forget those things here, under this roof". And I told them to forget their differences, to forget the wrongs. I don't want to tell you or go into the history of that incident. Probably most of you know. I simply want to invite your attention to the fact that they undertook to forget their differences.

Return No Blow For Blow

I only wanted my Bengali friends and all the other friends who have come to this great assembly with the fixed determination to seek nothing but the settlement of their country, to seek nothing but the advancement of their respective rights, to seek nothing but the conservation of the national honour. I appeal to every one of you to copy the example set by those who felt aggrieved and who felt that their heads were broken. (Cheers) I know, before we have done with this great battle on which we have embarked since the special Session of the Congress, we have to go probably, possibly through a sea of blood, but let it not be said of us that we are guilty of shedding blood, but let it be said by generations yet to be born that we suffered, that we shed not somebody's blood but our own; and so I have no hesitation in saying that I do not want to show much sympathy for those who had their heads broken or who were said to be even in danger of losing their lives. What does it matter? It is much better to die at the hands, at least, of our own countrymen. What is there to revenge ourselves about or upon?



So I ask everyone of you that if at any time there is blood boiling within you against some fellow countrymen of yours, even though he may be in the employ of Government, even though he may be in the Secret Service, you will take care not to be offended and not to return blow for blow. Understand that the very moment you return the blow from the detective, your cause is lost. This is your non-violent campaign. And so I ask everyone of you not to retaliate, but to bottle up your rage, dismiss your rage from you and you will rise greater men. I am here to congratulate those who have restrained themselves from going to the President and bringing the dispute before him.

Object-Lesson

That is the object-lesson to which I want to draw your attention, if you want to carry this resolution. Do not carry this resolution only by acclamation for it, but I want you to accompany the carrying out of it with a faith and resolve nothing on earth can move. That you are intent upon getting Swaraj at the earliest possible moment by means that are legitimate, that are honourable, and by means that are non-violent, that are peaceful, you have resolved upon, so far you can say today. We cannot give battle to the Government by means of steel, but we can give battle by exercising, what I have so often called, "soul-force" and soul-force is not the prerogative of one man, of a *sannyasi* or even a so-called saint. Soul-force is the prerogative of every human being, female or male, and therefore, I ask my countrymen, if they want to accept this resolution to accept it with firm determination and to understand that it is inaugurated under such good and favourable auspices as I have described to you. May God grant that you will pass this resolution unanimously, may God grant that you will also have the courage and the ability to carry out the resolution and that within one year." (Loud and continued cheers).

SPEECH AT CONCLUSION OF SUBJECTS COMMITTEE DEBATE¹

December 28, 1920

I have before me the original resolution along with the various amendments, including one about our remaining in the Empire and another suggesting omission of the term, "responsible government". I still maintain that, if our grievances remain unredressed, we should sever the British connection. This is why we are amending the



constitution. If our grievances are redressed, the possibility of arriving at a compromise on Swaraj through discussions is not ruled out. There is no trickery in this. In the form proposed, the Congress creed leaves the door open to both parties. If this is trickery, we should welcome it. 'Legitimate and peaceful means' are the very foundation of the Congress programme. We should proclaim to the Europeans that their lives were safe in our country, but that their guns and other things were no weapons of destruction but mere toys. At the moment at least, there is no possibility of violence. So far, we handled only the educated classes but now we must take in hand the masses. If we can have Swaraj only through disgraceful means, that Swaraj itself will turn out to be a disgrace. If we wish to undo the humiliation offered to Islam we should remain peaceful; otherwise this movement would collapse. If we take to violence, the Congress will be declared an illegal body and crushed out of existence. We should achieve our goal by honourable means. "Responsible Government" is a misleading phrase. No dictator will rise to power in India, since Swaraj will be literally the rule accepted by the people themselves. But if the people in the country themselves want dictatorship, nobody can prevent its rise.

Speech delivered on 28-12-1920 at the plenary session of the Congress, to propose the following resolution:

"The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."

The resolution says that the object of the Congress is to win Swaraj and that there is only one method to achieve the goal, viz., the use of only those means which are 'legitimate and peaceful'. The Congress believes that the country should get Swaraj at the earliest moment. If it is possible to get it today, we must take it right today, it feels.

Through this resolution the Congress also shows us what we must do to attain Swaraj. The resolution declares that we do not want to gain Swaraj by means of the sword. We do not want to win independence by dishonest means i.e., at the cost of truth. We say, just as our object is pure, our means also should be equally pure. So the resolution wants us to make a firm resolve to attain Swaraj and to take the road of truth, justice and peace to reach our goal.

I consider it a privilege conferred on me that I have to move such an important resolution before the Congress. Let me tell you that the aim of the Congress till now was the attainment of what is called 'Responsible Colonial Government'—i. e., that



form of government within the Empire which the Colonies are at present having—and to gain it by 'constitutional agitation', i. e., means that did not infringe the law. 'The law' here means the laws of the British Empire. In pursuance of the old creed, in order to remain in the Congress, we must respect every law of the British Empire, though the Empire may not provide a satisfactory solution of the Khilafat question and though, far from giving us justice, it may not even admit its error in the matter of the Punjab outrages. The old constitution meant that we could never end the Imperial rule over us. It is not now possible either for Hindus or Muslims to put up with the Empire, even though it may perpetrate such grave injustices and refuse to repair them. Hence, through this resolution, we affirm that we want Swaraj. It is only by getting Swaraj that we shall be able to retrieve the wrongs of the Khilafat and Punjab horrors.

But I do not want to take to the methods of the West in order to get Swaraj. I know, neither Hindus nor Muslims say that they would never take up the sword to win independence. But everyone accepts at least this point: at present we cannot gain our object by the sword. It is on that account that we have adopted *turke mavalat* or the non-co-operation method. The sword will not save either ourselves or our religion or our country. If you all agree with me on this point, you will refrain from opposing the resolution I have put before you.

I know that there are two parties among our thoughtful leaders. In one of them is my respected elder brother, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. He has not been able to present himself here today to give you his views on this question, as he is down with fever and cold. I will, therefore, reproduce them in brief. We all know that there are not many who render as splendid services to their country as does Malaviyaji. Even if what such a distinguished servant of the country says is not acceptable to us, we must give him a quiet and respectful hearing. He says, we may talk big, but it is beyond our capacity to end the British Empire. How is this disarmed and disabled India, he asks, going to be able to end such a mighty Empire? He, therefore, believes that we should not delude the people with promises we cannot fulfil. He is a fool, he says, who tries to whip the people to actions beyond their capacity. I would immediately accept his advice, if this thing (Swaraj) were really beyond the people's capacity. But in this matter I differ from him. I believe that every man, and every woman, possesses the innate capacity to get Swaraj. I believe that, so long as we have the faith that the Soul dwells within the body, we are fit for Swaraj. The thirty crores of Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, are men of religion, men who remember God, men who would love to die for His cause. Over the slaughter of a single



cow a thousand Hindus are ready to lay down their lives and take those of others. Over the insult of a single Muslim numerous Muslims are ready to give their lives and kill the opponents. So long as such Hindus and such Muslims live in India, I will never call it impossible for us to win Swaraj and I would never allow our goal of Swaraj to be pushed beyond our sight.

This Empire is guilty of so many outrages that to remain under its flag is to be faithless to God. That is why it is my humble prayer to you all to pass the resolution unanimously.

Even those among us who feel we are weak and unable to win Swaraj with our own power ought to agree with this new creed, since we want to get Swaraj by means that are peaceful and free from untruth. By this resolution we simply cherish the highest ideal.

This resolution, moreover, affords a place in the Congress even for those who think that the Empire is not so wooden as not to see reason, that it is certain to see the light at last and deal us justice and that we can persuade it to do the right thing by going into its Councils.

We do not wish to punish the Empire. The resolution does not say that in order to win Swaraj we are necessarily going to end the Empire. We are quite willing to remain in the Empire, if the Empire on its part is prepared to render us justice and give us our rights. This is what I call the path of justice and nothing can retard or obstruct our progress along this path of righteousness.

I tell you, therefore, if you agree with the resolution and want to gain Swaraj, and by the method indicated in this resolution, you must make a grim resolve in your heart to strive for Swaraj. Our work does not end by merely passing this resolution. If you are bent on it, you are certain to gain Swaraj and reappear the Punjab outrage as well as the Khilafat injustice.

There will be succeeding speakers who will assert that we can use any suitable means (violent or non-violent) to achieve our objective. I will answer the plea at the right time. For the present, I will only say that in fixing the aim of the Congress, we must bear in mind the situation as it stands at present. For me, personally, I can say, my *dharma* tells me I must not get Swaraj or even *moksha* (salvation), if either of them could be attained by violent means. I do not want even that *bhakti* (devotion), which enjoins killing of any creature. Only the means of truth and peace as shown in this



resolution are the right means for you. Only through those means, you will be able to repair your wrongs.

I don't want to say anything more. I recognise and appreciate the all-round awakening that has taken place in India and I believe it unnecessary to speak anything further.

I want just now to wind up my remarks by drawing your attention to an object-lesson. There was a little bit of scuffle in the Bengal camp yesterday. I was grieved to hear of it. I went there with a view to show those friends how Swaraj could be obtained. I told them respectfully whatever I wanted to. I said, "I cannot say which of the two parties has justice on its side. But if you are intent upon making up your quarrel, intent upon getting Swaraj, intent upon making your hearts pure and undefiled, you must forget all these things. You must bury the hatchet right here; and both the parties were reconciled. If we want Swaraj, we are not going to approach the Government for relief even if any of our brothers has injured us, even broken our head. Why should we go even to the President? If a man beats me with a stick, I must bow down to him in return. That is the only (right) way of overcoming him. We shall achieve nothing, if we do not behave that way. If you are strong, if you are brave, if you are determined to win Swaraj, and if you really wish to revise the Congress creed, you will have to control your rage, dismiss all the feelings of injustice rankling in your hearts and forget it all, right here. I have nothing to say to those who approve of violence, but I can certainly plead earnestly with those who call themselves non-co-operators into accepting my views." The friends from Bengal have resolved to control their anger and I congratulate them. If you follow their example I have not the slightest doubt that you will win Swaraj. You may forgive your assailant, but not out of cowardice. I will not submit to an assault on me out of unmanliness. But it is bravery if I really pity the man who beats me, if I heartily forgive the man who assaults me even savagely. In putting this resolution before you, I present this object lesson to you.

At the same time I expect from you a faith and a grim resolve which nothing in the world can shake. I request those who are in favour of this resolution to accept it with a firm determination. May God inspire you to approve of the resolution unanimously and endow you with the strength and courage sufficient to enable you to crown your resolve with success within one year.



1. On the draft resolution on the creed of the Congress which amended the creed from attaining 'responsible government within the Empire by constitutional means' into 'attainment of Swaraj' (within or without the Empire) by legitimate and peaceful means.

Speech on non-co-operation resolution

December 30, 1920

*Maulana Hasrat Mohani has come forward with an amendment as a matter of conscience. His amendment is that he wants to reject the conscience clause and he wants to reject the clause which says that you may not make personal appeals to boys under sixteen. The Congress resolution does not bind a man's conscience, and I have never made a fetish of the mandate of the Congress. Even now, although I feel that the majority are of the same opinion which I hold, I make bold to say that I shall never be a party to making the Congress itself a fetish or its mandate a fetish. I shall always reserve the right of conscience, wherever my conscience pricks me and tells me that I should resist the mandate of the Congress. With reference to boys of 12 years or under 16, this Congress certainly says, you may not address boys under sixteen because they are of tender age and I am not to quicken that boy's conscience who has his father, for the father has that special prerogative.

I think it is right that we should know that we are not tampering with the obligations of service imposed upon employees of Government, whether civil, military or police. But we are asking them not to kill their conscience and I want to make that point a little clear. I would have held it a sin if I had been one of those soldiers to receive the command of General Dyer to shoot those innocent men in Jallianwala Bagh. I would have considered it my duty to disregard that command and preferred being shot on the spot. I know the discipline of a soldier. I say that if a soldier receives a command from his officer which he considers to be in conflict with his religion or in conflict with his duties to his country, he may certainly disregard it at the peril of his life.

I hope, after passing the resolution, you will go away forgetting all the differences and acrimony that have guided our public life during the last three months, and you will show no violence in thought, deed or word and I repeat the promise that I made, that, if we can only do that, we do not require one year, we do not even require nine months to attain our goal.



Antyaja Parishad¹

Two social reformers suggested that Gandhiji should take the chair of this Conference. They said, "We do not agree with Gandhiji in his political views. No matter how great the achievement of Mahatmaji, he does not deserve that honorific, so long as he has not been able to uproot untouchability. Mahatmaji has done absolutely nothing for us till now. Only, he has sympathy for our efforts. We have no need to hang on to him for the sake of our uplift. That we can achieve by getting the Government pass good laws; but we cannot eradicate untouchability with the aid of law."

Gandhiji had first intended to finish the business with a short speech, as he was exhausted with the strain of the whole day's work. But, as the meeting began with expressions given above, it became incumbent on him to give out his views on untouchability and uplift of the depressed classes in the plainest terms.

Before beginning the speech, Gandhiji put two questions to the audience: "Can you understand my language (Hindi)?" Answer: "Yes." He then asked those among them who were *antyajas* to raise their hands. Many hands sprang up. Nearly three quarters of the audience were *antyajas*. Gandhiji began:

"I am very glad to find that such a large number of *antyajas* are present at the meeting.

"For quite a number of years I have been studying the conditions of the *antyajas*. On this question I do not fully agree with our great and well-known social reformers. My method of work differs from theirs. Ever since I came to India, I have repeatedly thought over the social reformers' ways of doing this work, but it has not appeared to me that there is something wrong about the work I am doing or that it is inferior in any way to what they are doing. It is possible that my method may be faulty, but, personally, I have no doubt that it is not.

"This is the basis on which I work. Untouchability is a sin and it has to be thrown out. I think it my duty to remove untouchability, but that can be done not by working among the *antyajas* and uplifting them, but by working among other Hindus and purifying them. Untouchability is the excrescence of Hinduism. I had declared at a meeting in Madras that, just as I saw Satanism of a very diabolical type in our Empire and if I could not mend I wanted to end it, so I believe that untouchability is heinous Satanism in Hinduism.



"The late Mr. Gokhale, after he came to know of the whole situation in South Africa, remarked to me, "But why should not our plight here be so wretched? Just as we regard *antyajas* as untouchables, the European race considers us all, Hindus and Muslims, as untouchables! We are not allowed to live in their quarters and possess the same rights as they enjoy. The Whites of South Africa have made Indians as miserable as the Hindu society has made the *antyajas* here. Even in all the other Colonies of the Empire, the behaviour of the Whites towards us is just the same as is the behaviour of Hindu society towards *antyajas*." That is why Gokhaleji told me, "We are only reaping in South Africa the fruit of the Satanism which Hinduism has sown in India. Our society has committed a great sin, betrayed the most devilish spirit and it is only by God's decree that our condition in South Africa has grown so miserable." I immediately accepted the castigation. His observation was perfectly true. My own experience since then confirms it.

"I am myself a Hindu. I claim to be a strict Hindu. It is my further claim that I am a *sanatani* (old, i. e., orthodox) Hindu. A serious dispute is going on today in Gujarat between the Hindu society and myself. Hindu society—specially the *Vaishnava* community—denies my claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu and yet I insist that I am.

"This (untouchability) is a very grave defect in Hindu society. There are many other defects also; but it does not matter much if you remove them today or after a thousand years. You will be excused for that delay. This untouchability, however, towards the *antyajas* is for me impossible to put up with. I cannot stand its existence. It is the duty of the Hindu society to undergo austere penance through strenuous efforts to drive out untouchability. I have warned the Hindu society, and I repeat the warning today, that the establishment of Swaraj is an impossibility, so long as the Hindu society does not free itself from the sin of untouchability. If you believe in my veracity, let me tell you, the pain I feel at the continuance of untouchability in Hindu society is even greater than that which an *antyaaja* feels for his disabilities. So long as untouchability persists among the Hindus, I feel ashamed and feel a constraint in claiming to be a Hindu myself. Those who spoke in Marathi before me have charged me. I can only then be fit for the title 'mahatma' which India has conferred on me—but which I have not accepted—when untouchability is ousted from Hindu *dharma* (During this speech Gandhiji was cheered twice already. Hexe again there were loud cheers. Gandhiji had, therefore, to say, "When I am pouring out the searchings of heart, please do not distract me by your noises"). I tell you, "Show me, if you can, how a single individual can end an age-old custom between sunrise and sunset. If anybody



can point out the way by following which untouchability can be uprooted in one day, I would eradicate it this very day. But it is no easy thing to make the Hindu society see the wrong in untouchability and get it removed.

"I always do what I say. From my experience of the great trouble I had to undergo, of the penance I had to impose upon myself in order to win my wife's support to this cause, I want to tell the *antyajas* and the Hindu Society that this work (removal of untouchability) is attended with stupendous difficulties. I do not thereby mean to say that the work must be stopped. But that shows why one must clearly think out the right way of tackling this difficult problem. That is why I do not approve of your resolutions.

"You propose a resolution saying that *antyajas* must have the right of entry into all Hindu temples. How is that feasible? To say that every Hindu must be allowed to go into every temple is unpracticable today, i. e., so long as *varnashrama dharma* plays such a prominent part in Hinduism. Hindu society is not ready for that change. My experience tells me that there are many temples from which even some *non-antyaaja* Hindu communities are debarred. Even I cannot go into some temples in Madras. But I am not unhappy over it. I am not prepared even to say that in imposing the ban Hindu society definitely shows itself up as illiberal and faulty. It may be at fault, but we must bear in mind the attitude behind the ban. If that exclusion is made with a view to maintain *sanyam* (restraint), I will not say that each and every Hindu must have the right to go into the temples. There are varying religious sects in India and I do not wish to destroy them. India does not owe its downfall to these religious sects or to *varnashram*. The degradation is due to our discarding the excellent traits that used to lie in *varnashram* and the life of self-restraint we lived. You must discern the difference. *Varnashram* is one thing, untouchability is another. To condemn *varnashram* as making the society corrupt and sinful is to adopt the standards of the West. I do not use them. Our acceptance of Western modes have led to India's downfall. I don't want to buy the blessings of *antyajas* cheaply. Hence, I want to say here quite plainly that it is after a great inner struggle that I have joined in this work, because, while I am with you (*antyajas*) and with social reformers in the matter of the removal of untouchability, I cannot see eye to eye with you and them in the other changes you want to bring about. I can never say to a Hindu—because I don't believe in it myself—that inter-dining and inter-marriage are a 'must' for Hindu society. I see no necessity for them,¹ say, the man who renounces both these social intercourses can



be a man of self-restraint and can also become a man of self-willed licence. I think this renunciation by Hindu society has come from the urge for self-restraint.

"I myself freely dine at the same table with *antyajas*. I have adopted an *antyaja* girl as my daughter. She is dearer to me than life itself. All the same I am not going to ask Hindu society to dispense with its attitude of abstemiousness in this matter. I believe there is room in Hindu society for men even of my type. With all my free intercourse, there is room in Hindu society for me also, even though I am not a *sannyasi*.² Just as I may accept any unforbidden food offered to me by Muslims, I accept it from *antyajas* also. But I do not wish to compel every Hindu to do likewise, because that means relaxation in *sanyam* and it is in *sanyam* that the protection of Hindu society lies. Ending *varnashrama* or the ban on inter-dining is not the same thing as ending untouchability. While the former is *sanyam*, the latter is *Satanism*. I am a student, always trying to learn. When, therefore, I realise that I was clinging to a false doctrine, I will at once freely admit my error. But at present, I can say this much. I see nothing but sham and Satanism in those who are defending untouchability. What they are defending is the evil that has crept into Hinduism. "

I have already given out my limitations and my sphere and method of work. I do not believe that reformers can remove the sin of untouchability by working among the *antyajas* and educating them. I know of many persons who deliver sonorous speeches on platforms, but when it comes to the question of their actually touching an *antyaja*, they beat a hasty retreat. That is not my way of work and I want to say that that is not the way to bring about the reform. On the other hand, I have an aversion for those who say they will follow in the wake of Hindu society when it sees its error. On my part, I have been always telling *antyajas* that I, for one, would offer non-co-operation and nothing else against that sin. Let me declare before those *non-antyaja* Hindus who are present here, that if this sordid custom cannot be removed by any other means, an occasion may arise when, single-handed, I will offer non-co-operation against the whole Hindu society for its deliverance from the sin. I do not find it so very difficult to put down the Satanism of the Empire. It is, after all, a secular matter. But the Satanism of untouchability has taken the garb of religion. Hindus even believe it as nothing but a sin to touch an *antyaja*. To persuade them to give up the belief is a difficult matter. We are sunk so deep in misery, we are so overcome by sloth and inertia, that we have lost the capacity to think. Even our religious heads are so embedded in ignorance that it is impossible to make them see the light. Removal of the sin of untouchability is nothing else but making the Hindu society see the sin of it. It is impossible for *antyajas*



to wipe off untouchability by killing the Hindu crores. If the Vedas or Manu-*smriti* (the code of law instituted by Manu, the first law-giver) sanctions untouchability, we have but to change the Vedas or that *smriti*. But who can be the giver of a new code?

I am a worldly man. I never lay claim to be a religious head. How can I, a man so full of faults, lay down a new religious code for the Hindu society? I would make myself the object of their (the present religious preceptors') pity and do whatever I can by beseeching them.

"The work is attended with serious difficulties. But if our social reformers realise that it is impossible to end this evil by uprooting Hindu society, they will be convinced that the evil can be ended by nothing else than forbearance and sympathy. To you, the *antyaja* brothers, I say 'You are as full Hindus as I am. You also possess all the rights that accrue to me as a Hindu. If you understand the essence of Hinduism rightly, you have the weapon for overcoming your disabilities in your hands, just as the weapon to end this Empire is in our hands. Begging at the door of the foreigner is not the way to end our ills. Similarly, the remedy to end untouchability lies in the hands of the *antyajas* themselves.

"*Antyajas* may tell me, 'Teach us non-co-operation.' I want to teach them non-co-operation this very night. Non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. India is a country different from others. That is why we are not trying what we want to get by the method of harassing the Englishman. What then should we (*antyajas*) do to purify ourselves? Hindu society grumbles, "See these *antyajas*! They are drunkards; they eat any dirty food; they never observe the rules of cleanliness and sanitation; they even slaughter the cow." I don't believe this last charge.

He who claims to be a Hindu can never think of taking beef. If *antyajas* want to offer non-co-operation, they must give up drinking, must give up eating putrid flesh and, must of all, cow-slaughter. I do not ask tanners to give up their occupation. Englishmen do that work and yet we lick their shoes. Even some Brahmins do the work these days. I don't think cleaning latrines is a dirty work. I have often done the work myself and I like it. My mother has taught me that it is a sacred work. Though it has to deal with dirt, the work itself is holy. He who does the work, with the consciousness that it is a holy work, attains to heaven. You can certainly remain within the fold of Hinduism without having to give up that work. If anybody gives you the leavings of their table or even cooked food, you should refuse either of them and ask for raw cereals. Your living habits must be clean. After cleaning latrines, you must change your dress. Even though



you may continue to clean latrines, you should keep yourselves as clean as my mother did. You will ask me, "How can we afford a change of clothing?" You must then say to Hindu society, "We are not going to do the work, so long as we do not get a salary of Rs. 15, 20, 30 or whatever we are fit for. Just as the carpenter or the blacksmith serves society, we also render an essential service to it." You must become fearless. I know quite well the *antyajas* of Gujarat. I am conversant with their temperament and nature. Them also I teach this same thing, viz., 'You can remove the stain of untouchability by your own strength. I ask you to be thorough Hindus, so that Hindu society, instead of looking down upon you, worships you.

"I want this work (removal of untouchability) done by your own efforts or by those of the Hindu society itself (i. e. without Governmental interference). I tell you, "Be fit for the rights you are demanding." I do not thereby suggest that you are not fit. When I exhort India to be fit for Swaraj, I do not believe it unfit today. I only ask India to be fitter than now. In the same way I tell the *antyajas*, "It is your birth-right to be free and gain a status of equality with every Hindu. But I ask you to be fitter than you are today, by undergoing *tapasya* (austere self-purification).

"In connection with this *tapasya*, I wish to narrate two incidents of my life. After opening the Satyagrahashram at Ahmedabad I accepted, as inmates, an *antyaja* brother, Dudhabhai, and his wife. And what was the Hindu society's reaction? Mrs. Dudhabhai was not allowed to draw water from the well which we were using for the Ashram needs. I said, "If Dudhabhai is not allowed, I will myself abstain from drawing water from that well." It was a common well and I was a part-user; but I gave up my share. And how did Dudhabhai behave? A pure soul, he quietly bore with all the abuses that were heaped upon him. The trouble ended in three days by this *tapasya*. The neighbours saw the light and realised that Dudhabhai must be allowed to draw water from that well. And that same Dudhabhai's daughter, Laxmi, lives in my house which she cheers and enlivens like Goddess Laxmi Herself. If you all imbibe Dudhabhai's *tapasya* your hardships, too, would end this very day.

"And now a word to the *non-antyajas* Hindus. You also should gather courage and drive out your sins. I believe I am a religious man. You may even dub me a superstitious fellow, but I believe that so long as you do not free yourselves from this sin and beg the *antyajas'* pardon, Nemesis will inflict on you still greater ills than you groan under now. Please understand as a dead-certain fact that untouchability is a sin. If you can see wisdom and throw off your dirt, you can secure freedom right today.



"And now this second incident to show you how sensible Hinduism is. When I came from South Africa, I had with me a *panchama (antyaja)* boy named Naidu. Mr. Natesan (Editor, *The Indian Review*) is an enthusiastic worker for the cause of the *antyajas*. It happened that, on my way to Ahmedabad, I had to put up with him at Madras. Many friends warned me, "What madness! Natesan's mother is such a strictly orthodox lady, that when she comes to know that you have brought an *antyaja* boy into her home, she will simply die of the shock." "I would rather give up Natesan's house than the boy," I replied. But Mr. Natesan is a man of straight dealings. He went home and told the truth about the boy's community to his mother. Mother said: "Let him come." She saw that an *antyaja* accompanying me can never be unclean; and I, too, had washed out all uncleanness from the boy. We became their guests and drew water from the same well from which mother was drawing. What does this incident show? *Non-antyajas* can convert their mothers and sisters by their own purity and straightforwardness. The moral of the story is that this question can be solved by the openness of heart of *non-antyajas* coupled with the *tapasya* of *antyajas*.

"It is my prayer to God that He may grant wisdom and patience to *antyajas* so that they may not give up their religion. For the rest of the Hindus I pray, "O, God! release Hindu society from this sin—this Satanism."

(Presidential speech at the Weavers' Conference held during the Nagpur session of the Congress dated 25-12-1920).

Though deeply immersed in work, I had not the heart to say, 'no', to the request to preside over this meeting. I was not born a weaver, but now I regard myself as a farmer-and-weaver. In the law-court also I have declared that as my profession. I think that till our weavers do not prosper in India, the uplift of the whole country is difficult, if not impossible. That is why some reference was made to this question during the last Special Session of the Congress. Before India became a 'dependency', she surpassed the world in the production of cloth both in quantity and quality. When there was all this abundant production of cloth in India, she did not possess a single spinning or weaving mill. At that time India produced varieties ranging from coarse Khaddar to the finest muslin of Dacca. India not only supplied her own clothing needs, but exported the excess to foreign countries. People from foreign parts were drawn to India to see the excellent specimens of her cloth. The inventor of the sacred hand-spinning wheel was a greater genius than Hargreaves who invented the power-driven spinning machine. No one in India has shown greater inventive intelligence than that



genius. When India was happy, there was a spinning mill in every home. Brahma (the creator in the Hindu Trinity) conceived the plan that if India wanted to remain free, her women should spin some yarn. Women should realise that spinning is their ordained sacred occupation. It was for that reason that, instead of creating a spinner community, Brahma made spinning essential for all women. Our downfall began since the day the East India Company entered the land. The weaver and the spinner gave up their employments since then. Just as indigo was exacted from the peasants of Champaran, so was a levy of yarn extorted from the people. The pressure was so great, that people cut off their own fingers in sheer disgust. It was then that Lancashire cloth began to flood the Indian markets. If you want to re-establish *dharma*, you must do penance by reviving the ancient occupations of spinning and weaving. It is because we have lapsed from true religious conduct, that, in the name of *swadeshi*, we are committing an irreligious act. Hence, I tell you, in order to protect *dharma*, produce yarn yourselves and cloth from it. If that is not done, importation of foreign cloth becomes indispensable. Fazalbai and Wadia Saheb (industrial magnates) think it impossible for us to be self-sufficient as regards our clothing needs for fifty years more. Gokhaleji had shown that even for a hundred years still that was not possible. But they are wrong. They had no idea that it is possible to see that every Indian home possesses a spinning wheel and a handloom.

To open *Swadeshi Stores* is not service of the country but a sin, as long as there is no hand-spinning and hand-weaving drive in India. The handkerchief I have been presented with contains foreign yarn.

I see a very small number of members of the *vankar* community (an 'untouchable' caste of weavers). Of the three classes of *Koshties* (weavers), I do not see the third class, i.e., *vankars*. A gentleman wrote to me that *vankars* would not be allowed entry into the Conference. I replied that in that case, I would walk out of the Conference. When you hold your second session, make it a point to bring those weavers in greater numbers.

The way you are conducting your profession is not the right way. If you want to carry it on so as to help the uplift of the country, you must weave only that yarn which you spin yourselves or get spun by others. It will make your weaving work difficult indeed, but that trouble you should cheerfully bear. If every little boy and girl in India spins for one hour daily, all the cotton India produces can be spun into yarn. It is not at present my *dharma* to advise the production of fine hand-spun cloth. A



conflagration of agony is raging in my heart today. I want to see, if that is possible, that all the men and women of India are consumed with the same fire. To the *koshties* I say it is a sad thing that the cloth they wear is not made by them.

1. Antyaja - Lowest born = 'untouchable'.

Parishad = Conference.

2. That Gandhiji later on moved away considerably from this position need not be reiterated here. But perhaps it is not so well-known that Gandhiji staked his life by fasting for the cause of allowing the 'untouchables' free entry into the temples and did his best to encourage marriages between the 'depressed' and the 'higher' classes of Hinduism.

3. Hinduism has always exempted the *sannyasi* from caste-rules.

Foundation of Swaraj¹

Dissolved are isms and discussions;
Gone all schisms and dissensions;
Those apart have joined together
Love's triumph to acclaim.

(Manilal)

Glad we were to bow to Love; and so
How could the clergy stop us or the law?

(an old Gujarati folksong)

"Give me the strength never to disown the poor,
Or bend my knee before insolent might."

(Rabindranath Tagore in *Gitanjali*)

The Congress is over, but it has left memories that time cannot efface. There may not be today a single part of India, a single city, small town or village, where the pilgrims to the Congress may not be relating their experiences to those who did not attend it. There may not be any peasant. any woman or child, living in the smallest village in India, who may still be entirely innocent of any knowledge about the Congress. The voice of the Congress, which used to spread only upto the limits of cities



and then be lost, will now resound to the ends of the earth. And its echoes and their re-echoes will not only go down deep into the life of the Indian people for all times to come, but will be loud enough to cross the country's limits, traverse thousands of miles and open the ears of the deaf there.

I hope nobody will ask me why all this exuberance, which is apparently an exaggeration. Everyone will agree that this was no ordinary session. It was not merely 'unprecedented' like the last Congress. It was a succession of wonders. To judge it from only a superficial view, it is enough to know the number and caliber of the delegates who attended the Congress. Including the members of the Reception Committee there were eighteen thousand delegates. They enhanced the dignity of the Congress and included: *sannyasis*, minus only their ochre robes, who had come to the Congress as if only to support Gandhiji's ideal of political *sannyas*; Marwari women, who never before had stirred out of their homes, under the leadership of Mrs. Janakibai (wife of Sri Jamnalal Bajaj), herself a lady as heroic as the Rajput woman of old; representatives from far-off Burma who had heard the call of the hurricane campaign going on in the country; and, above all, guests from England, who were eager to see with their own eyes the strength of the awakened country that is out to blaze abroad its inherent power of virtue, and who wanted to bring about peace with Britain if that offended country could be appeased. The large number of delegates kept hardly any space vacant for visitors; so they crowded into the *pandal* (a big tent) as best they could and there was still a big overflow. Those who had accepted non-co-operation as a principle but differed from Gandhiji formerly about the items for its implementation did not stage a walk-out in a huff, but presented themselves in large numbers to give the Congress the benefit of their changed views after their experience of the movement for the last three months. "The succession of wonders" which I spoke of above was thus brought about by the convergence of all those forces.

