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**MAHATMA GANDHI  
AND  
HIS SIGNIFICANCE**

**A BIOGRAPHICAL INTERPRETATION  
AND AN ANALYSIS OF THE  
POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA**

**BY**

**KIRBY PAGE**

*Editor, The World Tomorrow*

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## INTRODUCTION

Why did Mahatma Gandhi refuse to attend the first Round Table Conference and yet consent to be a delegate to the second one? Why was he imprisoned by the Government of India and what did he accomplish by going to jail? What is the significance of non-violent non-cooperation and how successful was the 1930 campaign? How large a following has Mr. Gandhi among Moslems, Christians, untouchables and other non-Brahmin groups? What is the basis of tension and hostility between Hindu and Mussulman? To what degree are the people of India ready for self-government and just how relevant is this question? Does "Dominion Status" mean "the substance of independence"? What are the fundamental differences in point of view between the British Government and Indian Nationalists? How soon is India likely to win freedom? After self-government is achieved, will the Indians be better off or in a worse position than they are now? When Gandhi dies what is likely to happen?

Insight into the motives and methods of Mahatma Gandhi is essential to an understanding of the present situation in India. Familiarity with his biography is necessary to a correct interpretation of his attitude toward the British Empire and the significance of his political strategy. Moreover, an increasing number of persons outside India are convinced that this Oriental saint and statesman has a message and a method which are valid for all mankind and that he is therefore a universal figure

Many times I had said that I would rather meet him than any other man on earth. To my great delight the way was opened for a visit in his own home. The three memorable days that Dr. and Mrs. Sherwood Eddy and my wife and I spent with him will always be counted among the rarest privileges of my life.

His body is frail and he weighs about a hundred pounds. He eats nothing but fruit and nuts and drinks goat's milk. He limits himself to five varieties of food in one day and never dines after dark. Frequently he fasts; once he abstained from food for a period of twenty-one days. He arises each morning at four o'clock. He dresses only in homespun and usually goes stripped to the waist. His feet are bare except for sandals when outdoors. With wretched teeth, large ears, prominent nose and shaved head, he is physically one of the least impressive of men. Yet his penetrating eyes, contagious smile, and serene countenance make him a superlatively magnetic personality.

On numerous occasions he has been sentenced to prison. Mobs have shouted for his blood. He has been stoned and beaten. Often he has been refused admission to hotels and other public buildings, and has been ejected from railway trains because of the prejudice

of white patrons. Many times he has been subjected to insults and indignities. For years he has been penniless. Long ago he dispossessed himself of private property. No symbols of pomp and power set him on a pedestal apart from his fellows.

Yet he is beloved by more millions of human beings and has a greater multitude of disciples and devotees than any other person in many generations. Indeed, it is entirely probable that in all history no other individual in his own lifetime ever received such homage and adoration as has been accorded to the Spinner of Sabar-mati. Little children flock about him as naturally as they climb upon a father's knee. Everywhere in his own land he is revered as "Mahatma," or Great Soul. "He appeals to the hearts of the Indian people," says an Anglican Bishop, "as no other man has done, probably since the days of Buddha. . . . Even men who strongly dissent from his political ideas, his theory of government and his views about Western civilization, yet regard him with profound veneration; while to the uneducated masses he is an incarnation of deity."

He is now leading a movement for the liberty of his three hundred million countrymen which threatens the very foundations of the mightiest empire of this era. No Cromwell, no Mazzini, no Washington ever desired freedom more passionately than does this saint in politics. Without machine guns, bombing planes and poison gas, he and his followers are bidding defiance to the most powerfully armed nation in the world. With his people steeped in ignorance, enervated by climate and disease, paralyzed by social custom, and torn by factional antagonisms, he goes forward unperturbed by fear or doubt as to the ultimate success of his cause. On a scale never before equalled in an actual political situation, he is pitting soul-force against brute-force and is attempting to overcome evil without hatred or violence. Unique among nationalists, he seeks independence for his people by peaceful means. Differ with his judgment at a hundred points as you may, you cannot escape the spell of his personality. His serenity approaches that of Buddha, his faith is as unflinching as that of St. Paul, his courage equals that of Garibaldi, his love reminds one of St. Francis. May it not be that he is the greatest man of the age?

## EARLY LIFE

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in India on October 2, 1869, at Porbandar on the Sea of Oman. His father and grandfather had occupied the office of Prime Minister of the semi-independent Porbandar State. Mohandas married at the age of twelve, in accordance with the general custom of his people. At nineteen he sailed for England to study law. After three years in London, he returned

to India in 1891, with the purpose of settling down as a barrister in Bombay. He was so shy and embarrassed when for the first time he arose to address the court that words completely forsook him and in great confusion he sank into his seat. The experience so unnerved him that he resolved to abandon the profession of law and seek employment as a teacher. When his application for a position in the high school was rejected, he left Bombay and went to Rajkot, where he earned a moderate income by drafting legal papers.

Through his brother's influence he received and accepted an offer to go to South Africa in behalf of an Indian company which had a claim for \$200,000 pending in one of the courts there. Little did he realize that the next twenty-one years of his life were to be devoted to an heroic and sacrificial struggle in South Africa! So significant did the experience of these years prove to be that Tolstoy wrote that he regarded Gandhi's activity in the Transvaal as "the most essential work, the most important of all the work now being done in the world."

## NON-COOPERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

For a year Mr. Gandhi settled down in Pretoria and devoted himself to the legal question which had brought him to the city. Eventually the case was won and Gandhi returned to Durban. Prior to sailing he was given a farewell dinner at the home of a friend. By sheer chance he happened to glance at a paragraph in a local newspaper headed "Indian Franchise," which described a bill pending before the Legislature designed to deprive Indians of their right to elect members of the Natal Legislative Assembly. After a prolonged discussion of the whole situation, Gandhi was persuaded to postpone his departure for one month and lead the opposition to the disfranchisement bill. The farewell dinner was thus transformed into a working committee, and the month's delay was destined to be lengthened into a further stay of twenty years.

During the next two decades Gandhi devoted himself with tireless zeal and exceptional efficiency to the task of securing justice for his exploited countrymen in South Africa. The members of his family were brought from India. At one time his earnings from his legal practice reached the sum of \$15,000 per year, most of which was used in the crusade for the removal of oppressive and discriminatory practices against Indians. Countless meetings of protest were arranged, petitions were circulated, a weekly periodical was published, delegations were sent to England and to India, strikes were directed, and most significant of all, an extensive and prolonged campaign of passive resistance, or Satyagraha, was organized.

Mr. Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned time after time. Once

he was attacked and beaten by a discontented minority among his own followers. A mob of Europeans assaulted him and would have killed him except for the timely appearance of an English lady. The endurance of insults was an almost daily necessity. Yet Gandhi was able to keep himself entirely free from bitterness and hatred. Due to the religious training received from his parents, the reading of Hindu scriptures, the study of the Sermon on the Mount, and the influence of Tolstoy, he had become thoroughly imbued with the doctrine of non-resistance and the gospel of returning good for evil. Not that he believed in "passivism" or acquiescence in the face of injustice. On the contrary, he advocated the utmost opposition to wrongdoing; even to the extent, if necessary, of laying down one's life in the effort. But only by the use of non-violent means. Hatred must be resisted by love, violence by meekness, cruelty by suffering, inhumanity by forgiveness. Not hopeless resignation nor violent antagonism, but an unceasing effort to overcome evil by doing good. Upon this foundation rests the strategy of Satyagraha, which means truth-force, love-force or soul-force.

Fourteen years after Mr. Gandhi landed in South Africa the crowning insult of all was inflicted by the enactment in the Transvaal of the Asiatic Registration Act which required all Indians and Chinese to register and leave their finger prints upon record, as if they were all actual or potential criminals. The significance of this measure will be enhanced by remembering that it did not stand alone but was the climax of a long series of discriminatory acts. With so much at stake, Gandhi and the other Indian leaders urged their countrymen to disobey the law by refusing to register and to accept the consequences however serious. This policy was adopted and a seven years' campaign of Satyagraha was inaugurated. Before success crowned their efforts in 1914 just prior to the outbreak of the World War, the Indian community in South Africa endured terrible hardships and exhibited amazing fortitude. Ten thousand Indians were ultimately sent to jail. Mr. Gandhi was several times imprisoned and released. Indeed, he was arrested three times within four days. Mrs. Gandhi and a number of Indian women were sentenced to three months' hard labor. Without hatred or violence, his indomitable band refused to obey oppressive laws and cheerfully accepted the consequences.

Finally, after a storm of protest had been raised in India and the Viceroy had publicly defended the Satyagrahis of South Africa for their civil disobedience, General Smuts and his colleagues were compelled to capitulate. The \$15 poll tax was repealed, marriages celebrated according to Hindu and Moslem rites were legalized, changes were made in the form of registration, the entry into South Africa of educated Indians was facilitated, and an assurance was given that all laws would be administered justly, with due regard for the rights



of Indians. These provisions by no means removed all the grievances of the Indian community but they did represent a striking victory of Satyagraha over Governmental violence.

## EFFECTS OF THE WORLD WAR

In great elation Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi sailed for England en route to a permanent residence in India once more. How little could they foresee the future course of their lives! That an even more impressive demonstration of Satyagraha on a vaster scale would be staged was hidden from their knowledge.

England entered the World War two days before Gandhi arrived in London. Almost immediately he volunteered for ambulance work. He and about 80 other Indians were accepted and began training. Shortly thereafter ill health compelled his return to the warmer climate of India. At a War conference convened by the Government of India, Gandhi made a speech of one sentence in favor of the resolution endorsing recruiting, as follows: "With a full sense of my responsibility I beg to support the resolution." To the consternation of some of his friends, he then started on a campaign of active recruiting for the army. Often he walked twenty miles a day from village to village urging young Indian men to volunteer for the army. The strain was too great. An attack of dysentery sent him to the brink of the grave and was followed by a long period of convalescence. To this day he is unable to stand as he addresses meetings.

Intimate friends like C. F. Andrews are unable to reconcile Gandhi's support of the World War with his advocacy of Satyagraha. Perhaps it should be pointed out that twice before Gandhi had done war service, although not as a fighting man. In the Boer War and in the Zulu War he served as a stretcher bearer in the ambulance corps. Three times he was decorated for bravery. He recorded his reasons for supporting the World War as follows: "All of us recognized the immorality of war. . . . It was quite clear to me that participation in war could never be consistent with *ahimsa* (non-violence). But it is not always given to one to be equally clear about one's duty. A votary of truth is often obliged to grope in the dark. . . . When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of *ahimsa* is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet whole-heartedly try to free himself, his nation, and the world from war."

Elsewhere Mr. Gandhi has written: "Being a confirmed war-resister, I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons, in spite of opportunities to take such training. It was per-

haps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of Government based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that Government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war, unless I non-cooperated with that Government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me."

Some of Gandhi's friends say that his own conduct during the past forty years is more convincing than the arguments he advances in justification of his support of three wars. Consistently he has personally refrained from the use of violence and constantly has relied exclusively upon soul-force to achieve the ends most ardently sought. Most men preach better than they practice; while Gandhi seems to practice better than he preaches.

## BRITAIN'S SERVICE TO INDIA

During the months following the Armistice the situation in India changed drastically. The Rowlatt Act and the Amritsar massacre transformed Gandhi from a recruiting agent for the British army into a tireless opponent of British rule in India. On many occasions he had expressed his confidence in and admiration of the British constitution. Repeatedly he had praised it as the best governmental system in the world. That British rule has substantially improved conditions of life for millions of Indians is beyond question. Monuments to its credit are to be seen on every hand. The story has been told in countless volumes. The maintenance of law and order ranks first among British accomplishments. The lady who indignantly reproached the Indians in a Calcutta newspaper used inelegant language but raised a pertinent question: "Have Indians forgotten how they were plundered and persecuted by self-seeking robbers and tyrants, in the evil days before the British bulldog pinned them to the dust? Those were dire days indeed!" To have kept the peace among the numberless hostile factions over so vast an area is an achievement of which Britain may justly be proud. The civil service has maintained an unexcelled standard of integrity and efficiency. A high quality of justice has been administered.

Next in order came the prevention of famines and the reduction of disease. The construction of an extensive network of railways and the completion of vast irrigation projects have benefited India to an enormous extent. The investment of some five billion dollars of British capital in India has greatly stimulated industry and commerce. An elaborate system of education has been created and maintained. Thousands of British missionaries, educators, physicians, and social workers have rendered constructive and heroic service to

the Indian people. Huge volumes would be required to describe in detail Britain's service to India.