In this series of marvels I do not hesitate to give first place to the doings of our worthy President (C. V. Vijayaraghavachariar). It could never be claimed that his election to the chair was enthusiastically hailed by the country. From his presidential address, moreover, it was difficult to gauge his attitude as the chairman. But his behaviour, his efficiency and his frankness astounded everybody and proved the wisdom of his choice as the President. While his Presidential speech reflected his deep and enlightened scholarship, some of his expressions born out of his experience, were such as did not fail to jar in the ears of some hearers. His printed speech, besides, included clear statements which indicated not only his want of faith in the principal



items of non-co-operation, but also the fear that if they were implemented, the country would revert to its former stage of barbarism—though he alone can say when the country was barbarous! And yet while reading the speech, he himself shortened the portion containing those criticisms and also mellowed them down. About students he said that the earlier they left the institutions, with the full understanding of the implications of their step, the better for them. He even declared that it would be a good thing if our lawyers came forth to sacrifice their practice. On the very first day he thus found it necessary to make changes in his views. But, on the last day, as he saw a wonderful unity about the non-co-operation resolution, he not only expressed his delight at the outcome, but declared in substance, "The soul of the country is astir. That will make haughty England rub its eyes and come to its senses." Only those know well, who were actual eye-witnesses, how adroitly he conducted the proceedings of the Subjects Committee as its President. A single day's experience of his erudition, his astonishing punctiliousness about order and method, his witty remarks, genial and sometimes strained and his sarcasms, was enough to convince every member that he had to deal with no ordinary President. Even those who had had the experience of discussions under the chairmanship of men like Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Gokhaleji were heard to remark that this President beat them all in strictness. At the same time it must be said that it was that selfsame strictness that made it possible to bring the great task which faced this Congress to a glorious success.

The task of replacing the old constitution by framing an entirely new one which contained overhauling transformations was by no means an easy one. The difficulty was enhanced by the provision in the old constitution that any constitutional change could be made only with the unanimous support of all the provinces. There was, besides, that important question of fixing such a programme of non-co-operation as would enable the country to win Swaraj in one year. The members of the Subjects Committee never cared to look either at the clock or at their health, till they succeeded in finishing all their business. Eight to ten hours' sittings for four continuous days brought about this happy result. Everyone present at the sessions of the Committee will testify that hardly ever before most members of any Subjects Committee of the Congress have taken such interest and exhibited such enthusiasm as well as intelligence in thrashing out its resolutions.

And the glorious outcome was the fact that epoch-making resolutions were passed unanimously.



The motive-springs that brought about this unanimity were as much the consciousness of the great peril the country was facing as a spirit of compromise arising out of that consciousness. But the biggest reason was the feeling that ruled uppermost among the members, viz., that of love which dissolves all discussions, acerbities and dissensions. Those great warriors who, at the Calcutta session, were in the opposition camp with regard to Gandhiji's non-co-operation resolution aligned with him this time. It was Sri. Chittaranjan (C. R.) Das himself who proposed the non-co-operation resolution! And its supporters were Gandhiji, Sri Bipin Chandra Pal² and Kasturiranga Iyenger (Editor, *The Hindu* of Madras). It was a sublime phenomenon that amazed everybody. The most wonder-struck was an Englishman, Mr. Ben Spoor (a Labour M. P.), who described this unity in memorable words. He exclaimed in effect: "Never since my birth have I witnessed the spectacle of such a huge mass of humanity impelled to offer an unflinching sacrifice with one resolve and for one ideal. On my return to England, I will tell my countrymen that all Indians of the Nationalist party are now of one mind. I have the feeling today that this country will bring the world to the path of sanity after achieving its sacred aim by sacred means. This effort to carry on political activity by means of renunciation and self-purification—the only path that leads to spiritual elevation—will not stop at the attainment of freedom for this country, but will contribute to the grant of real freedom to us and other countries."

This spontaneous admiration sprang from the sincerity and candour underlying the unity of the Congress. Mr. Spoor had already seen the charming spirit in which the discussions in the Subjects Committee took place. He had also seen with what nicety every resolution was discussed. But the plenary session revealed before him even more captivating scenes. Maulana Hazrat Mohani differed partly from the resolution with regard to the clause about non-co-operation in education. He even implemented his opposition by proposing an amendment before the open session. Gandhiji explained how there was no difference in principle between the resolution and the amendment and immediately the Maulana withdrew it. Owing to some misunderstandings about the resolution to keep the Congress aloof from the internal affairs of the Indian States, some persons got excited and demanded clarification of some points in the plenary session. Gandhiji in reply succeeded in quelling their doubts and so even that opposition group melted away. All these incidents were impressive enough to re-create faith in those who had lost it.

No other resolution created such an animated discussion, both privately and publicly, at Nagpur, as the non-co-operation resolution.³ Before proposing his



resolution, Gandhiji had distributed the copies of his draft among friends. Two or three private meetings were held to discuss it; there were some confidential talks also; and then, as we have seen, the very resolution that threatened a split, was passed unanimously at the general sitting! The speech of Sri. C. R. Das in proposing it was as exalted as the text of the resolution itself. The language of that resolution is so very clear, that it does not require any explanation worth the name. Let me add here that even the most radical non-co-operator will not fail to appreciate the propriety of the following sentence in Gandhiji's speech: "Where no principle is involved, I am prepared even to retrace a step, if need be, to win over Lalaji (Lala Lajpatrai), Kasturiranga lyenger or Das." And may I take the freedom to publish here the outburst of a dear friend on the passage of this resolution? In his letter to Gandhiji that saintly-hearted man, Mr. Andrews, says that the spirit of the prayer in both these lines of *Gitanjali*:

"Give me the strength never to
disown the poor,
Or bend my knee before insolent
might."

prevails in this resolution. The resolution shows what, without resigning from their jobs. our brothers. the Government servants in both the Police and Military Departments can do. Not only that, but there is in the resolution a firm resolve to bring up and fraternize with those (untouchables) who have been reduced to a miserable plight by our ungenerous treatment. In that unity and that firm resolve lies our determination not to bend our knee before the Government's insolent might.

It is difficult to assess properly the greatness of the new constitution which the Congress has framed. That could be done only after the experience of a year's work. I, for one, have no doubt that the future historian will see in this new constitution the foundation of the edifice of Swaraj. While the present rulers have made the divisions of the country at haphazard, simply for the sake of administrative convenience—and sometimes not even for that—the Congress, by dividing the country on linguistic basis, has adopted one of the best means to achieve national solidarity. Two resolutions of the Congress raised the hottest discussion: the first, to introduce the system of election that secured real representation; and the second, to formulate the new creed of the Congress. Those who opposed the creed resolution might have hardly seen how closely interlinked both these two resolutions were. The new creed cannot logically be opposed without ignoring the fact that the new method of representation is an



effective measure to bring into the Congress fold all the political parties of the country. The eagerness of the Congress to carry with it one and all of the parties as well as its foresightedness are evident in its decision to declare the aim of the Congress as the establishment of Swaraj within or without the British Empire. Without this option it was impossible to keep the Congress door open for that party which wanted the country to remain tied to the apron-strings of the Empire. That party can now, by its own strength, make the country demand the form of Swaraj which it likes.

After thus laying the foundation of Swaraj, the Congress has appointed a Working Committee to build up that Swaraj. That Committee has already begun to function. In order to have the money to do the work, the resolution of non-co-operation itself contains the resolve to open Swaraj fund called after the name of the late Lokamanya Tilak of revered memory. Perhaps no one else feels as happy and satisfied at the acceptance of this item as Gandhiji. At a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held about three months back, Gandhiji had suggested that a Swaraj fund (to be used only for national regeneration) was the only proper way to immortalise the memory of Tilak Maharaj. But Mr. Satyamurti (Editor of *Swaraj*, Madras) and other friends who were interested in foreign propaganda did not approve. Even Mr. Kelkar (Editor, Tilak Maharaj's paper *Mahratta*) did not like the idea. All these friends have exhibited an extraordinary accommodative spirit and delighted the heart of the nation by agreeing to let this selfsame suggestion be incorporated in the resolution. The auspicious start of the collection of the Fund has been made by the Chairman of the Reception Committee himself, Sri Jamnalalji Bajaj. He was the first to pay his tribute of one hundred thousand rupees to the memory of the Lokamanya; and the very next day that well-known philanthropist of Bombay, Sheth Shavaksha Bomanji, announced the promise of the donation of rupees ten thousand every month, till Swaraj was established! Among the series of the miracles that the Congress performed, these are by no means negligible.

But the most astounding feat has been performed by Sri Chittaranjan Das (of Bengal) through the renunciation of his legal practice, which used to bring him fifty thousand rupees per month. The benefit that will accrue to the country through that self-sacrifice cannot be fully estimated today. But within a very short time we will see how his collaboration in national service with Pandit Motilal Nehru has put heart into innumerable timid lovers of the country.



But these are all talks; though talks that can swell anybody's heart with justifiable pride. But that same heart trembles, when the thought strikes us of *our* (people's) responsibility in the wake of the achievements of the Congress. Let alone the question of national education; let alone even that of 'real political boycott', viz., educating all voters, so as to make the boycott of councils' programme a resounding success; but, in implementing the fourth part of the new constitution. I feel even from now that every nook and corner of the country will have to be stirred up through a whirl-wind campaign. A minimum number of—from sixty to hundred—workers per every newly formed province will be needed—and such workers as must be self-less, purehearted and willing to dedicate all their time to national service—so that they can cover all the sizable villages of their taluka (a division of a district), hold meetings, impress upon the minds of the people the importance of the new constitution and create sensible and truly representative bodies out of the villagers. Heaps and heaps of money will be required. Is the country equal to this task? If not, the time will come for us to hang down our heads in shame. And there are always those powerful enemies opposite, eager to throw every possible obstacle they can in our path! This time our victory is even greater than the one when that immortal expression, "The hour of the greater triumph is the hour of the greatest humility" had escaped Gandhiji's lips. Our humility also must be, at this time, greater likewise. None but the most Gracious Lord can endow us with that humility and that power for the required stupendous sacrifice.

1. The omnibus non-co-operation resolution was passed with all its details by the Nagpur Congress without a single dissentient vote, though it had met with formidable opposition in the beginning. Hence, these outbursts by Mahadevbhai. Manilal Nabhubhai Dwivedi was a leading philosopher, poet, and dramatist of Gujarat in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

2. He was one of the three foremost Extremist leaders ("Lal"—Lala Lajpatrai, "Bal"—Balgangadhar Tilak and "Pal"—B. C. Pal) at the Surat Congress in 1907 which ended in a rupture between Moderates and Extremists.

3. For the text of this historic resolution see App. II.

5-1-1921

Sarkar Patwardhan's death on the night of the 11th of the dark half of Margashirsh.



6-1-1921

At Chhindwada. Good work done there. Four lawyers gave up their practice. Bapu gave the following lecture:

"For the last three years I was making an attempt to visit your town. Among Muslims, the Ali Brothers were the first to come in contact with me after my return to India. Ever since their internment, I had been trying to secure permission to see them, but I could never succeed.

The Ali Brothers are very fond of this place, Chhindwada. It was agreed between us at first that I should go to Bombay and then to Ahmedabad for some rest, but they have brought me here to Chhindwada, which they love so much, which they have served so well, which, in turn, has served them well and for which they entertain high hopes.

The prestige of the Central Provinces has definitely risen through the holding of the Congress here, but the resolution the Congress passed has enhanced it all the more. To the good luck of India and the Central Provinces, we have definitely taken at Nagpur a step definitely forward, not backward, from our achievement at Calcutta. It is the Nagpur Congress which has shown us what we ought to do if we want to wipe out the insult of the Khilafat, to set right the injustice of the Punjab and to establish Swaraj. We had already said to the holders of Government titles all that could be said. The Congress has thrown on the holders themselves the responsibility of sitting tight on their titles or renouncing them. That is why they are not even mentioned in the resolution passed this time. There may not be a single child now, who may have any fear of, or respect for, these title-holders.

The Congress has earnestly appealed to our lawyers to make more strenuous efforts to give up their practice and spend their whole time in the service of the nation. The Congress may definitely provide for those lawyers who have not enough savings even to maintain their families. The energy and the time which lawyers are spending at present after the courts are badly needed for national work.

The Congress has also shown the students and their parents what their respective duties are. Instead of giving reasons for it, I wish to place before you (parents) the Congress directive itself. It is your duty not only to withdraw your children from schools, but also to provide engagements for them. If it is possible to give them national education, you must make arrangements for it. If that is not



possible at present, you should employ them in some other national work. I don't think there may be any school-boy who, after knowing what has happened about the Khilafat and in the Punjab, will not say, "I wish to destroy this rule root and branch." If there be any such rare hero, I will tell him, "Well, you can freely cling to your school." The Congress has advised every student above sixteen to give up his school or college having any connection with the Government.

Similarly, the Congress has asked the soldiers also to play their role. Loyalty to Government service is subordinate to loyalty to the motherland. Hence, when the two loyalties conflict, it becomes your (soldiers') duty to forsake the former and stick to the latter. If some tyrannical officer like Dyer gives you a nasty order, better be brave and accept death by being shot down than carry out that command. It is definitely better to brace yourselves up to be shot than to blow up innocent people like those assembled at Jallianwala Bagh. Have some sympathy for your own countrymen. Instead of taking a bad advantage of your power and oppressing them, you must remember that they are your own kith and kin and protect them. Nobody can ever stop you from contributing, for a national cause, something from the savings of your own salary. And give that amount publicly. You may also fearlessly attend public meetings. It is true you cannot make any speeches, but the Government can never dismiss you for attending public meetings in order to keep yourself abreast of the thought currents flowing in the country. In addition to all this, the Congress has laid special stress on *swadeshi*. Let it be taken for certain that the foundation of Swaraj would be laid only when Lancashire cloth ceases to be imported. And never entertain the delusion that you can gain your objective by replacing Japan for Lancashire. The spinning wheel is our emancipator. It must penetrate every Indian home. If every Indian-man, woman or child - takes a vow to spend some time after spinning, we shall be able, within a very short time, to free ourselves from dependence on others for our clothing needs and save sixty crores of rupees for the country.

Of equal importance is Hindu-Muslim Unity. As we do not propose to cut the throats of Englishmen, so also we don't want to cut each other's throats. We want to live amicably like brothers. Satan always creeps into us through the holes of our own weaknesses. It is our business to fill up these holes.

Just as it is necessary for Hindus and Muslims to live in harmony, it is equally necessary for Hindus to remove the stain of untouchability from Hinduism and wipe out its dishonour. The Congress has earnestly entreated all Hindus to give up this



sordid custom. Take it from me that, just as the Government does not fail to take advantage of any ill-feeling between Hindus and Muslims, so it is never likely to fail to take the fullest advantage of the discontent brewing among ourselves owing to this custom among the Hindus. I should not wonder if our effort to win Swaraj continues to fail, so long as such defects persist in us.

This is, in short, the resolution which the Congress has accepted unanimously at Nagpur. In its implementation lies our test. We have picked up the gauntlet to win Swaraj in one year. If the Government is prepared to give up its Satanism, satisfy us and stay here in the way we want it to, we, in turn, want to retain it. But if it wants to continue in its Satanic ways and suppress us, then, let me tell you, our one and only duty is to destroy it. If that can be done today, I don't want to wait till tomorrow. I pray to God, 'Give us the strength to offer all the sacrifices necessary to win this tremendous struggle.'

8-1-1921

Left Nagpur. Discussed my long letter on the way. Dictated letters to Kasturiranga Iyengar and Lalaji.

To Sri. Kasturiranga Iyengar:

"I was glad when you assured me that you were entirely satisfied with the non-co-operation resolution and that you would no longer oppose the detailed programme after it had been twice affirmed by the Congress. I hope that you will give it your wholehearted support in your paper (*The Hindu*). If we are to achieve Swaraj inside of one year, we need all the strength that can be given to the movement."

Letter to Lalaji:

"I hope you are looking into Pandit Gangaram's matter (Charges of conducting bogus national schools and misappropriation of public money). The letters received by me are most damaging to him. But I am going to defer publishing anything about them till I have heard from you.

May we look to you for organising the Punjab in respect of non-co-operation? I know that your difficulty is the greatest, with Lala Harkishan Lal ranged against the movement. But so long as the masses continue to respond, there is a clear duty before



those who are convinced of the necessity and virtue of non-co-operation. I cannot help feeling that both Malaviyaji and Lala Harkishanlal, being live and brave, will come round when they perceive the inherent weakness and the untruth of their position. I trust you will be in Bombay on the 20th instant for the meeting of the Working Committee.

I am anxious to convince you that we are wrong in spending anything in foreign propaganda outside India. Curiously, I have a letter from a friend in America which strengthens my position. I plead for saving every penny during this year of trial. We need all the men and all the money we can get for organizing ourselves here. But of this more when we meet".

13-1-1921

At the Sabarmati Ashram. The following inspiring speech was delivered to the students of the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya (National College, Ahmedabad) to impress upon them the need for setting aside their books, taking up the spinning wheel and going to the villages to propagate it in order to win Swaraj in nine months :

I had hoped that on return from my tour, I would meet you, confer with you, compare notes and share with you a few of my numerous experiences. But I did not then know that I would give you today the same message which I have been giving to all and sundry for the last two days. The thing I am going to put before you is by no means new. It had been lying rather latently in my mind for a long time past. In season and out, I have continued to ponder over it and have even followed it up in action. But my life is so moulded that I can see particular important things, clear as daylight, only when the right moment comes up. For instance during the Rowlatt Act agitation, it suddenly dawned in my mind at Nadiad: 'The masses are not yet ready for civil disobedience'. I had myself stayed in Nadiad and had, in my view, made there the greatest achievement of my life. But the men of that same place committed a ghastly blunder. I saw that only that person should offer civil disobedience who had respected the law all his life through, willingly and deliberately, not out of fear.

So I had to withdraw the charge of my missile. In this way definite things had awaken in my mind only at definite moments. When I was a student, Geometry was at first simply over my head. Till I came to the thirteenth theorem, everything was blank. But the moment the teacher explained that theorem on the blackboard, there was a



sudden flash of light in my mind and since then I felt interested in Geometry. In the same way three or four days ago there was a brain-wave and the idea has possessed me since then. It is the answer to the question what we should do if we want to make non-co-operation successful, want our students to give their due share in the struggle and gain Swaraj in one year. I am putting before you just now the same thing which I have always believed. My own conviction about the truth of it has always been deep and unshakable. But never before did I see so clearly as now, one of the facets of my conviction.

I have not come to speak to you as your august Chancellor. I have come here to advise you and confer with you as your elder brother or guardian. But that advice I will press upon you insistently. I have never till now spoken to you on this matter with as much conviction and force as those with which I will speak to you today. If you believe that to give up schools and be deprived of education is something like committing suicide, I say, "Save yourselves from the sin of continuing to study in schools and do commit suicide". God is certain to forgive you for that sin. Till now I used to speak to you on topics of varied interest. But today I have come to tell you one single thing. viz., 'if you want to see that non-co-operation ends in success, you must devote every hour you can to spinning.' This is a novel talk, a bombshell that may shock you. To those who wish to be B. As., who have been assured that the Vidyapith (National University) will confer that degree on them, I say spinning the wheel today for the cause of India is the highest degree you can aspire after. I go to the length of making this assertion because I wish to see you consumed with the same driving urge with which I am burning.

It was only because our people forsook *swadeshi*, that India passed out of our hands. Spinning was never a distinct profession in India. Every woman of whatever class, high and low, used to spin. Some men also did the same. It was menfolk who spun yarn fine enough for the well-known Dacca Muslin. But there I referred to only a few professional spinners. As a general rule, spinning was considered not an occupation but a duty common with all. It was a part of one's *dharma*. So long as spinning was flourishing in India, the country was happy and prosperous. Our production of cloth not only supplied the internal needs of the country but was large enough for exporting the surplus to foreign lands. That is what history testifies. By means fair or foul, the East India Company destroyed our weaving industry, waged aggressive wars to possess our crores of rupees, captured our ports, secured trade monopoly and finally established their rule. How can we win Swaraj, as long we do not



repent and do penance for the atrocities inflicted on us as our forefathers? We will never be able to gain Swaraj by physically punishing the oppressors. We must forget that method. Not by thrashing them, but by gaining soul-force through self-purification, we must stop the Englishmen from ruling over us. If you believe that it is owing to our own moral weakness that they acquired their rule over us and are sustaining it, if you want to bring Swaraj home with only pure means, what should you do? You must perform a penance, and resume our good old work of spinning. You may say, "Spinning is woman's business, we will gladly ask them to spin". I must then tell you, "That is not enough. We have come to a pass when we had to see with our own eyes the honour of the Punjab women looted. At least to retrieve that dishonour, we, men, have to take to spinning not as our whole-time job, but as our spare-time hobby and thus uplift our country. Our atonement will be complete only when men, women and children, are all engaged in spinning. Advocates of the boycott of British goods talk of it in order to beat Lancashire black and blue. But I, for one, prefer rather the talk of refusing to be throttled than of throttling others. If we want to stop the inroads of Japan, Britain and America (U. S. A.), we must produce all the cloth we need in our own homeland. As long as we do not produce sufficient yarn, we shall not be able to weave from *swadeshi* yarn as much cloth as we need. Experienced businessmen say that if we want our mills to produce all the cloth we need, it will take us fifty years to establish a sufficient number of mills. How then to gain the same object in nine months? You can never uplift your millions through the establishment of mills. You cannot cover the naked bodies of innumerable men and women through your mills. No country can ever subsist on agriculture alone. A widespread supplementary industry along with that of agriculture is an unavoidable necessity. That industry is spinning-and-weaving and no other. So long as we do not resuscitate that industry, do not learn it up, all our other learning is of no avail.

If all that I have said is true—and the country's National Congress has publicly accepted its truth by passing a conforming resolution what must we do now? If we want to win Swaraj in nine months, the real study for our students is to attempt to relieve India from this cloth famine. That there is this cloth-famine cannot be doubted. Food-famine in India is not as serious as this famine. Every year sixty crores of rupees are drained out of India for her clothing needs. India imports today four hundred million pounds weight of yarn. We must spin all that yarn at home. There is no dearth of weavers in our country. The crying want is that of spinners. I have not yet been able to know the exact number of our weavers, but they are about five millions or even



more. If we want to save all that money, we must set ourselves to spinning in right earnest. Just think what a mammoth number of men will earn their bread, if we bring back to our own country a yearly business of 60 crores of rupees! We must use cloth as sparingly as ghee (melted butter). We are not in a position to use as much cloth as we would like to. If you can do with only a shirt, you must not use a coat. If you can carry on with a short *dhoti*, you must not wear a long one. In order to save the outflow of 60 crores of rupees, we shall have to offer sacrifices proportionately as great.

If students concentrate on this single work during this year, they can win Swaraj in one year. But for this, Herculean efforts are necessary. You can gain your object only if you fulfil certain conditions. The student must give up his studies and become a labourer for the sake of India. You will be conferring an obligation if you do not take any payment for your labour, but those who want to take it can unreservedly do so.

If I am fit enough to advise you, I say, "Give up your colleges. If you intend to contribute your full share to the struggle for Swaraj, spin as much as you can for your country's cause. Spend six hours a day, or, if that is not possible, at least four hours in spinning. I do not insist that you should give up your studies entirely. Even if you do, I do not believe that your capacity to think will decline. His power of thinking never fades whose heart is not soiled with sin. I may submit my own experience. When I was in jail and had no access to books, I could think more deeply and clearly. In fact, too much reading has made our brains dull and listless. That is why I have asked you to spin for six hours and read for the remaining period. To you at least I may even say that if you become experts in spinning, you may go away to villages. If you have not sufficient self-confidence for it, you may stay on in the college. But, personally, I am convinced that we cannot gain Swaraj unless all of us give four to six hours daily to spinning. Within a month, or at the most three months, you can master the art and be fit for going away to rural areas and propagating spinning there. We can advance India's interests in no other way than by saving the country from this chronic cloth-famine. We are, besides, going to form voters' constituencies according to the changed constitution of the Congress. Which other way is there to do that? What message can I send today to the villages of Gujarat? Shall I ask them to abuse the Englishman? Or arm them with swords and rifles? What then should I tell them? My one message today is this:

"Let every one sit down to spin". When a villager comes to Ahmedabad to buy cloth and take it home, the sight fills me with deep sadness. According to my *swadeshi*-



dharma, every village must produce the things it needs. If we can revive this ancient usage, there is no power on earth which can dare to cast a greedy eye on India. I earnestly request the worthy Principal and the professors to accept this line of action for one year at least and train students in a way that makes them fit for being sent away to villages.

It is enough if this is your curriculum for the year; improve your Gujarati, drop English, learn Hindustani, the Urdu script, and the art of spinning. If you do that much, you will become fresh for the next year's work. I, for one, wish you to continue this course of study till we get Swaraj. If that can't be done, don't fail to do that much for this year at least. That is my message for today. You need not hesitate to put before me whatever doubts you may feel. I do not want a single student to accept my new programme, if he has no faith in it. You may accept my advice only if it appeals to your heart and head.

Student: Our parents will tell us, "You were sent to the National College for study, not for spinning."

Gandhiji: You may say to them, "Plying the spinning-wheel is also education".

Student: They will refuse us permission to go to villages and ask us in that case to quietly keep to our home.

Gandhiji: The best way for you then is to spin at home. If they forbid you even to spin, you may respectfully reason with them. For one day, two days, or at the most a few more, parents may scold a boy for spinning the whole day. But the boy is certain to win them round in the end. I have seen parents who even ask their children to tell lies. If the son does not, they get furious; but after some days of fret and fume, they let the boy have his way. You ought to possess that much firmness. From college students at least I definitely expect that degree of firmness.

Student: How is non-co-operation with the Government going to gain by our plying the spinning-wheel?

Gandhiji: The wheel will bring us economic freedom. We shall not have the power to keep our hold on Swaraj so long as we are not economically free. We can do without soap, needles and pins, but not without cloth. Our imports exceed our exports at present. Every year, therefore, our deficit goes on mounting. We have, besides, to bear the burden of the heavy military expenditure. We throw away sixty crores in cloth import over and above what is swept out of the country for buying less necessary



things or luxuries. If this is true, we have but to achieve economic freedom. Since it is practicable to save sixty crores, we must save them. When we are able to do so, we shall gain the power to save still more or we shall then be able to afford to buy the extra things. India is not going to be widowed, if there is no factory in India to produce pins or watches, but since she is unable to produce cloth, India is, at present, really in the helpless state of a widow.

Student: This innovation of the spinning-wheel will create a fresh commotion among students.

Gandhiji: Commotion only develops students. To create commotion is the *dharma* both of myself and the professors. Students are, at present, like somnambulists. When a tussle on such matters arises between them on one side and their parents or the world or their colleagues on the other, it is possible for some of them to be shaken out of their sleep. Such frictions never debase the student.

Student: Why don't you ask other people to spin? Why do you want the student specially to give up his vocation?

Gandhiji: To think that spinning is not education is our mistake No 1. No. 2. lies in thinking that self-sacrifice is not education. If, tomorrow, all students see the light and resolve upon serving the country at the sacrifice of their studies, I would regard their step itself as the achievement of my aim of getting Swaraj in one year.

Student: How can anybody maintain himself on spinning?

Gandhiji: With sufficient intelligence a man can even maintain himself. But at present I put spinning before you as your emergency *dharma*. If all the boys of India resolve upon spinning for four hours daily, the price of yarn would fall down in a month.

Student: Will not the non-co-operation movement be harmed by such a change in schools?

Gandhiji: No. Students of Government schools are expected to leave them under the conviction that studying in them is a sin. If they leave their institution under the temptation of studying in this college, they better hug their Government colleges or let anyone else, who wants to give literary education to them, open a separate college. But if we are clear at heart that this spinning is the one right duty for us, that the country will stand to gain if we devote a year after it, that we shall become implements in winning Swaraj, then spinning is a 'must' for us.



Student: Do you think the climate of the country is ready for this your new idea? You are thrusting the people all at once into the last room—the room for 'the turkish bath!' (i.e. asking them to undergo a too heavy sacrifice).

Gandhiji: It is because I know that the climate is ready that I am talking of it. The country has taken tremendous strides within the last three months. The national tempo is rising not with railway speed but in the geometrical progression, of a snowfall. It was but eight years ago that I had written that India had no other go but to take to this path. I did not then dream that on the 18th January 1921, I would be able to put this thing before the people.

Student: Should we not first serve the family and then the country?

Gandhiji: Definitely. But service of the family must never be harmful to public service. I accept the grades of service of the self first, then of the family, then of the village or town and then of the country. But no form of service must ever impair the welfare of the world. In the name of serving the family, you cannot spend twenty thousand rupees after your sister's marriage in these times of dire distress.

Student: The police force will be needed for the protection of the country. Instead of teaching us spinning, why not train us in police drill and make us fit for defence?

Gandhiji: How can I drill you into policemen? What is really necessary is the power to rush to places of danger. Do you mean to say that we may work for Swaraj at leisure, only after you have nonchalantly completed your higher education?

Student: What does Swaraj mean?

Gandhiji: That is Swaraj in which the military, finance and revenue departments as well as the courts are all in our hands. When we gain that Swaraj, we can stop the perpetration of all kinds of oppression. Among all these freedoms we can gain economic freedom right today. That can be won through the spinning wheel. Perhaps the country may not accept this point today.

Student: You have often harped on the cry: 'This is nothing but war'. Is it possible to fight the war without raising a 'Volunteer Army'? Students ought, therefore, to be given military training. Is it not necessary to emphasise it at present more than the spinning wheel?

Gandhiji: *Our* military training can be given in a very short time. And what, after all, is 'military training'? Bravery (Gandhiji knew that the questioner attended Sri Purani's



physical culture institution). And do you think one catches courage through intricate fencing drills? That man is really brave who, if riots break out in the city and people begin to burn buildings, flies to the scene, intervenes and says, 'You can step only over my dead body and burn the house'. Can 'orders' be given at such times? Should one have to wait for orders like 'March', and 'Quick March'? At such times we must forget even our drill. In that situation I would say, "Run as fast as your legs can carry, brother, and reach the spot". For myself, I may say that in that case I would not wait to take anything with me, would give up wearing my shoes, if I was about to wear them, and race to the place to be reduced to ashes in the act of quenching the fire. If I don't do so, do tell everybody, "Gandhi was talking big, but it was all bunkum".

Student: Should we continue the fight even if the Government grants all our demands except the single one of the Khilafat?

Gandhiji: Certainly. I have often said that, in fighting to save Islam, I am training myself for the defence of Hinduism. The protection of the cow is secured by that very defence of Islam and as long as a single cow is slaughtered in India, the agony will continue to char my muscles, my bones and my blood. It is to save the cow that I am taking this training, doing this *tapasya*, and gaining many spiritual powers; and I will die chanting the *mantra* (religious formula) of *Goraksha* (protection of the cow).

Student: Don't you think we shall forget what we have learnt so far, if we concentrate all our thoughts on the spinning wheel?

Gandhiji: Through the spinning wheel we shall gain freedom and, with it, real fitness for taking academic education. Spinning will, therefore, only animate our education.

Pilgrimage to Vadtal

19-1-1921

After a few days Gandhiji went on a pilgrimage to Vadtal a holy centre of the Swaminarayan sect. He went to Nadiad by a railway train and thence to Vadtal in a car. Speaking to the students of the national school at Nadiad he said : "I wish you did not catch the delusion that Swaraj is only a political matter. Every child must know what Swaraj means, must believe it as *swadharma* (swa=his own) and have the power to protect that *swadharma*. He must have sufficient moral power in him to make it impossible for anybody to compel him to do something against his will by bullying or beating him. He must also have the courage to call what he believes to be right as right



and wrong as wrong. Parents must train their children to discriminate between good and evil. That is the meaning of Swaraj. Swaraj means the right and the power to speak out the truth as one sees it and to refuse to do anything sinful".

At the meeting of the *sannyasis* of Vadtal, Gandhiji explained why he was not wearing the ochre robe.

"Some friends have suggested that I should become a *sannyasi*. But I have not become one. My conscience does not support the step. I am sure you won't think that the cause for my refusal to be a *sannyasi* is my craving for sensual pleasures. I have been trying to the best of my capacity to renounce them. But from those very efforts, I see that I am not fit for the ochre robe. I cannot claim to be observing truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya* in mind and speech and body. When urges of attachment or aversion or of some passion arise in my mind, I try to stop them by reasoning and effort and only physically I put them down. Were I able to practise those virtues in all their three aspects, I would be today the master of all supernatural powers. The world would be at my feet while I would remain humble and nobody would ever wish to despise or scoff at me."

Here is the substance of his public speech at Vadtal:

I am glad that I have come to this holy place. Ever since the year 1915, I had been cherishing the desire to make a pilgrimage to this holy town. I consider it God's grace that He has provided me the chance and I must thank you also.

I am very glad that such a large number of *sannyasis* are present at the meeting, because my message is not for lay-men and women only but for all and specially for recluses. When our ascetics understand what non-co-operation is and why the Indian Nation has launched upon it, they will realise that without practising it, it is not possible to become true *sannyasi* and lead his life. Non-co-operation is by no means a new or unknown element in our religion. But owing to some super-impositions we have forgotten it or at least what it really means. That is why, doubts arise, there is some slackness in its implementation and the advent of Swaraj is delayed. But it is because I know that that element has always been there in us, that I say that if the people respond properly, we can have Swaraj in one year. Though four months have already passed since I began to talk in these terms, I continue to repeat my statement, as my faith in my nation is infallible.



When those who believe in political activity pure and simple, raise doubts and complain "This (non-co-operation) is not a political activity, the Lord knows what it is, may be it is religious." I admit it at once and say, "Yes, it is, undoubtedly, religious and I have never made a secret of it." Difficulties arise if we do not apply our religious principles in the solution of political question. So long, therefore, as the *sannyasi* does not give his due share in non-co-operation, he cannot gain the purity of a recluse.

If a Kshatriya (warrior caste) is endowed with faith, death for a noble cause invests him with the glory of a crown on his head. Why should one be afraid of death? He is brave who rushes to that very spot where there is the greatest danger of death. Nobody calls him a brave man, who can kill others. We never call a potter a Kshatriya for beating an ass repeatedly. In the same way we give that Kshatriya the right epithet of a cruel tyrant who goes on killing others. We never call an unmanly male, who beats and beats his wife, a hero. We dub him a 'coward' and rightly so. As long as we have not been able to imbibe the virtue of a Kshatriya, Swaraj is difficult to gain. The Kshatriya virtue is steadfastness. The twelve-year-old Prahlad, Sudhanva¹ and Sitaji were imbued with that virtue. Ravana sent tempting things to Sita, threatened her with dire consequences, but Sitaji remained firm and it is for that reason that we regard her as a spotless Kshatriya heroine, even as Mother Divine. We are unfit to offer non-co-operation, to win Swaraj, so long as our women do not assimilate Sitaji's virtues. Sitaji would not touch the sweets sent by Ravana. They were by no means bitter in taste. But the gifts came from unclean hands and, hence, she would not cast a glance at them. The ornaments which Ravana sent to Sita must have been so valuable that you may have never even seen the like of them. Their pearls and diamonds must have been more brilliant than those of modern times. But, knowing that they were coming from a man of evil designs, Sitaji turned her back upon them. Only then was she able to preserve her purity and chastity.

The Government has stolen our honour. It was used to stealing our money. But so long as its thefts were confined to money-matters, I tolerated it. I treated it as I do the cases of theft in my Ashram. Just as I never punish a thief of any Ashram property, I put up with this Government for its thefts of money. But when the Government laid hands on my country's honour, I sat up and said to myself 'Good God! This Government is nothing but the reincarnation of Ravana! It has but to be destroyed.' I never claim thereby that I am a reincarnation of Rama. Ramachandra we regard as our God. I am not a god; nor are you; but we are all the spiritual heirs of Rama. It is our duty to undergo penances and sufferings like those He had undergone. We also must non-co-



operate with our Ravana, even as the He did with His. As we are not Rama Himself, we can gain nothing by killing our Ravana's body. We even believe that he will take ever-new bodies owing to his wicked passions. But we must obey the commandments of Valmiki and Tulsidasji (authors of Sanskrit and Hindi Ramayana), shun his contact and destroy his wickedness. The Avesta, the Quran, the Bible and the Swaminarayan sect, all teach us one and the same thing: 'Don't keep the company of the wicked. Don't take any help from them or give them any.' The Government has betrayed its nature of Ravana by playing false with Mussulmans and pouncing upon Islam. If today it is Islam, tomorrow it may be Hinduism. In fact, it has long since been attacking the Hindu *dharma*; but out of ignorance we discarded our own culture and did very little to resist the oppression. If we have not abandoned our *dharma*, how can we bend our knees before those who openly slaughter cows? This is not a question of one individual's crime. If a common man slaughters a cow and we bear with the deed, it is a different matter. But here is one, whom we look up to as our guide, our ruler and protector, our stay and support, who slaughters cows. How can we remain loyal to him?

You may ask, 'Was it only a year ago that I came to know this old story?' No. But I was till then sunk in delusion. I had imagined I would be able to reform this Government. I had thought, I would succeed, be it at the cost of my life, in exerting my influence upon it. But the Government's deliberate betrayal of Islam destroyed all my faith in it. I was disillusioned, alerted and I said to myself, "O, man! Beware! If you are a Hindu, keep yourself miles apart from this Government now; if you don't, you will betray your own religion." Since then I have been teaching non-co-operation to Hindu parents for the protection of their religion. At this holy place, I declare, "If you want to protect your *Hindu dharma*, non-co-operation is first as well as the last lesson you must learn up."

1. He upheld truth even though he was thrown into a pan of boiling oil. God made him feel it cool.

* * * * *

The Government played a traitor to Islam and raped the honour of the Punjab. The Punjab is the crown of India, the land in which our sages and seers had settled. In that land men were lashed with whips and made to crawl like snakes; women's veils were pulled off; the ochre robes of *sannyasis* were painted white; a thousand persons were shot from behind and murdered. And now the Government which did all this



says, "Forget it all"! And yet what has cut me to the quick is not (so much) the fact of the massacre of a thousand persons. It is the sting in the tail, the succeeding statement that it was all due to India's fault which was the last limit. Though wicked itself, it stained India's good name. It says, it has done nothing wrong, except for a slight error on General Dyer's part. Even for all these grave crimes it is in no mood either to repent or apologize. So long as justice is not done to the Punjab for this dishonour, it is the duty of all of us—Hindus, Muslims, Christians, all—to non-cooperate with the Government. There is the same injunction in Islam also. They have used the word *turke mavalat* for non-co-operation.

This non-co-operation is peaceful. It abjures the use of sticks or *dharias* (sickles attached to a long wooden pole). It is not others' head that are to be lopped off in it. but our own to be given away. It is the *dharma* wherein non-violence is to be observed towards the Englishmen as also among ourselves.

You are not *dharalas* (a popular term for a low caste) by caste, but *thakardas*, better still, *thakores* ('da' also shows some contempt). If you want to be *thakores* (Kshatriyas) you must not be so petty minded as to be thieves. Patidars (a 'higher' caste) also call themselves Kshatriyas, but they are not Kshatriyas; they too take a share in the crime of theft as they accept stolen property. They have forgotten their Kshatriya spirit. But you (*thakores*) look very like Kshatriyas and try to appear as such by carrying *dharias*. I tell you, as Kshatriyas, you are expected not to harass but to protect the people. It is not your *dharma* to get drunk, to terrorise and rob the public or cast an evil eye on women. If you do so, you are profligates and a Kshatriya is not a profligate. Regarding you, *dharalas*, as my own brothers, I have come here to meet you. I tell you, if any *patidar* becomes a man of lust, forsake him at once. I am verily one of your kith and kin. So am I one of the *patidars*. Believing them to be Kshatriyas, I came to stay among them. But when I heard that these same *patidars* accept stolen goods, the doubt arose in my mind, 'May they not be cowards?' You must forget that thing altogether, if you want to give your share in the winning of Swaraj through your *patidar* community.

Dharalas will become *thakores* only when they will be protecting the country. That is a real *Sadhu* (sannyasi) who goes in their (*dharalas*) midst to wean them from evil ways and remains all the while as detached and unaffected by contact with them as a lotus-leaf (which floats on water and remains dry). I do not claim to be a *sadhu*, but I say, though a layman, I would have gone to stay among *bhils* and other aborigines,



if I was not engaged in this work. Exhorting them to be pure, merciful, brave, honest, good and truthful, I would have turned them into protectors of the public.

Quite a number of *sadhus* stay here. This is my heartfelt appeal to them: "Just as I ask students to become volunteers, you too must make use of your respected position and take up at once this national work, so long as people are terrorised by dacoits. It is your *dharma* to purify villains, thieves, and adulterers of their sins. You have no right to be called *sadhus*, till you do not do that. If you want Swaraj—i. e., *Ramarajya* or *Satyayuga*, (the golden age of truth), if you want to make *Bharatkhanda* (Khanda =continent) the land of *dharma*, the land divine, it becomes your duty to protect your neighbour when he is oppressed. You have with you the divine weapons of *yama* and *niyama* (the bases of Yoga i. e. virtues like truth etc.). With a little *tapasya* (austere penance), you can make them real and effective weapons."

To *dharalas* I say, "Do not harass *sadhus*." To *patidars*, I say 'Never encourage theft and robbery. If you can't follow the way of the Brahmin, you may thrash dacoits and drive them out.'

If both of them lapse from their *dharma*, I say to *sadhus* "You must protect them, reform them, cleanse them of their sins. When you do that, there will be a real religious revival and only then shall we be able to call India '*Karmabhumi*' (the land which can emancipate man through action, as contrasted with *bhoga-bhumi*=the land of sensual enjoyment only).

I shall be going away. But do take up this work, I pray. I would even say, 'Right today form a committee of a few *sadhus*, *patidars* and *dharalas* and start working. Make people take oaths. If we do this work, Swaraj is certain to be ours in one year. May God inspire you with love, courage, pity, truth and capacity for self-sacrifice! That is my prayer to Him.

23¹-1-1921

to

4-2-1921

We reached Calcutta yesterday. We were carrying from our very start from Bombay the happy news that Mr. Jayakar² had decided to discontinue his practice till Swaraj was won. When we retailed the news to Mr. Das, he was highly pleased. This reminds me of a remark Gandhiji made to Mr. Jayakar when the latter visited him in



Bombay in the early morning of the 21st inst. and declared his decision to give up his practice.

Gandhiji said, "So, then, our Benaras Pact has been kept well enough. Now remain only Malaviyaji and Lala Harkishanlal". It is necessary to go into some details about this pact, so that the real reason which impelled Mr. Das to plunge into this fight, may be known. We were then at Dacca on about the 16th December. At the beginning of a weighty speech which Gandhiji had made there, he had said, "I have received invaluable help from Mr. Das in the preparation of the Punjab Committee Report. (The Congress had appointed a special Inquiry Committee, which included Mr. Das, to inquire into the Punjab outrages). When, in framing that Report, we came to the final stage of the Committee's recommendations, I had requested the members to submit only the minimum demands to the Government, but, at the same time, to be prepared to sacrifice our very lives, if necessary, in order to secure these minimum demands. I remind Mr. Das of that oral pact we had made at that time."

Since that day Mr. Das used to ponder deeply over the matter. He gave his thought the shape of a resolve at the Nagpur Congress and has now implemented it.

Mr. Das is, these days, the talk of the whole of Bengal, young and old. He himself once said : "I was simply amazed. I had never cherished such high hopes (re. the splendid response of Bengali students to the non-co-operation call) and now I can't budge from here, leaving all these students". "This is all due to his (Das') giving up a (legal) practice of fifty thousand rupees per month", says everybody; and Mr. Das also is now agreeing with the view. A cartoon which appeared in a paper, *Nayak*, is a typical expression of the high esteem in which the Bengalis hold Mr. Das. He is represented as Bhagiratha³ bringing the holy Gandhi-Ganges into Bengal.

The number of students who have left their institutions has already been given in the *Navajivan*. All the colleges except the Presidency College, the Sibpur Engineering College and the Medical College have been almost deserted. The Students of Bengal seem to have done what, it was rumoured, Gandhiji was going to do, viz., to lie full length along the steps of the Gujarat (Government) College at Ahmedabad. The least to blame among these students may be said to be those of the Bangwasi College. The circumstances that impelled them to offer this so-called *satyagraha* are worth knowing. The Principal of that College had told Mr. Das that he would nationalise the college, i. e., cut off all connection with the University, if he got a requisition signed by seven hundred students. When Mr. Das approached him with one thousand signatures



in hand, he said, 'O, these signatures! They are worthless!' It is natural that the students cannot bear with this disregard meekly. Some of them sat *en bloc* on the steps of the college. Some others lay flat near the entrance-door of the Principal's house right from 8 a. m. in the morning. At 10 p. m. at night they had to listen to the following tragic appeal of the Principal's wife:

"Dear sons, get up and have your meals. You want to serve the country. You must not give up your life by fasting. That's wrong. Give five days' notice to your respected Principal. Let him have that time for consideration". Mr. Das is trying to cope with this step of doubtful *Satyagraha*. He understands that the step is a form of subtle violence.

With this single exception, the students are exhibiting exemplary self-restraint. Let me give an instance. The Principal, Dr. Wott of the Scottish Church College, touched a student with the toe of his shoe and crossed over him. It does not seem that he really wanted to kick the student, but he did wish to tease him, since there was another unobstructed passage for him. Other students followed suit and crossed over the lying students. But the latter did not so much as utter a syllable. By practicing self-control themselves, they are teaching a lesson to others.

Men like Sir Prafulla Chandra Roy⁴ are still sitting on the fence and watching the arena. It is not yet futile to hope from a man of his innocent and open-eared nature, that he will turn his college into a national institution and thus show the way to others. None of the University Professors, except one or two, have non-co-operated.

1. This date is reproduced, from "The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhiji" and is, hence, authentic.

2. M. R. Jayakar, Bar-at-Law, one of the most prominent lawyers in Bombay, made his name later on as one who, in collaboration with Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, another legal luminary, made several attempts to bring about a compromise between the Government and Gandhiji.

3. A legendary king who, by his extremely austere penances, pleased the Heavenly Ganges and the Lord Shiva and then a sage Janhu to let the Ganges flow down on the earth.

4. A leading scientist of India and a man of ascetic simplicity. He gave away, later on, his life's savings to the institution he had founded.



Mirjapur Square's Monster Meeting

It is impossible to describe adequately the meeting of the students held last night at the Mirjapur Square. The Square must be as big as the Jallianwala Bagh. Not an inch of space was left vacant, and outside the square there were crowds and crowds of men. It appeared as if the three or four-storied buildings, that enclosed the square, would bend down with the weight of the rows of men and women who had filled them. It took a fairly long time at first to create silence. And who could be the President except Mr. Das? Gandhiji sat on a table and he on a chair. Gandhiji began as follows:

*Let me congratulate the students of Bengal on the very magnificent response they have returned to the call of the country. I know that the students of Calcutta were waiting for my friend, Mr. C. R. Das, to give them the lead. I congratulate him upon his having given you the lead and I congratulate you, the students of Bengal, upon having followed that lead. But you know as well as I do that the task for him and for you has only just commenced. We are in the throes of a new birth and we are experiencing all the difficulties and all the pains that attend a new birth. It is not enough for him, it is not enough for India, that you have emptied the colleges. It is absolutely necessary that you must not return to the colleges and schools that you have abandoned, and it is necessary for him to find out for you the work that you should do during this period of probation, during this period of purification.

[After so much strain of speaking Gandhiji's voice grew dry and low. Some disquiet continued for a while, but after Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal's appeal, made in his loud voice, silence was restored and then Gandhiji's voice gradually grew so powerful that all the thirty thousands present there must have been able to hear him.]

It has now become necessary for Mr. C. R. Das and for you to put your heads together and devise means whereby you may complete the work you have begun. In order that that work may be sustained, that that work may be continued, and in order that your services may be harnessed for the attainment of Swaraj, it is necessary to find out the ways and means.

To The Professors And Educationists

And I cannot describe to you how much it grieves me to find that whilst the student world has responded so nobly, the professors and educationists and the



trustees of the great educational institutions of Bengal are not giving the lead they should have.

In drawing your attention and their attention to this fact, I do not wish to be understood as casting any reflection upon them, or their love for the country. I know, I am convinced, they believe that you have erred. I know that they believe that Mr. Das has erred in asking you not to seek shelter behind your conscience but to respond to the call of the nation. They believe that I am grievously in error in having presented non-co-operation to the country and they sincerely believe that I am still more grievously in error in having advised the students to boycott Government educational institutions.

But in spite of all the experience that I have gone through, in spite of all that I have heard and read, and in spite of all the reverence that I tender to our elders and our leaders, I am here to confess before you that I am more than ever convinced of the correctness of the step that I have suggested to the country. I am more than ever convinced that if we desire to establish the Swaraj of our choice, if we want to retrieve the lost honour of India, if we want to retrieve the honour of Islam which is trembling in the balance, it is absolutely necessary for us to tell this government that it shall not receive any help from us, nor will we receive any help from a government which has forfeited all confidence. I know, those of you who are sceptics will tell me or tell yourselves that you have heard this kind of talk many a time from such platforms. It is true. But Max Muller has told us—he has paraphrased a Sanskrit proverb—that a truth always bears repetition until it has gone home; and I propose to reiterate this truth in the ears of my countrymen, to reiterate this truth before our elders, till it goes home, till they respond to it. I am here to repeat what I have said from so many platforms that India will not regain her lost honour—her lost freedom—until India has responded to the call of non-co-operation. It is not possible for Indians, constituted as we are, to give battle to this great government on any other terms.

Non-co-operation Bred In Our Marrow

Non-co-operation is bred in the very marrow of every Indian. And if you want to know why the crores and millions of the masses responded to the call of non-co-operation, as they have never responded to any other call, it is not because I gave voice to that call. Non-co-operation is born, is bred in them, it is part of every religion—it is part of Hinduism, it is part of Islam—and it is for that reason that, fallen though



we are, helpless though we feel ourselves to be, non-co-operation has awakened us from this long sleep. Non-co-operation has given us faith, has given us courage, has given us hope and strength.

Shun Modern Civilization

And if our educated leaders have not yet responded to the call of non-co-operation, let me say with all the humility that I can command that they are sceptics, they have not the religious fire of the people and the masses. They are saturated in modern civilization, or, as we call it, "Western Civilization," I have used the term "Western Civilization." But I want you and myself this evening to distinguish between the two. I want to make it clear that I am no hater of the West. I am thankful to the West for many a thing I have learnt from Western literature. But I am here to confess to you that I am thankful to modern civilization for teaching me that, if I want India to rise to its fullest height, I must tell my countrymen frankly that after years and years of experience of modern civilization, I have learnt one lesson from it, and that is, that we must shun it at all costs. What is that modern civilization? It is the worship of the material, it is the worship of the brute in us, it is unadulterated materialism. And *modern* civilization is nothing if it does not think at every step of the triumph of *material* civilization.

And, if I did not know my country, if I did not know the mass mind, I would also have erred, and I would also have been misled, even as I contend that educated India has been misled. You, my countrymen, know that I have lived for 20 years in the midst of modern activity. I have lived in a country that has copied everything that is modern. I have lived in a country which is pulsating with new life. South Africa contains some of the bravest of men on the face of the earth and I have seen modern civilization worked by that nation at its best; and I am here to tell you, the young men of Bengal, and I am here to tell my educated leaders, that my experience of modern civilization, worked at its best, told me in emphatic terms in the year 1908, 'God save India from that modern curse!' This is a lesson that I have learnt in South Africa. It is the lesson that I have followed up since 1908 and which, slowly but surely, I have been preaching in season and out of season during my five years' stay in India. And it was my faith in our ancient civilization, it was my faith in our simplicity, it was my faith in the inborn religious instincts of every Indian—be he a Hindu or be he a Mohammedan, Christian,



Parsi or a Jew - it is that faith in me which has sustained me throughout all the dark days of scoffing, of scepticism and of opposition.

Religious Battle

I know that opposition stares you and stares me in the face even today. We have just broken the ground, but it is true that if we are going to win this great battle that you, the people of Calcutta, commenced in September of last year (at the Special Congress in Calcutta), we shall have to continue as we have begun in full faith. I am not ashamed to repeat before you who seem to be nurtured in modern traditions that this is a religious battle. I am not ashamed to repeat before you that this is an attempt to revolutionise the political outlook, that this is an attempt to spiritualise our politics. And the more we have of it, I assure you, the greater progress we shall make towards our goal.

It is because I believe that the mass mind of India is tired of this British rule in its present form that I have made bold to say that Swaraj is easily attainable within one year. Four months of this one year have already gone by and my faith has never burnt as brightly as it burns tonight, as I am talking to the young-men of Bengal. You have given me greater hope, you have given me greater courage, you have given me greater strength. May God grant that Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali and I will live to erect this flag of Swaraj inside this year! But if it is the will of God that my ashes should be placed in the Ganges water before the eight months of the year are out, I shall die with the conviction that you will see to it the Swaraj is secured before this year is out.

Need For Faith

This is not as difficult as you may imagine. The difficulty lies with our conviction. The difficulty lies in our believing that we want to have lessons in Swaraj in the Council hall. The difficulty lies in believing that we cannot get Swaraj until we have passed through a sixteen years' course of education; and if we believe in all these things, I should be free to confess that we should require a century to get Swaraj. But it is because I believe that we need, not these things, but we need faith, courage and strength, and it is because I believe that the masses have got all these things today, that I believe Swaraj is attainable within this year.



Meaning Of Congress Appeal

And what does the appeal of the Congress mean? The Congress appeal means that you and I, that the whole of educated India, the whole of the mercantile community of India—a mere drop in the ocean of the millions of the people of India, the artisans and the agriculturists—have a test placed before them. And believe me that the Congress will isolate India and wrest Swaraj from insolent hands and establish the flag of freedom, if possible with your assistance, even without your assistance if need be. The whole of India is not concentrated in the educated India of today. India can sustain its hope even if the whole of educated India were to remain sceptic, were to remain without hope and faith and courage and strength. It is that faith which sustains me. But I am hoping that, if the student world and if the students of Bengal remain true to their vow, I am hoping that the professors and the trustees and the educationists of Bengal and India will respond to the call and their winter of discontent will be turned by you into the summer of hope.

Forget Old Standards

I ask you, the young-men of Bengal, to abide by the decision that you have come to—no matter what happens. I know that Mr. C. R. Das is going to remain true to his promise. He has already received a promise of Rs. 10,000/- to be given to him now and another ten thousand as annual contribution from a great Bengali (Sri. Gopalchandra Sinha). He has received certain promises from the Marwaris—the domiciled Marwaris of Calcutta—and he is going to receive many more promises, so far as the finance is concerned, but finance is the least part of the difficulty. He has to find out a habitation for having the college located. He has to find out better professors. And I ask students who have non-co-operated not to set before yourselves the old standard, even as this Swaraj of our dream is not to be a base copy of what we have today. So will you please see that what you get in the shape of a new college is not to be a base copy of what you have today? You will not look to brick and mortar. You will not look to benches and chairs for inspiration. You will look to character. You will look to sterling character in your professors and in your teachers for inspiration. You will look to your own determination to give you the necessary impetus and necessary inspiration. And I promise you that you will then not be disappointed; but if you believe that Mr. Das is going to present you with noble buildings, if you believe that he is going to give every



ease and luxury to which you have been hitherto used, you will certainly be disappointed.

Newer Gospel

I have come this evening to present before you a newer gospel, a better gospel. If you are determined to attain Swaraj inside of twelve months, if you are determined to help to attain Swaraj within one year, then I ask you to make the way of those who have dedicated their lives to the attainment of Swaraj easier and clearer by accepting the advice that I am about to tender to you. If you believe that Swaraj can be attained by continuing your colleges and schools precisely in the same manner as the institutions that you have left are being conducted, you are sadly mistaken. No country in the world has gained its liberty—has seen a new birth—without difficulties, without pain, without sacrifice. And what is sacrifice? The right meaning of sacrifice I learnt in my youth was that it meant making sacred, making holy. Non-co-operation is a process of purification, and if a suspension of our ordinary routine is necessary for the purpose of that purification, that has to be done. I know if I know Bengal at all—that you will not shirk it and you will respond.

Ply The Spinning-Wheel

Our education has been the most deficient in two things. Those who formed our education code neglected the training of the body and the soul. You are receiving the education of the soul by the very fact of non-co-operation; for non-co-operation is nothing less and nothing more than withdrawing from participation in the evil that this Government is doing and continuing to do. And if we are withdrawing from evil conscientiously, deliberately, it means that we are walking with our face towards God. That completes or begins the Soul training. But seeing that our bodily education has been neglected, and seeing that India has become enslaved because India forgot the spinning wheel, and because India sold herself for a mess of pottage, I am not afraid to place before you, the young-men of Bengal, the spinning-wheel for adoption. And let a training in spinning and production of as much yarn as you can ever do constitute your main purpose and your main training during this year of probation. Let your ordinary education commence after Swaraj is established, but let every young man, and every girl, of Bengal consider it to be their sacred duty to devote all their time and



energy to spinning. I have drawn attention to the parallel that presents itself before us from the War (the first World War).

2

Those of you know anything about what was going on in England will recall those days of the War, when every boy and every girl had suspended their education—ordinary education—and were put upon such national work as was necessary for the purpose of the War. They were put upon simple tailoring, upon making badges, and that was done even here. I recall many a home where even little children were put to work and the Government looked upon my activity with sympathy, with attention and approval, when I presented to the youths of Kaira (during his recruiting campaign in 1918) the opportunity of fighting on the battle-field even though their parents might be against it. Times have changed and I am now twitted for asking these young men and girls and for having the audacity to tell them that they should rather obey the voice of their conscience than the voice or commands of even their parents. But I say to the young-men and young girls of Bengal that if your voice, the voice of your conscience, tells you that during this year of probation you should devote your energy and attention to the attainment of Swaraj, then you will believe me when I tell you that it is impossible to arrive at a complete boycott of foreign cloth or foreign goods, until and unless we employ every man, woman and child on spinning yarn. We have spun many a yarn during all these long 35 years on the Congress platform. Let us now spin the truest yarn that India wants. And let me tell you that if you want to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, there is no other way out of the difficulty but spinning for the whole of India. And so I ask you, young men of Bengal, to accept the privilege that I place at your feet. And if we can bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth, we sterilize the activity of the fifty-five members of the House of Commons that Lancashire contributes to it, we sterilize the activities of ambitious Japan who has her eyes fixed and set upon India. You will not gain your economic freedom, as the Congress has told you, until India becomes self-contained so far as her food and clothing are concerned. We can do without all things but we cannot do without food and clothing. A vast country like India, 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad, cannot possibly become self-contained by any other means than the means of old. If you want to do penance for what Bengal did, and what the whole of India did, during the East India Company's regime, even then you have no other remedy, no other penance open



to you, but to revive those noble arts and industries and to present India with sufficient yarn, so that the prices of cloth and clothing may both go down and so that India may not have to depend upon foreigners for her special needs.

Spin To Win

So, young-men of Bengal, if you will work to gain Swaraj within one year, you will accept the advice of a man who has conducted a series of experiments, to whom this gospel came in the year 1908, and who has not been ousted from it by hair's breadth. The more I have studied the economics of India, the more I have listened to the mill-owners of India, the more convinced I have become that until we introduce the spinning-wheel in every home of India, the economic salvation and freedom of India is an impossibility. Go to any mill-owner you like, he will tell you that it will require fifty years if India is to become self-contained, so far as cloth supplies are concerned, if she has to depend upon her mills alone. And let me supplement the information by telling you that today hundreds and thousands of weavers are weaving and are able to weave home spun yarn, but they have to fall back upon foreign yarn because mills cannot supply them. So I ask the young friends of Bengal who have left their colleges to go forward in hope and courage and take up this neglected training of the hand for at least the time that we have not attained Swaraj and then think of anything else.

Learn Hindustani

I have suggested another thing. You and I, and every one of us, have neglected the true education that we should have received in our national schools. It is impossible for the young men of Bengal, for the young men of Gujarat, for the young men of the Deccan, to go to the Central Provinces, to go to the United Provinces, to go to the Punjab and all those vast tracts of India which speak nothing but Hindustani, and therefore, I ask you to learn Hindustani also in your leisure hours— the hours that you may be able to save after spinning. And if you will learn those things, you can learn both spinning and Hindustani in two months. An intelligent gentle lad, a patriotic and hard-working lad, I promise you, can learn both these things in two months' time. And then you are free to go out to your villages, you are free to go to every part of India but Madras, and be able to speak your mind to the masses. Do not consider for one moment that you can make English a common medium of expression between the



masses. 22 crores of Indians know Hindustani—they do not know any other language. And if you want to steal into the hearts of 22 crores of Indians, Hindustani is the only language open to you. If you will do but these two things during this year, during these nine months, believe me, you will have, by the time you have finished, acquired courage and acquired strength, which you do not possess today. I know thousands of students. Black despair stares them in the face if they are told that they cannot get Government employ. If you are bent upon mending or ending this Government how do you propose to get Government employ? If you do not want to fall back upon Government, what is your English knowledge worth? I do not wish to underrate the literary value of the English language. I do not wish to underrate the vast treasures that are buried in the English books. I do not want to suggest to you that we have overrated the importance of the English language. But I do venture to suggest to you that the English language finds very little place in the economy of Swaraj.

Serve India's Villages

You do not need to increase the stock of English words in order to gain Swaraj and so I have suggested to the young men of Gujarat that they should suspend their literary training in English for these nine or twelve months and devote their time and their leisure to learning spinning and to learning Hindustani and then place themselves at the disposal of India and join the National Service that is going to be formed. You are not going to respond to the great constitution that the Congress has given, unless we have got an army of workers penetrating the seven and a half lakhs of villages with which India is studded. If we are going to set up a rival organisation in every village of India, if we are going to have a representative in every village of India, we cannot do so until and unless the young men of India respond to the Motherland. The privilege to play that role is yours. The call today has come to the young men of Bengal and the rest of India. I hope—I have every confidence—that all the young men and all the young girls of India will respond to this sacred call. I promise, before the year is out, you will not have regretted the day that you set your heart upon these things. And you will find at the end of the chapter that what I am saying to you tonight has come true, that you have vindicated the honour of India, you have vindicated the honour of Islam, you have vindicated the honour of the whole nation and established Swaraj.¹ May God grant you, the young men and the young girls of Bengal, the necessary courage, the



necessary confidence to go through the sacred period of purification and sacrifice. May God help you!

1. Fantastic though it seemed to many at the time, the cry of 'Swaraj in a year' was not really so. The Viceroy had to confess that he was 'puzzled and perplexed' and Sri George Lloyd, the then Governor of Bombay, to admit that the movement was "within an inch of success."

To Medical Students

Requested to address a few words to the medical students, Gandhiji got up again and said:

There was one thing which I had purposely neglected to mention. I had the thing in my mind, but I was obliged to take up so much of your time as to the necessity of learning spinning and the necessity of learning Hindustani and as to what you should do after having given up your colleges, that I purposely omitted reference to the difficulty of the medical students. If they will but exercise their splendid faculty and imagination, they will deduce from what I have said generally to the student world that the remarks that are applicable to the arts colleges and other colleges are equally applicable to the medical students, if possible even much more to the medical students than to others. They want to heal the bloody wounds of India, they want to heal the diseases from which India is suffering. And I know no greater wound than the one that has been inflicted upon the Punjab and I know no greater disease than the disease of helplessness, dependence and servility from which the whole of India is suffering. And if the medical students will be true to that future calling, they will have no hesitation in responding to the call. And they will have no hesitation in undertaking the humanitarian work of clothing the naked and of ridding India of her shame, degradation and helplessness. They cannot do any nobler work. For an Indian, no matter how noble, how learned, how powerful and rich he may be, there can be no nobler work than the work of attaining Swaraj, than the work of ridding India of the great disease from which we have been suffering for years and years. And so I ask all the medical students and all the boys of the colleges and all the boys over sixteen years of the schools, without a moment's hesitation, first of all, to leave their schools and colleges, to finish that one peremptory duty that devolves upon them. But it will always be open to you either to reject or to accept my advice. It will be open to you to establish new colleges, new schools, new medical colleges, or anything you like. But if



you will accept my advice, you will understand that you will not have finished your work as true and brave fellows unless you dedicate all the time at your disposal for the attainment of Swaraj and make the task easy all round.

Tired Of Speechifying

If there is anything that I have left out in connection with the medical college or any other institution and if you want a solution about these things from my lips, I shall be prepared to answer those questions. But I must confess to you that I am tired of answering questions, I am tired of making speeches, I am tired of making appeals. I would rather wish that I became speechless and left you to your own resources and left you to your own conscience. Only today I have been answering a correspondent who has written to the *Navajivan* asking, "If you say, if you call conscience above all, why do you waste so much of your time in arguing with us? Why do you not leave us to ourselves?" In a way the rebuke was well administered. But I know the fire that is burning within me. I should be untrue to you and to my-self, if I do not give it to you in the best manner that I can, and so I have been travelling through the length and breadth of India in order to give you the gospel of hope and courage that is within me. But believe me, could I possibly be left alone, you will find me spinning away for all I am worth and poring over the pages of Hindustani, but I know my limitations also. And I know what handicap I am labouring under, for I am not so well-versed in Hindustani literature as I am in English literature.

And so, my young friends, I would ask you to cast all your doubts, all your fear, all your scepticism, into the Bay of Bengal and rise with a new hope that will not be denied.

Gandhiji's speech has been given above in full. M. Mohammad Ali's speech on that occasion was also very important—specially his answer to some charges of Col. Wedgewood. In an article on Gandhiji which Col. Wedgewood has contributed to the paper *Nation*, he has stated that Shaukat Ali has only a lip-loyalty for non-violence. In answer to this accusation, Mohammad Ali declared, "We have accepted the programme of non-violence, because we feel that our object can be gained more quickly through it than through violence. It is impossible to imagine how many long years it may take us to manufacture bombs and fire arms for a violent warfare, whereas, through this programme of peaceful non-violent resistance, we hope to attain Swaraj in a year". Asking students to take up the work of spinning he said, "Just



as our age-long slavery has no parallel in the world's history, the period of our struggle for the achievement of freedom will be so wonderfully short as to make another record. In order that we can gain independence without delay, Gandhiji asks you all to leave aside your books for one year and take up the spinning-wheel. Through those strings of yarn, you will be able to snap all the strings of our economic slavery. Ask your heart the question, "Does anybody ever ask you to read Shakespeare as a means for gaining freedom?" If you think somebody does, you are free to follow his advice. But if you feel that, by burying your head in his books, Manchester's hold on India only increases, then let the study of Shakespeare go to the dogs".