## IGNORANCE AND INDIFFERENCE

Yet bitterness and hostility toward British rule are accumulating at an alarming pace. That public opinion in Europe and America should understand clearly the reasons for this antagonism is supremely important. The primary cause is found in the prevailing attitudes of the British toward Indian peoples and problems. Indifference, condescension and contempt have often been manifested. One should hasten to point out that many individual Englishmen have revealed a genuine understanding of Indian questions and have shown sympathy, appreciation and cooperation with the Indian people. Hundreds of Britishers have identified themselves completely with the Indian cause. Nevertheless it is true that in spite of the fact that some two-thirds of His Majesty's subjects live in India, the English nation as a whole has remained ignorant of and indifferent to conditions in that land. Fortunately, the situation in this respect has shown marked improvement during the past year.

A British publicist recently wrote: "I don't suppose that the number of Englishmen who are well-informed about India average six in each constituency. It would be easy to pack the whole lot of them into the Royal Albert Hall in London. This is the God-endowed British democracy which is supposed to govern India!" "India empties the House of Commons," wrote a retired British civil servant a year ago, "and Indian subjects are boresome to the ordinary reader. Verily, India is a long way off." Four years previously another English writer exclaimed: "They say in Oxford today that the mention of the word *India* is guaranteed to empty the smallest hall in the city." In an address on February 17, 1931, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India, said: "You know what the history of India in Parliament is. I have spent nearly all my adult years in the House, and what has there been of Indian affairs? An annual debate, interrupted at times by a 'count.' In the ordinary way half a dozen or a dozen questions a week is the beginning and end of the responsibility of Parliament for the government of India."

## SUPERIORITY AND INFERIORITY

With so little interest in or knowledge of India, the English people have found it easy to believe the exaggerated accounts by retired civil servants of blessings bestowed upon the unfortunate "heathens" of that land. A self-righteous attitude became all but universal and is still widely prevalent. British rule in India, writes a retired official in

the year 1929, was a "trust committed to us by Providence, history or fate—some may prefer one name, others another, to describe the great causes that have linked the destinies of Great Britain and India. I think that most Christian people will prefer to regard it as a task committed to our nation by a Divine Providence." Lord Salisbury once exclaimed: "I do not see what is the use of this political hypocrisy; it does not deceive the natives of India; they know perfectly well that they are governed by a superior race." The famous John Lawrence, Governor and Viceroy, once wrote: "We are here by our own moral superiority, by the force of circumstances and the will of Providence. These alone constitute our charter of government, and in doing the best we can for the people we are bound by our conscience and not theirs." An English professor said: "From all I can make out, we have done the greatest work in India that has ever been done by one country for another, and it has been received with nothing of gratitude." Literally thousands of similar expressions could easily be assembled.

The idea of superiority is usually accompanied by the concept of inferiority. The prevailing attitude of Englishmen in India, with numerous notable exceptions, has been one of condescension if not actual contempt toward the "natives," a term which has therefore become extremely obnoxious to educated Indians. The following statement which was made in the House of Commons nearly a half century ago remained true for many years thereafter: "The subjects of the Queen in India have always been treated as subjects to be trodden under foot. You have only to go to any regimental affair in India to hear them spoken of not as 'Indians' or 'natives,' but as 'niggers.' The notable Lord (Marquess of Salisbury) who is at the head of the Government has himself called them 'worse than Hottentots.'" Many years ago a meeting of Europeans in Calcutta protested against the passage of a certain bill on the ground that its enactment "would permit the jackass to kick the lion."

Apart from the missionary community, the British in India until recent years have had only limited social contacts with Indians, the latter often being barred from membership in clubs frequented by Europeans. Few things are more galling to sensitive Indian gentlemen than the frigid assumption of superiority manifested in a hundred subtle, or blatant ways by many Britishers. The attitude of the latter is not unlike that of white men in the South toward Negroes. They have protected and befriended Indians in countless ways, but have expected the latter to "stay in their place." The significance of self-respect was emphasized several years ago by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in these words: "You may take away all kinds of things from us, who are Indians by birth, and we shall passively endure this treatment; but if you touch our *izzat* (which may be translated 'self-respect') no Indian will endure it. We would rather die a thousand

deaths than lose it. We are the most patient and kindly people in the world until this final insult is offered us which we call 'the loss of *izzat*.' Beware lest ever you drive us to this extreme point." A marked improvement in attitude during the past decade seems to have occurred, but the old assumption of superiority still prevails widely and is more bitterly resented than ever before. The British often complain, and with good reason, of the recklessness of the vernacular press, while at the same time their own papers in India and at home treat the Nationalist leaders with the utmost discourtesy and contempt.

### BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARD INDIAN FREEDOM

Under the circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that the British have only recently begun to take seriously the question of self-government for India, and even now are facing it with reluctance and alarm. Prior to the World War it was tacitly assumed that British rule would continue indefinitely or permanently. Many isolated utterances of British statesmen who referred to the day when India would become autonomous may be pointed out, but they were never taken seriously. The general assumption was that the "superior" must continue to rule the "inferior."

In fairness to the British it should be pointed out that the obstacles which have prevented the creation of a stable and efficient Indian national government are titanic. The people are separated by barriers of race, language, religion and caste. The poverty of the masses is appalling. Illiteracy is greater than in almost any other country in the world. Paralyzing religious beliefs and social custom block the pathway of social progress. Because of these stupendous difficulties and because of their own self-righteous attitude of superiority, the British down to the year 1917 made only the feeblest of efforts to prepare India for genuine self-government. Rarely in history has a ruling race regarded subject peoples as fit for self-government. Yet all the free nations of the world were under foreign domination at one or more periods in the past.

It may prove illuminating to quote several typical British expressions toward freedom for India. In 1890 Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said: "The principle of election or Government by representation is not an Eastern idea ; it does not fit Eastern traditions or Eastern minds. . . . You must not drift into an elective Government of India. . . . Do not imagine that you can introduce it in small doses, and that it will be satisfied by that concession . . . wherever it has made for itself a small channel it has been able to widen and widen gradually, until all has been carried before it, and that is the danger of any actions you

may take in India.” About this time an English professor said that “the concession of the smallest reform to India would lead to universal anarchy.”

Bishop Whitehead wrote that when he landed in India in 1884 “the view that England should govern India as a conquered country and keep it in a state of perpetual subjection was at that time widely accepted by both officials and non-officials in the European community.” The Bishop then pointed out that “in the selection of Lord Curzon’s speeches published in 1906 the idea of preparing the Indians for self-government drops almost entirely out of sight. I have not been able to find a single allusion to it. The word self-government does not appear in the index.” About twenty-nine years ago the author of a popular volume on India expressed the opinion that “local self-government in India is even more a folly than a fraud.” The year following Sir John Strachey said: “We cannot foresee the time in which the cessation of our rule would not be the signal for universal anarchy and ruin, and it is clear that the only hope for India is the long continuance of the benevolent but strong government of Englishmen.”

The Morley-Minto reforms would not satisfy even the most moderate of Indians today, yet in 1921 Lord Morley, himself a noted liberal, said: “My reforms were quite enough for a generation at least.” In 1925 a former provincial governor said: “We have, in callous disregard of the welfare of the masses, in recent years, let loose the demon of discord in the form of Western democratic institutions.” This same retired official referred to “self-determination” as a “will-o’-the-wisp,” and said: “In 1917 it was certainly premature to assume that India would ever develop a desire or a capacity for ‘responsible,’ i.e. democratic government. Many facts then, and even more since, point the other way.”

Another retired provincial governor in a volume published in 1929 spoke of the “hope of self-government” as an “apple of discord,” and said that “no more deceptive phrase was ever invented as a political shibboleth” than “self-determination.” After spending nearly forty years in India this Englishman wrote: “As neither ‘full responsible government’ nor ‘full Dominion status’ is within practical politics, the question for the present is purely academic. . . . The chance of her becoming a democracy *in esse*, is in the womb of distant history.” At the end of 1929 the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill wrote: “The idea that India is a nation, or could ever be fashioned into a nation, is known to be a delusion by everyone acquainted with the facts.”

While there have been numerous exceptions, the attitude revealed in these statements has been dominant among British officials in India for many decades. The result has been that, while many individual Indians have received a thorough training in the science of

government, the whole problem has been approached in a half-hearted spirit even when any attempt at all has been made to prepare India for freedom. During the past decade India has enjoyed a large measure of autonomy and has been promised an even greater degree of self-government. But the most that has been contemplated falls far short of immediate and complete Dominion Status, although it is possible that the threat of the independence movement will now force this concession.

## THE ECONOMIC DRAIN

Another grievance of Indian nationalists against Great Britain is that of economic exploitation. They are constantly lamenting "the drain" of their resources to England. The experts differ sharply as to the facts. Some writers maintain that India receives a fair return for every pound that finds its way to England and that the net result of British rule has been to raise the standard of living in India. This idea is challenged by another school of economists who maintain that India has been bled by the British. It is not my purpose to go into the relative merits of the two points of view. In outlining the reasons for the resentment and hostility of many Indians toward the British, it is not necessary to establish the *truth* about any given question, but only to state what Indians *think* is true. That Indian Nationalists *believe* that their country is being drained is beyond argument. It is the subject upon which there is most unanimity and about which they complain most often.

The items usually included in "the drain" are payments for the maintenance of British troops in India out of Indian revenues, high salaries for British civil servants in India, pensions for retired British soldiers and civil officials, generous furlough allowances for British soldiers and civil servants, excessively high profits for British manufacturers, merchants and planters, interest on the public debt which includes part of the cost incurred by the British in conquering India, and interest on British capital invested in India. The total amount of "the drain" is usually estimated at 150 million dollars annually. In their present mood Indian Nationalists find it easy to believe that their country is being bled white by Great Britain. An even more serious charge is that in the early days India was deliberately plundered by the British conquerors and that the latter then sought to crush Indian industries by manipulating import and export duties in such a way as to favor British goods. Concerning the extensive plundering and extortion which were resorted to by the conquering hero Clive, the author of the *Oxford History of India* says: "Mir Jafer received the reward of his treason and was formally installed as Nawab by Clive . . . the new ruler was made to

pay well for his promotion . . . Clive received the gigantic sum of £ 234,000 (\$1,170,000) and Members of Council from £ 50,000 to £ 80,000 (\$250,000 to \$400,000) each. A little later Clive also obtained from the Nawab an assignment of revenue on the lands south of Calcutta, which was known as 'Clive's Jagir,' and which brought in nearly £ 30,000 (\$150,000) a year."

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### MUTINY OR WAR OF INDEPENDENCE?

The relations between Britishers and Indians were permanently embittered by the resort to extreme measures of repression on three fateful occasions. It should be pointed out, however, that relative to other imperialist governments Great Britain has ruled with a minimum use of violence. The first of these events has been described as The Great Indian Mutiny and also as The First War of Independence. The atrocities perpetrated on British soldiers and civilians and the agonies to which they were subjected struck horror into the British public mind and have colored every subsequent judgment. The fact is not equally well known in the West, however, that British atrocities perpetrated on Indian soldiers and civilians left a similarly indelible mark upon the Indian public mind.

To the credit of his nation let it be recorded that an Englishman, Edward Thompson, has assembled the evidence in a volume entitled *The Other Side of the Medal*. The author cites incontrovertible evidence that the British inflicted excessive cruelties upon many Indians. Blowing Indians from the mouth of cannon was a common method of execution. Prisoners were sometimes branded with red-hot irons. At least a few prisoners were slowly roasted to death. Mr. John William Kaye in his *History of the Sepoy War in India* gives the following description of the sack of Allahabad by the British: ". . . soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assize, or slaying natives without any assize at all, regardless of sex or age. Afterwards the thirst for blood grew stronger still. It is on the records of our British Parliament, in papers home by the Governor-General of India in Council, that 'the aged, women and children, are sacrificed as well as those guilty of rebellion.' They were not deliberately hanged, but burnt to death in their villages. Englishmen did not hesitate to boast, or to record their boastings in writing, that they had 'spared no one,' and that 'peppering away at niggers' was very pleasant pastime, 'enjoyed amazingly.'" The renowned Nicholson wrote: "Let us propose a Bill for the flaying alive, impalement or burning of the murderers of the women and children at Delhi. The idea of simply hanging the perpetrators of such atrocities is maddening. . . . If I had them in my power today, and knew that I were to die tomorrow, I would inflict the most excruciating tortures . . . on them with an easy conscience."



A correspondent of *The Englishman* published in Calcutta, on November 16, 1857, wrote: "God has enabled us to take signal vengeance on the people of Delhi, and all others round about Delhi have been completely plundered, not one native inhabitant is to be seen in it now, thousands were killed. . . . By the strong hand of the God of Battles we are out of danger." Yet Sir George W. Forrest concludes his *History of the Indian Mutiny* with these words: "Justice was done, mercy was shown to all who were not guilty of deliberate murder, the land cleansed of blood." The general tendency on the part of English writers to emphasize the atrocities committed by mutineers and to pass quickly or silently over the record of British inhumanities creates extreme resentment in the minds of Indian Nationalists.