Messrs. Das, Pal (Bipin Chandra Pal) and Jitendralal Bannerji spoke after Gandhiji, but I do not wish the reader to go into their speeches. I simply quote here the last paragraph of the covering letter of Bapu Gopal Chandra Sinha enclosing his donation of Rs. 10,000/-: "Whether the students have done well or ill, all of us—the rich or the poor, the learned or the fool, everyone—must do all he possibly can to turn into the right direction the irrepressible enthusiasm with which the students have become the vanguards of this movement. I am certain that those who do not back them up at this critical moment will be branded with a stigma for ever. It is this conviction that has impelled me to give what I could". This important point in that letter is overlooked by Ramanand Chattopadhyaya (Editor, *The Modern Review*), Sir Prafulla Chandra Roy and other learned educationists who are opposing the movement.

After this mammoth gathering Gandhiji delivered speeches at many meetings, conferred with many men, founded a Teachers' Association, talked to parents of students and did everything he possibly could. The enthusiasm exhibited in the women's meetings beggars description. There were three such meetings in all. One was held in the front of Mr. Das's residence. Four to five hundred Bengali sisters must have been present there. The collection made from them came to more than six hundred rupees in cash and about five thousand in jewellery. Then there was a meeting of Marwari ladies. They simply rained money and ornaments, amounting to not less than ten thousand rupees in all. The third meeting was held in the house of Babu Nirmalchandra, where, from hardly more than a hundred women, as many as eight hundred rupees were collected.

Profuse help from private individuals in land, building etc., comes flowing into Mr. Das' hands. The other day a whole running school with a building and landed



property worth a lakh of rupees was entrusted to Mr. Das. Marwari gentlemen also are showing commendable enthusiasm. Nearly a lakh of rupees have been collected from among them. A special meeting of Gujarati brothers is to be held on Wednesday.

The spinning activity cannot be said as yet to have evoked sufficient interest, though women come to attend the spinning-class conducted in Mr. Das's house. Srimati Urmila Devi - Mr. Das's widowed sister—has opened her house for those women who wish to learn spinning. One business institution has donated rupees ten thousand ear-marked for the spinning activity.

It is difficult, at present, to estimate properly the number of students who have non-co-operated, as all the colleges have been closed. The National College is to open in two or three days and then we shall know the number of the new-comers. When a heavy rush of intending entrants began, Mr. Das insisted on the production of the Leaving Certificate of the past college before enrolling the name of the applicant. But even the number of those who possess them is by no means small. A building with a monthly rent of Rupees 2,000/- for the college and three others for the students' hostel have been secured. A morning to-night programme of eight meetings at different places in the city has been fixed for tomorrow to protest against the opening of the new Council. Gandhiji and Maulana Mohammad Ali will be present at all of them.

3

In my last letter I referred to Gandhiji's activities in Calcutta. The remarkable event that followed them was the protest meetings held on the 1st instant. The figure of estimated attendance at these meetings comes to three or four lakhs of men and women. If even a moderate report of these meetings has reached the ears of the Duke of Connaught, he must be feeling very sad at having to behave like a puppet according to instructions given beforehand. Mr. Das was the President at one, and a speaker at five, of these protest meetings. Though not a President in any, Gandhiji spoke at all of them. One can imagine how great must be the exertion which Mr. Das and Gandhiji had put in on that day.

Co-operation Of The Domiciled

Then there was a meeting of the Gujaratis at the Manmohan Theatre. Those Gujaratis, who have grown rich through their business in Calcutta and settled there,



tried to repay their debt to Bengal at that meeting. They entrusted Gandhiji with a purse of 47 thousand rupees to be given away to Mr. Das. By their timely help to Bengal, the Gujaratis have the satisfaction of having thus discharged their duty of repayment of their debt. On the next day there was a small gathering of the Sikhs. Gandhiji did not particularly wish to beg alms there. He had only gone there, at their earnest invitation, to teach them lessons in non-violence and forbearance. Hardly two to three hundred persons must have collected at the meeting. When, after finishing his speech, Gandhiji was eager to listen to the hymns to be sung by Sikh sisters, an old Sikh appealed to him to give a short discourse against the bad habit of drinking which was prevalent among the Sikhs. Gandhiji accepted the appeal and took that opportunity to beg for the national fund. Immediately, the men began to loosen their purse-strings and women to take off their ornaments. In no time the men collected Rs. 500/- and one rich Sikh gentlemen announced a monthly donation of 100 rupees to the Bangeeya National College.

And now remain the Marwari brothers. Nobody has now any doubt left in his mind that, in this fight for India's freedom, the contribution of the Marwari brothers is going to take a front rank. In the first place it was a leader of that community, Sri Jamnalalji, whose name led all the rest in the list of donors. Not content with this, he came to Calcutta to help Gandhiji. He saw numerous Marwari brothers and sisters. Their contribution is likely to exceed the two lakh mark. This includes the splendid share of Marwari sisters.

In this way, the domiciled Indians are giving their own contribution to Bengal, which has made a name through the princely charities of Messrs. Ras Behari Ghose and Taraknath Palit.

New National College

The 4th instant was a red letter day, inasmuch as Gandhiji opened a palatial building situated on the Wellington Square as the premises of the National College. And what shall I say of the solemnity and sanctity of the function? I have seen Gandhiji himself visibly impressed by the scene. Thousands of students were present, but the silence that prevailed was something unique. The loud cry of '*Bandemataram*'¹ was uttered only once and no more. After that cry, the pin-fall silence that pervaded the audience persisted till the very end. In that deep quiet the function began with the recital of verses from the Bhagwadgita.



That profound silence was reflected in Gandhiji's speech also, since he spoke in a soulful and serene language befitting the occasion. There is every hope that his deep concern, coupled with his invincible faith and his insistence on the indispensability of purity in thought, speech and action, which he expressed in that speech, will not fail to bear a good result. Every word of that speech has been published elsewhere in this same issue of the *Navajivan* and I am not going to dilate upon it. Speaking about it Gandhiji himself had remarked to me, "Only on rare occasions such utterances spring up from my heart".

We left Calcutta the very same evening of the 4th. The love and geniality we met with at Mr. Das' residence are difficult to translate into language. People are awed at first by the majestic features of Mr. Das, and they wish to keep away from his presence, but a few minutes' contact creates a sense of equality and turns them into his friends. And what a child like simplicity there is in him! He has made his palatial residence very like the quarters of a public office. His wife and his widowed sister Srimati Urmila Devi, as well as the daughters of his brother Sri Prafulla Chandra Das, a High Court Judge at Patna, have all cast, by their love, an irresistible spell on the public. The daughters of Mr. Das, the Judge, have even begun to insist on wearing Khadi and have already learnt up spinning.

(The following is the speech, referred to above, which Gandhiji delivered at the opening of the National College at Calcutta):

Friends,

You have just now heard the beautiful prayer sung by the students over there, and I hope that all of you will ponder over the magnificent language of that prayer. If we will base all our acts in this institution on prayer, I have very little doubt that we shall come through with added glory to ourselves and to our country. I have had the privilege, during these few months, of opening several institutions in several parts of India. But I must confess to you that, in opening no other institution have I been so weighed down with anxiety and fear as I am in performing the opening ceremony in connection with this institution. As I have elsewhere remarked, all the eyes, all the attention of the student world are centred upon Calcutta. You have seen so many telegrams reproduced in the Press, I have seen many more telegrams not reproduced in the Press, congratulating the students on the magnificent response to the country's call. You may have also noticed that, as a result of your response, the students all over India are withdrawing themselves from Government institutions. Great, therefore, is



your responsibility and the responsibility of the professors and teachers connected with this institution, of Mr. Das and of myself also. For myself, I can only assure you that my prayers will attend all your efforts in making this institution a success. But I know that no prayer that I can offer, no prayer that our clearer hearts can offer, can be of the slightest service unless the students approach their task in humility and in their fear of God, with perseverance, with single-mindedness and with love and devotion for the country in whose name and for whose sake they have abandoned Government institutions. It is not a light task for a student expecting certificates of high merit, expecting a great career in his estimation, it is not a light task for a student with all these expectations to surrender them in the hope that he is rendering a service to the country and, therefore, to himself. Personally I have not the slightest doubt about it. I hope you will never have to regret the day that you left Government institutions. But I know also that you must have to regret it if you will not use your time usefully, if you have left under the impulse of the moment, as so many of our leaders who mean well of the country have already expressed their fears. Let me hope that you will falsify their fear.

You will, at the end of the year, so discharge yourselves that those who are today filled with doubts may come forward with an expression of opinion that their doubts were misplaced. Let me not conceal from you, the students of Calcutta, what certificate Indians in other parts of India give to you. Many of the students and many grown up men also, who have talked to me about your movement, have expressed a sense of nervous fear. You have been credited with a great deal of emotion, you have been credited with a great deal of impulsiveness, but you have not been credited with the same amount of perseverance and industry.

1. I bow to Mother (Bharat). It is the title of a song composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee which was for long sung in the Congress sessions as the one national song. For crying out '*Bandemataram*' in public streets, boys were assaulted by the police during the Bengal-Partition agitation.

The Professors' Responsibility

You are embarking upon a new career. You are turning over a new leaf. You are shouldering a great responsibility. You are counting yourselves among the makers of India of the future. And if you realize this responsibility, I have no doubt, you will dispel all these fears which have been expressed in other parts of India. Those who know



Bengal well are in a position also to testify that Bengalis, on many an occasion, have not been found wanting. And for my part, I shall certainly decline to believe that those students who have responded and who have joined the institution will be found wanting. I shall hope also that the professors and the teachers will prove true to their trust. What I said in all humility to the professors and teachers at the time of performing the opening ceremony of the Gujarat National College, I am tempted to repeat here: that the success and failure of this institution will very largely depend upon the honest exertion that the professors and teachers may put forth. At this critical moment in the history of our dear country, every one of us, who intends to mould the young mind of the country, has a serious responsibility; and if the professors and teachers are found asleep, if they are overtaken with doubt, if they are overtaken with fear as to the future, God help the students who come under their charge. And I shall pray to the Almighty that he may bless the professors and teachers with wisdom, with courage, with faith and hope.

Live and Let Live

I have, in one of my speeches, told the students that whilst they might go on with the course that they have mapped out for themselves they must not interfere with others. You have perhaps read the paragraph that appeared in the newspaper today with reference to Barisal. I do not know whether it is an exaggerated account of what had happened there. I do not care whether it is an exaggeration or whether it is an understatement, but it furnishes a lesson for you and for me that we must on no account resort to violence, that we must on no account exert undue pressure. And as I said at one of the meetings the day before yesterday, I hope that the students will not sit *dharna* (sitting tenaciously—sometimes fasting the while—at the door of a person, till he does something expected from him)—they will not exercise any pressure whatsoever upon those students who would not come out of the schools and colleges. It is sufficient that those who feel it is sinful to belong to these institutions ought to come out of them. If we have sufficient faith in ourselves, we shall remain steadfast, although not a single other student responds to the call. It does betray want of faith in our own mission when you become impatient. And if we are impatient we begin to compel others to do what we have done. I hope no one of the students who will belong to this institution will be filled with any such doubt as to the correctness of his conduct.



Invaluable Treasures In Hindustani

I hope also that when I renew your acquaintance a month hence, as I hope I shall be able to do, you will not call upon me to address you any longer in English, but that you will have mastered sufficient Hindustani to be able to understand whatever message I might have to give to you in our national common language. I assure you that when you approach your study of Hindustani, some of you will find it simple and easy. To some of you the words will seem perfectly natural, because the vocabulary is common to Bengali, Hindi and most of the Indian languages, barring the Dravidian stock. You will find also it will feed your intellect and it will satisfy all the intellectual requirements of intellectual Bengal. And if you want to go in for literature, I promise you will find treasures hidden both in Hindi and Urdu, whatever scripts you take up and whatever books you take up first. You talk of the poverty of Hindi literature, you talk of the poverty of today's Hindi, but if you dive deep into the pages of Tulsidas, probably you will share my opinion that there is no other book that stands equal to it in the literature of the world in modern languages. That one book has given me faith and hope which no other book has given. I think that it is a book which can stand any criticism and any scrutiny, alike in literary grace, in metaphor and religious fervour.

The Poetry of the Wheel

I hope that when I come back you will have made sufficient progress in making yarn and have it woven by some village weaver for your own use. But I hope that you will be able to give sufficient proof of what wonders you have performed in spinning and I hope you will be able to share with me the same poetry and the same intellectual treat that I find in spinning, if you spin with faith and hope with reference to the future of India. I hope also that your professors and teachers will give their lectures through Bengali and I hope that all the knowledge that you have acquired in your Government institutions, you will translate for yourselves in Bengali and that you will be able to find equivalent expressions for the richest thought that you have learnt from English poets and from English literature.



Need For Religious Approach

I hope also that you will approach your task with a religious faith. If this movement of ours is not religious, I am free to confess to you that this movement will not only fail, but it will discredit us. It is a new method of applying ourselves to the task and, if you consider that we can solve the problem of India by bringing some changes only upon the old methods, we shall be doomed to disappointment. If you approach the task with the same religious fervour for which Bengal is noted, I know you will find that Swaraj is within easy reach. May God help you. May God help the professors and may God give you the strength that our friend Chittaranjan Das needs. I have much pleasure in declaring this institution open.

At Jharia

5-2-1921

After bidding good-bye to the Das family, we went to Jharia. The place is a big settlement of Gujaratis and Kutchis (residents of an outlying part of Gujarat). They have settled at Jharia for coal-business and coal-mining contracts. There are a good many Marwaris also and they have all become rich from coal. This is not the place to dwell upon the condition of the miners. We had not the time to observe it carefully, though we did see, with our own eyes, at what risk and under what hardship, they were labouring for a mere pittance.

Let me tell you of an amusing talk, before I say anything about the work done at Jharia. On the day preceding that on which we left Calcutta, Mr. Das told me, "Mahadev, cannot Jharia be considered, on any ground, as part of Bengal"? I immediately caught the motive behind the question; all the same I asked him, "Why"? He began to laugh and returned, "O, the collection at Jharia will all be swept away into Bihar"! "What else can you hope from a Government that combines or splits provinces at its own sweet will? You may freely include Jharia in Bengal, when you form the provinces yourself." The collection made at Jharia will reveal more clearly the significance of this pleasantry.

The brothers and sisters at Jharia performed a marvellous feat. A Marwari gentleman, Lala Ramjas Agrawal, started the ball rolling with his donation of rupees fifteen thousand. And then he himself exhorted other businessmen to pay liberally. It was at his earnest persuasion that the Kutchi businessmen, who had at first put the



figure of ten thousand as their contribution, raised it to twenty thousand. Other gentlemen also gave generous donations. The women contributed thirtyfive hundred rupees in cash and two or three thousand in jewellery. The total amount at Jharia came to sixty thousand rupees. Then there was a collection of one thousand at Dhanbad in the morning and ten and two thousand, at Katras and Barakat respectively, in the evening. But it is not the figures of these contributions that I value very highly. What is really wonderful is the religious attitude at the back of these donations; and, in my humble opinion, that attitude is nothing but the outcome of this our new movement. And shall I cite here only one out of the many instances of the charming confusion that arises from the faith and loving devotion of women? A sister put a gold necklace round Kasturba's neck and was about to adorn her wrists with gold bracelets. Kasturba immediately felt uneasy, and protested, 'But why do you give this necklace to me'? She took it off and added, "Sister, don't you know that these ornaments Gandhiji asks for are to be given for Swaraj?" The sister then laid the necklace at Gandhiji's feet, but she insisted, "But these bracelets, I would give only on condition that you (Kasturba) wear them". Kasturba refused—with the result that the Swaraj fund was robbed of the bracelets.

At Patna

6,7-2-1921

I ended my last letter with an account of Jharia. Carrying the heavy bag of Jharia, Gandhiji came to Patna. The National College there had already started to function, but its formal opening ceremony was to be performed at Gandhiji's hands on the 6th, in order to let the institution receive his blessings. There is bound to be a scarcity of funds in a province so poor as Bihar. The sight, therefore, of the huge bundle of Jharia was a feast to the eyes of Rajendraprasad and Brijkishorebabu. At the same time it seemed as if the responsibility of properly using that huge amount was weighing them down. Both these leaders are well known for their unaffected childlike manners and a keen sense of duty. It was due to their efforts that the National College could be founded. It is their reputation that has drawn not only excellent professors to the College, but also students of very high calibre. There are twelve professors there today. The maximum salary drawn by any of the staff is rupees one hundred and twentyfive per month, while there are others who accept the minimum amount of rupees thirty or forty only. And as for their qualifications. it is enough to state that



most of them have University gold medals. And what shall I say of the worth of the students? The National University has been recruited from only those students who had taken an 'Honours Course' in Government Colleges. The students of this college and those under Mazharul Haq Saheb are a ringing answer to those who say that only vagrants and worthless students, averse to study, who want to pass muster as servants of the nation resort to National Universities. These students will give three hours to literary studies and devote the rest of their time to spinning, weaving and manufacturing spinning wheels.

‘Lead, Kindly Light’

How I am tempted to reproduce in full both the speech, Mazharul Haq Saheb delivered in a voice choking with emotion when he requested Gandhiji to open the University, and the reply which Gandhiji gave to it! But I must content myself with only a gist. Everyone found from Haq Saheb's utterances that he had succeeded wonderfully in gaining the potency of the *mantra* (charm) of doing work in a silent, self-effacing manner. "Gandhiji took the vow of silence and I, too, long to keep myself away from such gatherings, but it is my loving friends who drag me and I am compelled to say something." That was the note struck by Haq Saheb in the beginning of his speech and he ended with these equally characteristic remarks: "Gandhiji has incarnated himself with the set purpose of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. That unity he is going to achieve and through that same unity we will get Swaraj. National colleges like this one are bricks in the foundation, and men like myself but the incidental implements—for the building of that edifice." Gandhiji, in his speech, laid special emphasis on that prayer with which the function was begun. Let us, he said, forget the education in which lessons, un-consecrated by prayer, are taught and henceforth begin all our acts after their sanctification by prayer. Let us, as we did today, daily pray to *Rudra* (God in His merciful aspect).

असतो मा सद्गमय |

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय |

मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय |

(Lead me:

From untruth unto truth;

From darkness unto light;



From death unto immortality.)

After this benediction, he said, "This our movement for self-purification is verily a movement that inspires us to go from untruth unto truth, from darkness unto light, from death unto immortality." Let us hope that every non-co-operator treasures in his heart this benedictory expression.

Side by side with the opening of the College, the Vidyapith (The National University) was also founded. And who else could be the all-in-all of this institution also except this triad of Rajendrababu, Haq Saheb, and Brijkishorebabu? Even in South Africa there were only 16 fighters for freedom, when the great struggle began. But afterwards as the tempo rose and others began to be fired with same spirit, the number went up and up till it came to 16,000. On the basis of that consideration, one need not lose heart at the paucity of the workers at present. Besides, the work put in by some gentlemen who remain out of the arena is worth noting. When the fund for the National University was being collected, Prof. Jayaswal who is a (Government) University Professor wrote to the Registrar, "Please send me immediately 600 rupees, the honorarium for my speeches, as I want to give away the amount to the National University." It may appear that the letter written in such a strain shows a teasing tendency, but it also, undoubtedly, reveals a desire to speak out the writer's sentiments with frankness and fearlessness even at the risk of losing his job. Will Government servants take a leaf out of the professor's book and give up their secretive methods of attendance at public meetings and secret contribution to the Swaraj Fund?

As for other activities, they can be known from the very fact of the hectic rush of the bureaucracy here and there and the consequent arrests. Lord Sinha's¹ regime has thus been ushered royally with the beat of drums and kettles. All over the Tirhut and the Durbhanga Divisions, national workers are given notices. Some are asked not to deliver speeches, some not to hold meetings; then some others to furnish securities for good behaviour, while there are others who are banned entry into particular areas. And why all this fuss? On what charges? The single one of spreading unrest. Four or five members of one single family of Sitamarhi were issued notices to give securities, and, on their refusal, were all thrust behind the prison-bars. A son of the family came to see Gandhiji immediately after seeing his aged father off to jail. He himself was expecting an arrest-warrant every moment. He said to Gandhiji, "My father had never even gone, and had never intended to go, to the place at which he had been accused of having spread sedition!" But all this is of a piece with what Mr. Fielding Hall, a



sympathetic Civil Servant, has written in his beautiful book, "The Setting Empire." He says, "Under the prevention of crimes clauses in the Criminal Law, without even stating the offense, securities for good behaviour have been exacted from a good number of men and many others have been even jailed! Magistrates and the police have been vested permanently with the authority to apply these clauses to their hearts' content. There are orders on them to inquire, whenever they are on tour whether there are any 'vagrants' or men of 'suspicious character' in the areas they visit, and to drag them to the court of law. Pressure is brought upon headmen of villages to point out any such person visiting or residing under their jurisdiction. So the headmen have a heyday and get those persons arrested against whom they may bear a grudge." And this was the situation five years back! Can there be any doubt that today the police are certain to pounce upon a 'white-capped' person as a man of suspicious character, because they always see red in a white cap? Fielding Hall further writes. "The whole Criminal Law is bad and its execution worse. If all these criminal courts were locked up and I were given the power to consult the Village Panchayats and, with their aid, prevent the perpetration of crimes, I am certain, I can keep my district much more peaceful and law-abiding." But Civil Servants of the type of Fielding Hall are a rarity these days and the bureaucracy is now making all possible efforts to see that the very ominous foreboding made in his book—that of the setting of the Empire's sun—comes out true.

And what is the answer the people are giving to the bureaucracy?

Quite a number of courts in Tirhut Division of Bihar remain idle for want of work. Where the lawyers have not emptied them, the people have. The *panchayats* (people's arbitration courts) are dispensing satisfactory justice even in grave criminal cases. Licensed dealers in hard drinks, in Arrah, Monghyr and other districts, are simply yawning in their shops for want of customers. National schools are being opened everywhere. The construction of the school building at Hajipur, whose foundation stone was laid by Gandhiji two months ago, has been already completed and it has three hundred and fifty students on its roll. Not only almost all the students of the local English school, but most of the teachers also, have vacated it and joined this national school. At other places also Babu Brijkishoreprasad and Babu Dharanidhar are faring well and opening new schools. And I must never omit here an account of the generosity of a *fakir* (recluse). He is held in high esteem by the people around. From the bits they gave him in charity, he was able to pile up slowly the respectable amount of seven or eight thousand rupees. He got a *dharmashala* (a religious building; i. e., a free temporary lodging house for wayfarers) built out of that money. But when he saw



that the province was humming with the activity of opening new schools, he himself requested the local workers to transform that *dharmashala* into a school building. So the *dharmashala* has now become a *shikshanashala* (a building for teaching, i. e., a school). And that *fakir*, now inflamed with patriotic fire all the more, is roving in the villages to support the many national activities carried out in them.

I have already said something about Haq Saheb in the beginning of the letter. I saw him this time as quite a new man. I have already drawn in an earlier letter a picture of my impression of him when I saw him last. He deserves a graphic description this time also. In plain language, I saw him grown very fat, cheeks round and ruddy like roses, and his *achkan* (a tight fitting upper wear) threatening to burst every moment. "Really, you have put on tons of flesh!", I remarked. "But why should I not?", he replied with a laugh—"with all this freedom and this bank of the Ganges and this companionship of my dear students!" The sight of these students, progressively blooming, makes on me bloom myself." We visited his *Sadakat Ashram* on Monday, Gandhiji's silence day, to see the students' way of living. They were happy and gay. The villagers are spreading the story that 'Gandhiji's Ashram' has been opened there and they are already thronging the place. The students mix with them completely. When they come, the students sit down with them in a mixed crowd and begin to recite, with *pakhaj* and *manjira* (Indian musical instruments), verses from the Hindi Ramayana.² And the soul of Haq Saheb heaves with pride and joy at the sight. The students spend 8 to 10 hours in manufacturing spinning-wheels and building the structure for their *Udyogagriha* (Industrial Home). At their common meeting-place in the evening, there is first the reading of Ramayana and then Haq Saheb discourses on the events of the day. The students put questions to him and thus for an hour or two there is an intellectual treat. And what is their food? I was a little astonished. I had my morning meal with Haq Saheb. Only coarse rice, lentil and a vegetable were served. At the end of the meal, I inquired, "Is this all that you have for your daily food?" He ridiculed the question and said, "Brother, do you think this is *Sikandar Manzil* that I can have any number of vegetables and any number of guests?" He told me that the students, too, took the very same food and added, "My dear friend! I don't dine with them in order to avoid the people's suspicion that I am out to convert the Hindu students into Islam". I had my evening meal with the students. The same kind of food there also. I asked them, "What's your monthly food expense? "Rs 7/ 12 (7 rupees 12 annas) or 8", came the answer. I was under the impression that, by and large, in India you could not do without spending at least 10 rupees,—not that I did not know there were people who



managed to live on 2 or 3—but these students disillusioned me. They hardly ever take ghee or milk. I asked them, "Do you keep well on this food?" It was presumptuousness on my part to put this question, when I had myself seen the rosy glow on Haq Saheb's face. And I got a silencing answer, "Our health hasn't gone down till today. The future God alone knows". Hardly anywhere else may I have seen such strict observance of the vows of non-possession and non-stealing as I saw here. Will our country emulate these students in the implementation of the vows?

My letter has grown quite long, but I cannot resist the temptation of saying a few words about an incident that happened in Haq Saheb's Ashram. The people knew that Monday was Gandhiji's day of silence and yet large numbers of them were coming from the villages around and flooding the Ashram precincts simply to have Gandhiji's '*darshan*'. Haq Saheb observed: "About half this number say to themselves 'It is Gandhiji's Ashram that is being built! Let's go and see it' and that is how they come. Today the number has doubled! So now, for the sake of quiet, the Ashram shall have to be shifted to some solitary place, where Gandhiji's name may not have reached the people's ears! It's a nuisance—Mahatmaji's name!" But he immediately exclaimed: "But it's impossible to live without that nuisance! These villagers have become my life and soul". Hardly had he finished, when a student came up and said, "Hundreds of women are sitting in the pandal over there! Just to have the darshan". I reported the matter to Gandhiji. He went there and kept standing. A bag, filled with ornaments big and small, was emptied at his feet! Such deep faith, seen everywhere, has amazed me. The bag at Jharia contains ornaments of the half-naked women labourers there. The other day again when revered Kasturba went to the Ganges for her bath, one of the many women bathing there, noticing her, exclaimed : 'O, this is Mataji!' And so all the loose coins which the women had tied in a knot at the end of their saris were laid at their Mataji's feet! But the climax was reached when an old woman in rags came up and laid one whole rupee at her feet. Revered Kasturba asked her, "Sister, what are you?" "A milk-woman", she replied. "That one rupee has come", a bystander interrupted, "from hard-earned savings—from the retail sale of milk". But the kind old woman observed, "Mataji! It has been given for the good you are doing for the country".

1. Sir S. P. Sinha, a leading lawyer and ex-President of the Congress, was made a peer, the first, and perhaps the only, Indian raised to peerage and appointed the Governor of Bihar in 1921.



2. Tulsidas' *Ramayana* has penetrated the meanest Hindu hamlet in Northern India.

8-2-1921

We left Patna for Gorakhpur. I do not intend to give my report about Gorakhpur itself, but wish to give a description of our tribulations during our journey to Benaras on the 8th and some thoughts that struck me in consequence.

Gorakhpur is the biggest district in the United Provinces. That single district is said to have a population of 29 lakhs. Despite the short notice of a few days, people from numerous villages had swarmed into Gorakhpur. Hardly less than a lakh of men must have been present at the monster meeting. The sight of that vast gathering, made me, in a way, feel at ease at the idea that we would be able to spend a quiet night as most of the darshan-lovers might have had their fill at the meeting itself. But I was living in a fool's paradise.

The train started from Gorakhpur at 8-30 p. m at night. For Benares, one has to change at Bhatni at about 11 p. m. It was a train that halted at every station. The workers at Gorakhpur had the foresight to keep vacant for us one or two compartments in the through bogie and thus to save us from the worry of having to change at midnight. But it was impossible for anybody on earth to free us from troubles. Hordes and hordes of people began to rush upon our compartment and create a row from the very next station after Gorakhpur. It is unnecessary to describe, for readers of my account of our travel from Kasganj to Cawnpore, what these inroads mean. But I want to describe these new invasions only in so far as they excelled in fearfulness even those historic ones between Kasganj and Cawnpore. At every station peasants with long long lathis and torches in their hands would come to us and raise cries loud enough to split the very drums of our ears. Of course, all of us in the compartment were making as many appeals for quiet as we possibly could.

But whoever would care to listen to us? At many stations, I would get down on the platform and fall at the feet of the people. They would then recede for a little while, but the moment I stepped up into my compartment, they would rush to our door and start their deafening cries. As if even this did not satisfy them, hundreds of men would, as soon as the train started, get on to the footboards and keep standing outside. At some places, imagining that their combined strength would be able to stop the train from starting, they would even enter into a kind of tug-of-war with it. The harassment and the patience of the guard reached their last limits at one place, when



he tried to stop them from doing so, push them back from the vicinity of the train and see that none of them was injured. But the people were in no mood to yield to any entreaties.

I could not contain myself for anger. Let me confess here that in the heat of that annoyance, I had the check to tell a lie in the very presence of Gandhiji. Many of these devotees do not even know how their 'Mahatma Gandhi' looks. A few of them thrust themselves into our compartment, and began to bawl out, "Who is Mahatma Gandhiji?" "Who is Mahatma Gandhiji?" I got desperate and said "I". They were satisfied, bowed down to me and left the compartment! What a world of difference between my presumptuousness and these people's untainted love! But it was no use getting enchanted with that guileless love.

We reached Bhatni and the craze for Gandhiji's *darshan* reached its climax. As it was, owing to the preceding invasions, the train reached there at 12 midnight instead of the scheduled 11 p. m. As the people could not have the *darshan*, they got furious and stood, inspite of all our earnest pleading, between the railway lines in front of the engine. Cries of, "We won't allow the train to start till we have the *darshan*" came out from many lips. I got down again and fell at their feet—all to no purpose.

I grew wild at last. I began to say things I should not have uttered. I told them that Gandhiji had offered Satyagraha for such insistence against only 2 men in the Punjab and had kept standing for 2 hours in the train. I warned them that, as a result of this tumult, Gandhiji might stop travelling altogether or undergo some unimaginably severe form of Satyagraha. But they were stone-deaf to all my frantic appeals. On the contrary, they tried to put us to shame by repeatedly asserting, "We have come for the *darshan* of the Lord. How ever can we feel ashamed of it?" In all this tussle, the guard had to take half an hour or three quarters in attaching our bogie to the new train.

Any sleep for Gandhiji in the midst of this uproar was out of question. But he kept lying full length without a word. We had hoped for some quiet after leaving Bhatni, but that hope too, turned out to be a mirage. The people's *hathagraha* (mule-like obstinacy) was repeated at each and every station that came after Bhatni: At last even Gandhiji's endurance and tolerance were exhausted and he got up at one station when it was 1.30 a. m. He began to entreat the people "Please go away.

Why do you harass us at this dark hour?" He was answered only by sky-rending shouts of victory to him! Many in the crowd were even saying that they would not move till



the train started. Gandhiji repeated his request in a pathetic tone, but who would care to listen? I have not the pen to give a picture of the distortion Gandhiji's ever-gentle features then underwent. I too had enough of the torment. I could not imagine what the outcome would be. Never before had I seen Gandhiji in a state of rage and I was literally trembling. At last he beat his forehead with his hands in desperation and said "I, fall at your feet. Please be good enough to move away". That was the height of the people's love-mad insolence. Only after Gandhiji beat his forehead thrice, did the people get quiet at least there.

An unknown gentleman saw our harassment. At every succeeding station therefore he would rush to our compartment in time and deliver a speech to the crowds in a very humble and heart-melting language. And fortunately the people would listen to him and disperse quietly. So this angel from heaven shifted on to his own shoulders all the load we were groaning under. The language of his speeches was remarkably chaste. It seemed he had digested all the principles of Gandhiji very well. At the end of his appeal for quiet, he used to exhort the people to observe non-violence to boycott foreign goods and implement all the items of the non-co-operation programme. His devotion, his quiet firmness and his patience were a revelation to me.

I asked his name. He said, "I am Ramgopal. I am an ordinary, a very ordinary, businessman at Mhow and Secretary of the Khilafat Committee there". That only increased my wonder. What a countless number of such silent workers there may be in the country, whose very existence is not known to most of us! Inevitably the following lines leapt up in my memory:

"Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood."

With it came a kind of this soothing assurance. If there is any possibility of anyone of the thousand craters of this gigantic volcano of non-co-operation expelling the fires of violence at any time and place, there is an equal chance of such men of no note rushing forth to quench the conflagration and even allowing themselves to be consumed into ashes in that attempt. But, definitely, the hand of destiny points to success for this activity. In what a mysterious way are the principles of peace and non-violence creeping into the country's frame! And what an excellent result the principles produce as they are assimilated more and more by the right type of souls!