## ROWLATT ACT AND AMRITSAR

Another major cause of bitterness was the passage of the Rowlatt Act in 1919, a sedition measure designed to enable the Government to cope more effectively with conspiracies, which provided that under certain circumstances the right of trial by jury should be abolished and which placed inquisitorial power in the hands of governmental officials. Coming so quickly after India had sent 800,000 soldiers and 400,000 non-combatants overseas and had expended some 800 million dollars in support of Great Britain in the World War, this measure was regarded as a stab in the back. That it was not necessary is indicated by the fact that it was never used in a single case and was a dead letter from the moment of its enactment. Its only achievement was to send the poison of distrust and enmity coursing through Indian veins.

Mr. Gandhi was slowly recovering from a long illness contracted while recruiting for the British army when first he learned of the proposed sedition bill. Instantly he was filled with indignation and determination to resist the passage or enforcement. When it became a law, he organized a general *hartal*, a day of mourning on which shops were closed and business suspended. Huge demonstrations were held in various cities. In Delhi violence occurred and several people were killed. Riots broke out in several other places. Martial law was proclaimed in Amritsar. In the excitement of the moment General Dyer, the commanding officer, committed one of the gravest blunders and perpetrated one of the foulest crimes in the annals of the British Army.

Let the story of the Black Act be told by Sir Valentine Chirol, a conservative British publicist: ". . . without a word of warning he opened fire at about 100 yards' range upon a dense crowd, collected mainly in the lower and more distant part of the enclosure around a

platform from which speeches were being delivered. The crowd was estimated by him at 6,000, by others at 10,000 and more, but practically unarmed, and all quite defenceless. The panic-stricken multitude broke at once, but for ten consecutive minutes he kept up a merciless fusillade—in all 1650 rounds—on that seething mass of humanity, caught like rats in a trap, vainly rushing for the few narrow exits or lying flat on the ground to escape the rain of bullets, which he personally directed to the points where the crowd was thickest. The 'targets,' to use his own word, were good, and when at the end of those ten minutes, having almost exhausted his ammunition, he marched his men off by the way they came, he had killed, according to the official figures only wrung out of Government months later, 379, and he left about 1200 wounded on the ground, for whom, again to use his own word, he did not consider it his 'job' to take the slightest thought . . . on his own showing, he deliberately made up his mind whilst marching his men to Jallianwala and would not have flinched from still greater slaughter if the narrowness of the approaches had not compelled him regretfully to leave his machine guns behind. His purpose, he declared, was to 'strike terror into the whole of the Punjab.' ”

An inexcusably provocative order was then issued that all Indians passing through certain designated streets in Amritsar must crawl upon their hands and knees, or as Mr. Gandhi phrased it, "innocent men and women were made to crawl like worms on their bellies." The conduct of General Dyer was condemned by a vote in the House of Commons but a majority of the House of Lords defended his use of severe measures and deplored the attack upon him. A London daily paper raised a popular purse of \$130,000 for the General and presented him with a jeweled sword in appreciation of his action. Many Englishmen in India praised him as the savior of the empire. All this fanned the flames of Indian resentment to the point of explosion.

## THE KALIFAT QUESTION

The injection of the Kalifat question still further infuriated India. More Moslems reside in India than in any other country. Nearly seventy millions of the subjects of the Emperor of India are followers of the Prophet. All the faithful revered the Sultan of Turkey as Kalif or supreme sovereign of Islam. The Moslem leaders in India supported Great Britain in the War upon the condition that the religious and temporal sovereignty of the Sultan-Kalif should be respected. Moreover, the Moslems of all lands, including India, believed that Great Britain had made definite pledges to help create an independent Arab-Moslem state which would include the Holy Places of Arabia, Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia. Therefore, the

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news of the crushing peace terms to be imposed on Turkey was received with consternation and indignation. Practically the whole Moslem population of India was thus completely alienated. Because Mr. Gandhi genuinely sympathized with the Moslems in their hour of betrayal and because he saw an opportunity to unite Mussulman and Hindu in a common crusade for self-government, he accepted an invitation to preside at an All-India Kalifat Conference.

The Rowlatt Act, the Amritsar massacre and the Kalifat question—this combination created intense bitterness and enmity toward British rule in India. For many years resentment against foreign domination had been accumulating. The ferment of nationalism had been spreading and becoming more dynamic. The unconscious or blatant assumption of superiority on the part of most Britishers was year by year becoming more galling to sensitive Indians. Countless discriminations and humiliations deepened their desire to throw off alien rule. A servile attitude on the part of many Indians was being created and the process of emasculation was alarming to their leaders. The knowledge that Great Britain's economic policy, while benefiting India in many ways, had severely exploited great sections of its people, was becoming more widely known. It may prove illuminating if we ask: were the grievances of the thirteen colonies against King George as legitimate and extensive as those endured by India during recent decades?

At any rate, Gandhi felt the situation to be intolerable and often expressed himself in words like these: "I have considered for thirty years, and been driven to the conclusion that British rule in its present form has proved a curse to India. I consider that I would be less than truthful if I did not describe as satanic a Government which has been guilty of fraud, murder and wanton cruelty: which still remains unrepentant and resorts to untruth to cover its guilt."

## NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION

India had reached the breaking point and Gandhi advocated the beginning of non-violent non-cooperation, including the following: surrender of all titles of honor and honorary offices; non-participation in Government loans; suspension by lawyers of practice, and settlement of court disputes by private arbitration; boycott of Government schools by children and parents; boycott of reformed Councils; non-participation in Government parties and other official functions; refusal to accept any civil or military post; agreements to spread the doctrine of Swadeshi or home industries.

The response to this appeal was unparalleled. Some thirty thousand Indians gladly went to prison in the campaign of civil disobedience which followed. Nationalist lawyers gave up their practice, merchants suffered loss, workers went on strike, officials re-

signed their positions, teachers boycotted Government schools, students left their classes. Mr. Gandhi returned his war medals, Sir Rabindranath Tagore repudiated his knighthood and their example was widely followed. For a moment it appeared that the non-cooperation movement would sweep all before it. British officials have since admitted that they felt powerless to cope with this bewildering strategy.

At the height of the campaign Gandhi exercised a magic spell over tens of millions of his countrymen. Everywhere he was acclaimed as Mahatma or Great Soul, the most exalted title it was possible to bestow upon him. Pictures were painted in which he was represented as the sacred Sri-Krishna, much to his regret and over his protest. Enormous crowds greeted him wherever he went. The Indian National Congress delegated unlimited power to him and authorized him to appoint his successor if he himself should be imprisoned.

Throughout this momentous period the Mahatma made constant and eloquent appeals to his countrymen to refrain from enmity and violence. Repeatedly he declared that there was no hatred in his own heart. "By a long course of prayerful discipline," he wrote, "I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know that this is a big claim. Nevertheless I make it in all humility. But I can and do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of Government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishman, as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open to us. My non-cooperation has its root not in hatred but in love." He pleaded for goodwill toward Englishmen, while urging ceaseless opposition to the abhorred British policy. Satyagraha was interpreted in countless speeches and articles. Soul-force was proclaimed as the way of redemption. To an unprecedented degree reliance was placed upon spiritual processes. His followers were exhorted to accept any humiliation and endure any suffering rather than to retaliate with violence. Evil must be overcome by absorption. "Few things are more remarkable," wrote an English missionary concerning this period, "than the disappearance of bomb and revolver from Indian political agitation just at the time when Ireland and Russia seemed to be achieving a large part of their national aims by the use of force and assassination."

That the non-cooperation movement was on the verge of success has since been admitted by British officials. Months afterward Sir George Lloyd, former Governor of Bombay, in an interview with Mr. Drew Pearson, said: "Just a thin, spindly, shrimp of a fellow was Gandhi! But he swayed three hundred and nineteen million

people and held them at his beck and call. He didn't care for material things. He preached nothing but the ideals and morals of India. You can't govern a country with ideals! Still, that was where he got his grip upon the people. He was their god . . . He gave us a scare! His program filled our jails. You can't go on arresting people forever, you know—not when there are 319,000,000 of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes! God knows where we should have been! Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world history; and *it came within an inch of succeeding*. But he couldn't control men's passions. They became violent and he called off his program. You know the rest. We jailed him."

## SUSPENSION AND PENITENCE

Immeasurable as was the influence of the Mahatma, it was not sufficient. In spite of all his persuasiveness, violence broke out. Riots occurred in several places. At Chauri Chaura especially the crowd went mad and committed terrible atrocities. Gandhi was stunned by the news of these barbarities. In deep agony of spirit he decided upon the drastic step of calling off the campaign of mass non-cooperation. This decision produced the utmost consternation within the ranks of his colleagues, many of whom regarded it as fatal to the cause of Indian freedom. The extent of Gandhi's power was indicated by the fact that nevertheless his decision was accepted.

Mr. Gandhi also felt impelled to do penance in the form of a five-day fast. "I must undergo personal cleansing," he said. "I must become a better instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary mental co-operation . . . I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved skillless to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill . . . The only way love punishes is by suffering . . . I would, at any rate, suffer every humiliation, every torture, absolute ostracism and death itself to prevent the movement from becoming violent or a precursor of violence."

## IMPRISONMENT

A month later the Mahatma was arrested and sentenced to six years in prison, after one of the most notable trials in legal history. The indictment was based on three articles which Gandhi had written. The fact that he had abandoned mass disobedience did not mean that henceforth he was to refrain from denouncing acts of injustice on the part of the Government. On the contrary, the three articles which formed the basis of his indictment contained such burning words as these: "We seek arrest because the so-called freedom is

slavery. We are challenging the might of this Government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the Government. We want to *compel* its submission to the people's will . . . Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions . . . How can there be any compromise whilst the British Lion continues to shake his gory claws in our faces? . . . No empire intoxicated with red wine or power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this British Empire, which is based upon organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe."

At the trial Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty in a memorable address to the court in the course of which he said: "I knew that I was playing with fire, I ran the risk, and if I was set free, I would still do the same. I felt this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say what I say here just now. I wanted to avoid violence, I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad. I am deeply sorry for it, and I am therefore here to submit not to a light penalty, but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, Judge, is either to resign your post or inflict on me the severest penalty."

## THE LONG FAST

Upon the advent to power of the Labor Government in England in 1924, Mr. Gandhi was pardoned and released after having been imprisoned for nearly two years. He had undergone an operation for appendicitis and his health was still in a precarious condition. Before his convalescence was completed, frequent and alarming riots between Hindus and Moslems broke out. In great agony of spirit, the Mahatma felt obliged to impose a fast of twenty-one days upon himself. In many previous crises he had fasted, sometimes for as long as seven or even fourteen days. The announcement of this decision created extreme anxiety among his friends who earnestly warned him that in view of his weakened condition the result would probably be fatal. But he was unyielding and, at Delhi in the home of Mahomed Ali the Mussulman, began his act of penance.

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The ordeal which followed was an amazing exhibition of the supremacy of mind over body, or spirit over matter. At best his health is fragile. The serious operation had almost exhausted his meager reserves of vitality. Yet for three weeks he did not touch food, existing solely upon water! And on every one of these days he performed his allotted task at the spinning wheel! On the twelfth day the doctors warned him that he was in imminent danger of death. His dearest friend, C. F. Andrews, implored him to take food in order to save his life. The only response was: "Have faith in God." And again: "You have forgotten the power of prayer." For nine days longer his famished body was deprived of food. But his spirit was radiant and triumphant throughout.

All India awaited the outcome with intense eagerness. Temporarily all rioting ceased. A "Unity" Conference of Hindus and Moslems was held at Delhi and pledged opposition to all religious strife and enmity. Few acts in recent generations had moved as many millions to such depths of emotion as this self-imposed suffering of the Great Soul of India.

## REFORM WORK

For several years Mr. Gandhi then devoted himself chiefly to social reform. Not until the end of 1928 did he resume active leadership in politics. His three primary interests were the extension of Khaddar or homespun, the removal of untouchability and the granting of human rights to outcasts, and the reconciliation of Hindus and Moslems. He sought to abolish child-marriage and to make it possible for girl-widows to remarry. He conducted many experiments in food reform. His time was divided between residence at the Satyagraha Ashram, or religious retreat at Sabarmati near Ahmedabad in Western India, and long tours through the provinces.

The Ashram was established in 1915 shortly after Gandhi's return to India. About two hundred persons reside in the colony. Allowances are granted to members from a common fund. The purpose of the Ashram is to train its members for national service. A rigorous discipline is observed. The day's activities began with corporate prayer at four o'clock in the morning. Eleven observances are required of all members: truth, non-violence or love, chastity, control of the palate, non-stealing, non-possession or poverty, physical labor, Swadeshi or promotion of home industries, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, tolerance.

## HAND SPINNING

No aspect of Gandhi's work has been subjected to wider misunderstanding and keener ridicule in the West than his advocacy

of home spinning and weaving. The real significance of his economic program cannot be understood apart from a knowledge of the agricultural situation in India. More than 107 million people in India are engaged exclusively in agricultural pursuits. Most peasants have only a small plot of ground to cultivate. The result is that these small holders do not have sufficient work to keep them occupied all the year. For at least one-fourth of the time they are unemployed, while most estimates place the figure at nearly one-half of the working year. They are not only confronted with a scarcity of capital, most of them are hopelessly in debt. The average per capita income in India is the lowest in the world, and has been estimated at from \$12 to \$40 annually, most authorities placing the figure at about \$18 per year. Moreover, they are fettered with many ancient customs and superstitions. To talk of their purchasing expensive machinery under present conditions is absurd. Moreover, only a mere fraction of them can find employment in industrial communities, the total number of industrial workers in all India being about two and a half millions. The alternatives before a hundred million Indian peasants, therefore, are to remain idle for long periods or to supplement their agricultural pursuits with some form of hand work.

Mr. Gandhi is strongly convinced that under present circumstances hand spinning and hand weaving are the way to economic salvation for India. Cloth is a staple commodity and a necessity for everyone. The purchase price of a charka or spinning wheel ranges from \$1 to \$2.50, while a hand-loom costs only \$7.50. Both can easily be made by village carpenters. Spinning is a simple process and not injurious to health. It can be done by men, women and older children during longer or shorter periods of unemployment throughout the year. If by this means a person earns only five cents per day for 180 days the amount thus received is equivalent to half a year's income for the average person in India. That is to say, the use of idle time would increase a man's annual income by 50 per cent. Since constructive labor is a better character builder than prolonged idleness, spinning is to be commended on moral grounds as well. Tirelessly Mahatma Gandhi proclaims this gospel from the platform, in conversation and through the printed page. He sets an example by spinning for at least half an hour every day. Even when on tour and extremely busy with important duties, he never fails to do his quota of spinning. During our long interviews with him the spinning went on almost automatically and in no way interfered with the flow of conversation.

The extension of home industries is an important phase of Gandhi's method of achieving independence for his people. "Much of the deep poverty of India," he says, "is due to the departure from Swadeshi in the economic life. If not a single article of com-



merce had been brought from outside India she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey . . . The Lancashire cloth, 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 sent out of India every year sixty crores (more or less) of rupees (\$225,000,000) 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?"

Continuing his interpretation of the historic effects of Britain's economic policy in India, Gandhi says: "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 . . . 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."

## ATTITUDE TOWARD INDUSTRIALISM

Mr. Gandhi's strong convictions concerning the imperative need of extending hand production among India's under-employed peasants, have colored his judgment concerning the use of machinery. Like his spiritual teachers, Tolstoy and Ruskin, he abhors many aspects of modern industrialism. His sweeping indictments have thrown him often to the charge of being blind to the blessings inherent in machine industry. From his many utterances on this subject, however, perhaps the following dialogue with a young Indian student is the most illuminating as to his real attitude:

"Are you against all machinery, Bapuji (a term of endearment meaning father)?" asked Ramachandran.

"How can I be," he answered, smiling at Ramachandran's naive question, "when I know that even the body is a most delicate piece of machinery? The spinning-wheel itself is a machine. What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on 'saving

labour' till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. To-day machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might."

"Then, Bapuji," said Ramachandran, "you are fighting not against machinery as such, but against its abuses, which are so much in evidence today?"

"I would unhesitatingly say 'yes'; but I would add that scientific truths and discoveries should first of all cease to be the mere instruments of greed. Then labourers will not be overworked, and machinery, instead of becoming a hindrance, will be a help. I am aiming, not at the eradication of all machinery, but its limitation . . . The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of men. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer Sewing Machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself. Mr. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing with her own hands, and simply out of love for her he devised the sewing machine, in order to save her from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour, but also the labour of everyone who could purchase a sewing machine."

"But, in that case," said Ramachandran, "there would have to be a factory for making these Singer Sewing Machines, and it would have to contain power-driven machinery of ordinary type."

"Yes," said Bapu, smiling at Ramachandran's eager opposition. "But I am Socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalized. They ought only to be working under the most attractive conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive-power. It is an alteration in the conditions of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease; and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but of a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. The machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to the man working it as to the State. The present mad rush will cease, and the labourers will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions I have in mind. The sewing machine had love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and honest humanitarian considerations and not greed the motive-power. Thus I would welcome any day a machine to straighten crooked spindles. Not that blacksmiths will cease to make

supplies; they will continue to provide the spindles; but when the spindle gets wrong every spinner will have a machine of his own to get it straight. Therefore replace greed by love and everything will come right."

## UNTOUCHABLES

The elevation of the forty to sixty million outcasts of India is another reform to which Gandhi has devoted himself. He regards untouchability as the greatest blot on Hinduism. Strange as it may appear to Western readers, he believes in caste, that is caste as interpreted in his own mind. Caste to him imposes duties rather than confers privileges. The idea that one caste is superior to another is obnoxious to him. In his opinion various castes have different responsibilities, but this division of society into functional groups does not necessarily connote superiority and inferiority. That millions of his countrymen should be regarded as pariahs or outcasts, treated with contempt and cruelly exploited severely shocks the sensitive spirit of the Mahatma.

On one occasion he replied to an address of welcome in a city of Western India: "I see that you have committed the error of omitting (from your address) the untouchables. A municipality that ignores the untouchables hardly deserves the name. The fact is that you wanted to flatter yourselves that you were honouring me, and you thought you could do so by referring only to a part of my activities . . . But I have often said that my effort for the removal of untouchability is an integral part of my life, and you cannot isolate it from my other activities . . . Those therefore who do believe in untouchability as part of Hinduism, or who are indifferent in the matter, cannot give me an address of welcome. I am no official, nor a sirdar, that you should give me a conventional address . . . I am a sweeper, a scavenger, a spinner, a weaver and a labourer, and I want, if at all, to be honoured as such . . . You should not therefore have presented to me this address. It will, however, serve as beacon-light to me. I hope that no association will trouble to present me with addresses if it cannot endorse my work for and among the untouchables."

Again and again he has cried out in words like these: " 'Untouchability' is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of pity or love . . . I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it, if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability; and, as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing . . . Untouchability is a

hydra-headed monster. It is therefore necessary, each time the monster lifts its head, to deal with it." Gandhi went further and admitted an untouchable family to the Ashram and later adopted the little daughter as his own child.

Under the title "Virus of Untouchability," Mr. Gandhi in *Young India*, June 11, 1931, discussed the case of an Indian who had permitted outcasts to take water from his well and afterward himself bathed in water from this well, thereby committing what a correspondent referred to as the "most heinous crime that a Hindu could commit." The Mahatma's attitude was expressed in clear terms: "Sjt. Subanagounder deserves warm congratulation for his bravery and pertinacity. The only advice I can give him is that he should take all risks in protecting the untouchables of his village and yet bear no ill-will to the villagers. He will find in the end that the villagers will cease to worry him . . . The only condition is that he must be prepared to sacrifice everything, suffer even his fields to lie fallow if the sinful boycott by the villagers succeeds in scaring labour away from him."

## HINDU-MOSLEM HOSTILITY

The hostility between Hindus and Moslems is regarded by Mr. Gandhi as one of the most serious problems now confronting his people. The roots of this conflict run deeply into the national life. The Moslems entered India as a conquering race and have vivid memories of the days when they ruled the land. They are strict monotheists and look with abhorrence upon the idolatry of the Hindus. Music is debarred in their religious services and long periods of unbroken silence are maintained, so they bitterly resent the noise and disturbance of passing processions. The Hindus, on the other hand, are infuriated by the sight of Moslems slaying cattle for food or sacrificial purposes at their religious festivals. Both groups become indignant at attempts to proselytize among their adherents. Economic rivalry still further accentuates the enmity between them. This religious strife has caused great agony of spirit to Gandhi and he has sought passionately to eliminate or reduce its bitterness.

## RETURN TO POLITICS

While he was promoting these various reforms during the years after his release from prison by the MacDonal Government, Mr. Gandhi was also laying the foundations for another campaign to secure political freedom. Constantly about him at the Sabarmati Ashram or retreat were scores of men and women being trained and disciplined for leadership. Repeated tours throughout India

gave the Mahatma an opportunity to scatter his message of social reform and non-cooperation with evil among throngs of people. He was in continuous consultation with Indian leaders of all shades of political opinion and with English friends. At the Calcutta meeting in 1928 of the Indian National Congress, the largest political party of the country, he resumed active political leadership and supported the independence resolution.

## REASONS FOR REJECTING ROUND TABLE

On October 31, 1929, Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, made a notable pronouncement which was currently interpreted as offering Dominion Status. The fact was soon revealed, however, that he referred to Dominion Status as a goal and not an immediate realization. Sherwood Eddy and I were fortunate in securing interviews at this critical period with both the Viceroy and the Mahatma. The latter made it clear that he was eager to attend the proposed Round Table Conference provided it was being called for the purpose of working out a form of government like that of Canada and the other dominions. He was equally emphatic, however, that he would not go to London to discuss Dominion Status as an objective or accept any advance in self-government for India which stopped short of a real change in status. Nothing less than *immediate equality of status* would suffice. He recognized the need for transitional measures and was willing to permit the British Government to retain temporary control of the Indian army, foreign affairs and relations with the Native States. All this, he maintained, must be the result of agreement after equality of status had been conceded. It was apparent that he was primarily concerned with the recovery of Indian freedom and self-respect and not with driving out the British. He went on to say that if the Prime Minister through the Viceroy would assure him publicly or privately that the Labor Government would support the immediate grant of Dominion Status at the forthcoming Round Table Conference, he would gladly consent to be a delegate and expressed the opinion that he could gain the consent of the Congress. This point of view was immediately conveyed to the Viceroy, the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India, and several other Members of Parliament. Unfortunately, however, the British Government was not at that time prepared to consider immediate Dominion Status, and consequently the desired assurance was not given to Mr. Gandhi.

## NON-COOPERATION IN 1930

The Nationalists or Congressmen were not willing to wait thirty or forty years for a change of status by stages. So the Lahore Con-

gress reiterated the demand for independence and authorized the Working Committee to launch a campaign of civil disobedience and non-violent non-cooperation. Repeatedly Mr. Gandhi had pointed out that 200 or 300 million Indians could not be governed by the 165,000 British residents any longer than the Indians were willing to be so governed. The entire system was propped up with Indian consent and assistance, and it was now proposed to topple over the system by knocking out the props.

Mahatma Gandhi showed himself a master strategist when he selected the salt monopoly as the first point of attack. While the salt tax did not appreciably affect the rich or well-to-do, it placed an extra burden upon the masses of Indians. It had long been denounced as unjust and oppressive by many Britishers, as well as by most Indians. Mr. Gandhi wrote: "There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax constitutes therefore the most inhuman poll tax that ingenuity of man can devise."

So instead of calling for civil disobedience in general, Gandhi and some 79 followers on March 12, 1930, started their famous march to the sea, with the announced purpose of violating the salt law which prohibited private manufacture without the payment of the assessed tax. Instantly the whole issue became dramatized and the eyes of all India were fixed upon the marching band. The Government was confronted with a serious dilemma: if law breaking were to be ignored the movement might spread like a flame; whereas if Gandhi should be arrested he would be regarded as a martyr and his influence enormously extended. A cautious policy was adopted in the hope that the movement would collapse. Finally, however, it was deemed necessary to take decisive action, and in the early morning of May 5th, Mr. Gandhi was seized, carried quickly away and sent to jail without trial, under a statute which empowered the authorities to imprison any person suspected of being a public menace.

## POLICE BRUTALITY

By thousands now rebellious Nationalists were put behind the bars, until eventually some 60,000 had been imprisoned for shorter or longer terms. Intimidation and brutality were also resorted to by the police. It would be unfair to attribute to Lord Irwin and his colleagues a desire to be cruel and inhuman, but there is no question that the lower officials and especially the Indian police were guilty of atrocious excesses. On the day of his arrest, Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy as follows: "I had hoped that the Government would fight the civil resisters in a civilised manner. I could have

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had nothing to say if in dealing with the civil resisters the Government had satisfied itself with applying the ordinary processes of law. Instead, whilst the known leaders have been dealt with more or less according to the legal formality, the rank and file have been often savagely and in some cases even indecently assaulted."

The following summary of acts of police brutality was later prepared by Miss Slade, an English woman who had become a resident at the Ashram, and printed in *Young India*:

- “1. *Lathi* blows on head, chest, stomach, joints ;
2. Thrusts with *lathis* in private parts, abdominal regions, chest, etc. ;
3. Stripping of men naked before beating ;
4. Tearing off of loin-cloth and thrusting of stick into *anus* ;
5. Pressing and squeezing of the testicles till a man becomes unconscious ;
6. Dragging of wounded men by legs or arms, often beating them the while ;
7. Throwing of wounded men into thorn hedges or into salt water ;
8. Riding of horses over men as they lie or sit on the ground ;
9. Thrusting of pins and thorns into men's bodies, sometimes even when they are unconscious ; and
10. Beating of men after they had become unconscious.