A little deeper reflection brought back to my mind Sir Chimanlal Setalwad's question to Gandhiji during the session of the Hunter Inquiry Committee at Ahmedabad. Repeatedly he had asked Gandhiji in effect: "Is it not true that others are necessarily incapable of observing as much non-violence and endurance as you can?" Gandhiji had disagreed with Sir Chimanlal and, to show India's power of endurance, he had pointed out the instance of every mother in the world. Today's incident furnishes an exactly similar example. On the occasion when even Gandhiji lost his balance of mind and the shadow of a furious mood spread over his face, it was no other than a common man who could, with extraordinary self-restraint, succeed in persuading the people to keep quiet. Somebody may argue that it was but natural for Gandhiji to lose his temper, since such an experience had been his headache everyday till then. The argument is not unreasonable, but we have, at the same time, no basis for the view that the gentleman who showed extraordinary equanimity on this occasion was incapable of repeating his performance everyday. Moreover, all that I mean to say is that we may hope that wild outbursts of violence like those I have referred to above may happen rarely and that men who will be able to restore the necessary peace will spring forth from the masses at these times.

9-2-1921 to 12-2-1921

Before the Peasants

From Bihar Gandhiji proceeded to the United Provinces—chiefly to meet the peasants and to open the Benares National University. Two massive gatherings of the peasants were held at Gorakhpur and Fyzabad. The meeting of a hundred thousand men at Gorakhpur was organised perfectly. It was impossible not to feel elated at the sight of thousands of men of the soil with their long thick sticks in hand. Gandhiji had only one message to give them, viz., those big sticks were not to be used for killing or injuring anybody. The same thing was preached at Fyzabad also. Gandhiji's utterances were devoted exclusively to the outbreaks of robbery, villainy and rioting that had taken place in the United Provinces. I may as well say that, at the meetings, he dealt at length with his very same views which he had expressed in a nutshell in *Young India*. Let me give them in brief here also: 'It is impossible to create an atmosphere for popular rule in one year, where tyranny either from the Government or from the masses rules the land. In some ways the tyranny of the masses is even more adverse to the creation of a healthy atmosphere for genuine people's rule than the tyranny of



the Government, since, while the latter nourishes, the former eradicates, the urge for popular rule. Nothing has given a greater impetus to the longing for freedom than Dyerism. But Dyerism by one party against another, being only the echo of the brutality of majority rule, will establish such an oligarchy as will crush out of existence the very desire for free discussion and action'. Even '*The Leader* (a Moderate paper) has clearly stated that, in his speech at Fyzabad, Gandhiji had laid very great emphasis on non-violence.

After the first evacuation of educational institutions by about two hundred students during Gandhiji's previous visit of Benares, there has been no further exodus. All the same the non-co-operating students continued their work steadily and firmly and it is not wrong to say that owing to their perseverance alone Babu Bhagwandas and Shiva Prasad Gupta resolved on opening a National University there. The leader of these students is Professor Kripalani. It was he who carried those students with him when he left the Benares Hindu University. About four years ago he was a professor in the Government College at Muzaffarpur, where he committed the first sin of inviting Gandhiji to his place; and then, by his outspokenness, he earned the complete displeasure of the Government and was given the order of dismissal. He then went to see Gandhiji, who was at that time in Champaran, and assisted him in that campaign. Though a man of extraordinary spirit and a great capacity to lead the masses, he chose to perform one of the humblest duties pertaining to Gandhiji. For months together, it was he who prepared Gandhiji's meals, in the absence of Kasturba (Gandhiji used to take at that time our ordinary food of vegetable, rice, lentil etc. and so there was scope for a devoted cook like Kripalani to express his love through that work). After working in Champaran for a year and a half, he was taken to Benares by Malaviyaji. He worked for a long time as his secretary and then Panditji appointed him a professor of History in the Benaras Hindu University. He won the adoration of the students there and the 'Seniors' had often to consult with him, though he was only a 'Junior'. Only a short while ago he extricated himself from the dilemma of having to choose between the parting roads of love and duty, between the commiseration for Panditji and the satisfaction of his own conscience, and with the blessings of the generous-hearted Panditji he bade adieu to the Hindu University. This is not the place to dwell upon the troubles which he, with his small group of students, underwent after leaving the University. He took a small building and opened an *ashram* for his students. Many of these students collaborated to open a National School. This school is expanding day by day. It was simply these students' spirit of self-help, I believe, which induced Babu



Shiva Prasad Gupta and Babu Bhagwandasji to exert themselves for starting the National Benares University. Even Principal Anandshankar Dhruva (of the old Benares Hindu University) presented himself to bless this National University on the occasion of its inauguration. As the speeches of Babu Bhagwandas and Gandhiji have been reproduced in the Press from the *Aaj* paper, I do not wish to inflict upon the reader a repetition of their substance. The position as it stands, at present, is this: The number of students in the National College remains the same, but in the National School, it is ever on the rise and that to such an extent that the managers will have to pay more attention to that school than even the college itself.

Lucknow

On his way to Delhi, Gandhiji had halted at Lucknow also for a short while. Let me give here one or two anecdotes of the place. Many soldiers, with a White officer at their head, happened to be standing on the platform of the Lucknow station. When Gandhiji alighted from the train. In right military fashion they all saluted Gandhiji and even the White officer could not forbear to do the same. This is in a way surprising, but from another angle quite natural. Gandhiji's visit had absolutely no connection with the strike of the railway employees which was then going on and yet the correspondent of the '*The Leader*' (a Moderate paper and so opposed to Gandhiji) discovered Gandhiji's hand in it. In fact, not a single striker had even come to see Gandhiji.

Delhi

It was a memorable visit that Gandhiji paid to Delhi this time. He went there to open that Tibbia College of Hakimji¹ whose foundation stone was laid by Lord Hardinge! People might have felt the position somewhat queer. But in his unforgettable speech Gandhiji gave an excellent explanation of the perfect propriety of the step. It was the institution of Hakimji, himself an embodiment of Hindu-Muslim unity; it was, besides, an institution which symbolized that unity. How could Gandhiji have the heart to refuse to open that institution? And, how could Gandhiji let slip the opportunity of going there and showing that the function of unveiling the portrait of Lord Hardinge might superficially seem to be inconsistent with non-co-operation, but was really in perfect accord? And, lastly, that function gave him the chance to declare in plain terms his views on modern medicine. You will find all these three points excellently put in his speech there. Every word of it deserves a perusal.



This is all about the medical college. But the wonderful scenes that met the eye on our way to the college can never be forgotten. It was arranged that ten motor cars, carrying Gandhiji, Lajpatrai, Motilal Nehru, the Ali Brothers and other leaders, would speed swiftly through a particular route. The distance between the college and *Dariyaganj*, Dr. Ansari's residence, was about four miles, but right from that bungalow to the college, the whole route was lined on both the sides with swarms of men. From Jumma Masjid, specially, for about two and a half miles, till Chandni Chowk was reached, there was hardly an inch of space left vacant by this sea of humanity. Even buildings, three or four storeys high, resembled beehives more than clusters of men. And it was not only men, but women also, who had gathered in countless numbers. Naturally, all vehicular traffic was closed and so the streets were filled with nothing but crowds and crowds of men and women and that, too, under a fairly hot sun. "This was a reception unprecedented in the annals of Delhi", say many of the spectators. Even co-operators were heard to exclaim : "Is it possible for the Hon. Duke (of Connaught) not to have any knowledge of all this? The event is too glaring for even the wilfully blind to fail to see:" "During the Duke's visit for two or three days here, there was a marvelous *hartal* (strike) in Delhi. Even the front rooms in private buildings, were not lighted. How long will the Government continue to drop an iron curtain over the people's disgust for it?

1. Hakim Ajmal Khan, a staunch Nationalist Muslim leader and founder of the Tibbia College, teaching both the Unani (Arabic) and the Ayurvedic (Sanskrit) systems of medicine.

The Punjab

After leaving Delhi and teaching lessons in *ahimsa* (non-violence) to the Jats at Rohtak and Bhivani, Gandhiji proceeded to the Punjab. I could not have the good fortune to accompany him in his tour in the Punjab this time and nobody should expect from me a detailed description of that tour. The recent terrible massacre of the Sikhs at Nankana Saheb has become the one topic of talk all over the province. I read the right today news that the people have appointed Gandhiji as one of the members of the Inquiry Committee on the outrage and I have a wire from him stating that he will have to stay there for about ten days. In a letter I received four days back, Gandhiji writes: "My mind is engrossed in the Sikh cataclysm. It is impossible to understand the (divine) purpose behind this *yagna* (=the sacrifice, i. e. of non-co-operation) and



forecast its consequences. This is nothing but a conflagration all ablaze. I am constantly trying to dive into the Self to find out the meaning of all that is happening. I do not see any particular danger (from these events) to our movement, but it is bound to be affected seriously".

In a letter which came only yesterday he writes, "I have not yet been able to get at the truth about this Sikh event".

From other private letters, however, it seems that one party among the Sikhs has offered a sublime form of Satyagraha against their merciless slaughter by some other Sikhs. But it is best to wait patiently and quietly to let the truth come out in due course.

[For a long time after these events, Mahadevbhai stayed away from Gandhiji, first with C. R. Das and then with Pandit Motilalji Nehru. He could not, therefore, write his Diary, but, during that period also, he stayed with Gandhiji for a while in May and June. Four letters on Gandhiji's tour written during this stay are given below.]

1

THE NORTHERN TOUR

After Three Months

After an interval of about three months I meet again, through my letters, the readers of *Navajivan*. Owing to the exigences of other work, I could not have the good fortune to accompany Gandhiji in his tours. But Sri *Ramanuj* has given excellent descriptions of the various experiences of Gandhiji during the period.

We visited the United Provinces after an interval of three months. People's enthusiasm seemed to be on the increase, but in their power of organisation there did not appear to be any marked improvement. It is only rarely now that Gandhiji's sleep is disturbed, but we are not yet free from our other defects, such as loud cries and overcrowding on station-platforms and lack of consideration for other travellers.

The Crowd Nuisance

It was with difficulty that I could manage to get a seat in the 'Servants' Compartment' in Bombay. The domestic servants, who were inside, simply refused to



take me for one of their class. But when I assured them that I was Gandhiji's servant, they immediately let me in and said : "We are Gandhiji's slaves". The next day, however, their attitude changed. Crowds of men invaded every halting station and the servants could not get out of their compartment to buy *puries* and vegetables for their meals. Right up to 12 noon, they could not have a morsel to eat! When I closed my eyes for a nap, they began to give vent to their tirades against us. I sat up and gave away to them all my tiffin. When again I closed my eyes, they began to discuss me. One of them said. "See, you were not allowing this man to get into our compartment last night. What would have been our plight today, if he had not been allowed? We could get something to eat only when he gave us his food. Would we not have starved otherwise?" The other man countered, "But why? If Gandhi and his troupe were never allowed to enter the trains, we can freely have our *puri* and vegetable at every station!"

This will give some idea of the woes of the passengers. We must have passed through the Cawnpore station for more than ten times and yet even this time there was the same horde of thousands of men, jostling among themselves and rushing towards our compartment. It is only this crazy adoration for Gandhiji and this want of discipline and organisation which stops the All-India Congress Committee from advising people to offer civil disobedience. I suppose the hordes at Malegaon (the scene of an anti-Government riot) must be of the same character. The one duty today of every man throughout the country is to be absorbed in doing quiet work and to advise everyone else to do the same. It must be clear as daylight to everyone now that Swaraj will be delayed unless we maintain peace.

Allahabad Municipality

There was some flutter in Allahabad before we reached the city. Some of the enthusiastic members of that Municipality were impelled with the desire that their Municipality also should, like some others, declare its sympathy with Gandhiji's activities by giving him a civic welcome. They proposed the resolution, but it was thrown out by the opposing majority. The people, therefore, held a meeting and resolved that since the '*Shaheri bawao*'—may I use here the translation for 'Fathers of the City' made by papers like the *Jame Jamshed*¹?—would not give a welcome address to Gandhiji, the '*Shaheri bachchao*' (the children of the city) must make it a point to give him one. So Gandhiji was given a welcome address at the very place where the



Agriculturists' Conference was held. As orders banning public meetings were then in force in several districts, such as Pratapgarh, Fyzabad, Bareilly, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had decided upon holding that Conference in Allahabad itself. It was held in an open *maidan* under the moonlit sky. Thousands of peasants coming from various villages had thronged into the *maidan*. A simple inexpensive address of welcome, written on a piece of Khadi cloth, was read to Gandhiji by Pandit Motilalji Nehru. I give below important extracts from Gandhiji's reply:

"It is not the first time that I come to this place. I have often come here before. I may as well be said to become a domicile. You thought of leaving the public in no doubt about your sympathies with us, by presenting me with a civic address, just as other municipalities do. But the members here thought that a municipality has nothing to do with politics and an address to a man like myself, immersed in political work, should not be given. Well, one may say so, but to us it is clear that dabbling in politics has become an utter necessity for our municipalities today. We can become fit to win Swaraj, only if the municipalities make use of the power they possess. So the Allahabad Municipality, it seems, will go slowly along the path to Swaraj. But it was not any enmity against me that impelled it to do what it did. It is municipalities in small towns which present me addresses now-a-days, not those in big ones like Allahabad. The fact is that big municipalities cannot do what small ones can, because they are involved in such a complex system that they cannot easily get out of its rut.

"But we cannot, we must not, quarrel with the municipality. If we entangle ourselves in such squabbles, we are certain to forget the commands of the Congress Working Committee. What we have to do during this year is to achieve three things², and that achievement you cannot have through giving welcome addresses, singing gazals (a highly emotional form of Persian poetry) or gathering in mammoth congregations. It is we who are the rightful rulers of the country and so, when our Congress has ordered us to do a particular thing, we must never leave the thing to its fate and do some other. The advent of Swaraj will be retarded, not by giving up holding huge meetings, singing songs and honouring leaders, but certainly by neglecting to do the work the Congress has entrusted us with.

1. The words do mean 'Fathers of the City' but it is a characteristically Parsi—Gujarati, and so not a classic, expression. *Jame Jamshed* is a Parsi paper.

2. Attainment of Swaraj and reparation of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs.



Allahabad or Fakirabad

"If, as stated in your address, you make Allahabad a real *Fakirabad*. (City of Fakirs i.e., men undergoing heavy sacrifices), we will immediately win Swaraj. How many of those present here have got their names entered in the Committee? (Pandit Jawaharlal: 'All'; Gandhiji expressed his gratification). You ask me how a *Fakirabad* can collect the Swaraj Fund. To me the answer is clear. This is the holy town of Prayag where three sacred rivers of India meet and lakhs of men come as pilgrims. At the very time I was in Jagannathpuri (another holy town), it struck me that our places of pilgrimage can render great help to Swaraj through the collection of funds from visiting pilgrims. The whole share fixed for the contribution of the United Provinces towards the National Fund can be easily collected from only the places of pilgrimage lying within its area".

Gandhiji then dealt with the spinning wheel and *Swadeshi* and strongly condemned the crimes of Malegaon. He said, "We must imbibe the strength to mount the scaffold. If Panditji is arrested, or I, you may release us only by winning Swaraj. Never think of freeing us by indulging in riots. Malegaon must teach us a great lesson. The people there have stained the honour of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee and insulted God".

Why Arrest Mohammad Ali

The Government is angry at the plain speaking of Mohammad Ali on the Afghan Bogey and rumours are afloat that it intends to arrest him. In that connection Gandhiji said:

"Why does the Government think of arresting brother Mohammad Ali? I have been saying the same thing, as he. If he says that not a single Hindu or Muslim is going to help the British Empire this time, in case the Amir of Afghanistan invades India, I too have been telling the people the very same thing. I am not afraid of the Afghans. If I am afraid of anybody,

I am unfit for my work. I am unfit, if I fear the seven crores of Muslims. Any fear of a human being betrays incapacity for Swaraj. And why should seven crores of Muslims be afraid of Hindus? No religion teaches its followers to be timid. I would definitely say to the Amir that if this Empire refused to listen to us, refused obstinately to comply with our demands, we would certainly desist from helping it, I, rather we, do not possess today the strength to win over the Indian soldiers to our side, because they



are not masters of their temper yet. I may not, therefore, advise them today to refuse to fight on the side of the Government but it is ever possible for us to help in the maintenance of that Empire which we want to uproot? Even if Mohammad Ali is arrested, you might as well let him go to jail without any hindrance. If, to prevent his arrest, you make riots, betray cowardice, you will cast a slur on his name and on that of Allah. If you have the slightest love for me, if you want to have a satisfactory solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat questions during this very year, you must forget all idea of rioting. If you are not prepared to do even that much, you are incapable of winning Swaraj and so am I."

We could not have the opportunity to be present at the Agriculturists' Conference, because it was decided to proceed to Simla the very next day in response to a letter from Pandit Malaviyaji. Gandhiji has written quite a good deal on his visit of Simla, but I will add something about it in my next letter.

2

GANDHIJI AT SIMLA

Viceroy's Interview

In his Notes of the last issue of *Navajivan*, Gandhiji himself has explained the circumstances that brought about his Simla visit. He has detailed these same circumstances in his speeches at Simla and thereafter at Ambala, Bhusaval, Sangamner etc. The paper, *The Englishman*, looks at his step with deep suspicion and alleges that all his colleagues must have been opposed to his visit to Simla, otherwise there was no need for Gandhiji to go into such lengthy explanations. It is necessary here to state simply the fact that Pandit Motilalji, the Ali Brothers, Lala Lajpatrai and several other leaders were with him at Allahabad, when he received revered Pandit Malaviyaji's letter from Simla. In consultation with them Gandhiji had decided to go to Simla, but chiefly to meet the Panditji (Malaviyaji) ; and if, after his talk with the Panditji, it was found necessary he was to see the Viceroy also. Mr. Andrews, who had come straight from Simla on that very day, had said that the Viceroy was eager to know Gandhiji's stand-point directly from Gandhiji himself. When he (Gandhiji) reached Simla, Pandit Malaviyaji told him the very same thing. Gandhiji thereupon wrote to the Viceroy that if the latter desired to know his views personally from him, he was prepared to meet him. H. E. the Viceroy accordingly gave him an appointment. The detailed explanations



of Gandhiji are aimed, not at the leaders but, at the public at large. The people's political thinking has grown so sharp that they have become watchdogs of their leaders' good behaviour. And that is by no means an unsatisfactory situation. It is to satisfy these sentinels that Gandhiji gives the facts about his interview with the Viceroy so frequently. He wants to impress upon the people that the principle of non-co-operation does not mean that the opponent must never be enlightened about the non-co-operator's stand, even if he wants to. It is our duty, he says, to explain clearly our position to the smallest Government officer, if he really wants to understand it.

Gandhiji met the Viceroy at Simla, not once or twice but six times! It is not at all an impertinent question to ask him what he did through these many interviews. Gandhiji has already satisfied the query. In great detail, right from the start of the movement, Gandhiji explained to the Viceroy the non-co-operator's stand. And the Viceroy too, for hours and hours together during these six days, listened patiently, quietly and with perfect civility to all that Gandhiji had to say. One can, therefore, safely infer that he must have a really earnest desire to understand our viewpoint. After explaining it Gandhiji listened to the Viceroy's case. If, therefore, there was any definite result which accrued from the interviews, it might be said to be this: The Viceroy understood Gandhiji better and *vice versa*. Nothing tangible besides this has emerged from the interviews, says Gandhiji. "I never went to him to *get* something, that I might *bring* something", he adds, "In fact, I had gone to *give* him something and that I did. After all these talks my views remain the same as ever before. And if we want to succeed, victory will be ours only by continuing our peaceful fight with ten times its present vigour. It is not in the Viceroy's hands to give us Swaraj. It is in ours to win it". These are Gandhiji's declarations after his Simla visit. This is all about what actually happened there. "But what was the actual talk that you had with the Viceroy?" not that this question also is not raised. But many of us will agree that it is not in good taste to put such a question.

I, for one, was anticipating an altogether different atmosphere, ever since we reached Kalka on our way to Simla. But though the physical heat of the plains did begin to abate, the mental warmth of the people did not seem to cool at all. The platform at Kalka also was filled up with men. The balls of yarn—for which the Punjab is known—began to be thrown to us as presents right from Kalka itself. And they continued without diminution as we went up and up, till we reached the height of Simla—"five hundred storeys above" the stark realities of India. Even the policemen at the Kalka station were giving Gandhiji a fairly hearty welcome. "But how could you manage to



come?," inquired Gandhiji. "We have come with our superiors' permission", came the answer. And at all the dozens of stations that we passed through between Kalka and Simla, there were the same inevitable crowds to welcome Gandhiji. I was at first a little sceptical and wondering how people living on the hills of Simla, thousands of feet high, could have come to know about Gandhiji, but I found, in fact, no difference between the enthusiasm of men on the High Lands and the Low. On the smallest stations men, including even the station coolies, would come and give their mite to the Swaraj Fund. At one place people had even kept ready a purse of a hundred or a hundred and twentyfive rupees—and that from a population of hardly five hundred souls! The sight of our new National Flag at the Simla station was another pleasant surprise. On our oblong flag, with its red, green and white strips of cloth, they had embossed the figure of the Spinning Wheel by sticking cotton on it.

The number of persons who came for Gandhiji's *darshan* at Simla during our week's stay was by no means less than at any other place. Villagers living at the foot of the hill used to come all the day through, while Government servants would come from their offices in the mornings and evenings. And there was not a single group of Government servants which came to Gandhiji empty-handed-without their small collection for the Swaraj Fund. During the time when Gandhiji was having his talk with the Viceroy, invariably these Government servants of the Secretariat would collect in their hundreds outside the Viceregal Lodge and would be seen waiting for Gandhiji's *darshan*. Government employees are thus simply casting the Government's notices to the winds and doing their little best for the country's cause. Gandhiji asked the Government servants at Simla to use Khadi, whenever they did not wear woollen clothes. But they, poor people, candidly expressed their fear, "And suppose Khadi takes away our bread?" It was with reference to these same people that Gandhiji had declared in a public meeting at Simla on the 15th inst., "I do not wish to live under the aegis of that Empire, which bans the wearing of clothes made up of yarn spun by your own mother. That Empire has but to be ended or mended."

While thus the enthusiasm of the common people at Simla was fairly up to the mark, it seemed that the educated class, i.e. largely the lawyer class, (because most of the others of this class were probably Government servants) seemed to be untouched by the non-co-operation movement. Not a single lawyer in Simla has renounced his practice. All the same a Punjabi gentleman, Lala Mohanlal, who is a lawyer in name but a businessman, in fact, invited Gandhiji one evening and presented him with a purse of ten thousand rupees collected from his friends' circle.



Simla's Public Meeting

Despite the long interviews with H. E. the Viceroy, public meeting did not spare Gandhiji even at Simla. Moreover, many European officers, representatives of the English Press and others would continue to visit him at his staying place *Shant Kuti*. A special women's meeting was held and the attendance there was quite good, but the public meeting was nothing less than a mass gathering of humanity.

And the scene of the place where it was held had a charm of its own. As we descend along the trunk road for about a thousand feet, we come across some plain ground. A few chairs and a dais were put up there and in their front upto a height of 500 feet, there seemed nothing but terraces, one over the other, so closely packed up with men as to remind one of collections of bees in bee-hives. Besides Lala Lajpatrai and Lala Dunichand, a lawyer from Ambala, Pandit Malaviyaji also was present. Fir trees which shamed by their majestic height even the palm trees of the plains adorned these terraces clustered thick with men. Lalaji (L. Lajpatrai) took the presidential chair. Gandhiji was first of all given an address of welcome by the citizens.

It was a very important speech he delivered. He began with explaining the circumstances that brought about his meeting with the Viceroy and declared: Will any solid result come out of our talk? I say it may or even may not. It is our business to invoke God's help and do our part of the work to the full. I placed our case before His Excellency and, with great patience and love, he listened to me all through the long narration. I too, fully heard all that he had to say. I heard from him the difficulties of the British Empire. All I can say is this: We are certain to gain what we want within this very year, if only we follow up in practice the resolve we made in the name of God at the Congress, at the Sikh League, and at the Khilafat Conference. The Viceroy has no power; and let us forget to look up hopefully towards England for a favourable telegram. Ours is a fight waged on high principles, ours is a fight for justice, and we have to convince the world that we are prepared to lay down our lives to secure justice. God never grants anything to anybody without testing his mettle. And there is no alternative for us but to offer ourselves for that test, before we can gain anything substantial. Even villains, the most depraved among us, are prepared to pay the full cost for what they wish to acquire. If then you, the Punjabis, tall muscular men six feet high, are determined never to crawl again, if all of you without exception are determined never more to rub your noses against the ground, then you must learn the



lesson our Sikh brothers have taught us recently. Be prepared like them to stake your very head in order to do your *dharma*. Don't be murderers like Mahant Narandas (the man who murdered non-violent Sikh worshippers at the Nankana Saheb Gurdwara). You can't win Swaraj by murders. You can't bring about a satisfactory solution of the Punjab and Khilafat questions by murders. These things you can gain by shedding your own blood, not taking that of others. It is only by gaining the strength of Lachhmansingh (he died, but did not budge, as blows rained on him at the instance of Mahant Narandas) that you can gain these objects.

Gandhiji then answered the question, 'What would happen to the Hindus, if the present Empire came to an end?' "I say," he asserted, "better bury your Haradwar (holy town) fathoms deep into the ground, better ask your women to commit *jauhar*,¹ so long as you continue to cower from fear lest the Pathans might desecrate your holy places and rob your women of their chastity. Even if you cannot thrash the Pathans, you ought to possess the power to face them bravely and die. instead of fleeing away from them. Don't be afraid of the Afghans. Don't be afraid of the Mussulmans. It is God alone in Whose fear you must walk. During the life time of the Prophet Mohammad Saheb some cowards, as they saw the enemy hordes rushing towards them, had exclaimed. "We are all alone. How shall we fight?" But the Prophet answered, "No. You are not alone. God is with you". I also tell you, "Don't consider yourselves as helpless creatures. If you are brave, even the Afghans will be purified by your contact. I know them—these Afghans. In South Africa many of them were my clients. I know they are men of honour. And even if they are wicked, they are, I feel, God-fearing men after all. If you consider Muslims as your brothers, if you have trust in them, have no fear from the Pathans. And yet if the Pathans invade our country, I am not a spent force. I am ready and able to non-co-operate with them. I will not let an inch of India land pass into their hands. God will at that time arm me with the power to make it certain that it would be only by crossing over my dead body, that they could grab the smallest piece of our land. It is our distrust of each other that has reduced both of us to slavery. If Muslims stain Islam's name, if crores of Muslims betray us, Islam itself will be wiped out of existence. Our relationship with them (Mussulmans) is not one of the trading *bania* (a selfish one of give and take) but one among men of honour.

1. When Rajputs knew for certain that they could hold their fort no longer against the invading Muslim general, their women first burned themselves on a huge funeral pyre to save their honour and the Rajputs came out



in a wild sortie for a last desperate effort to kill and be killed. The first custom is called *jauhar* and the second *kesaria*.

Public Prayer For Dyer

"I assure all religions that we want to be united at heart. Are we not already of one heart with the Christians? Do we not accept the help that men like Andrews and Stokes give us? We never want to make any one our enemy. It is our own blood that we want to give. If the Englishman wishes to remain here as India's servant, as a brother to the Indians, if he wants to live here on condition of giving up his imperious manners, he is welcome to stay; otherwise he must pack up his baggage and go.

"Whatever our trials, nothing is of any avail without peacefulness. You are certain to lose the game, if you lose your temper. I have never in my heart, wished that General Dyer or Michael O' Dwyer (the Governor of the Punjab) be awarded any punishment; and today, at this holy place of a mosque, I pray to God to cleanse their hearts".

Finally, giving the Sikhs the *mantra* of becoming brave like Guru Nanak and Guru Teg Bahadur, by self-immolation he gave an exposition on *Swadeshi*.

An Amusing Incident

Lalaji (Lajpatrai) then got up to wind up the proceedings. He laid special emphasis on those parts of Gandhiji's speech which dealt with Hindu-Muslim Unity and fearlessness. He dismissed the charge that disorder was spreading in the land by a single sentence: "Will you show me a single country in the world, with a population as large as India's, that has maintained the peace which India has even in such a life-and-death struggle as this?" In order to impress upon the audience how perfectly the people have assimilated the *mantra* of Swaraj, he said, "God forbid, but if Mahatma Gandhi accepts on our behalf anything less than Swaraj, we will not back him. If Mahatmaji cheats us, we don't want even Mahatmaji". The audience also took these remarks in good humour and it hailed them immediately with the cry, "Mahatma-Gandhi-ki-jai". Malaviyaji then told Lalaji in the same lighter vein, "Beg Gandhiji's pardon for this disrespect". Lalaji then begged the pardon in the following terms: "In order to gain Swaraj, *shuddha* (unalloyed) Swaraj, the people on their part are ready to follow Gandhiji wherever he leads them". This observation raised cries of wild



delight from the people and the hills around resounded with shouts of 'Mahatma-Gandhiji-ki-jai' for several minutes.

3

Gandhiji's Single-mindedness

The one object for which Gandhiji now travels is to complete the Bezwada programme before the 30th June. His speeches everywhere are exclusively such as give an impetus to the fulfilment of that programme. His first condition for agreeing to visit any place is that the place must have already collected a large fund or must give a reasonable hope of raising a big amount. In his amusing way of putting things, Maulana Shaukat Ali calls this collection, 'the fee', and to anyone who invites them to their place he says, "so many thousands is my fee and so many Mahatmaji's. Take anyone of us you like".

It was to get this 'fee' that Gandhiji was taken to Ambala. Four thousand rupees could be collected there. For this amount four meetings had to be held within four hours—two of men and two of women. There are countless heaps of yarn in the Punjab, but the use of Khadi is definitely below the mark. Four women opened their hearts to Gandhiji to show the difficulties that really troubled them and they went after taking a vow to introduce the use of Khadi among women.

From Ambala Gandhiji came to Khandwa. The collection there might be said to be fairly satisfactory. From there he started for Bhusawal. It was a daytime journey and at every station the Tilak Swaraj Fund was collected. There was a big rush at one station. I give a substance of his address to the people at that place. (He invariably speaks for about a minute at every station, if he has the time, but here he got time to speak for about five minutes).

Gandhiji Becomes Impatient

"Those who come to the station must never fail to bring money with them. We have resolved to end, before the year is out, three great troubles that beset us. Ways to end them were planned at Bezwada. If we are not able to collect a crore of rupees before the 30th June, we shall become the laughing stock of the world. And if that happens, I will certainly declare that we cannot get Swaraj inside of a year. Though



swadeshi is marching on, I see that some people want to pass for wearers of *swadeshi* on the strength of a *swadeshi* cap. I must say now in the plainest terms that I do not wish to see anyone who does not want to discard foreign cloth. Swaraj is an empty dream, so long as you do not make Khadi the wear of the *elite*. If it is a fact that this is a movement for self-purification, you must, besides wearing Khadi, give up drinking and profligacy, become honest, refrain from running amuck like the people at Malegaon, and from regarding the Bhangis (sweepers) and Chamars (tanners) as untouchables. You must serve them as much as you serve the Brahmins. Don't bring flowers. Bring money for Swaraj instead."

These short and crisp sentences give the essence of Gandhiji's speeches. They show plainly his impatience at the pace of the work done at present. To a student of Gandhiji's former activities, there is nothing surprising about his present state of mind. He fixes a goal, gets completely absorbed in his attempt to reach it and wishes all others to be as deeply concentrated as he. If the people do not possess his earnestness, he becomes a little impatient. I remember that, during his drive for recruitment (in 1918), if he was told that a certain person wanted to see him or that some other was an excellent man, immediately he would spring upon us the question, "Is he likely to be a recruit?" Then, during the Satyagraha agitation he had declared in a speech, "I have become *swadeshi-mad*. Just as Damayanti had grown mad after her lost husband Nala¹, I have gone crazy over *swadeshi*. No other thought strikes me'. He is today in that same mood. He is today Swaraj-mad and is calling upon the country to be possessed like him with the same mania.

This same mentality was evident at many of the subsequent occasions. We reached Bhuswal on the 20th. Shri Dastane had striven his hardest and about fifteen hundred rupees were collected there. Let me give a few observations from his speech there:

"You are adorers of Lokamanya (Tilak). You have brought him as a witness here. (It is an invariable rule in Maharashtra to instal an image or a photograph of the *Lokamanya* at public meetings). He who was the soul of Swaraj, whose *mantra* for constant chant was Swaraj—that man's soul asks you, 'How much are you prepared to work for the cause of Swaraj?' Can you not collect a crore of rupees to make his name immortal? The promised land of Swaraj will remain beyond your sight, so long as you cannot drive out foreign cloth. I will turn my back upon one who does not wear Khadi, who cannot do without fine foreign muslin. I have been devastatingly frank with the



Government till now and told it that it must do this and that. But now I want to be equally outspoken before the people and say that it is your bounden duty to do this particular thing. I am nothing but a slave of the people. But they can make me their bondsman only under certain conditions. They can hope any service from me only by fulfilling the stipulations I have laid down.