And other vile things too many to relate, besides foul language and blasphemy, calculated to hurt as much as possible, the most sacred feelings of the Satyagrahis.

The whole affair is one of the most devilish, cold-blooded and unjustifiable in the history of nations."

In the face of such extreme provocation, Mr. Gandhi's followers, nevertheless, to an amazing degree refrained from violence. There were, of course, sporadic outbreaks and some Englishmen were assassinated and others handled with violence. Regrettable as were these cases, the astounding fact was that so few Britishers were victims of violence. This is all the more remarkable when the fact is recalled that in India, as in every other country under parallel conditions, there are communists and anarchists who seek by terrorist tactics to overthrow the existing order. With widespread and bitter resentment against the arrogance and oppression of the foreign rulers and with an unfaltering determination to secure freedom, it is a political miracle that violence against the British was reduced to such an absolute minimum. Than this no more convincing testimony as to the illimitable influence wielded by the Mahatma could possibly be adduced.

## SACRIFICIAL BRAVERY

The courage and fortitude of the non-cooperators were impressive. A striking case was reported by Mr. Negley Farson, correspondent of the *Chicago Daily News*, in these vivid words: "Crash! Whack! Whack! Whack! . . . At last the crowd broke. Only the orange-clad women were left standing beside the prostrate figures of crumpled men. Congress volunteer ambulances clanging bells, stretcher-bearers running helter-skelter across the field. Whack! Whack! Whack! One's anger flamed at the sound of those *lathi* blows. Then came a band of fifty Sikhs and the most amazing scene I have ever witnessed. The Sikhs, as you know, are of a fierce, fighting brotherhood. . . . These Sikhs were Akalis of a fanatic religious sect. They wore the *karpan*, or sacred sword. And with them were fifteen of their young girls and women. . . . Coming from all districts as representatives of the fighting punjas, these splendid looking Sikhs swore they would not draw their *karpan*s to defend themselves—they would not leave the field—and, be it noted, they did not! 'Never, never, never!' they cried to the terrific delight of their Hindu brothers in swaraj. 'We will never retreat. We will die, we will die.' I cannot describe it—but such fanaticism made one feel sick. The police felt so, too, and hesitated before hitting the Sikhs. They asked their women to leave the field. 'No,' said the women, 'we will die with our men.' It was terrible. Mounted Indian policemen who had been galloping across the field whacking heads indiscriminately, came to a perfect stymie when they faced the little cluster of blue Akali turbans on the slender Sikh men. 'The Sikhs are brave men—how can we hit them?' It was not fear but sheer respect. But the police, determined to try to clear the field, at last rushed around the Sikh women and began to hit the men. I stood within five feet of the Sikh leader as he took the *lathi* blows. He was a short, heavy-muscled man like one of the old Greek gods. The blows came—he stood straight. His turban was knocked off. The long black hair was bared with the round topknot. He closed his eyes as the blows fell, until at last he swayed and fell to the ground. No other Sikhs had tried to shield him, but now, shouting their defiance and their determination to die rather than move, they wiped away the blood streaming from his mouth. Hysterical Hindus rushed to him bearing cakes of ice to rub the contusions over his brown eyes. The Sikh gave me a bloody smile—and stood up for more. And then the police threw up their hands. 'You can't go on hitting a blighter when he stands up to you like that.' For two hours these unbelievable scenes went on. . . . The Sikhs had told the police that if the police left first they would leave, too. The police did, and at 9 o'clock the survivors of the Sikhs, not one of whom was not covered with blood stains and with some part or another of his clothes torn, led



the triumphant procession of Gandhi's non-violent Congress followers down the streets. The injured in the hospitals must number several hundred, some seriously hurt from the wounds of *lathi* blows. No police were touched."

Mr. H. N. Brailsford, an eminent British publicist, described an experience in these words: "One face from among them stands out in my memory; its owner may have been too fine a spirit to be typical, but his thinking was characteristic of Gandhi's movement. He had been the chief speaker at one of the few meetings (near Meerut) which were dispersed by rifle fire. He had tried to calm an angry crowd, and had stationed a cordon of volunteers round the police station to protect it. He was, none the less, arrested, beaten by the police, and shot by one of them while under arrest, at close range. After other ill usage, his right arm had to be amputated. He told the story without a trace of bitterness, his face lighted up by a triumphant serenity. 'In prison,' he went on, 'my friends and I were happy and even gay. "Now we know," one said to the other, "that India is free. We have kept the master's sayings. We have faced even the rifle, and refrained from anger."' As one looked at the face of the man, proud of its gentleness, one ceased to pity the mutilated arm."

## THE BOYCOTT

During the period when the jails were becoming more and more congested with non-cooperators, the boycott against British goods became increasingly severe. During April and May the import of British merchandise showed a decrease of 23 per cent as compared with the previous year. The Finance Minister reported that for the three months ending in June, customs receipts dropped to the extent of near four million dollars. Orders were often cancelled due to the precipitous drop in demand for British goods. Business was thrown into chaos by frequent *hartals* or mass demonstrations. Industrial strikes were numerous and costly. The non-cooperation movement was disastrous alike to British merchants in India and to exporters in England.

## THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

It was under these adverse and ominous circumstances that the Round Table Conference convened on November 12, 1930. The Indian personnel represented liberal, conservative and reactionary opinion, but not that of the Congress party. On the contrary, practically all the distinguished Nationalists were being detained behind prison bars as enemies of society. Fourteen of the delegates representing British India bore the title Sir and the personnel was obviously composed primarily of Indians with pro-British leanings.

Nevertheless, the conference started auspiciously. The Indian delegates gave united expression to their desire for full self-government with the minimum of delay. This demand was phrased by Sir Tej Sapru in these ringing words: "India wants, and is determined to achieve, a status of equality—equality with the other three members of the British Commonwealth, an equality which will give it a Government not merely responsive to, but responsible to the popular voice . . . so long as there is that feeling of superiority or inferiority, India can never be happy and can never be contented . . . The time has long since passed by when India could be told to hold its soul in patience and to march to that far-off ideal through the ages."

Equally vigorous was the statement by Maulana Muhammad Ali, the famous Moslem leader who came to the Conference at great personal risk of death and who passed away on January 4, 1931: "I want to go back to my country if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise I will not go back to a slave country. I would even prefer to die in a foreign country so long as it is a free country, and if you do not give us freedom in India you will have to give me a grave here . . . India has put on fifty-league boots. We are making forced marches which will astonish the world, and we will not go back to India unless a new Dominion is born. If we go back to India without the birth of a new Dominion we shall go back, believe me, to a lost Dominion. We shall go back to an America . . . will history be written again like this: George III lost America. George V won India!"

Perhaps even more astonishing was the position taken by Dr. Ambedkar, who represented the untouchables: "When we compare our present position with the one which it was our lot to bear in Indian society of the pre-British days, we find that, instead of marching on, we are only marking time. Before the British, we were in the loathsome condition due to our untouchability. Has the British Government done anything to remove it? Before the British, we could not draw water from the village well. Has the British Government secured us the right to the well? Before the British, we could not enter the temple. Can we enter now? Before the British, we were denied entry into the Police Force. Does the British Government admit us in the Force? Before the British, we were not allowed to serve in the Military. Is that career now open to us? To none of these questions can we give an affirmative answer. That the British, who have held so large a sway over us for such a long time, have done some good we cheerfully acknowledge. But there is certainly no fundamental change in our position. Indeed, so far as we are concerned, the British Government has accepted the social arrangements as it found them, and has preserved them faithfully in the manner of the Chinese tailor who, when given an old coat as a pat-

tern, produced with pride an exact replica, rents, patches and all. Our wrongs have remained as open sores and they have not been righted, although 150 years of British rule have rolled away. We do not accuse the British of indifference or want of sympathy. What we do find is that they are quite incompetent to tackle our problem. . . . We feel that nobody can remove our grievances as well as we can, and we cannot remove them unless we get political power in our own hands. No share of this political power can evidently come to us so long as the British Government remains as it is. It is only in a Swaraj constitution that we stand any chance of getting the political power into our own hands, without which we cannot bring salvation to our people."

The case was summed up by Mr. Jinnah, the Moslem leader, in these words: "The position in India is this, and let me tell you here again, without mincing any words, that there is no section, whether they are Hindus or Muhammadans or whether they are Sikhs or Christians or Parsis or depressed classes, or even commercial classes, merchants or traders, there is not one section in India that has not emphatically declared that India must have a full measure of self-government."

## THE PRINCES AND FEDERATION

Extreme surprise was occasioned by the vigor with which the princes supported their countrymen in demanding early autonomy for India, and especially with their readiness to support the idea of an All-India Federal Government. Indeed, this unexpected attitude on the part of the representatives of the Indian States revolutionized the conference procedure. In an early session, the Right Honorable Srinivasa Sastri, co-chairman of the British Indian delegation said: "The idea of federation, I must confess, is comparatively new to me. I struggled hard against it until the other day. Now I confess I am a convert. I have listened both in private and at this Table to the Princes and their spokesmen, and may I say, with all due respect to them, that they have brought me round to their view, both by the sincerity of their declarations as to Dominion Status and by the tone of restraint and moderation in which they have spoken of the terms of federation itself."

His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, declared: "We can only federate with a British India which is self-governing, and not with a British India governed as it is at present." While Lord Peel said: "The most outstanding fact of the Conference, of course, has been that great change in opinion that has brought the conception of a Federated India from the realm of dreams to a state of reality." In closing the debate prior to the Prime Minister's summary, His Highness the Aga Khan spoke these

significant words: "You, Sir, and the British representatives of the three Parties of the State have heard practically every school of Indian thought. From the Hindus to the Muslims, coming down across the centre, nearly every school has spoken. Their Highnesses, the Princes, have spoken. If we eliminate all differences, there is on one point complete unanimity. We all ask for a full measure of self-government. I think, as Chairman of the British India Delegation, working in cooperation with the two other Delegations, I can say that we are all unitedly asking for that. We ask you to promise us the framework."

In replying Mr. MacDonald said: "The declaration of the Princes has revolutionized the situation . . . The Princes have given a most substantial contribution in opening up the way to a really united federated India." In a subsequent session, His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal said: "When the history of this Conference comes to be written, I believe that the rapid progress of the federal idea will be selected by future historians as among its most remarkable characteristics. May I recall to mind that this idea was pronounced by the Report of the Statutory Commission to be a dim and distant one, that even the Despatch of the Government of India did not regard it as being an issue of the immediate future; and yet we here have succeeded in turning Federation into a practical issue, into something for which we can work in the confidence that its attainment is now finally assured."

There were probably three reasons why the princes announced their willingness to cooperate in the formation of a Federal Government. First, many of the native rulers had become imbued with the spirit of nationalism and deeply resented alien domination of Indian people, especially foreign interference with their own full liberty of action. Second, they had little to lose if they could secure federation on their own terms and probably would thereby be able to entrench themselves more securely. Third, they were alarmed at the prospect of having the civil disobedience and non-cooperation movement spread from British India into their own territories. In addressing a plenary session, His Highness the Maharaja of Dholpur said: "The reason which impelled the Princes to take up the attitude they did is not far to seek. They saw that great forces of disruption were arising and a mighty upheaval was coming in political India. They realized their twofold duties towards the Crown and towards the country." The Princes, like all other delegates, could not for a moment forget the frail old man lying in Yeravda Jail. They realized that any proposed solution which was rejected by this saint in prison would prove to be ineffective and indeed would only fan to whiter heat the flames of independence.

Although the non-cooperation movement was not directly represented in London, it played an exceedingly important rôle in the

deliberations of the delegates. Not only were the Princes affected, the moderate Indian delegates were undoubtedly stiffened in their demand for the maximum of self-government with the minimum of delay. World opinion was aroused and tremendous moral pressure was exerted in behalf of a free India. All these factors combined to create a tremendous change in the British public mind and enabled the Labor Government and the British representatives at the Conference to adopt a more liberal attitude than previously had been considered expedient. Thus, contrary to the opinions of numerous writers who admitted Gandhi's saintliness but who said he lacked political wisdom and practicability, the non-cooperation movement exerted incalculable power over the Round Table Conference.

### THE LONDON DRAFT

The effect of all this was to produce a tentative agreement which promised India far more autonomy than had been recommended by the Simon Commission or the Government of India Despatch. Indeed, the recommendations contained in these documents were not seriously considered and in many quarters received scant respect. Mr. Jinnah, for example, said bluntly: "So far as we are concerned the Simon Commission Report is dead. The Government of India Despatch is already a back number. . . ."

The proposed constitution will "recognize the principle that, subject to certain special provisions more particularly specified hereafter, the responsibility for the federal government of India will in the future rest upon Indians themselves." Four safeguards are outlined with regard to defense, external affairs, foreign credit and exchange, and minorities. The first three are to remain under British control for an unspecified period. Moreover, the British Viceroy or Governor-General is to be granted wide discretionary powers. In serious emergencies he is to be empowered with dictatorial authority. No agreement could be reached concerning the relative rights of Hindus and Moslems.

### THE IRWIN-GANDHI AGREEMENT

The next step after the adjournment of the Round Table was the endeavor to secure the support of Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues. As long as the non-cooperation movement continued the new scheme would prove unworkable. In the hope of creating a favorable atmosphere, the Mahatma and other members of the Working Committee on January 26, 1931, were released from prison. After a long series of conversations, Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi entered into an agreement, subject to ratification by the Congress, whereby the civil disobedience campaign was to be suspended and the Congress represented at the new Round Table Conference. This desirable result was achieved by heavy concessions on the part of the Government.

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Persons living by the sea were to be permitted to manufacture salt for private use and for sale within the local community; peaceful picketing against foreign cloth and intoxicating liquors was to be allowed; political prisoners were to be released; the emergency ordinances were to be withdrawn; unpaid fines were to be remitted, and confiscated immovable property was to be returned; persons discharged from official positions because of civil disobedience were in some cases to be restored to their former positions.

This agreement represented a notable victory for both sides. Lord Irwin deserves the warmest possible praise for his courageous and conciliatory attitude. It is difficult for Americans to realize the intensity of the opposition on the part of many members of the Indian Civil Service, as well as within the ranks of his own Conservative Party at home, with which Lord Irwin had to deal. The idea of an equal status for India within the near future has been almost unthinkable to many Englishmen. The opinion expressed by Lord Roberts years ago that "however educated and clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, no rank which we can bestow upon him would cause him to be considered as an equal by the British officer," still represents the attitude of many British officers and is widely prevalent in all realms of British officialdom in India. Lord Kitchener once spoke of "the deep-seated racial repugnance to any step which brings nearer the day when Englishmen in the army may have to take orders from Indians." In a recent issue of a Calcutta newspaper the following question was asked: "Did not Clive, Nicholson and Ochterloney, to mention but a few of our Generals, fight to conquer, and, having done so, did they or the Governors of John Company hand back the conquered provinces to their rulers to do as they like with? Certainly not. We are the rightful Rulers. The Laws were made by us and should be enforced by us. May we not hope soon to hear the cry of 'Rule Britannia' above that of 'Gandhi ki jai' and 'Bande Mataram.'" Recently in *Queens Quarterly* the opinion was expressed that as a political leader Gandhi "is as little constructive, or useful, or sane, as 'a flash of lightning in a grocer's shop.'" A former cabinet colleague refers to Lord Irwin's conferences with a "seditious, half-naked fakir" as "nauseating." Viscount Burnham, a member of the Simon Commission, called the Irwin-Gandhi treaty "a triumph of lawlessness and a masterpiece of casuistry." The extreme bitterness against Gandhi found in some quarters is illustrated in a stanza from a poem published with a monstrous cartoon in a recent issue of an English magazine, *Truth*:

"Great Soul! Who put'st on saintly airs  
While bursting with malignant spite!  
What carest thou how India fares,  
Great Soul, yet greater hypocrite?"

The *Morning Post* quotes an Irish Nationalist (an *Irish Nation*-

alist) as saying that Gandhi is "the greatest impostor that has ever fooled a credulous people or frightened a cowardly Government." Even H. G. Wells says: "Gandhi is a great holy man, the victim of a hot climate, who sits in meditation and conjures up methods to rouse the emotions of his nation. He has capitalized his inferiority complex and that of his three hundred million fellow-countrymen." *The Daily Mail* complains of the mischief done through "the sentimental weakness of Lord Irwin" in consenting to "prolonged and humiliating confabulations with Gandhi, that convicted criminal and avowed enemy of the British Empire." When an announcement of the truce was made in the House of Commons there were prolonged cheers from Laborites and Liberals, but "from the Conservative benches, however, there was nothing but stony silence. . . . Mr. Baldwin fidgeted in his chair, passed his hand over his face and kept his lips shut. Sir Austen Chamberlain, next to him, sat impassively with his top-hat pulled down over his eyes and his feet on a clerk's table."

The Mahatma, however, overcame still more titanic odds. When he started on his famous march to the sea, few Englishmen or Americans thought he would quickly win the right for Indians living on the sea to make their own salt. The significance of this victory is far greater than appears on the surface. Gandhi selected the salt monopoly and salt tax as a symbol—a symbol of his determination to overthrow the British system in India. Instead of advocating civil disobedience in general terms, he dramatized the issue in terms of salt—and won! The loss of "prestige" has caused great grief within the ranks of British officials, whereas the salt victory has enormously enhanced the morale of Gandhi followers.

Moreover, the Nationalist movement has been greatly strengthened by the non-cooperation movement. The masses have been aroused as never before. On an unprecedented scale Indian women have participated in political affairs, while the youth of India has gained new determination and enthusiasm for the cause of freedom. Indian merchants have been impressed with the effectiveness of the boycott against foreign goods.

The enhanced influence of Gandhi was apparent at the Karachi Congress. At Lahore he had been defeated on two issues and narrowly averted defeat on several other vital questions. But at Karachi his wishes were acceded to almost unanimously, in spite of the Government's execution of three Indians who had been convicted of violence only a few days previously. When a group of Redshirts threatened him with personal violence because he had not saved Bhagat Singh, Mr. Gandhi quietly replied:

"I shall not complain if you beat me. I have no bodyguard. God alone keeps vigil over me. Some think me crazy, some a fool because of my love for my enemies, but it is the very foundation of

my whole life work and creed. I have nothing left to sacrifice. I have no worldly possessions. I am a beggar. But the day that India abandons the sacred principle of non-violence, I shall let my fragile body perish. If you say that I am doing harm to India, you have a right to do so; but it is my duty to turn you to the path of affection and truth. I have no weapon against you except love; let none take upon himself the duty of protecting me. God alone can do that." The correspondent of the Associated Press adds: "Before the Mahatma had finished the antagonists were sobbing. All left in a humble, penitent mood."

## THE SECOND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

At the moment these paragraphs are being written, Mr. Gandhi is preparing to sail for England, where he is to attend the meetings of the Federal Structure Committee and later the sessions of the new Round Table Conference. For some days it appeared that the Mahatma would not go to London after all. The new breach was produced by the refusal of the Government of India to yield to Gandhi's demand that the controversy over the alleged violations by the Government of the Irwin-Gandhi agreement be referred to an impartial tribunal for settlement. It will be recalled that when the non-cooperation movement was suspended in March, the Government agreed that ordinances promulgated in connection with the civil disobedience movement would be withdrawn, prosecutions pending against non-violent non-cooperators dropped, non-violent prisoners released, unpaid fines remitted, and forfeited movable property returned. Shortly after the truce was signed, complaints began to pour in that local governments were flagrantly violating the agreement. On July 9th under the caption, "Is It Crumbling?" Gandhi wrote: "Complaints are pouring in from many parts that the local officials are breaking the Delhi Pact to pieces and that it almost looks as if the Government was at war with the Congress and therefore every Congressman a suspect. From the dates I shall give of the events about to be described the reader will see that for long I suppressed publication in the hope that the cases brought to my notice were isolated instances and that the complainants would receive relief on application to their respective Provincial Governments. My hope however was disappointed." Fortunately, however, a compromise was finally reached and Mr. Gandhi has left for London.

It is highly important that the public should realize the nature and degree of his commitment in the light of the Irwin-Gandhi agreement and the Congress resolution. By the former Mr. Gandhi is bound to accept the principle of federation and to recognize the necessity for "reservations or safeguards *in the interests of India*, for such matters as, for instance, defense, external affairs, the



position of minorities, the financial credit of India and the discharge of obligations." *No commitment has been made, however, with regard to the details of these safeguards.* The degree and form and duration of British control over the reserved subjects is yet to be determined. All such decisions reached to date are *tentative and provisional*. All agreements negotiated at the first Round Table fall within this category. This fact was made crystal clear at the Conference itself. In the report of the Federal Structure Committee we read:

"It must be clearly understood that although agreement has been reached by a majority of the sub-Committee on many important matters, such agreement is only provisional, and every member followed the example of Lord Reading, who said that the understanding had been from the outset that it would be open to all members, when they came to consider the complete proposals for the Federal constitution, to modify or change any provisional assent they might have hitherto given. Every member of the sub-Committee reserves to himself the right of modifying his opinion before the final picture is completed. This is the attitude of British and Indian members alike."

Lord Peel said: "But those who heard the discussions the last few days will realise that there is great diversity of opinion as to what these safeguards should be and how they should be put into force. . . . It is agreed that opinion neither here nor in India is to be presented at the end of this Conference with a scheme that must be accepted as a whole or rejected." Mr. Chintamani called attention to the fact that "the most important matters have been left as open questions." His Highness the Maharaja of Dholpur pointed out that "It has been repeatedly affirmed in the many stages of this Conference, that all the opinions expressed must be taken as tentative rather than as final." Sir Tej Sapru expressed satisfaction that the proposed scheme "does not bolt the door against further suggestion."

## NOT EVEN HALF ENOUGH

Moreover, Mr. Gandhi has repeatedly said that the Round Table proposals as they stand are not acceptable. In *Young India* for March 12, 1931, he writes: "I must confess, that what seems to have been yielded by them at the Conference in London is not even half enough—no approach to the goal that India has in view." The "substance of independence" must be granted if Mr. Gandhi's support is to be obtained. This fact is clearly revealed in his recent writings. On March 19, 1931, for example, in *Young India* he replies as follows to the question as to whether *Purna Swaraj* would be possible within the British Empire: "It would be possible but on terms of abso-

lute equality. Complete independence may mean separation and popular imagination does understand it in that light. But, if we remain part of the Commonwealth, on terms of absolute equality, instead of Downing Street being the centre of the Empire, Delhi should be the centre. India has a population of 300 millions and that is a factor that cannot be ignored. Friends suggest that England will never be able to reconcile itself to that position. But I do not despair. The British are a practical people, and as they love liberty for themselves, it is only a step further to desire the same liberty for others. I know if the time comes to concede equality to India, they will say that that was what they had all along meant. The British people have a faculty of self-delusion as no other people have. Yes, to my mind equality means the right to secede."

In this same issue he answers the question, "Why should we have gone in for this terrible suffering to get no further than the position of 1929?" in these words: "You are making a great mistake. It is not the same position. Lord Irwin could or would then promise nothing. He simply reiterated the goal of Dominion Status. Today Dominion Status is in words a certainty and it is within our power to make it as comprehensive as possible so as to mean complete independence. In 1929 we had no knowledge of the attitude of the Indian members. Today we know." It is wholly probable that Mr. Gandhi will insist that the safeguards which will finally be drafted be made narrower in scope and that a time limit be set to their duration.

## MOSLEM REPRESENTATION

With regard to the thorny question of governmental representation for Moslems and other minorities, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress has made the following proposal:

1. (a) The article in the constitution relating to Fundamental Rights shall include a guarantee to the communities concerned of the protection of their cultures, languages, scripts, education, profession and practice of religion, and religious endowments.

(b) Personal laws shall be protected by specific provisions to be embodied in the constitution.

(c) Protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various provinces shall be the concern and be within the jurisdiction of the Federal government.

2. The franchise shall be extended to all adult men and women.

(Note: The Working Committee is committed to adult franchise by the Karachi resolution of the Congress and cannot entertain any alternative franchise. In view, however, of misapprehensions in some quarters the Committee wishes to make it clear that in any event the franchise shall be uniform and so extensive as to reflect in the electoral roll the proportion in the population of every community.)

3. (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future constitution of India.

(b) That for the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and N. W. F. P., and for Hindus and Muslims in any province where they are less than 25% of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population with the right to contest additional seats.

4. Appointments shall be made by non-party Public Service Commissions which shall prescribe the minimum qualifications, and which shall have due regard to the efficiency of the Public Service as well as to the principle of equal opportunity to all communities for a fair share in the public services of the country.

5. In the formation of Federal and Provincial Cabinets interests of minority communities should be recognised by convention.

6. The N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan shall have the same form of government and administration as other provinces.

7. Sind shall be constituted into a separate province provided that the people of Sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of the separated province.

8. The future constitution of the country shall be federal. The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless, on further examination, it is found to be against the best interests of India.

### THE DICE ARE LOADED

Another alarming feature of the constitution as outlined at London is the proposed basis of franchise and representation. If accepted it will load the dice in favor of the Princes, land-owners, industrialists and money-lenders, and will fail utterly to provide adequate representation for the workers, peasants and untouchables. This fact was pointed out at the Round Table by Mr. Shiva Rao: "Let me say at once that we cannot entertain any warmth or enthusiasm for the principles of the new constitution which have emerged as a result of the discussions in the various sub-Committees. . . . Sir, we cannot but express our misgivings that in the new constitution, unless a radical revision is made in the later stages of discussion, the position of the workers will not only be not better than it is today, but in some respects it will be definitely worse."