And in the mere touch of my feet lies nothing but the man's degradation.

From Bhusaval to Sangamner. We were regaled with tall talks that thousands of men would come to Sangamner, that it was a central locality, etc. But they all turned out to be vapours. At no other place I could see such total lack of discipline, such complete disorder, as at Sangamner. A procession over a long long distance was taken out and it made immense waste of time inevitable. And the noises made there were loud enough to split one's ears. There was no arrangement made for our stay. We were taken to a temple, where the onrush of hundreds of men made any quiet totally out of the question. The circumstances were exasperating enough for anybody. In his speech there, one can see the intense pain that Gandhiji felt at all this.

"We are today pitting ourselves against the most powerful Empire in the world. The satisfactory end of three great questions is a must for us. But all our signs and gestures indicate that we do not mean business. From what I saw today it struck me that if national work was going on all over the country in the same leisurely fashion as here. India was incapable of winning Swaraj. I have been bathing in the ocean of love I meet with wherever I go. But that love is useless so long as a solid power is not generated from the warmth of that love. I never like any worship or adoration of my person. *I never like this touching of my feet I am very averse to it. In it lies India's degradation and nothing else. That is not the way for India to win Swaraj. I want to see India stand erect.* I want to see India stand face to face with all the countries of the world on terms of equality. I don't want Gandhiraj. I don't want any individual's *raj*. I want one thing and that is Swaraj for all. That is why I don't want you to touch my feet."

I present the above two italicised expressions to Sir Narayan Chandawarkar. In a letter to *The Times of India*, he has charged Gandhiji in the following terms: "Gandhiji allows himself to be venerated as an *avatar* (God's incarnation), has no objection to people touching his feet and does not raise a syllable of protest against it". It seems that the Hon. Justice (Sri N. Chandawarkar) does not read even *Young India*. How can these emphatic declarations reach him then? (But if they don't, who is to blame?)



1. Banished into exile, owing to his defeat at a dice play, King Nala and Queen Damayanti had to go to a forest. In the hope that Damayanti in his absence, would go to the safe resort of her father's palace, Nala absconded at the dead of night. When she woke up, her grief knew no bounds. The story—and this grief specially—is a favourite theme of poets of Indian languages. The story ends in their reunion and the recovery of their kingdom.

Making A Muddle

The garland Gandhiji was presented with must have been woven by some free and easy gardener. There were rosy ribbons of genuine Japanese silk on it! That naturally pained Gandhiji's heart:

"We aped only the excrescences of the European civilization. It would have been better if we had imitated its excellences. This ribbon is a specially feminine wear. Why do you use such things at all, when you have no idea of their right use? You imagined that ribbons enhance the beauty of flowers. That only shows that, in India, we are making a muddle of things. The Congress shows you the way out. There is no sense or substance in what you do. Do you worship Tilak Maharaj? He, for one, has given you but one *mantra*. He continued chanting it till his last breath. Tilak Maharaj has left that heritage for the whole of India, but your duty is more imperative than that of the other parts of India. What answer are you going to give to his soul on the 1st August? If you can't do anything more, be at least *swadeshi* from top to toe, give up the use of foreign articles at least in your temples. Let me tell the officiating priests, 'When you take me to a temple adorned with foreign articles, the occasion pains me'." Rs. 1600 were collected at Sangamner.

Yeola

Yeola was a serious disappointment. And there was no end to the indiscipline that prevailed there also. We reached the town late at 11 p. m. Despite the plainest 'no', processions were taken out and the meeting was held at 2 a. m.! And Gandhiji himself has narrated what happened at the meeting in the preceding issue. One should never forget the dilemma he had to face there.



Barshi

We entered the Sholapur District after leaving Ahmadnagar. We were put up with Sri Yashwantrao Desai in Barshi. Though he conducts a spinning and weaving mill, he is taking an active interest in the propagation of Khadi and is a firm believer in the maxim that Khadi alone can salvage India from its economic ruin. He has even supplied his mill-labourers with spinning-wheels many of which are plying in the courtyard of the mill itself and Khadi is woven out of the yarn. These workers and other employees of the mill had collaborated and kept a purse ready for presentation to Gandhiji. That purse alone must be containing 1700 rupees. The collection from all other sources in the town may be hardly coming up to that figure.

There was a meeting in the evening at Barshi. Mr. Sulakhe, a local worker, got up to describe the work already done. With smug self-complacence and some pride he declared that his Barshi Taluka had the satisfaction of having played its part well and truly, inasmuch as the 4200 rupees, which it had to collect as its quota, had been nearly all collected and as many as twenty-five spinning wheels were working in perfect trim. That yarn, he added, was not only not wasted, but woven in the Taluka itself and the Khadi produced was sent to Poona for sale. Gandhiji frowned upon this self-gratification in his speech. The whole speech is very valuable and deserves careful consideration by every worker in India:

"Our friend cheerfully stated that Barshi Taluka would easily discharge its duty to the full. I cannot congratulate my brother, Sulakhe, on his efficiency in computation. If every district, taluka, and circle accepted his wrong basis of calculation, the collection of a crore would be completed by asking everyone to pay neither more nor less than two pice (1/2 anna). But among those thirty crores of Indians, there are as many as three crores who never get a square meal a day. And who can, or will, take two pice each from these three crores? Who can, or will take two pice each from the physically handicapped? If Bombayites, after fulfilling their quota on that basis, say, 'We have given our share and that's all there is to it', we shall never be able to finish our programme. So this reckoning, this method of calculation, has but to be discarded. Rather, every Indian, man or woman, must ask himself or herself. 'How much must I myself contribute to complete the crore for the whole of India?' My pertinent question is: 'What is the contributing capacity of your district?' We adore the life of Tilak Maharaj. Let us then learn at least something from his example. Did he ever think even for a moment, 'I must sit content with as much national service as an average



Indian renders?' No. He, on the contrary, sacrificed his all. I ask you, how many among you are those who have given their all? Let alone the talk of 'giving one's all'. Have you already given even as much as you can afford to? God's demands from anybody are never too heavy. But one who does not give even according to his capacity is a traitor to his town and to his country. Don't be traitors to yourself. I wish, you don't deceive yourselves. We are faced with the question of having to fight with a mighty Empire. It swindled us. It dealt us a treacherous blow. It made us crawl on our belly. We cannot destroy this Empire by fraud or Satanism. The answer to treachery is nobility of behaviour. The answer to Satan's tactics is worship of the Lord. Don't hoodwink your conscience. If you intend to immortalise the memory of Tilak Maharaj, follow in practice the method of calculation given you just now and win your birthright of Swaraj before his next anniversary day.

Twentyfive Wheels And Khadi's Flight!

"My heart began to shed silent tears when I heard you say that twentyfive spinning-wheels were working here and the Khadi produced from them was sent out to Bombay and Poona. Khadi's export has only one meaning: As you want fine clothes for yourselves, you are unwilling to wear Khadi and you are sending it away. Your *Swadeshi* lies in looking after your own interests. Never even think of Bombay. My patriotism tells me that I must first make my home free, then my city and then my province. I want to tell you frankly that, these paltry twentyfive wheels are nothing as an equipment for matching yourselves against this mighty Empire. If we owe allegiance to the Congress, we must clearly and fully understand what *swadeshi* means. I am sorry, indeed, that lawyers have not given up their practice. But merely by their becoming fearless and religious, the whole country does not automatically grow fearless and religious. And even among them many well-known lawyers have offered sacrifices and exhibited a truly noble behaviour. Other lawyers, who are men of little faith, men haunted by the fear that their families would starve, will also, in course of time, come out of the courts. But for *swadeshi* the law stands inexorable that so long as the people do not adopt it, the stoppage of the import of foreign cloth is an impossibility. I cannot cheat my conscience. My voice has not yet reached all the thirty crores of India. Mill-cloth is only for the very poor whom my voice cannot reach. Our millowners will be the elite in the true sense only if they keep the price of their cloth low enough for the capacity of the poor man's purse. That is the only course open to



those who are beyond the reach of my voice—unless, of course, they produce the cloth in India itself and use it. *Swadeshi* does not require much wealth, or self-sacrifice or even skill and intelligence for its spread. The only thing really needed is the heart for doing it".

This Mockery of Twentyfive Wheels!

M. Mohammad Ali said, "We laid the foundation of our slavery, by selling off the spinning-wheel. If you now want to do away with slavery, take up the wheel again. Without resuscitating the wheel, the miserable poverty and oppression of India can never come to an end. That is why I tell you, Give up your conceit for this mockery of twentyfive wheels as enough for our salvation. Personally I don't find here anybody clad in Khadi. You cannot smash a business of fifty crores of rupees by wearing merely a Khadi cap. You must, you have to, bear the burden that full Khadi dress entails.

Ancestors Avoided Fine Clothes

"If you do want fine clothing, teach your wife, sons and daughters to spin fine yarn. Only thirty years ago our elders felt ashamed to wear fine clothes. I can still recall what my holy mother did. For herself, she felt constrained to wear fine clothes and she would leave them for the use of her daughter-in-law. Unless you adopt the Indian simplicity of old, you cannot revive India's well-known fine Muslin. If you feel satisfied at enrolling 4200 members of the Congress, who will bring into its fold the starving masses of Bihar? When you make 50,000 members from your population of 1,20,000, it will be reasonable to hope that our work will end in success. Make your accounting straight by giving up false method of calculation."

I have given this much portion of that weighty speech and dropped all that Gandhiji said on other topics. His heart must have been read by all both in his longest and shortest speeches. You will find this impatience of his even more goading in his great speech at the Gujarat Provincial Conference held at Broach. Will not the country respond to that uneasy longing?



A Great Event

At Mr. H. P. Mody's request Gandhiji met the Parsis at the Parsi Central Association last week. It has a membership of over a hundred, but the members present were hardly more than ten or fifteen. The rest were Parsi gentlemen who did not belong to the Association. And yet I have called a talk held in such a small circle as 'a great event.' I shall try to explain why, at the end of the letter.

Let me first give the reader some idea of the meeting itself. Gandhiji began his speech with singing generous praises of the Parsi community for its nobility of heart, its unstinted charities, its strength of character and love for truth. He then recounted his hallowed reminiscences of the patriots which that community had produced. I must reproduce Gandhiji's very words for at least the memorable occasion of his first contact with Sir Pherozshah Mehta. "I was then a young freshly-returned barrister. The political Agent at Rajkot insulted me once. For a case of his own, Sir Pherozshah happened to be there just at the time. I approached him through a friend and told him that I intended to give a legal notice to the Agent. He replied, "You are a fool. Young man! Many a bitter draught like that you shall have to quaff in life." Ever since then right to this present moment, I have treasured his advice that one must think ten times before entering into a quarrel with Government officers for private or selfish reasons. And I have honoured that advice by quietly gulping down a thousand insults to my person. Like the stage manager of a Sanskrit play who, in his introductory speech, gives in a succinct but suggestive form the whole import of the succeeding drama, Gandhiji gave out, through this short preface, the fact that the present was no fight for any selfish reason or any tolerable insult, but was against the unbearable affront given to our whole country. Proceeding further he said: "My deep study of Indian History tells me that the economic and moral state of India was never so weak, so miserable, as under the present British regime. I cannot help feeling that if any Empire has succeeded in pulping India from head to foot, it is this Empire and no other. That the tallest among us, he added, have to eat an humble pie and bear with insults under this regime has been said much earlier even by our G.O.M (Grand Old Man) of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, and Mr. G. K. Gokhale. It is this same Empire in which a moderate leader like Lala Harkishanlal was sentenced to transportation for life, just because he had tried to stop the disturbances by pacifying the people. And it is this same Empire where Lala Dunichand, who had never made a speech in his lifetime, was awarded the same punishment. It is again in this self-same Empire that the Civil Service has simply devoured such a brave and intelligent man as Lord Sinha, with the result that nowhere



else in the country is the Civil Service so unbridled as in his Bihar. And, notwithstanding our grim resistance, just at the moment we are hearing of a repetition of Jallianwala in Assam! I am trying to mend or end the wicked system which is responsible for all this. I wish that the Parsi community, which has gone above communal limitations and given princely charities and which has been enjoying the country's leadership for the last 50 years, does not lose its leading position. I wish your community, which is capable of great sacrifices, which is intelligent and shrewd and has the knack of doing the right thing through its sagacity, occupies the throne of political power in India."

After this talk, the old questions that have now grown hackneyed, such as, "What type of Swaraj do you want?" "Where is the harm if we win Swaraj stage by stage?" were put to him. The clincher to these questions could only be, "We want that Swaraj, where this beastly cruelty does not exist and where the present gruelling poverty becomes a thing of the past." But Gandhiji had not gone there to answer questions in a forthright manner. He wanted to win over the community to his side and make it contribute its due share in the struggle. He, therefore, explained at length: "The Swaraj of my own dream is not easy of attainment. But what I demand today is nothing other than a parliamentary form of Swaraj. Control over the military and police forces, power of framing laws and appointment of the Commander-in-Chief must rest in our hands, and we want that not a single soldier could be sent outside India without our express approval. The moment that much is achieved we have Swaraj. Our minister, be he an Englishman or an Indian, must have been chosen by us. I must have the power to dismiss any English officer who wants to lord it over me. When Thomson proved himself a worthless officer in the Punjab, he was withdrawn. But how? He was kicked upstairs to Simla and humbly requested to take that post. Such justice shall never obtain in our Swaraj".

"But", the faltering question was raised, "Are we really fit for Swaraj? You yourself say that we cannot have Swaraj if we do not use *swadeshi* cloth, if we do not keep to non-violence, if we cannot successfully complete the Bezwaada Programme. How then can you say that we are fit today, this very day, for Swaraj?" Giving a simple example, Gandhiji, in reply, explained the difference between fitness and capacity: "If you snatch a piece of bread from a beggar's hand, he has every right and fitness for getting it back from you. It is quite possible that he may not have the power to retrieve it. The same is the case with India today. She has, at this present moment, the fitness to have Swaraj, but not the power to win it."



Another question then arose, "How are we going to acquire control over Army, Law etc. We have, for the last hundred and fifty years, done nothing but clerical quill-driving. There has been no Captain among us, no Commander."

Gandhiji explained more clearly: "I believe that mankind never loses its innate power of self-protection. I cannot imagine for how many long years we will have to continue our quill-driving, if we sheepishly accept Britain's conditions for our uplift. I, for one, detest the idea of this perpetual clerkship. We shall certainly commit mistakes, but these we will ourselves repair. No country would bother to invade India after the departure of the British power. If India becomes self-reliant, she does not require a navy. There are many states which do not possess a navy."

At last a Parsi gentleman let the cat out of the bag: "Does the Parsi community stand to lose or gain from your struggle? For ourselves, we feel that Parsis will have to suffer under Swaraj. We feel that the British Government is better than any other. The Parsis have nothing to gain, if the rule of the British is done away with."

Gandhiji, in reply, argued: "Take your memory back to the times before the advent of the British 150 years ago and ask yourselves how the Parsis fared then. If you think that your state in the pre-British days was worse than at present, you must forget all idea of joining non-co-operation. We use the term 'Hindu-Muslim' (Unity) at present, because they are crores in number; but, in reality, the unity of all Indian communities is included in that 'Hindu-Muslim Unity.' The unity of those two communities is not for domineering over any minority. And who has enjoyed Swaraj for years and years in the Congress? Parsis have been even real rulers owing to their adventurous spirit. Who ever can possibly harm that community which possesses such capacity and such efficiency? Big communities take under their wings the small ones and protect them. But I have not come to give you courage. If you fear you will be ground down between the two big communities like corn between the stone-disks of a hand-mill, you need not think of joining non-co-operation."

One single note was harped upon at the start as well as at the end of this talk. In the beginning Sheth Hormasji Edenwala had plainly stated: "The Parsi community will remain ever thankful to Gandhiji and wish him all success and help him in his work, so long as he remains loyal to the Empire." And at the end, Mr. Dumasia was even more outspoken: "The Parsis believe that it is the Englishmen who are their stay and support. They have a single minded loyalty to George V, the preserver of peace in the world, (pointing to his photo) who is sitting over your head. We will help you, with all



our heart and soul and money in everything that you do, so long as you remain loyal to him. We are under the royal umbrella of George V and we will sink or swim with him, but never help you in driving out the Empire."

This is the substance of the talk between Gandhiji and Parsi brothers, I gave it because I feel that it gives a graphic picture of the situation as it stands at present in India and because in that situation lies the significance of that apparently small event. The same fears, which have seized the very small community of Parsis, are entertained by other minority communities in India. The same expression of loyalty which have been given above are given vent to by a very large number of the well-to-do class, both among Hindus and Muslims. And every community contains men who hold this same view, viz., we are not fit for Swaraj. And yet it is a dead certain fact that there is no community, which has been totally devoid of men who have responded to the call of non-co-operation. Even in the Parsi community there are quite a number of men, known and unknown, who are taking a glorious part in this fight. 'Contribution to the Swaraj Fund from a poor Parsi.' 'This Dividend warrant as a subscription to the Swaraj Fund from a poor Parsi lady'; with scrips like these, there has been a regular stream of help from Parsis flowing incessantly into Gandhiji's hands. The same despair, which we noticed in the expressions of the Parsi gentleman quoted above, is nursed by many of us owing to the great emasculating power of this Empire.

What is the way out? The only answer that comes uppermost is: "The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Take part in this movement of self-purification and see for yourself." To the rich classes Gandhiji says, 'Your heavy industries do not feed the stomachs of the poor. Give up all thought of getting rich by starving the submerged classes. Immediately you give it up, all these quarrels between the rich and the poor will also end. Not that this idea has completely passed over the head of the people. They have acclaimed with warm approval this declaration made by Gandhiji: "You will tell me after five years that if there was any individual who had stopped the invasion of Bolshevism in India, it was Gandhiji." Gandhiji has repeated before many others what he had said to the Parsis, viz., "Two antagonistic forces, 'Ahurmazd and Ahriman' or 'God and Satan', are spoken of in all religions of the world and everyone of them preaches the adoration of one force and the boycott of the other." And yet there are still many among us who put to the shelf their loyalty to God in their devotion to His Enemy. Gandhiji had told one American missionary also, "If you, a servant of Lord Jesus Christ, continue to be the recipient of this British Government's charity, you will have someday to obey the anti-divine behests of that Government." It is not true that this



advice remains unappreciated by one and all. Whenever Gandhiji expresses these sentiments, they are hailed by the public with delight.

The trouble is, many of us do not know where we stand. Many of us have not been able to resolve our doubts and take a definite decision. Either this movement is wicked—and in that case it has but to be destroyed—or it is purificatory and then one has but to apply one's shoulder to its wheel. There is no third course. This ought to be clear as daylight to us, but many of us are still groping in the dark. It is because of this lack of clear vision that some persons belonging to a stalwart community, which had at its head illustrious leaders like Sir Pherozshah and India's Grand Old Man are still trembling with the fear that they will not be able to stand on their legs without the British prop. It is because of this confusion in the mind that many a veteran among us are quietly putting up with insults, crooning the note of loyalty and entertaining doubts and vacillations such as, "We are not fit for Swaraj"—despite the glaring fact of the starving and naked crores among us—and "If we get Swaraj, we shall be robbed of everything we possess at present." And, forgetting to think out what their own duty is at this moment, they ask Gandhiji, in a state of abject fear, "Will you be able to get the crore of rupees you have appealed for? This question to Gandhiji might come out of the lips of an Englishman. It does not become us to put it. 'How can I get the crore I want? Parsi millionaires, Khoja millionaires, Marwari millionaires make it a point to keep miles away from me. I have now only one resort—that of getting the amount from poor sweepers like myself.' Everyone should ponder over this tragic declaration of Gandhiji. Will one portion of the public—the princely donors of old and the communities that have made a name, through their heavy sacrifices and services—shift the burden of fighting for Swaraj from their own shoulders to those of the rest of the public and sit on the fence with folded hands? The one way out of the fear-complex that has overtaken us is to gather faith in ourselves.



*[Here there is a gap of near about three years
in the Diary. A probable explanation is given
in the Preface of this Volume.]*



18-1-1924

Interview with (Sardar) Vallabhbhai at exactly 4 p. m. Bapu was in the room on the right side. He looked very worn out. When he saw us, looking at Vallabhbhai he greeted him: "Hail! O, King of Borsad!"¹ And then he burst into a broad laugh and patted Vallabhbhai's back. "Really, it was a feat you performed at Borsad", he added. He then turned to explain how his health began to deteriorate and the pain in his stomach arose. About Col. Murray (Superintendent, Yervada Central Prison), he remarked, "He is very competent; besides being an I. M. S. he is an M.D., has taken some other medical degrees and had served at port Blair. He has a great regard for me. He would always tell me, 'I don't like these your ever new experiments on your body. You should follow my advice about your food.'" I explained to him the situation that had arisen out of the case of Abdul Gani.² He said, 'We would definitely give him the same food as we give you, if he were like you'. I replied, 'Then I don't want that he should be given the same food as I get. I want that I should be treated at par with him.' He said, 'For your sake, if you say so, I may sanction his demand. But it is really going against the rule' 'No'. I said, 'You need not go against the rule. But since he has been kept with me, get the rule amended that way.'

"Done is done. And nothing wrong has happened. The body was bound to grow weak from my refusal to take fruit etc. And then the pain grew intense on Saturday. Murray examined the abdomen thoroughly. Repeatedly the pressure of his hand would come near the appendix and I would say. 'I feel the pain there'. That made him suspicious. But the pain subsided a little and again on the 12th there was a recurrence. So he called Col. Maddock (Civil Surgeon, Sassoon Hospital, Poona) and told him, 'It is appendicitis'. But Col. Maddock did not agree. He said the pain might be due to the aggravation of chronic dysentery. When, on the next day, the pain grew unbearable. Col. Maddock came again and they decided that I should be taken out.

He (Col. Maddock) brought me here in his own car immediately. There was no arrangement for me here at the time. After making the arrangement, there was a consultation and it was decided that I should be operated upon. I said, 'I was willing'. Then I was asked to give the names of those whom I wanted to be present at the time. I gave the names of Shastriar (Sri Srinivas Shastri, President, Servants of India Society, Poona) and others. There was Dr. Phatak doing Khadi work here. I thought I should call him also" [Gandhiji had told Devdas that if there had been any Bhangi (the lowest



among the outcasts) there, he would have asked him to be present, but there was none.]

'Shastri has not given to the public a correct idea of my talk with him. I had pointed out three courses. I had told him, "Either the people may release me by means of their own strength or the Government may realise that I am innocent and love every Englishman and so it may release me; or, since my quarrel with the Government is continuing, it may release me after six years'. He thought that if things were put that way, a difficulty might arise in the way of my release and so he put them differently.

"As for my treatment as a patient, it is the last word in excellence. They have been extremely careful, more careful than what our own men would be.

"The more I reflect, the more I feel that my self-restraint is still raw. In Africa I had given away my body at the disposal of the jail officers completely. Here I fell ill thrice. I always believed that I was successfully walking on the edge of a sword, but that edge must have been blunt.³"

Speaking to Muni Jinviyaji (a Jain recluse and scholar), Bapu said, "However high be the degree of self-restraint in a man, if once there is a lapse, he is doomed. A time was when I had thought myself beyond the clutches of any disease, except for a stray attack of sneezes or a common cold but that apart, but I now see that despite so much of self-restraint I fell ill thrice".

Looking at me he said, "You had to meet with many a disappointment. Couldn't see me at all! Doesn't matter. It is good for you and good for our work. Since I called you at 4 p. m.⁴ sharp, I shall be able to tell everybody, 'I refused to see Vallabhbhai and Mahadev earlier and you also may not come before time'. I have heard about you. You are doing exactly what Vallabhbhai asks you to do, with the fidelity of Yudhishtira's dog.⁵ If he points you out the sun at the dead of night, you say, 'Yes, I see it', and if he shows stars by daytime, you say, 'I see them'. I was very glad to know it. That is how any solid work could be done". He inquired about Durga (Mrs. Mahadevbhai). "A great thing has been achieved at Borsad, but it is now there that we have to work". He inquired about Narhari (editor to these Diaries). I gave him the names of three fields ripe for his work. "If you come to Borsad", I said, "you will find the field ready", that delighted him very much.



1. Sardar Vallabhbhai had only just come out of a successful fight he had waged in the Borsad Taluka against the imposition of a poll-tax there on the ground that the taluka was rife with dacoits. It was a stigma which steeled the people for a united and firm resistance.

2. Janab Abdul Gani was a fellow-prisoner of Bapu in the Yeravda Jail. The following letter explains Bapu's reference to him. The note also which Bapu appended with the letter and which he published in *Young India* is given here:

Yeravda Central Prison
12th November, 1923.

To
The Superintendent,
Yeravda Central Prison,
Sir,

At the time you told my companion Mr. Abdul Gani that the prison rules did not permit you to let him have the diet that cost more than the authorized scale, I informed you that your predecessor had allowed all my companions and me to regulate our diet. I further submitted to you that it was awkward for me to enjoy a facility Mr. Abdul Gani could not enjoy and that, therefore, my diet too should be so reduced as to be brought in harmony with the regulations and the scale allowed to Mr. Abdul Gani. You were good enough to suggest that, for the time being I should continue the present rations and that I might discuss the matter with the Inspector General, who would shortly visit the prison. I have waited now for over ten days. I feel that if I am to keep the peace of my mind, I should wait no longer, and in any case, I have nothing to discuss with the Inspector General. I have no complaint whatsoever to make against your decision regarding Abdul Gani. I recognise that you are powerless even if you were minded to help my companion. Nor is it my intention to seek any revision of the prison regulations regarding diet. All I am desirous of doing is to avoid any favoured treatment. You have kindly suggested that my diet scale might have been considered by your predecessor a medical necessity. I know, however, as a matter of fact, that such could not be the case, for my diet has been the same more or less from the time of my admission to this jail; and what is more to the point, my companions and I have, as has been already mentioned, been hitherto permitted to regulate our diet without regard to cost.

I propose, therefore, to discontinue oranges and raisins as from Wednesday next. My diet will still exceed the authorised rate. I am not sure that I need 4 lbs. of goat's milk, but unless you will kindly assist me to further change my diet so as to reduce the cost to the authorised rate, shall reluctantly continue to take the 4 lbs of milk and sour limes not exceeding two.

I need hardly assure you that I contemplate the reduction in no querulous spirit. I fully sympathise with your decision regarding Abdul Gani. I propose to make the change purely for my inner peace, and in this I ask for your sympathy and approval.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. Gandhi

No. 827.

[The reader is warned not to read a meaning into the letter which it was never intended to bear. The letter is only published in order to explain the incident referred to in the letter, as it has been the subject-



matter of much talk and speculation And as the renunciation of fruit is said to have hastened my collapse, it is necessary to make it clear that it was in no way a protest against the Superintendent's refusal to grant Mr. Abdul Gani's request; moreover, Mr. Abdul Gani had the right under the Special Division Regulations to send for fruit and any other food that he wanted. But he, Mr. Yagnik and I had come to the conclusion that it would not be proper for us to send for food from outside. The authorities could, therefore, be in no way blamed for the consequence of my abstention. The Superintendent, as well as the Inspector General of Prisons, pleaded with me to desist from enforcing my decision. They warned me of the possible serious consequences of abstention, but for the peace of my mind I had to take the risk. And after all the serious illness I have gone through I do not feel sorry that I took the step I did. Nor should the reader, in any way, blame Mr. Abdul Gani for having asked for a change of his diet. He asked for it after full consultation with me, and I approved of the change, not knowing that the regulations would not allow the Superintendent to grant the changed diet. I was misled into thinking so, because, as stated in the letter, Mr. Yagnik

and other fellow-prisoners were allowed by the previous Superintendent to change their diet from time to time. When I decided to renounce fruit after the refusal to Mr. Abdul Gani, he tried his utmost to dissuade me from the course, but it was not possible for me to forego the experiment until it was absolutely clear to me that fruit was necessary for my constitution.

3. The spiritual seeker's path is said to be 'as difficult as walking on the edge of a razor' Gandhiji humbly acknowledges that he had overestimated his capacity to regulate his life in the right way.
4. Patients in Indian hospitals are generally allowed to meet visitors between 4 to 6 p.m.
5. This eldest Pandava prince had a dog who could, owing to that trait, succeed in going to the heavens in his master's company.

19-1-1924

When we met next, I told him, "Bapu, you had not grown so weak in your last illness". "May be", he replied, "there was no other (physical) hardship, but they left nothing undone in giving me mental pain". He inquired about Kripalani (then Principal of the National College at Ahmedabad). "He must be doing splendid work. He has the power of winning the students' hearts and has educational and administrative experience besides". Then about Vinoba. "Is his *Maharashtra-dharma* (a monthly which Sri. Vinobaji, now the world-known *bhoodan* leader, used to edit) continuing? His articles on the Upanishads in it are master-pieces. They show profound study. I was not given them to read. But in the jail what I would get, others did not; and what they got, I did not. Indulal (Yagnik), had got a file and I read it. Everything including reference notes. Everything in it is excellent indeed, but in his study of the Upanishads, he excels even himself."

Then he asked about Mazhar-ul Haq.¹ He was a little surprised when I told him he was enjoying the state of a recluse. Bapu spoke of his own study of Urdu. He had



made considerable progress in it. "*Usvae-sahaba* (the colleagues of the Prophet), Shibli's 'Life of the Prophet Mohammad', Omar's 'Life'—! read all of them. In Urdu I am quite at home now. You may tell the Mussulmans that their fear of my coming out a Maulvi is going to come out true".

"And who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee at the Coconada Congress?" he inquired. "Konda Venkatappaiya", I said. When Bapu came to know that he had delivered his speech in Hindi, Bapu was immensely pleased.

He asked for the names of the members of the (Congress) Working Committee. I told him of the votes also each of them had secured. He remarked it was good that Deshbandhu Das was elected and also good that he got so few votes.

Referring to Kallenbach,² I quoted his sentence: 'The light that you (Gandhiji) kindled in me is on the point of extinction.'

Gandhiji observed, "I know what he means."

1. A leader of Bihar and once a thriving barrister. When he non-co-operated; he gave up his stay in his palatial bungalow and founding 'Sadakat Ashram' on the bank of the Ganges in Patna, he was staying there.

2. Gandhiji's close friend in South Africa. He had suffered imprisonment and had given his big farm for accommodating Satyagrahi families.

20-1-1924

Lalaji (Lata Lajpatrai) came this morning. Gandhiji greeted him with, "Welcome! Lion of the Punjab." "I am no longer the Lion", he replied. He was shocked at seeing Gandhiji so pulled down. Tears did not stream out, but his heart was weeping. As he did not say a word, Bapu inquired about his friends, narrated the causes of his illness and giving an account of his daily routine he said, "I can give a good account for every little minute from 4 a. m. to 7 p. m. every day. It is the complaint of my sons against me that I have not given them proper education. I wanted to show to Ramdas (third son) specially that a man, fiftyfive years old like myself, could study for 15 hours daily. My knowledge of Sanskrit was very indifferent. So I studied the Bhandarkar text-books and read Sanskrit with their help."

Lalaji returned in the evening and poured out a little of the anguish which filled his heart, as he could not do so in the morning: "What shall I say? Come out quickly. We are building upon the hope of your coming out and leading us once agam. We have



been like children without a Master in your absence. We have been little babies fighting amongst one another."

Bapu put his hand on his stomach and said, "I feel like laughing a hearty laugh, but my stomach does not permit it. It is my supreme conviction that I am serving the country in jail equally well, if not more than I used to do outside."

Lalaji had come in depressed spirits, but bade adieu with a laugh.

An Englishman, Captain Todd, daily visits Bapu and brings flowers with him. He said, "Regard me as your brother." Bapu told him, "Yes, there are many Englishmen whom I regard as more than my brothers."

21-1-1924

Bapu asked Devdas (youngest son) in the morning, "Where is that man—our typist?" Devdas: "What makes you put that question?" Bapu: "I may be released. He will then be needed."

He inquired of Imam Saheb the news about several Muslim brothers and sisters and then of me about *Young India* and *Navajivan*. "How do they fare?" When he heard of the present number of subscribers, he was a little astonished. "I would not give you such news on my own," I said. "Do you think", he rejoined, "I shall catch fever if I learn that *Young India* has only 5 subscribers? Not the least." Then he inquired about *Hindi Navajivan*. He was not given *Navajivan* or *Young India* to read in jail, but he had read Rajaji's Diary. He could not have a look at 'Hind Swaraj' also. "Is it here with anyone?" When I told him that there would be a greater variety of articles in *Navajivan*, now that Kaka (Kaka Kalelkar, a versatile scholar and Gandhiji's disciple) was going to edit the paper, he said, "Definitely, *Navajivan* may even grow then." "Has Urmiladevi (Deshbandhu Das' sister) completely forgotten me?" he asked and to Pyarelal (Gandhiji's Secretary after Mahadevbhai's demise and a Punjabee) "I suppose Khadi-production must have ceased altogether in the Punjab?"

23-1-1924

Col. Murray, Superintendent of Bapu's jail, came to see him today. I also was astonished at his humility and tenderness. Shaking hands with Bapu, he said, "Do you think, Mr. Gandhi, I have neglected you? I did want to come. But I thought I need not



disturb you in your rest. Now that I am seeing you after some days, you are looking very much better." Bapu said, "I am sorry, some vicious attacks have been made on you in the Press." The Colonel laughed and said, "Please don't worry. They have not been made by those who know me."

Bapu inquired after his jail comrades. He said, "Everyone remembers you. Your colleague, Mr. Gani, has sent you word that he has been regularly observing your rule of getting up at 4 a. m. Indulal and others are all O. K. They all miss you very much and—(with a smile) I hope they will miss you permanently." Bapu smiled and said, "Nothing will please me better, Col. Murray, than to be up and doing again under your kind care." The Colonel blushed. "Don't say that, Mr. Gandhi. Be all right soon and let me know if I can be of any service to you," he said, as he bid good-bye. Bapu then remarked, "See, his very face reveals the man. What frankness and goodness!" Col. Murray gave me an idea of the deep love with which the atmosphere in Bapu's small jail room must have been filled and I felt pity for the stupidity of that Government which is trying to confine the light of that love within the four walls of a prison room.

24-1-1924

Jinvijayaji and Punjabhai saw Bapu. In the course of his talk Bapu told them, "I read the Upanishads. But that has made no change in my belief. Yes, but I did come across expressions here and there that only strengthened my views. I began to read them only when I sat down to write about Rayachandbhai¹ (Rajachandra). I wrote six chapters and then, as I began to deal with *dharma*, my pen refused to move altogether. Hence, I began to read." Jinvijayaji: "Your heart is so much in tune with Rayachandbhai's that it is impossible for you to do him injustice."

Bapu: "I may not do him injustice, but readers may be led to think that I have. But now, after I have gone through these books, there will remain no reason for the people to speak of injustice." To Vinoba also, who visited him, Bapu said, "I read a lot of religious books, but there has not been any advance in *gyana* (spiritual and experiential wisdom) even by an inch."

Shuaib, Sherwani and others came. At night Bapu asked Anasuyabehn to sing. When we went to see him, I found him singing '*Abaki teka hamari*' (a Hindi hymn) with great relish and suggesting the couplet whenever Anasuyabehn was missing any. That was the first time when I heard Bapu himself singing.



A must have talked about M's letter and it made Bapu a little sorry. He said to Devdas in substance, 'You should have spoken frankly to M there and then or sent a note afterwards. As for Mahadev, he is from his very birth. too gentle to hurt a fly, and you are so young that you must have felt, 'How could I pit myself against such a great man as M?' But doesn't matter, what's done is done. As for S, I have no doubt that if he crosses swords with M, he is sure to win; but neither of you two should write anything.'

In the presence of Devdas at night, Bapu was in a mood of soliloquy. "A veritable craze for reading seized me. Forgot to care for the body altogether. Went on and on with reading. I would not feel at ease unless I finished the portion I had decided to read for the day. 'If I don't learn up from Gani so much of Urdu', I said to myself, 'when shall I get such a chance? Should I not read so much Sanskrit? And I have got to make up English.' In that mood I devoured books. Thinking that the time I spent after easing myself was wasted, I began to read even as I sat on my commode. It was there that I finished Guizo. Wells was nothing, but Guizo was philosophical. And I finished both Gibbon and Buckle. But that is exactly where the Englishmen surpass us. 'Who else will do this, if I don't?—that is our line of thinking and we neglect even our body. But in 1914, during the War, Asquith felt a little indisposed and, though the War had already begun, he went away to the Mediterranean on a cruise! That is what is lacking in us. It is true those people are worshippers of the body. We may not be such worshippers. But why should we be possessed with such a craze for even a good thing? But the urge to read voraciously simply overwhelmed me. I started on an experiment to do without fruit, since Gani's request for a particular diet was turned down. I am not at all sorry for my step, but what I feel for is my folly in not freeing myself from that mania. Though I changed the food, my reading continued under the same high pressure as before. That was what knocked me down."

Kelkar (Swarajist and responsive co-operator) saw Bapu before he went to Delhi. He talked of the strength of his party and Bapu remarked in a lighter vein, "So the Independents hold you in the palms of their hands." And then at the end he said, "It is an interesting situation indeed!" After his meal at night, some nurses came to have a good time with him. Bapu asked one of them, "Do you sing?" She said, "I used to, but I can't, today." Bapu then told them, "Get away. You are no good as nurses. One of the essential qualifications of a nurse is her ability to sing. The first nurse whom, happily, I came in contact with was an excellent singer. She was not a professional nurse. That nurse was Olive, Mr. Doke's daughter. I had got a wound and the pain was unbearable.



I asked Olive to sing, 'Lead Kindly Light!' She sang it in such a soulful manner, that the music is still ringing in my ears. My pain disappeared all at once."

Another nurse then trotted out many excuses. She had got herself operated in the throat etc.

The English nurse said, "I am going out for a walk with my dog to-night. Do you love dogs?" Bapu: "Yes, I love them very much." She said, "Sometimes dogs are excellent companions." "Yes," agreed Bapu, "When we are very depressed they give us very good company." The nurse then described how dogs show their hearty sympathy in one's grief.

1. It was Shrimad Rajachandrajī whom Gandhiji had approached for the satisfaction of his religious doubts on Hinduism, when his Christian and Muslim friends in South Africa were attempting to inject their doctrines into his inquiring mind. Shrimad Rajachandrajī's answers to his queries and other suggestions removed Gandhiji's vacillations about the truths of Hinduism.

25-1-1924

Tyabji, Jayakar and some others saw Bapu in the morning. Durbar¹ Saheb and his wife (Mrs. Bhaktibehn) came in the afternoon. Bhaktibehn had come a little earlier. As he saw her, Bapu said, "I had not seen you till now, but I have heard many things about you. I don't mean Borsad only, but other things also." Looking towards Ba (Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi) Bapu said, "Have you any control over me? But this Bhaktibehn has—over Durbar Saheb." (Bhaktibehn blushed). "But in one matter you have failed to make him change his way." I explained, "Durbar Saheb considers smoking a pardonable failing." Bapu continued, "Though you carry your point with him, you do it all as becomes the *Hindu-dharma* and that's a great thing."

Durbar Saheb came up by that time. Bapu welcomed him and said, "Really you have covered Borsad with glory! We have never yet gained such a splendid victory. And what would Vallabhbhai alone have done, were you not there to stand by him?" Durbar Saheb thereupon referred to the services of Pandya² and Ravishankar.³ "Yes," Bapu said, "they are veterans, but what could they alone have done in Borsad? It was because you were there, that you could key up the whole Taluka. But, let me say, there has been a complaint also against you. It's said that you have gained good control over others, but very little over your own self. And one must never be a leader of the people, without gaining self-control. Is it not true that in the matter of smoking, you



have harassed Bhaktibehn very much, even made her undergo fasts? And don't you suppose that it was just now that somebody made this complaint. It was made during my imprisonment. (Gopaldasbhai felt ashamed). "And who said that it was an excusable weakness?" "*Navajivan*," rejoined Durbar Saheb. "I remember saying so about tea, not *bidi* (a cheap Indian cigarette)," said Gandhiji. "Bidi also," Gopaldasbhai asserted. Bapu: "Well, then, I must have taken leave of my senses at the time." Durbar Saheb put in his own defense then. "I gave up smoking 33-34 times and reverted to it. It's a very difficult thing—to give up smoking." That reminded Bapu of his past. "Giving up smoking is really a very difficult thing—more difficult than even drinking. Would you believe that I was once a pickpocket? But when I was 11 years old, I caught the habit of smoking discarded stubs of *bidis*. But would that allay the craving? So I began to steal loose coins from the servant's pocket. I don't think I would have gone to that length, if I had become a drunkard. But the most remarkable example of giving up smoking is that of He was a heavy smoker once. But friends and others began to urge, 'A man like you and a smoker! It doesn't become you.' The reproach stung him to the quick.

And on that very day he gave up smoking and for good. So what's needed is to feel poignantly and then give up smoking all at once. You can't give up *bidi* by stages, deciding to smoke a certain number today, a smaller number tomorrow, still fewer the third day and so on. Smoking must be given up at one stroke. But I didn't call you to hear a lecture from me. What impelled me was the wish to congratulate you. You have performed a glorious deed. My hearty congratulations to both of you."

Vinoba came to see Bapu in the evening. To him he said, "Tell all the Ashramites that I never fail to remember everybody. At 4 a. m. in the morning, or, as it has become irregular these days, at 2 or 3, whenever my eyes open, I pray to God as I keep lying in bed. In the evenings also, I never miss prayers and hymns." Referring to Balkoba, "Tell him, there is a talk of my release in the air. He should, therefore, wait till I come to Sabarmati. And when I know everything about the situation there, I shall discuss with him the question whether he should stay in Sabarmati or depart for Wardha. And yet if he thinks it indispensable to come over here, he may. I would like that nobody should ever leave his field of work in order to see me, but, I also feel that if somebody thinks that it is absolutely essential for him to do so, that he would lose the chance if I am sent to jail again, he may as well come and meet me." I then suggested, "Vinoba may remain here, if you want him to read something (religious literature) to you." "Yes", Bapu replied, "I have already discussed the question in my mind. That illness (in 1918)



was of a different nature. I was then feeling certain that I was not going to survive the attack and was only a few days' guest; I had, therefore, decided to listen to nothing else, and be absorbed in one single remembrance (of God) during the few remaining hours of my life. That was why I used to listen to those things only from you all."

Before this talk, Devdas had asked, "Did you read Mohammad Ali's speech (as Congress P resident)?" "Yes, half of it, but, I don't yet agree with Rajaji that it was second only to Dadabhai's. It does not possess anything remarkable in thought or style. All the speeches of the Congress Presidents of former times were classical. You may not agree with them—that matters little—but the speeches themselves were of a very high calibre. Take Gokhale's, take Surendranath's. He delivered the whole speech extempore. He spoke on education. He had taken one compact idea and based his whole speech on it. Take Hume's, take Wedderburn's. Why, take even that very early speech of Yule. All of them were classical. Sinha's speech may be ranked as 'superb.' But this speech (Mohammad Ali's) cannot stand comparison with them. And nothing much could be said about the style either. He takes credit for the Amritsar compromise, but the credit goes definitely not to him but to Jairamdas. And his ego pops in every now and then." The topic then changed. I asked him about 'Non-violent Coercion.' "Yes, I read two chapters preceding the last one. He seems to have read much in order to collect his material, but the book cannot come up to Romain Rolland's ('Mahatma Gandhi'). It is somewhat scrappy also. In contrast with Tilak, R. Rolland has a real sage-like vision. The poet shines as a seer there. There is not simply poetry, but a real vision of truth in the book. There is nothing of the kind in this book ('Non-violent Coercion')."

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1. Durbar Gopaldas Desai's state was confiscated during the non-co-operation fight in 1921. He became a Satyagrahi leader specially of the Kaira District. He had his wife's solid support in all this.
 2. Sri Mohanlal Pandya, an erstwhile Revolutionary, became a staunch follower of Gandhiji and rendered a great service in the Kaira Satyagraha. He 'stole' onions from his own farm, which the Government had confiscated, and was nick-named, 'Onion-thief.'
 3. Sri Ravishankar Maharaj is a saintly personality and an intrepid, silent, social worker. He weaned away many Dharala dacoits from their sinful ways by visiting them in their own dens at the risk of his life. When the Gujarat State was formed, he was given the honour of installing it with his blessings.



26-1-1924

Col. Maddock had a long confidential talk with Bapu. When I went to see Bapu to give him two books sent by Andrews, he himself touched the matter. "There is now a tussle among them again. The Government has sent a letter asking Col. Maddock why, now that Gandhi is improving, all other interviews except those of his relatives should not be banned. I told him 'Friends do come to meet me, but I never talk politics with them and it is my friends who are my real relatives. If friends are not permitted, I do not wish to see any of my relatives.' Maddock said, 'I should not even tell you this thing, but I do. They (the Government officers) exercised great pressure on me, but I am not going to yield now. I have put in a service of twentyfive years. Only two months remain and I shall retire. Why should I succumb to pressure? I will phone them (that they must not bar interviews). But you, please, behave as if you have no inkling of all this. And let it not weigh upon your mind. I will go on fighting with them.'"

I asked Bapu, "So all that talk of release was bunkum?" "What else!" replied Bapu: "This man is really very noble. What a sterling spirit of independence he has! An Indian in his place would not exhibit such a spirit."

Before returning home Bhaktibehn and Durbar Saheb came today to bid him good-bye. Bapu said, "After what I told you yesterday, I said to myself, 'Why should I have said so much to him? I may wish anything—may wish the whole of India to be of my mind, but how can I legitimately expect one and all of my colleagues to transform their ways of living? But, carried away by love, I said all that.'" Durbar Saheb then said, "After giving up smoking for 33 times, I dare not pledge my word to you. It would be extremely painful if the plighted word is broken. But I cherish that idea, as I leave you." "I too would be grieved," replied Bapu and added, "You have performed a glorious deed. If India could do what you two did, there would be no need for it today for a resolution asking for my release in the Legislative Assembly, but I would be released automatically. The keys of the Yeravda Prison would then fall into your hands. Even my (unconditional) release (under the present circumstances) would leave me cold. Good-bye; if you do only these three things,—spread of spinning, Hindu-Muslim unity, and removal of unouchability—even that is enough. Good-bye; what you have done is a feather in our cap;" and to Bhaktibehn, "You have shed lustre on Hinduism."

There were many visitors today, Rangaswamy Iyenger being one of them. Bapu told him, "I don't think my release, even if it comes about, will make any difference in the future of the nation, but it will surely interrupt my fixed programme of studies."



Rangaswami then saw me. He said, "He (Bapu) is as indifferent about his release as about his going to jail." Shastri (of "The Servants of India Society") had visited him yesterday. As he was leaving Bapu, he joined his palms and said, "The whole country has been blessed and I in particular." Devdas talked of the nominated members. Bapu remarked, "Well done! What grace is there in going under Government's favour and patronage, when the people refused to elect them?" Among other interviewers today were Swami Shraddhanandji, Sharadabehn Mehta, Dr. Sumant Mehta, Raymal (of Kurduwadi), M. Mohammad Ali (of Kasur), Shankarlal Banker and Jamnalalji Bajaj.

The meeting with angaswamy lyenger was very touching. He was so moved that he began to pass his hand over Bapu's body, was shedding tears and wiping them with the sleeve of his coat. Devdas asked him, "When are you going to Delhi?" "There is nothing I can do there," he said. In the evening he came again, this time with his mother, and as he was leaving he said, "If he (Bapu) is released, I will join him."

D. V. Gokhale had visited Bapu yesterday. Bapu inquired of him about Tilak Vidyalaya (a national school). He said, "We have got everything, funds too, but the number of boys is dwindling. There has never been any trouble about funds." Bapu thereupon said, "It has been my firm opinion that no institution can fail for want of funds. An institution may fail for want of workers or it may fail if it is in advance of its times, i. e., if a clear need for it is not felt."

27-1-1924

Pandit Motilalji came up in the morning. Then Shaukat Ali with his troop. Bapu had a private talk with Motilalji for nearly three quarters of an hour in the presence of Devdas. Motilalji was somewhat apologetic in his tone; "We had to take this course (of forming the Swaraj Party and going to the Councils) only because of your absence. Had you been out, the idea would not have even arisen; and if you come out, we will have only one leader and follow you. It was after long days and nights of deliberation that I came to the decision that I, for one, could serve the country only this way." "I am still watching you and considering if what you and Das (Deshbandhu C. R. Das) are doing is right," replied Bapu. "You have yet to convince me that yours is the right course." Motilalji said, "On my part, I had told the people that this situation would not have grown if Gandhiji had been out. 99 per cent, it would have been Gandhiji who would have dissuaded us or there was a 1 per cent chance that we might have convinced him. I must admit that today there are grave differences in views even among



ourselves. Even with Das I am seriously at variance. I was against the idea of bringing the resolution demanding the release of prisoners in the Bengal Council. But Das did not listen to me. But I want to know one thing. You said to Shastri that any agitation for your release must be on 'proper lines.' What does it mean?" Bapu then explained what he had actually said to Shastri. Panditji demurred. "Why only those three methods? There may be a fourth method. Suppose they (the Government) made your sentences run concurrently." "Yes," Bapu said, "but that is not the way to secure my release. What you pointed out was the method which the Government might take to release me." "Agreed," argued Motilalji, "but we may bring in a resolution and the Government may release you on that account also." Bapu said, "But I would not be happy over that way of release." Motilalji pressed his point. "But how does it concern you by what means you were released, so long as you yourself have done nothing in the matter?" Bapu said, "Yes, I have no concern. But there must be honour, there must be dignity, in whatever is done. Our flag must not be lowered." Motilalji said, "Will you not agree, I ask you, that there is honour in it, if we pass a resolution to the effect that Gandhiji must be immediately released and a Round Table Conference called for the settlement of all questions?" Bapu agreed, "Yes, honour there is in it." Panditji pursued, "I suppose you have enough trust in me to think that I would do nothing that could lower our honour or dignity?"

Then he talked of the strength and weakness of his party. He showed on what resolutions they would have to vote with the Independents. On the whole, it might be said that he talked with a very open heart.

By that time Shaukat Ali's army came up. After some casual chats, Shaukat Ali talked about his activities. It was a moving sight to see him uncover Bapu's feet and kiss them at the time of his departure.

Panditji was to leave Poona by the 3 p. m. train, but since Bapu was asleep, and he could not meet him before leaving, he returned from the station and gave up presenting himself at dinners etc. to which he was invited in Bombay. 'However could I go away without a final leave-taking?' he thought and came back. Bomanji came earlier and urged, "Gandhiji, I want to ask you one thing. You have allowed them to go into the Councils. So will you not give one other permission now? These poor people (lawyers) are starving. What would they eat if they do not resume their practice?" "My permission!" Bapu exclaimed. "Who am I to give anybody any permission? You are all there outside (the jail). You may do whatever you think best. I cannot, I must not, give



you any advice from here. If everything happened as I ordered, it would be Gandhiraj; and if Gandhiraj is to come next, how is this Government itself any the worse?

If there be Gandhiraj, the first Gandhi may perhaps be good, but the succeeding ten Gandhis will be bad rulers. That I do not want. The people will commit mistakes. That I can understand. But I am certain that after a thousand errors, they will do at the thousand and first time what ought to be done. And this view is not new with me. I have been holding it for many years past. This is my fourth jail. Thrice I had gone to jail in South Africa and the while I was in jail there, I used to abstain scrupulously from giving any advice. Yes, if I am out, I would certainly wish people to understand and listen to my advice. But even at that time if they don't, I shall be content with my own single vote. Nor am I going to be puffed up if I get millions of votes. The pleader who wants to resume his practice, may as well do so freely. Why should he desire my permission ?"

Bapu explained the same thing in Hindi to Panditji (Motilalji). So Panditji talked of his own incident. "But do you know how I would react, if people pestered me? Do you know my weaknesses? There was a very hot and long discussion on this matter once. In anger I blurted out, 'If you nag at people (lawyers) like that, I myself will go to the court one day and stand as a lawyer.' The next day Jawahar asked me in amazement, 'What was it that you were saying yesterday?' 'Oh,' I said, 'I was only joking.'"

The topic then touched was that of Khadi, "We were offered a temptation: 'If you support the mill industry, we will give you a handsome reward.' There had been many attempts to create a quarrel between me and Jawahar also."

Turning to Jamnalalji, he asked, "And were there not attempts to discover from my speeches expressions to show that I was opposed to Gandhi?" "Yes, I did once say. 'I am senior to them all—Hakimji, Das, Mahatmajji, everyone.'" "Your claim there is entirely justified," remarked Bapu.

Rajaji (C. Rajagopalachariar) was the next visitor. He looked intently at Bapu and said, "You are half yourself."

Bapu turned the tables on him: "India will not go to rack and ruin, if you took rest for four months, and thoroughly recouped yourself, but if you neglected your health, it would go to rack and ruin. The Englishmen have beaten us hollow in this respect. Imagine a man like Asquith going on a cruise on the Mediterranean while the



War had just begun! 'I had a quarrel with Gokhale in this matter. I agree he packed the work of a hundred years in a short life time, but we must really not overdo ourselves.'

Rajaji then said, "I thought you would be better than this. I think you will now improve. It is very good that the appendix has been removed." Bapu: "Well. I doubt that. The opinion, it seems, is growing that the medical opinion about the uselessness of the appendix is wrong, and that it has a purpose to fulfil."

"Do you get papers? " Rajaji asked Bapu. "Yes, but I don't read them. I didn't read them in South Africa either; not even in this jail, if we got it by chance. Somehow I am constituted that way." Bapu then told him what Col. Maddock had advised; "I shall have to stay here for one month and then to spend three months on a hill-station for convalescence."

Then they talked about Mohammad Ali's speech. Bapu said, "I read through the whole address, after I heard from Devdas your certificate about it. But I have not been able to agree with you." Rajaji: "I only wanted to say it was the only readable address after Dadabhai's. The other Congress addresses have been very heavy." Rajaji then added that probably Bapu might not have read the earlier speeches. Bapu then poured out, "Oh, yes, I have. Look at Gokhale's Bankipur speech. Take Surendranath's speech. It was marvellous how he packed that study in the course of eight (?) pages. It was a magnificent effort. And it was not at all heavy. On the contrary, I think Mohammad's speech is heavy. I admit it is a good speech well-meant. There is no error of thought in it. But there is no study behind it. And it is unnecessarily laboured. Where he could give his meaning in 2 sentences, he has used 20. I could cut it down to less than half its length and still retain the whole substance." Rajaji : "Yes, brevity is not the soul of Mohammad Ali's wit."

Talk with Mathuradas in the evening from 5 to nearly 7.30 p. m. It is given here in the words of Mathuradas himself (written in Gujarati):

After Bapu had his fruit diet, Anasuyabehn began to make preparation for the evening hymns. Bapu, however, had a call just then to ease himself. When that was over, Anasuyabehn sang three hymns. Bapu also sang a little to show how a particular hymn was sung. For me it was the first occasion when I heard Bapu singing. Ba and Anasuyabehn went away shortly after the hymns ended and I was left alone with Bapu. The nurse was, of course, present. Complete silence prevailed for two or three minutes. I was tempted to broach the question of *Goraksha* (cow-protection) which



had arisen in Bombay. After some mental conflict as to whether to open the subject or not, I started the talk at last.

"Bapu, in Bombay also this question of *gorakhsa* has raised its head. The Corporation has passed a resolution that a cow or a buffalo under eight years of age must not be killed in its slaughter-house. This resolution was supported by some Mussulmans also. But afterwards the resolution created a controversy. Hindus have begun to demand total abolition of cow-slaughter. Muslims cry for the repeal of the resolution. So the Corporation is between two fires. It has appointed a Committee to decide the question. I am in that Committee. I have suggested that the Corporation resolution should stand for one year and its economic effects observed at its end. If it is then found that the resolution causes economic hardship to Muslims, it should be reconsidered. But the Muslims are not amenable even to this suggestion and a man like even Miya Chhotani (Treasurer of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and a staunch non-co-operator) is angry with me. Those (Muslims) who had supported the resolution are now backing out. I see bullying in it and I have a mind to resist it and stick to my proposal."

Bapu was lost in thought as he heard all this and then said: "We cannot serve the *goraksha* cause by ignoring the Muslims and carrying our point by a majority vote. We cannot transform their nature in a single day. We must drop the idea, if they do not approve of it, but that step should be taken with a clear consciousness of doing the right thing and not out of our weakness. And if we are men of understanding and wisdom, they will at last be amenable and see reason, even if, in the beginning, they go on winning one victory after another over us. They themselves will wonder at last, 'What is this! How is it that Hindus do not resist us at all?' So you need not have any fear of bullying. And you must quietly slip out of this matter. A man like myself may do anything, will be able to do anything; I know however that you are in a difficult situation.

But that knack—of how to sneak out of a slippery situation—you have.

"There may be much in common between *Hindu-dharma* and the other creeds, but in its element of non-violence Hinduism is unique. Christianity is only two thousand years old and Islam still less—only thirteen hundred. Of what account are these few years? Islam's mission has ended up. There were no regulations for self-control among wild tribes and Islam taught them self-restraint. But Hinduism has much to accomplish still.



"There is a story in Islam to the effect that, in one battle, the Prophet was moved to pity and he stopped the carnage. But immediately he received an *ayat* 'You have erred. You need not be compassionate.' So the Prophet started the massacre again. *Ayat* means 'message' and that is nothing but the voice of conscience.

"I tell you this story, but not to belittle Islam. Our sages and seers have prescribed specific ways of behaviour, food etc. and thus moulded us quite differently from other people. We cannot, therefore, enter into a rivalry with others, nor can we imitate them. You cannot develop the spirit side by side with the flesh. As the spirit develops, the physique gets thinner. Mere moderation in diet is not sufficient for the unfoldment of the soul. One must eat sparingly. I thought I could serve both the masters (spirit and flesh) and there I stumbled. I read voraciously and pondered deeply in jail and used my brain to exhaustion, and with it I took the same quantity of food as before. That was why I fell ill.

I am certain that the truth which I am striving to give to the world will never die.

"Even at the time of the operation, I had no fear of death. I was cool as a cucumber. I was certain, the task I was commissioned to do I had completed. If God wanted to take more work from this body, he would keep it alive and take the work."

As the talk grew long I suggested closure, but Bapu said, "I had done much talking today about this and that, but I was not really interested. It is a joy to talk with you. And what else can I wish for but a receptive soul like yourself? I would feel satisfied if I could properly expound my thoughts to a few young men like you and if they began to think along that line.

"For myself, as I have no *guru*, I have to wander here and there and find out my path. There is no end to my troubles!"

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Appendix

I—Some Open Letters:

1. To the Trustees of Aligarh College
2. To every Englishman in India
3. Rejoinder
4. Letter to Duke of Connaught
5. To the Parsis
6. To the Moderates
7. To every Englishman in India

II—Synopsis of Congress Resolution on non-co-operation.

III—The Hon. V. S. Shastri's Statement



Appendix I- 1

TO THE TRUSTEES OF ALIGARH COLLEGE

Gentlemen,

I know you are about to meet in order to give your decision on a most momentous issue for Islam and India. I hear that you are calling in the aid of the Government and the police for the occasion of your meeting. If the rumour is true you would be making a grievous mistake. In a matter which is purely domestic you need neither the intervention of the Government nor the protection of its police. Neither the Ali Brothers nor I are engaged in brute war. We are engaged in a war in which our only weapon is force of public opinion, and we shall reckon ourselves beaten in the battle if we do not carry the public with us. In the present dispute the test of public opinion will be in the first instance your majority. Therefore, if you after a full and free discussion decide by a majority that the college and school students may not remain in the college ground, either as students or even as boarders, if they persist in their demand of disaffiliation and the rejection of the Government grant, they will be peacefully withdrawn. We propose in the event to carry on their education if at all possible in Aligarh itself or elsewhere. The desire is not to suspend their secular education for one moment longer than is absolutely necessary. But it is our sincere desire that it should be given in consistence with the law of Islam and the honour of India. I understand that in the opinion of the recognized Ulemas it is not lawful for a believing Muslim to receive the assistance of a Government that has desired or indirectly sought to cause the destruction of the holy Khilafat

and to tamper with the exclusive Muslim control of Jazirat-ul-Arab.¹ You know as well as I do, how this Government has wilfully trampled under foot Indian honour. Consistently, therefore, with the control of the passions by the people, all voluntary association with the Government is being withdrawn by the people. The least that you, in my humble opinion, can do is to decline any further Government grant, disaffiliate the great institution of which you are the trustees and reject the charter of the Muslim University. The least that the Aligarh boys can do, if you fail to respond to the call of Islam and India, is to wash their hands clean of an institution acknowledging the aegis of Government that has forfeited all title to the allegiance of Islam and India, and to bring into being a larger, nobler and purer Aligarh that would carry out the inmost



wishes of its great founder. I cannot imagine the late illustrious Sir Syed Ahmed keeping his noble creation under the control or influence of the present Government.

As I have been the originator of the idea of disaffiliation of Aligarh and rejection of the Government grant, I feel that I might be able to assist you in your discussions, and, therefore, offer my humble services to you and will gladly attend your meeting if you will allow me to do so. I am proceeding to Bombay and shall await your answer there.

But whether you wish me to attend or not I hope that you will not summon Government intervention in this purely domestic matter.

And let me say to the Government through you, that one hears all sorts of rumours of their intentions about the Ali Brothers and myself. I hope, for the peaceful evolution of the struggle, they will not restrict our liberty. We are endeavouring in a most constitutional manner to conduct our propaganda. We are seeking to bend the Government to the people's will, or if it will not, to overthrow it, not by brute force but by creating real public opinion. We hold it to be perfectly constitutional, legitimate and honourable to expose the Satanic nature of the Government and to ask the people by appealing to their heads and their hearts, never to yield to their animal passions, to express their will, not in words but in action, i. e., by withdrawing all possible association with the Government. But if the Government wish even to suppress the liberty of opinion and peaceful action, I hope they will issue no internment orders against us, but that they will imprison us. For, in spite of our sincere desire not to offer civil disobedience even in our own persons, it will not be possible for us to respect any internment orders. So long as our movement is not physically restrained, we must use it in such a manner as we consider to be the best in the interests of our mission.

With humble apology,

Your faithful servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-10-1920

1. The holy places of Hedjaj. The Govt. of india affirmed on March 29, 1920, that those would remain under independent Muslim control.



Appendix I-2

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

Dear Friend,

I wish that every Englishman will see this appeal and give thoughtful attention to it.

Let me introduce myself to you. In my humble opinion, no Indian has co-operated with the British Government more than I have for an unbroken period of twenty-nine years of public life in the face of circumstances that might well have turned any other man into a rebel. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that my co-operation was not based on the fear of the punishments provided by your laws or any other selfish motives. It was free and voluntary co-operation based on the belief that the sum total of the activity of the British Government was for the benefit of India. I put my life in peril four times for the sake of the Empire—at the time of the Boer War when I was in charge of the Ambulance Corps whose work was mentioned in General Buller's dispatches, at the time of the Zulu revolt in Natal when I was in charge of a similar corps, at the time of the commencement of the late war when I raised an Ambulance Corps and as a result of strenuous training had a severe attack of pleurisy, and lastly, in fulfilment of my promise to Lord Chelmsford at the War Conference in Delhi, I threw myself in such an active recruiting campaign in Kaira District, involving long and trying marches, that I had an attack of dysentery which proved almost fatal. I did all this in the full belief that acts such as mine must gain for my country an equal status in the Empire. So late as last December, I pleaded hard for a trustful co-operation. I fully believed that Mr. Lloyd George would redeem his promise to the Mussulmans and that the revelation of the official atrocities in the Punjab would secure full reparation for the Punjabis. But the treachery of Mr. Lloyd George and its appreciation by you and the condonation of the Punjab atrocities have completely shattered my faith in the good intentions of the Government and the nation which is supporting it.

But though my faith in your good intentions is gone, I recognize your bravery, and I know that what you will not yield to justice and reason, you will gladly yield to bravery.

See what this Empire means to India:



Exploitation of India's resources for the benefits of Great Britain,

An ever-increasing military expenditure and a civil service the most expensive in the world,

extravagant working of every department in utter disregard of India's poverty,

disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole nation lest an armed nation might imperil the lives of a handful of you in our midst,

traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs for the purpose of sustaining a top-heavy administration,

progressively repressive legislation in order to suppress an ever-growing agitation seeking to give expression to a nation's agony,

degrading treatment of Indians residing in your dominions and

you have shown total disregard of our feelings by glorifying the Punjab administration and flouting the Mussulman sentiment.

I know you would not mind if we could fight and wrest the sceptre from your hands. You know that we are powerless to do that, for you have ensured our incapacity to fight in open and honourable battle. Bravery on the battlefield is thus impossible for us. Bravery of the soul still remains open to us. I know you will respond to that also. I am engaged in evoking that bravery. Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self-sacrifice. Why should we co-operate with you when we know that by your administration of this great country we are being daily enslaved in an increasing degree? This response of the people to my appeal is not due to my personality. I would like you to dismiss me, and for that matter the Ali Brothers too, from your consideration. My personality will fail to evoke any response to anti-Muslim cry if I were foolish enough to raise it, as the magic name of the Ali Brothers would fail to inspire the Mussulmans with enthusiasm if they were madly to raise an anti-Hindu cry. People flock in their thousands to listen to us because we today represent the voice of a nation groaning under your iron heels. The Ali Brothers were your friends, as I was, and still am. My religion forbids me to bear any ill-will towards you. I would not raise my hand against you even if I had the power. I expect to conquer you only by my suffering. The Ali Brothers will certainly draw the sword, if they could, in defence of their religion and their country. But they and I have made common cause with the people of India in their attempt to voice their feelings and to find a remedy for their distress.



You are in search of a remedy to suppress this rising ebullition of national feeling. I venture to suggest to you that the only way to suppress it is to remove the causes. You have yet the power. You can repent of the wrongs done to Indians. You can compel Mr. Lloyd George to redeem his promises. I assure you he has kept many escape-doors. You can compel the Viceroy to retire in favour of a better one, you can revise your ideas about Sir Michael O' Dwyer and General Dyer. You can compel the Government to summon a conference of the recognized leaders of the people, duly elected by them and representing all shades of opinion so as to revise means for granting Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.