Dr. Ambedkar also expressed disappointment: "It would be dishonest to say that the Report of the Federal Structure sub-Committee does not contemplate a change in the bureaucratic form of government as we know it today. But it would be equally dishonest for me to conceal from you my opinion that this change is shadowy and not substantial and the responsibility is bogus and not real. . . . Indeed, if I were given a choice between the existing system and the cross-bred by the Committee I would prefer the existing one.

... A franchise so limited must necessarily make the future government of India a government of the masses by the classes."

The menace to the Indian masses inherent in the London Draft has been vividly exposed by H. N. Brailsford: "The constitution drafted at the Round Table in London may go far to satisfy the claim of nationality, but it is a poor instrument with which to win social justice. One-third of the membership of the two federal chambers will consist of the nominees of the Princes, who will form an immovable conservative block. The members chosen by British India will be elected on a narrow property franchise. Self-governing India, if this draft goes unamended, will be dominated by the *zamindars*, the usurers, and the lawyers who serve them both. It is a constitution which ignores the village and emancipates its owner. To suppose that India, handicapped by such a constitution, can peacefully solve her social problems stretches my optimism too far. I came from these villages reflecting that in the minds of their peasants the same thoughts were stirring which in 1905, to little purpose, and in 1918 with irresistible impulse mobilized the Russian *muzhiks* to sweep their landlords down the long road that led to exile."

## INDIAN BILL OF RIGHTS

The vast chasm which separates the London Draft and the Congress position is revealed clearly in the Bill of Rights adopted at Karachi, as amended by the Committee on Fundamental Rights, as follows:

The Committee carefully considered the clauses of the original Karachi resolution and all the amendments and suggestions received, and have recommended the resolution in the revised and amended form given below:

### FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES

I. The Swaraj Constitution should provide or enable the Swaraj Government to provide for the following fundamental rights and duties and economic, social and administrative reforms:

(1) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination and the right to assemble peaceably and without arms for purposes not opposed to law or morality.

(2) Every citizen of India shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practice his religion, subject to public order and morality.

(3) The culture, language and scripts of the minorities and of different linguistic areas shall be protected.

(4) All citizens of India are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste or creed or sect.

(5) No disability attaches to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex in regard to public employment, offices of power or honor and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

(6) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, roads, schools and places of public resort maintained out of State or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.

(7) Every citizen has the right and obligation to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.

(8) No person shall be deprived of his liberty, nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated save in accordance with law.

(9) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.

(10) Franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

(11) The State shall provide for free and compulsory education. The aim of educational institutions shall be good moral training, cultivation of public spirit, personal and vocational efficiency and the development of the spirit of Indian nationality and international friendliness. In giving instruction in public educational institutions, care shall be taken not to wound the susceptibilities of those holding different opinions.

(12) The State shall confer no titles.

(13) Every citizen of India is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling.

(14) No person shall be punished for any act which was not punishable under the law at the time it was committed.

(15) The privacy of correspondence, of postal, telegraphic and telephone services shall not be infringed, except in accordance with law.

(16) Every citizen has the right of complaint or petition to competent authorities or representatives of the people. This right may be exercised by individuals or several persons in common.

(17) There shall be no capital punishment.

## LABOR

II. The State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers and shall secure for them by suitable legislation and in other ways adequate wages, healthy conditions of work, limited hours of labor, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.

(3) No person shall be compelled to labor against his will and without due compensation except when such labor is imposed by law.

(4) Attention shall be paid to the special needs of women workers, including care of infants when their mothers are at work and adequate provision during the maternity period.

(5) Children of tender age shall not be employed in factories and mines.

(6) Workers have the right to form Unions to protect their interests.

### TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE

(7) The system of land taxation shall be reformed and an equitable adjustment made of the burden, immediately giving relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction in agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them, and in cases of uneconomic holdings totally exempting them from rent or revenue, with such relief as may be just and necessary to holders of estates affected by such exemption or reduction in rent, and to the same end, imposing a graded tax on net incomes from land above a reasonable minimum.

(8) A graduated scale of death duties on property above a fixed minimum.

(9) A policy of peace with neighboring countries will be pursued and there shall be a drastic reduction of military expenditure so as to bring it down to at least one-half of the present scale.

(10) Expenditure and salaries in civil departments shall be largely reduced. No servant of the State, other than specially employed experts and the like, shall be paid above a certain fixed figure, which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 1,000 per month.

(11) No duty shall be levied on salt manufactured in India.

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMME

(12) The State shall protect indigenous cloth; and for this purpose pursue the policy of exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country and adopt such other measures as may be found necessary.

(13) Intoxicating drinks and drugs shall be totally prohibited.

(14) Currency and exchange shall be regulated in the National interests.

(15) The State shall own or control key industries, mineral resources, railways, shipping and other means of public transport.

(16) Adequate steps shall be taken for the relief of agricultural indebtedness and the prohibition of usury.

(17) The State shall take steps, directly or through local bodies, to improve the condition of people in rural areas by providing healthy amusements, facilities for adult education, the extension

and improvement of agriculture, revival and development of hand-spinning and handweaving and other indigenous arts and crafts, and the adoption of an effective programme of village sanitation, drinking water supply and medical relief.

(18) The State shall provide for the military training of citizens so as to organize a means of National defence apart from the regular military forces.

## THE POOR MAN'S SWARAJ

In moving the foregoing resolution embodying the proclamation of fundamental rights, Mr. Gandhi said: ". . . by passing this resolution we make it clear to the world and to our own people what we propose to do as soon as we come into power. Let Government also take note of it. Let those who may have to deal with us at the Round Table Conference also take note of the fact that the Viceroy, under Swaraj, should not get more than Rs. 500 per month. The position has been made as clear as possible, in order that we may not be accused of having sprung sudden surprises on those who have to deal with us. They are also meant to forewarn all concerned. Let them prepare themselves for the coming legislation by modelling their lives in the light of the coming changes . . . the poor man's Swaraj is soon coming and let them not be found unprepared when it actually comes."

Before the Subjects Committee at Karachi, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the Princes as follows: "All I have suggested in connection with the federation is that they should acknowledge that the fundamental rights of the people of the States should be the same as those of the citizens in what is called British India. . . . The Princes are naturally touchy, and we should do nothing to touch them on the raw, if we can help it. We may only make it clear to them that a federation of the people and Princes will have meaning only when the Princes will stoop to conquer, will stoop to the level of their people, just as we ask the Englishmen to descend from the heights of Simla to the plains. But we do not want to give them any notice of this. We will trust them to conform to the spirit of the times, and I am sure that if we succeed in getting everything else the Princes will offer no difficulty."

"The Giant and the Dwarf" were discussed in *Young India* on March 26, 1931, by Mr. Gandhi in these words: "The Britisher is the top-dog and the Indian the under-dog in his own country. . . . It is to be feared, therefore, that before we reach the state of equality, the levelling process will have to be gone through. Justice demands this. It will be a misnomer to call the process one of racial discrimination. There is no such question. There is room enough in our country for every British man, woman and child, if they will

shed their privileged position and share our lot. . . . To show that no racial discrimination is involved in this demand one has only to state that Indians who occupy entrenched positions behind their British patrons will also be expected to come to the level of their brethren of the plains. The true formula, therefore, should be this. In order to remove the existing unnatural inequalities the privileges of the ruling class and those others who have shared them shall be reduced so as to reach a state of equality between all classes and communities."

Elsewhere in the same issue, Mr. Gandhi said: "By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism."

### WILL GANDHI SUCCEED?

It would appear, therefore, that Mahatma Gandhi will insist upon certain minimum measures: the granting of full Dominion Status, the "substance of independence"; reduction in the number and scope of safeguards, as well as the fixing of a short time limit for their duration; extension of representation and power for the Indian masses. Will these demands be granted? The Mahatma himself has expressed grave doubts as to the outcome. In a report of one of his addresses published in the columns of his paper on April 9, 1931, we read: "It is quite right for you to question why we who have all along distrusted the Round Table Conference should now decide to go to it. What miracle has happened to make us change our course? No such miracle has happened, and I have not much confidence in our getting what we want at the Round Table Conference. I have often wondered myself what we are going to do at the Conference when we know that there is such a gulf between what we want and what has been as yet offered at the Round Table Conference. But consideration of the duty of a Satyagrahi decided me. There comes a stage when he may no longer refuse to negotiate with his opponent. His object is always to convert his opponent by love."

When it became apparent, after weeks of endeavor, that the Hindu-Moslem controversy over representation could not be settled prior to the second Round Table, Mr. Gandhi went so far as to recommend that the Congress refrain from participation in that gathering. He was outvoted in the Working Committee, however, and reluctantly agreed to follow the judgment of his colleagues that he should go to London.

In addressing a vast audience in Bombay, Gandhi said: "If the second Round Table Conference fails to grant our demand for a complete independence, then it is written in heaven that our struggle



shall be renewed until India's inarticulate millions are given a voice in their own affairs."

Dr. John Haynes Holmes received a cablegram from Mr. Gandhi in March, 1931, which reads: "Nothing on important issues you mention was settled or could be settled, but door kept open for raising these questions. Congress enters Conference with determination to gain these points. Settlement is provisional and if Congress position cannot be reached through Conference Congress might have to readopt method of suffering and civil disobedience."

It is obvious, therefore, that staggering difficulties must be overcome before the re-convened Round Table Conference can reach a satisfactory agreement. And still further barriers must then be crossed before ratification is accorded by Parliament and the various Indian groups. Unless substantial concessions are made, Mr. Gandhi is likely to resume civil disobedience and non-cooperation, and in that event there is every reason to believe that he would receive wider support from the masses than ever before. On the other hand, there is basis for doubt that British public opinion is prepared to go as far as is necessary to gain Mr. Gandhi's support. Moreover, the Princes cannot be ignored and the scheme of federation may fail if they become alarmed at the prospect of losing their power. Perhaps worst of all is the Hindu-Moslem controversy concerning representation and safeguards. The issues at stake are stupendous and the difficulties to be overcome are titanic.

Encouragement may be gained, however, from the fact that the desperate seriousness of the situation is widely recognized. That India must soon be free is generally admitted not only in Labor and Liberal circles, but also by many Conservatives, under the leadership of Lord Irwin. Hesitation comes only with regard to the speed with which the transfer of authority is to be made. In an address subsequent to the Conference, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India, in assessing its achievements, said: "A third result is in the status of Indians. We have heard a lot about the status of Indians and, either from ignorance or from designed offensiveness, those who wish to wound or give pain speak about India as a dependency. You do not invite the members of a dependency to sit round a table on an equality and discuss the future of their country. Once the Conference had been addressed by the Prime Minister and had dispersed for the time being, the question of the status of the representatives was settled."

As he landed in India to begin his régime as Viceroy, Lord Willingdon expressed the hope that India "may move rapidly toward the goal of responsibility and a position of absolutely equal partnership with the other dominions under the Crown," that is to say, the early achievement of the "substance of independence." The crucial question is this: *will the pace be fast enough?*

## WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

After freedom is won, India will continue to be confronted with innumerable problems. It is wholly probable that administrative efficiency will slump seriously during the early stages of self-government, while inexperience will cause tragic blunders. Countless cleavages of race, language, caste and class will prevent the harmonious functioning of government. Indeed, the combination of obstacles now facing India's leaders has rarely been equalled in magnitude and complexity: abysmal poverty, innumerable divisions, widespread ignorance, low physical vitality, the crushing weight of social custom and the paralyzing effects of religious beliefs and institutions. One may rejoice over India's prospects of gaining political liberty in the near future and yet be soberly aware of the high barriers which must be surmounted before the goal of genuine freedom is reached.

Encouragement may be found in the fact that similar difficulties have been overcome in other countries. Medieval Europe confronted many of the problems which are now found in India. Abject poverty was widespread and the masses often lived in extreme physical destitution. The regions that now constitute nations were once divided into hundreds of petty principalities. The ruins of numberless old castles furnish eloquent reminders that brigandage and petty warfare once flourished over extensive areas. The rival clans of Scotland formerly hated each other more violently than do the various castes of India. Catholics and Protestants for long periods fought each other more ferociously than do Hindus and Moslems. Child-marriage and even the sale of children persisted throughout Europe for many centuries. Superstition and magic held that continent in bondage for a millennium. Vile practices found their way into the heart of ecclesiastical institutions. Immorality and corruption were prevalent not only among secular officials but also within the ranks of the clergy.