But this you cannot do unless you consider every Indian to be in reality your equal and brother. I ask for no patronage, I merely point out to you, as a friend, an honourable solution of a grave problem. The other solution, namely repression, is open to you. I prophesy that it will fail. It has begun already. The Government has already imprisoned two brave men of Panipat for holding and expressing their opinions freely. Another is on his trial in Lahore for having expressed similar opinions. One in the Oudh District is already imprisoned. Another awaits judgment. You should know what is going on in your midst. Our propaganda is being carried on in anticipation of repression. I invite you respectfully to choose the better way and make common cause with the people of India whose salt you are eating. To seek to thwart their aspirations is disloyalty to the country.

I am,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-10-1920



Appendix I- 3

REJOINDER

Messrs Popley and Phillips have been good enough to reply to my letter "To Every Englishman in India." I recognize and appreciate the friendly spirit of their letter.¹ But I see that there are fundamental differences which must for the time being divide them and me. So long as I felt that, in spite of grievous lapses, the British Empire represented an activity for the world's and India's good, I clung to it like a child to its mother's breast. But that faith is gone. The British nation has endorsed the Punjab and the Khilafat crimes. There is no doubt a dissenting minority. But a dissenting minority that satisfies itself with a mere expression of its opinion and continues to help the wrongdoer partakes in the wrongdoing.

And when the sum-total of his energy represents a minus quantity, one may not pick out the plus quantities, hold them up for admiration and ask an admiring public to help regarding them. It is a favourite design of Satan to temper evil with a show of good and thus lure the unwary into the trap. The only way the world has known of defeating Satan is by shunning him. I invite Englishmen, who could work out the ideal they believe in, to join the ranks of non-co-operationists. W . T. Stead² prayed for the reverse of the British arms during the Boer War. Miss Hobhouse³ invited the Boers to keep up the fight. The betrayal of India is much worse than the injustice done to the Boers. The Boers fought and bled for their rights. When, therefore, we are prepared to bleed, the right will have become embodied and the idolatrous world will perceive it and do homage to it.

But Messrs Popley and Phillips object that I have allied myself with those who would draw the sword if they could. I see nothing wrong in it. They represent the right no less than I do. And is it not worth while trying to prevent the unsheathing of the sword by helping to win a bloodless battle? Those who recognize the truth of the Indian position can only do God's work by assisting this non-violent campaign.

The second objection raised by these English friends is more to the point. I would be guilty of wrongdoing myself if the Muslim cause was not just. The fact is that the Muslim claim is not to perpetuate foreign domination of non-Muslim or non-Turkish races. The Indian Mussulmans do not resist self-determination, but they would fight to the last the nefarious plan of exploiting Mesopotamia under the plea of



self-determination. They must resist the studied attempt to humiliate Turkey, and therethrough Islam, under the false pretext of ensuring Armenian independence.

The third objection has reference to schools. I do object to missionary or any schools being carried on with Government money. It is true that it was at one time our money. Will these good missionaries be justified in educating me with funds given to them by a robber, who has robbed me of my money, religion and honour, because the money was originally mine?

I personally tolerated the financial robbery of India, but it would have been a sin to have tolerated the robbery of honour through the Punjab and of religion through Turkey. This is strong language. But nothing less would truly describe my deep conviction. Needless to add that the emptying of Government-aided or affiliated schools does not mean starving the young mind; national schools are coming into being as fast as the others are emptied.

Messrs Popley and Phillips think that my sense of justice has been blurred by the knowledge of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. I hope not. I have asked friends to show me some good fruit (intended and deliberately produced) of the British occupation of India. I repeat the request. And I assure them that I shall make the amplest amends if I find that I have erred in my eagerness about the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

Young India,

15-12-1920

1. *Two Englishmen Reply*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter to every Englishmen in India, with its hardhitting and its generous tone. Something within us responds to the note which you have struck. We are not representatives of any corporate body, but we think that millions of our countrymen in England, and not a few in India, feel as we do. The reading of your letter convinces us that you and we cannot be real enemies.

May we say at once that in so far as the British Empire stands for the domination and exploitation of other races for Britain's benefit, for the degrading treatment of any individual, for traffic in intoxicating liquor, for repressive legislation, for administration such as that which led to the Amritsar incidents, we desire the end of it as much as you do? We quite understand that in the excitement of the present crisis, owing to certain acts of the British Administration, which we join with you in condemning, the Empire presents itself to you under this aspect alone. But from personal contact with our countrymen, we know that, working like leaven in the midst of such tendencies, as you and we deplore, is the faith in a better deal—the deal of a



commonwealth of free peoples voluntarily linked together by the ties of common experience in the past and common aspirations for the future, a Commonwealth which may hope to spread liberty and progress through the whole earth. With vast numbers of our countrymen, we value the British Empire mainly as affording the possibilities of the realization of such an ideal, and on that ground give it our loyal allegiance.

Meanwhile we do repent of that arrogant attitude to Indians which has been all too common among our countrymen, we do hold Indians to be our brothers and equals, many of them our superiors, and we would rather be servants than rulers of India. We desire an administration which cannot be intimidated either by the selfish element in Anglo-Indian political opinion or by any other sectional interest, and which shall govern in accordance with the best democratic principles. We should welcome the convening of a National Assembly of recognised leaders of the people, representing all shades of political opinion, of every caste, race and creed, to frame a Constitution for Swaraj. In all the things that matter most we are with you. Surely you and we can co-operate in the service of India, in such matters for example as education. It seems to us nothing short of a tragedy that you should be rallying Indian patriotism to inaugurate a new era of good-will under a watchword that divides, instead of uniting all.

We have spoken of the large amount of common ground upon which you and we can stand. But frankness demands that we express our anxiety about some items in your programme. Leaving aside smaller questions on which your letter seems to us to do the British side less than justice, we may mention three main points: Your insistence of spiritual forces alone we deeply respect and desire to emulate, but we cannot understand your combining it with a close alliance with those who, as you frankly say, would draw the sword as soon as they could.

Your desire for an education truly national commends our wholehearted approval. But instead of Indianizing the present system, as you could begin to do from the beginning of the next year, or instead of creating a hundred institutions such as that at Bolepur (Poet Tagore's Shantiniketan) and turning into them the stream of India's young intellectual life, you appear to be turning that stream out of its present channel into open strands where it may dry up. In other words, you seem to us to be risking the complete cessation, for a period possibly of years, of all education for a large number of boys and young men. Is it best for those young men or for India that the present imperfect education should cease before a better education is ready to take its place?

Your desire to unite Mohammedan and Hindu and to share with your Mohammedan brethren in seeking the satisfaction of Mohammedan aspirations, we can understand and sympathise with. But is there no danger, in the course which some of your party have urged upon the Government, that certain races in the former Ottoman Empire might be fixed under a foreign yoke, far worse than that which you hold the English yoke to be? You could not wish to purchase freedom in India at the price of enslavement in the middle East.

To sum up, we thank you for the spirit of your letter, to which we have tried to respond in the same spirit. We are with you in the desire for an India genuinely free to develop the best that is in her and in the belief that that best is something wonderful of which world to-day stands in need.

We are ready to co-operate with you and with every other man of any race or nationality who will help India to realize her best. Are you going to insist that you can have nothing to do with us if we receive a government grant (i. e. Indian money) for an Indian school? Surely some more inspiring battle-cry than non-co-operation can be discovered. We have ventured quite frankly to point out three items in your present programme, which seem to us likely to hinder the attainment of your true ideals for Indian greatness. But



those ideals themselves command our warm sympathy, and we desire to work, so far as we have an opportunity, for their attainment. In fact, it is only thus that we can interpret our British citizenship.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) H. A. Popley“
G E. Phillips

Bangalore,

Nov. 15, 1920.

2. William Thomas Stead (1849-1912); English journalist and reformer, whose enterprise and originality exercised a potent influence on contemporary journalism and politics; an enthusiastic supporter of the peace movement in Great Britain.

3. Emily Hobhouse; an Englishwoman of liberal views, mentioned by Gandhiji in *An Autobiography*.



Appendix I-4

LETTER TO DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

Sir,

Your Royal Highness must have heard a great deal about non-co-operation, non co-operationists and their methods and incidentally of me, its humble author. I fear that the information given to Your Royal Highness must have been in its nature one-sided. I owe it to you, to my friends and myself that I should place before you what I conceive to be the scope of non-co-operation as followed not only by me but my closest associates such as Messrs Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali.

For me it is no joy and pleasure to be actively associated in the boycott of Your Royal Highness' visit. I have tendered loyal, voluntary assistance to the Government for an unbroken period of nearly 30 years in the full belief that through that lay the path of freedom for my country. It was, therefore, no slight thing for me to suggest to my countrymen that we should take no part in welcoming Your Royal Highness. Not one amongst us has anything against you as an English gentleman. We hold your person as sacred as that of a dearest friend. I do not know any of my friends who would not guard it with his life if he found it in danger.

We are not at war with individual Englishmen. We seek not to destroy English life. We do desire to destroy the system that has emasculated our country in body, mind and soul. We are determined to battle with all our might against that in English nature which has made O'Dwyerism and Dyerism possible in the Punjab and has resulted in a wanton affront upon Islam, a faith professed by seven crores of our countrymen. We consider it inconsistent with our self-respect any longer to brook the spirit of superiority and dominance which has systematically ignored and disregarded the sentiments of thirty crores of innocent people of India on many a vital matter. It is humiliating to us. It cannot be a matter of pride to you that thirty crores of Indians should live day in and day out in fear of their lives from one hundred thousand Englishmen and, therefore, be under subjection to them.

Your Royal Highness has come, not to end the system I described, but to sustain it by upholding its prestige. Your first pronouncement was a laudation of Lord Willingdon. I have the privilege of knowing him. I believe him to be an honest, amiable gentleman, who will not willingly hurt even a fly, but he certainly failed as a ruler. He



allowed himself to be guided by those whose interest it was to support their power. He is not reading the mind of the Dravidian province (Madras). Here, in Bengal you are issuing a certificate of merit to a Governor (Lord Ronaldshay) who is again, from all I have heard, an estimable gentleman, but who knows nothing of the heart of Bengal and its yearnings. Bengal is not Calcutta; Fort William and the palaces of Calcutta represent an insolent exploitation of the un murmuring and highly cultured peasantry of this fair province.

The non-co-operationists have come to the conclusion that they must not be deceived by the reforms that tinker with the problem of India's distress and humiliation, nor must they be impatient and angry. We must not in our impatient anger resort to stupid violence. We freely admit that we must take our due share of blame for the existing state. It is not so much British guns that are responsible for our subjection, as our voluntary co-operation.

Our non-participation in a hearty welcome to your Royal Highness is thus in no sense a demonstration against your high personage, but it is against the system you come to uphold. I know individual Englishmen cannot, even if they will, alter the English nature all of a sudden. If we would be the equals of Englishmen we must cast off fear. We must learn to be self-reliant and independent of schools, courts, protection and patronage of a Government we seek to end, if it will not mend.

Hence, this non-violent non-co-operation. I know we have not all yet become non-violent in speech and deed, but the results so far achieved have, I assure Your Royal Highness, been amazing. The people have understood the secret and value of non-violence as they have never done before. He who will may see that this is a religious, purifying movement. We are leaving off drink. We are trying to rid India of the curse of untouchability. We are trying to throw off foreign tinsel splendour and, by reverting to the spinning-wheel, reviving the ancient and poetic simplicity of life. We hope thereby to sterilize the existing harmful institutions.

I ask Your Royal Highness as an Englishman to study this movement and its possibilities for the Empire and the world. We are at war with nothing that is good in the world. In protecting Islam in the manner we are, we are protecting all religions; in protecting the honour of India, we are protecting the honour of humanity. For, our means are hurtful to none. We desire to live on terms of friendship with Englishmen, but that friendship must be friendship of equals, both in theory and in practice, and we must continue to non-co-operate, i. e., to purify ourselves till the goal is achieved.



I ask Your Royal Highness, and through you every Englishman, to appreciate the viewpoint of non-co-operation.

I beg to remain, etc.,
M. K. Gandhi

Young *India*, 9-2-1921



Appendix I- 5

TO THE PARSIS

Dear Friends,

I know that you are following with considerable interest the present non-co-operation movement. You may know, too, that all thoughtful non-co-operators are anxiously waiting to see what part you are going to play in the process of purification through which the whole country is passing. I, personally, have every reason to have full faith in your doing the right thing when the moment for making the final choice comes to you. And I address these few words to you because I feel that, probably, that moment has now arrived.

Apart from your being fellow-countrymen, I am bound to you by many sacred ties. Dadabhai (Naoroji) was the first patriot to inspire me. He was my guide and helper when I did not know any other leader. It was to him that I bore, when yet a boy, a letter of introduction. It was the late uncrowned king Sir Pherozshah Mehta of Bombay who led me in 1896 and showed me the way to work. It was he who, when I wanted to give battle to a Political Agent as far back as 1892, restrained my youthful ardour and taught me the first practical lesson in *ahimsa* in public life. He taught me not to resent personal wrongs if I would serve India. A Parsi merchant in Durban, Rustomjee Ghorkhodoo, was among my most valued clients and friends in South Africa. He gave freely to the public cause, and he and his brave son were the first among my fellow-prisoners. He gave me shelter when I was lynched¹, and now, too, he is following the Swaraj movement with considerable interest and has just donated Rs. 40,000 to it. In my humble opinion, probably the first woman in India today is a Parsi woman gentle as a lamb, with a heart that holds the whole humanity. To have her friendship is the rarest privilege of life. I would love to multiply these sacred memories, but I have given you enough of them to enable you to understand and to appreciate the motive of this letter.

You are a very cautious community. You are compact, and you rightly insist on abundant proof of the stability and the morality of any movement before you would take to it. But there is now danger of your becoming over-cautious, and your success in trade may make you oblivious of the wants and aspirations of the multitude of your countrymen. I dread the Rockefeller spirit that seems to be overtaking the great House of the Tatas. I dread to think of the consequences of their appropriating poor people's



properties for the doubtful benefit of making India Industrial. But I do believe that this is a passing phase. Your shrewdness will show you the suicidal nature of such enterprises. Your quick wit will tell you that what India needs is not concentration of capital in a few hands, but its distribution so as to be within easy reach of the 7 1/2 lakhs of villages that make this continent 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. I know, therefore, it is a question of time when you will throw in your lot as a community with the reformers who are hungering to free India from the curse of an Imperialism which is bleeding her to death.

But there is one thing for which it will be criminal to wait. A temperance wave is passing over India. The people want voluntarily to become teetotallers. Society is fast developing a public opinion that would consider drinking an unpardonable vice. Many Parsis make a living by running liquor shops. Your whole-hearted co-operation can sweep out of existence many of these plague-spots in the Bombay Presidency. The local Governments almost all over India are making a discreditable attempt to thwart the movement which bids fair to succeed even to the point of destroying the whole of the Abkari (excise) revenue. Will you help the Governments or the people? The Bombay Government has not yet been seized by panic. But I can hardly imagine that it will have the courage and wisdom to sacrifice the drink revenue. You have to make your immediate choice. I do not know what your scriptures say about drink. I can guess what the Prophet, who separated good from evil and sang the victory of the former over the latter, is likely to have said. But apart from your own religious belief, you have to make up your mind as to whether you will forward the cause of temperance in a whole-hearted manner or whether you will supinely and philosophically watch developments. I shall hope that you as a practical community of India will actively and thoroughly associate yourselves with the great temperance movement which bids fair to outshine every such movement in the world.

I am,
Yours faithful friend,
M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 23-3-1921

1. By the Whites in Durban in 1897. Gandhiji refused to prosecute the assailants



Appendix I- 6

TO THE MODERATES

Dear Friends,

It is a matter of no small grief to me that I find myself estranged from you in ideas, although by training and association, I have been brought up in the company of those who have been regarded as Moderates. Partly owing to circumstances and partly owing to temperament, I have never belonged to any of the great parties in India. Nevertheless, my life has been influenced much more by men belonging to the Moderate party than the Extremist. Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, Badruddin Tyabji¹, Pherozeshah Mehta are all names to conjure with. Their services to the country can never be forgotten. They have inspired the lives of many like myself throughout our country. I have enjoyed the pleasantest associations with many of the living amongst you. What is it that has flung me away from you and into the lap of the Nationalist party? Why do I find more in common with the Nationalists than with you? I am unable to see that you love your country less than the Nationalists. I refuse to believe that you are less willing to sacrifice yourselves for the country's good than the Nationalists. Certainly the Moderate party can claim as much intelligence, integrity and ability as the Nationalists, if not more. The difference, therefore, lies in the ideals.

I will not weary you with a discussion of the different ideals. For the moment, I will simply invite your attention to some of the items in the constructive programme in the movement of non-co-operation. You may not like the word itself. You may internally dislike, as I know you do, many items in the programme. But if you concede to the non-co-operators the same credit for love of the land that you will claim for yourselves, will you not view with favour those parts of the programme on which there cannot be two opinions? I refer to the drink evil. I ask you to accept my evidence that the country as a whole is sick of the drink curse. Those unfortunate men who have become slaves to the habit require to be helped against themselves. Some of them even ask to be helped. I invite you to take advantage of the wave of feeling that has been roused against the drink traffic. The agitation arose spontaneously. Believe me, the deprivation to the Government of the drink revenue is of the least importance in the campaign. The country is simply impatient of the evil itself. In no country in the world will it be possible to carry on this traffic in the face of the united and the enlightened opposition of a people, such as is now to be witnessed in India. Whatever



the errors or excesses that were committed by the mob in Nagpur, the cause was just. The people were determined to do away with the drink curse that was sapping their vitality. You will not be deceived by the specious argument that India must not be made sober by compulsion and that those who wish to drink must have facilities provided for them. The State does not cater for the vices of its people. We do not regulate or license houses of ill fame. We do not provide facilities for thieves to indulge their propensity for thieving. I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution. Is it not often the parent of both? I ask you to join the country in sweeping out of existence the drink revenue and abolishing the liquor-shops. Many liquor-sellers would gladly close their shops, if the money paid by them were refunded.

'What about the education of the children?' May be the question asked. I venture to suggest to you that it is a matter of deep humiliation for the country to find its children educated from the drink revenue. We shall deserve the curse of posterity if we do not wisely decide to stop the drink evil, even though we may have to sacrifice the education of our children. But we need not. I know many of you have laughed at the idea of making education self-supporting by introducing spinning in our schools and colleges. I assure you that it solves the problem of education as nothing else can. The country cannot bear fresh taxation. Even the existing taxation is unbearable. Not only must we do away with the opium and the drink revenue, but the other revenue has also to be very considerably reduced if the ever-growing poverty of the masses is to be combated in the near future.

And that brings me to the existing system of government. The country is the poorer for the Reforms. The annual expenditure has grown. A deeper study of the system has convinced me that no tinkering with it will do. A complete revolution is the greatest need of the time. The word revolution displeases you. What I plead for, however, is not a bloody revolution, but a revolution in the thought-world, such as would compel a radical revision of the standard of life in the higher services of the country. I must frankly confess to you that the ever-increasing rate of salaries paid to the higher branches of the Civil Service fairly frightens me, as I hope it would frighten you. Is there any correspondence between the life of the governors and of the governed millions who are groaning under their heels? The bruised bodies of the latter are a standing testimony to the truth of my statement. You now belong to the governing class. Let it not be said that your heels are no softer than your predecessors or your associates. Must you also rule from Simla? Must you also follow the policy that,



only a year ago, you criticised adversely? It is under your regime, that a man has been sentenced to transportation for life for holding certain opinions. You may not plead that he was inciting to violence, for not very long ago you dismissed such pleas. The Ali Brothers have apologized for even a suspicion of violence in their speeches. You will be doing a cruel injustice to the country, if you allow yourselves to believe that any fear of prosecution has prompted the apology. A new spirit has been born in the country. The fear of the judge within is more terrible than that of the one without. Do you know that during the past six months several high-souled youths, your countrymen, have gone to gaol, because they will not condescend to give security which, in their opinion, was dishonourable for them to do? It is under your regime that the patience of utterly innocent Moplas has been put to a severe test and has as yet not been found wanting. I would gladly think, as I really believe, that you are not responsible for the atrocities that are at present being perpetrated in the name of peace and justice. But you will not let the public or me say that you are helpless, where you are not hoodwinked. That, however, would bring me to a discussion of our ideals, which I must not enter upon at the present moment. If the country can only get your assistance in stopping the drink traffic, you will certainly add to the many services that you have rendered it in the past, and, may be, that one step will open your eyes to many other possibilities.

I remain,
Yours, as ever,
M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 8-6-1921

1. President, Indian National Congress, 1887.



Appendix I-7

TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

Dear Friend,

This is the second time I venture to address you. I know that most of you detest non-co-operation. But I would invite you to isolate two of my activities from the rest, if you can give me credit for honesty.

I cannot prove my honesty, if you do not feel it. Some of my Indian friends charge me with camouflage when I say we need not hate Englishmen whilst we may hate the system they have established. I am trying to show them that one may detest the wickedness of a brother without hating him. Jesus denounced the wickedness of the Scribes and the Pharisees, but he did not hate them. He did not enunciate this law of love for the man and hate for the evil in him for himself only, but he taught the doctrine for universal practice. Indeed, I find it in all the scriptures of the world.

I claim to be a fairly accurate student of human nature and vivisection of my own failings. I have discovered that man is superior to the system he propounds. And so I feel that you as an individual are infinitely better than the system you have evolved as a corporation. Each one of my countrymen in Amritsar on that fateful 10th of April was better than the crowd of which he was member. He, as a man, would have declined to kill those innocent English bank managers. But in that crowd many a man forgot himself. Hence, it is that an Englishman in office is different from an Englishman outside. Similarly, an Englishman in India is different from an Englishman in England. Here in India, you belong to a system that is vile beyond description. It is possible, therefore, for me to condemn the system in the strongest terms, without considering you to be bad and without imputing bad motives to every Englishman. You are as much slaves of the system as we are. I want you, therefore, to reciprocate, and not impute to me motives which you cannot read in the written word. I give you the whole of my motive, when I tell you that I am impatient to end or mend a system which has made India subservient to a handful of you and which has made Englishmen feel secure only in the shadow of the forts and the guns that obtrude themselves on one's notice in India. It is a degrading spectacle for you and for us. Our corporate life is based on mutual distrust and fear. This, you will admit, is unmanly. A system that is responsible for such a state of things is necessarily Satanic. You should be able to live in India as an integral part of its people and not always as foreign exploiters. One thousand Indian



lives against one English life is a doctrine of dark despair, and yet, believe me, it was enunciated in 1919 by the highest of you in the land.

I almost feel tempted to invite you to join me in destroying a system that has dragged both you and us down. But I feel I cannot as yet do so. We have not shown ourselves earnest, self-sacrificing and self-restrained enough for that consummation.

But I do ask you to help us in the boycott of foreign cloth and in the anti-drink campaign.

The Lancashire doth, as English historians have shown, was forced upon India, and her own world-famed manufactures were deliberately and systematically ruined. India is, therefore, at the mercy not only of Lancashire, but also of Japan, France and America. Just see what this has meant to India. We send out of India every year sixty crores (more or less) of rupees for cloth. We grow enough cotton for our own cloth. Is it not madness to send cotton outside India, and have it manufactured into cloth there and shipped to us? Was it right to reduce India to such a helpless state?

A hundred and fifty years ago, we manufactured all our cloth. Our women spun fine yarn in their own cottages and supplemented the earnings of their husbands. The village weavers wove that yarn. It was an indispensable part of national economy in a vast agricultural country like ours. It enabled us in a most natural manner to utilize our leisure. Today our women have lost the cunning of their hands, and the enforced idleness of millions has impoverished the land. Many weavers have become sweepers. Some have taken to the profession of hired soldiers. Half the race of artistic weavers has died out, and the other half is weaving imported foreign yarn for want of finer hand-spun yarn.

You will perhaps now understand what boycott of foreign cloth means to India. It is not devised as a punishment. If the Government were today to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and consent to India attaining immediate Swaraj, the boycott movement must still continue. Swaraj means at least the power to conserve Indian industries that are vital to the economic existence of the nation and to prohibit such imports as may interfere with such existence. Agriculture and hand-spinning are the two lungs of the national body. They must be protected against consumption at any cost.

This matter does not admit of any waiting. The interests of the foreign manufacturers and the Indian importers cannot be considered, when the whole nation is starving for want of a large productive occupation ancillary to agriculture.



You will not mistake this for a movement of general boycott of foreign goods. India does not wish to shut herself out of international commerce. Things other than cloth which can be better made outside India she must gratefully receive upon terms advantageous to the contracting parties. Nothing can be forced upon her. But I do not wish to peep into the future. I am certainly hoping that before long it would be possible for India to co-operate with England on equal terms. Then will be the time for examining trade relations. For the time being, I bespeak your help in bringing about a boycott of foreign cloth.

Of similar and equal importance is the campaign against drink. The liquor shops are an insufferable curse imposed upon society. There never was so much awakening among the people as now upon this question. I admit that, here, it is the Indian ministers who can help more than you can. But I would like you to speak out your mind clearly on the question. Under every system of government, total prohibition, so far as I can see, will be insisted upon by the nation. You can assist the growth of the ever-rising agitation by throwing in the weight of your influence on the side of the nation.

I am,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 13-7-1921



Appendix- II

SYNOPSIS OF CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON NON-CO-OPERATION

Whereas the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country; and

Whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj; and

Whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last Special Session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties.

Now this Congress declares that non-violent non-co-operation, with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present Government at one end and the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be progressively put in by force; and to prepare the country for it effective step should continue to be taken in that behalf:

- (a) by calling upon the parents of school children under the age of 16 years to withdraw them from schools in any way controlled by Government and to provide for their training in national schools or by other means within their power;
- (b) by calling upon students of the age of 16 and over to withdraw from institutions controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions dominated by that Government which the nation has solemnly resolved to end;
- (c) by calling upon trustees of Government affiliated schools and municipalities and local boards to help to nationalize them;
- (d) by calling upon lawyers to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law courts by litigants and the settlement of disputes by private arbitration;
- (e) by calling upon merchants to carry out a gradual boycott of foreign trade relations and to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving;
- (f) by calling upon every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible self-sacrifice for the national movement;
- (g) by organizing Committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organization;



- (h) by organizing a band of national workers for a service to be called the Indian National Service; and
- (i) by raising national fund to be called the

ALL INDIA TILAK MEMORIAL SWRAJ FUND.

This Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in working the programme of non-co-operation, specially with regard to the boycott of Councils by the voters, and claims that the new Councils do not represent the country and trusts that those elected in spite of the deliberate abstention from the polls of an overwhelming majority of their constituents, will resign their seats in the Councils, and that if they retain their seats in direct negation of the principle of democracy, the electors will studiously refrain from asking for any political service from such Councillors.

This Congress hopes that the police and the soldiery will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers.

And this Congress appeals to all people in Government employment, pending the call of the nation for resignation of their service, to help the national cause by openly attending popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking any active part therein and by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movement.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on NON-VIOLENCE as the integral part of the non-co-operation resolution and is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy but actually retards the enforcement of the other stages of non-co-operation.

Finally, in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and Swaraj *established within one year*, this Congress urges upon all public bodies to promote non-violence and non-co-operation with the Government and, calls upon them to advance Hindu-Muslim unity and upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability.



Appendix- III

THE HON. V. S. SHASTRI'S STATEMENT

The Hon. Shrinivas Shastri has published the following statement on Mahatmaji's health:

Poona,
13-1-1924

I was called suddenly to the Sassoon Hospital last night to see Mr. Gandhi. In view of the profound interest that the matter would have for the public, I venture to make the following statement:

Dr. V. B. Gokhale came to me at about 8. 45 p.m., just as I was finishing my dinner, and told me how the Yeravda authorities had removed Mr. Gandhi to the Sassoon Hospital, where he was in charge. He was about to be operated upon for appendicitis. As the case was serious, the patient had been asked whether he would like any doctor friends of his to be sent for. He had mentioned Dr. Dalal of Bombay and Dr. Jivraj Mehta who was in Baroda. Both had been wired to and attempts had been made, but in vain, to get at Dr. Dalal on the phone. Meanwhile, in view of the patient's temperature and pulse, it had been decided to perform the operation immediately. He was asked whether he would like to have any friends brought to see him. He mentioned me, Dr. Phatak of the non-co-operation party and Mr. N.C. Kelkar. Dr. Gokhale and I started at once and took Dr. Phatak on the way, Mr. Kelkar being away at Satara. On my entering the room we greeted each other and I enquired how he felt as to the operation. He answered firmly that the doctors had come to a definite decision and he was content to abide by it.

In reply to further inquiry, he said that he had full confidence in the medical men about him and that they had been very kind and very careful. Should there arise any public agitation, he added, then it should be made known that he had no complaint whatever to make against the authorities.

Mr. Gandhi said that so far as the care of his body went, their treatment left nothing to be desired.

Then I inquired if Mrs. Gandhi had been informed of his condition. He said that she did not know the latest developments, but she knew that for some time he had not been well and he expected to hear from her. He then made inquiries of my wife and of my colleagues in the Servants of India Society, viz., Messrs. Devdhar, Joshi,



Patvardhan and Kunzru. "Have your frequent journeys out of India benefited your health?"

Dr. Phatak then read a draft statement to be signed by Mr Gandhi conveying his consent to the operation. After hearing it once, Mr. Gandhi put on his spectacles and read it himself. Then he said he would like the wording changed and asked Col. Maddock, who was in the room, what he thought. The Colonel said that Mr. Gandhi knew best how to put it in appropriate language and that his own suggestion would not be of much value. Then he dictated a statement which I took down in pencil. It was addressed to Col. Maddock who was to perform the operation. The letter acknowledged the exceeding kindness and attention which he had received from Col. Maddock, the Surgeon-General and other medical men. It proceeded to thank Government for their considerateness in allowing him to send for his own doctors, but as they could not be got in spite of the best attempts made by Col. Maddock and as delay would in the opinion of the Colonel involve serious risk, he requested him to perform the operation at once. When it was finished I read it out to him at once. Then he called Col. Maddock to his side and I read it again at his desire. Col. Maddock was quite satisfied and remarked, "Of course, you know how to put it in proper language." He then drew up his knees in posture of signing the paper, which he did in pencil. His hand shook very much and I noticed that he did not dot the "i" at the end. He remarked to the doctor, "See, how my hand troubles! You will have to put this right." Col. Maddock answered, "O, we will put tons and tons of strength into you."

As the operation room was being got ready, the doctors went out and I found myself nearly alone with the Mahatma. After a remark or two of a purely personal nature I asked him whether he had anything particular to say. I noticed a touch of eagerness as he replied, as though he was waiting for an opportunity to say something. "If there is any agitation," he said, "for my release after the operation, which I do not wish, let it be on proper lines. My quarrel with the Government is there and will continue so long as the originating causes exist. Of course, there can't be any conditions. If the Government think they have kept me long enough, they may let me go. That would be honourable. If they think I am an innocent man and that my motives have been good, that while I have a deep quarrel with Government, I love Englishmen and have many friends amongst them, they may release me. But it must not be on false issues. Any agitation must be kept on proper non-violent lines. Perhaps, I have not expressed myself quite well, but you had better put it in your inimitable style."



I mentioned the motions of which notice had been given in the Assembly and added that though Government might in other circumstances have opposed it I expected they would take a different line.

I then pressed him again for a message to his people, his followers or the country. He was surprisingly firm on this subject. He said that he was a prisoner of Government and he must observe the prisoner's code of honour scrupulously. He was supposed to be civilly dead. He had no knowledge of outside events and he could not have anything to do with the public; he had no message.

"How is it, then that Mr. Mohammad Ali communicated a message as from you the other day?" The words were scarcely out of my lips when I regretted them. But recall was impossible. He was obviously astonished at my question and exclaimed: "Mr. Mohammad Ali? A message from me?"

Luckily at this point the nurse came with some articles of apparel and signalled me to depart. In a few minutes he was shifted to the operation room. I sat outside marvelling at the exhibition I had witnessed of high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love, transcending ordinary human nature, and what a mercy it was that the non-co-operation movement should have had a leader of such serene vision and sensitiveness to honour.

The Surgeon-General and the Inspector General of Prisons were also there. I could see from their faces how anxious they were at the tremendous responsibility that lay on them. They said the patient had borne the operation very well indeed, that some pus had come out and that it was a matter of congratulation that the operation had not been delayed any longer. The patient had had morphia and was expected to sleep soundly for some time longer, when we dispersed. I learnt from the doctor this morning that the patient's condition was thoroughly satisfactory.

I have read out this statement to Dr. Phatak who approves of it and adds that his inquiry as to a message elicited the same sort of answer.

Dr. Phatak conveyed to Mr. Gandhi the anxious inquiries made by several public bodies and persons all over India. Mr. Gandhi asked Dr. Phatak to convey to them all the following message:-

"I am deeply touched by the manifestations of deep affection shown to me by my countrymen during the critical period of my health. They need have no anxiety because every possible attention is being given to me by the medical authorities here."

Navajivan, 20-1-1924

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