Representative government came into being as a slow growth and was retarded by human weakness buttressed by social custom. Referring to the situation which prevailed a century and a half ago, an English authority on constitutional history wrote: "Most of the English boroughs were either sold by their patrons, or by themselves, to the highest bidder. In 1793, when the members of the House of Commons numbered 558, no fewer than 354 were nominally returned by less than 15,000 voters, but in reality, on the nomination of Government and 197 private patrons." The theory of the divine right of kings was for many centuries accepted without question by the best minds of Christendom. The enmities between the thirteen American colonies were so bitter that the Continental Congress was almost paralyzed. Strife and disorder pre-

ailed for a decade following victory in the Revolutionary War. An early Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States resigned on the ground that not enough respect was paid to that body to make it worth while for him to sit upon the bench.

Even today many of the evils which afflict India are found also in an aggravated form in many sovereign nations. Some months ago an American periodical said that recent political events in New York City, Chicago and Boston "seem to suggest that the American people, when they come together to live and work in these enormous agglomerations, develop a mass stupidity which is almost fatal to their own wellbeing." If flagrant corruption and fierce internal rivalries are held to disqualify a people from the exercise of self-government, how many of the existing nations are fit for independence? The recent examples of Japan and Turkey in creating modern nations out of medieval practices and institutions offer hope that India, although facing a far more complex and baffling situation, may likewise succeed in overcoming the formidable obstacles now blocking the way.

Nationalism has worked political miracles in the past and may yet accomplish the "impossible" in India. For decades to come, however, the statesmen of that land will make heavy demands upon the understanding, sympathy, cooperation and patience of world opinion.

## WHEN GANDHI DIES

The frail shoulders of India's Mahatma are probably now carrying a heavier burden than any other man of this generation and one rarely equalled in history. The strain under which he has labored during recent weeks would have crushed most other leaders. The following description is from the pen of his secretary: "Even on silent Monday, when he manages to steal some snatches of sleep out of hours of writing work, he could get no rest or sleep, having to listen to numerous interviewers whom he could not possibly turn away, and when he broke his silence at 8 P. M. public engagements and an important interview with Sjt. Subhaschandra Bose kept him busy until 2:30 A. M. the next morning. After about an hour's sleep he was out of bed again for the morning prayer, having thus kept awake 23 out of the 24 hours of that day! Interviews began again soon after the prayer and the day full of numerous taxing conversations and meetings ended with an interview at midnight. After three and a half hours' sleep, he was again on his legs for the next day's programme, which one would have thought would end at 1:30 P. M. when he entrained the Frontier Mail at Andheri. But that was not to be. Interviews had been promised and had to be fulfilled, with the result that practically no rest could be had right up to 10 o'clock. Could he then have rest? How could he with *Navajivan*

hovering over his head, articles for which must be posted the next morning? As though this torture was not enough, crowds at stations shouting, at all hours of day and night, to the top of their voice, cries which do no good to them and positively get on his nerves, must disturb what little rest he can manage to get on the train. We have been doing this for the last ten years in the teeth of Gandhiji's repeated protests."

The fact that Gandhi is now nearly sixty-two years of age, with crushing burdens bearing down upon his slender body, raises the question as to how long he can last. When he dies, what is likely to happen? Are there Indian leaders who can succeed him? While there are plenty of Indians of great ability, they will not be able to take Gandhi's place. Such a genius has no successor. Fortunately, however, the influence of great men is immortal. Mr. Gandhi's power is likely to increase rather than diminish after his death. Sun Yat Sen is more dominant in China now than at the height of his career. Lenin now sways the life of Russia more powerfully than when he was visible in the flesh. Because Gandhi is saint as well as statesman, he will probably be more deeply revered with the passing of years. The most hopeful aspect of the Indian situation is that Gandhi's dominance is likely to be permanent.

## GANDHI'S RELIGION

Perhaps even more marvelous than Gandhi's physical vitality is the serenity which characterizes him even in times of acute crisis. Hatred was long ago ruled out of his life. He is relentless in his opposition to an evil system, but harbors no ill-will toward any man. Through long discipline he has achieved an inner unity that prevents worry and anxiety. He has no fear and follows his convictions without regard to consequences. His faith in his cause is boundless and his patience appears inexhaustible.

Mahatma Gandhi is a Hindu but is extremely tolerant of all other faiths. Repeatedly he has acknowledged his indebtedness to Mohammed, Jesus and other non-Hindu religious teachers. "For many years," he writes, "I have regarded Jesus of Nazareth as one among the mighty leaders that the world has had, and I say this in all humility. I claim humility for this expression because this is exactly what I feel. Of course, Christians claim a higher place for Jesus of Nazareth than I, as a non-Christian and a Hindu, am able to feel . . . I can say that Jesus occupies in my heart the place of one of the great teachers who have made a considerable influence on my life. I say to the 75 per cent of Hindus receiving instruction in this college that your lives also will be incomplete unless you reverently study the teaching of Jesus . . . *If, then, I had to face only the Sermon on the Mount and my own interpretation of it, I should not*

*hesitate to say, 'Oh yes, I am a Christian.'* But I know that at the present moment if I said any such thing I would lay myself open to the gravest misinterpretation . . . Because of its Western, external appearance we in India have come to distrust the Christian missionary endeavour that has reached us from the West . . . Do not confuse Jesus's teaching with what passes as modern civilisation . . . By all means drink deep of the fountains that are given to you in the Sermon on the Mount ; but then you will have to take up sack-cloth and ashes also with regard to failure to perform that which is taught in Christ's Sermon."

Many years ago Mr. Gandhi said: "*It was the New Testament which really awakened me to the rightness and value of Passive Resistance.* When I read in the Sermon on the Mount such passages as 'Resist not him that is evil ; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also,' and 'Love your enemies ; pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven,' I was simply overjoyed, and found my own opinion confirmed where I least expected it. The Bhagavad Gita deepened the impression, and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* gave it permanent form . . . Jesus Christ, Daniel, and Socrates represented the purest form of Passive Resistance, or Soul-Force. All these teachers counted their bodies as nothing in comparison with their souls. Tolstoy was the best and brightest modern exponent of the doctrine. He not only expounded it but lived according to it." On another occasion Gandhi wrote: "Progress is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer. The purer the suffering, the greater is the progress. Hence did the sacrifice of Jesus suffice to free a sorrowing world. In his onward march, he did not count the cost of suffering, entailed upon his neighbors, whether it was undergone by them voluntarily or otherwise."

Mahatma Gandhi's strong disapproval of proselytism is based in part upon the fact that hostility and bloodshed between Hindu and Moslem are greatly accentuated by efforts to induce individuals to abandon their own faith and join another. In his famous statement concerning foreign missionaries, published in *Young India* on April 23, 1931, he said: "I am, then, not against conversion. But I am against the modern methods of it. Conversion nowadays has become a matter of business, like any other. I remember having read a missionary report saying how much it cost per head to convert and then presenting a budget for 'the next harvest.' Yes, I do maintain that India's great faiths are all-sufficing for her. Apart from Christianity and Judaism, Hinduism and its offshoots, Islam and Zoroastrianism are living faiths. No one faith is perfect. All faiths are equally dear to their respective votaries. What is wanted, therefore, is living friendly contact among the followers of the great

religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the superiority of its faith over the rest. Through such friendly contact it will be possible for us all to rid our respective faiths of shortcomings and excrescences. It follows from what I have said above that India is in no need of conversion of the kind I have in mind. Conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realisation is the crying need of the times. That, however, is not what is ever meant by proselytising. To those who would convert India, might it not be said, 'Physician, heal thyself'?"

Two weeks later Mr. Gandhi wrote: ". . . with my known partiality for the Sermon on the Mount and my repeated declarations that its author was one of the greatest among the teachers of mankind I could not suspect that there would be any charge against me of under-rating Christianity. . . . The missionaries know that in spite of my outspoken criticism of their methods, they have in India and among non-Christians no warmer friend than I . . . In India under Swaraj I have no doubt that foreign missionaries will be at liberty to do their proselytising, as I would say, in the wrong way ; but they would be expected to bear with those who, like me, may point out that in their opinion the way is wrong."

Mr. Gandhi regards himself as an orthodox Hindu, but a wide gulf separates him from the beliefs and practices of the vast majority of his co-religionists. He refuses to label himself a Christian. yet few men in history have borne so striking a resemblance to the Divine Galilean. "All that long day," writes C. F. Andrews in describing an experience in South Africa, "I watched the behavior of the crowd and their attitude towards Mahatma Gandhi, their leader. It was there for the first time that I could understand the secret of his amazing influence with his fellow countrymen and the reason for their devotion to him. I can only describe this briefly by saying that my thoughts went back to the Gospel story for an analogy. He was there, in the heart of that multitude that pressed upon him. They had come to him without anything to eat ; and he was busy providing for their needs. An infinite tenderness and compassion shone from his eyes, while the mothers brought their little children to him, so that he might lay his hands upon them and bless them. The crowd would never leave him even for a moment and his patience was inexhaustible. He had not time himself to rest or take his own meal while he supplied others with food, for they went on pressing upon him and he would not turn them away. As I have often in memory looked back upon that scene and afterwards recalled many other pictures also of a similar character I have been able from time to time to find the parallels I needed in history. Sometimes the scenes I have witnessed have reminded me of stories about the Buddha. But most often my thoughts have turned to the

legends concerning St. Francis of Assisi. Mahatma Gandhi is, most nearly of any one I know, the St. Francis of this modern age, the Little Brother of the Poor."

During the crisis of 1919-22, says an Indian leader, "all India seemed to have become suddenly aware of the meaning of the Cross. The supreme point was when Mahatma Gandhi was convicted. The mind and the heart of India reverted instinctively to a similar happening in the court of Pilate two thousand years ago." The following testimony was offered by a prominent Hindu editor: "Mahatma Gandhi's movement has made the central teaching of Christ known and cherished in quarters to which a hundred years of the propaganda of Christian missions had not been able to penetrate. And it has presented it in a form readily assimilable to the Indian mind. Not only among Hindus but among Indian Christians also are being revealed a new meaning and a new purpose in the message of the Galilean prophet . . . It may be said without exaggeration that the Mahatma in jail has achieved in a short while what Christian missions had not in a hundred years with all their resources of men and money—he has turned India's face to Christ upon the Cross."

During the Lahore meeting of the Indian National Congress, I saw impressive evidence of the way Gandhi subordinates politics to religion. At a critical moment in the debate when his chief opponent had just risen to speak on an important theme, the hour approached for Gandhi's evening prayers. Every day in the year at four o'clock in the morning and at half past seven in the evening, he and his friends gather together for corporate worship. Quietly he slipped out of a rear exit. We quickly accepted an invitation from his secretary to accompany them. The Volunteers formed a human-chain about us and cleared a way through the crowd, which greeted Gandhi with cheers. When we reached his tent we sat for half an hour in a circle in the darkness and engaged in worship together. After the chanting of sacred songs and a long period of silent prayer, Gandhi returned to his political duties.

## CONCLUSION

Mahatma Gandhi is the first to admit that he has many weaknesses and has made numerous mistakes. Indeed, his humility is one of his most attractive attributes. His autobiography is one of the frankest and most revealing documents ever published. People of the West find it difficult to understand his attitude toward machinery, his practice of occasionally burning foreign cloth, his aversion to modern hospitals, his reverence for the cow as a symbol of all sub-human creatures, his exaltation of celibacy and advocacy of complete continence even for husband and wife. His outlook is

half medieval and half modern. He is at the same time an ascetic and a militant social reformer. His revolt against industrialism is like that of Tolstoy and Ruskin; his attitude toward sexual relations is somewhat similar to that of many Christian theologians in the fifth century, although he does not share their conviction that women should be shunned by men whose lives are devoted to spiritual purposes. Many readers of his autobiography were repelled by the way Gandhi forces his own ideas upon his wife.

Pacifists find it difficult or impossible to reconcile Gandhi's recruiting tour during the World War with his ideal of Satyagraha or non-violent resistance of evil and feel that his defence of this action is quite unconvincing, especially in view of the fact that he has consistently condemned the use of violence in the effort to secure freedom from Great Britain. Many men who believe that India is utterly unfit for self-government look upon the crusade for independence as sheer madness. One American resident of India went so far as to say: "Gandhi will burn in hell for his sins!" Citizens of countries which gained their own liberty by armed revolution or warfare should remember that while Gandhi's longing for freedom is as passionate as that of their own forefathers, he entirely repudiates the use of violent weapons and relies wholly upon the spiritual processes of goodwill and vicarious suffering.

The great soul of India has many faults, he is not always consistent, he has committed grave blunders; but his supreme devotion to the poor, his utter reliance upon love in the conflict with evil, his courageous and sacrificial spirit, his unshaken trust in God are much nearer to the religion of Jesus than are the lives of most persons who call themselves Christians. Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord! But he that doeth! More than any other man of the age the Spinner of Sabarmati reminds me of the Carpenter of Nazareth!



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